

MARION COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL CALLED CODE OF CONDUCT WORKSHOP
MARION SCHOOL DISTRICT CONFERENCE ROOM
719 North Main Street – Marion, South Carolina 29571
March 2, 2023

Board Members Present: Chairperson-Patricia Atkinson, Vice Chairperson-Nadine Foxworth, Rev. Cynthia V. Brown, Mr. Donnie Hill, Mr. Kevin Dozier and Susan Pridgen (audio).

Call to Order & Notification of Board Workshop: The Board meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m. by Chairperson Atkinson. In accordance with the S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (d) as amended, the local media was notified of the time, date and place of the meeting. Ms. Deciera Gause stated that the media was notified of the meeting and a copy of the agenda was also provided.

Invocation: The invocation was given by the Rev. Darryl Woodberry. The Board thanked Rev. Woodberry for the invocation.

Welcome to Staff and Visitors Present: Chairperson Atkinson welcomed everyone to the March 2, 2023 Special Called Code of Conduct Workshop.

Establishment of Quorum: Chairperson Atkinson verified that a quorum was present.

Approval of Agenda: Chairperson Atkinson asked for approval of the agenda. Rev. Brown moved, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Foxworth to approve the March 2, 2023 agenda; and the vote passed. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Mr. Hill, Rev. Brown, and Mr. Dozier).

Chairperson Atkinson advised the Board to only discuss policy and not to discuss or reference any specific student events.

Code of Conduct: Chairperson Atkinson stated that Policy JIC: Student Conduct will be reviewed. For clarity, she stated that MCSD does not have or ever voted on a Zero Tolerance Policy. She further outlined the topics of discussion from the agenda. Dr. Bethea will lead the discussion.

Code of Conduct Presentation: Dr. Bethea will be sharing information and getting input and feedback from the Board as it pertains to the Code of Conduct. She began by expressing that any decisions made in the District must align with the Strategic Plan. Priority 3 of the Strategic Plan: Supporting the Whole Child aligns with the Code of Conduct. She provided a snapshot of the discipline levels of infractions by percentages. She gave an overview of the purpose and consequences of the Code of Conduct.

Mrs. Rush further explained the different levels (Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3). She reviewed Policies JIC, JKD, JKE and JICDA.

Attorney Boykin gave legal guidance and input about using the term “Zero Tolerance” and due process. The Board was given the opportunity to clearly define “Zero Tolerance” for MCSD. Rev. Brown believes that there is a fine line between the aggressor and the innocent child that has never been in trouble but had to defend him/herself...the innocent child should not get the same punishment as the aggressor. Other Board Members asked questions and made statements during this time. Dr. Bethea explained the 10 days suspension process. Two members of the Board will now

serve on the Discipline Task Force. The Discipline Task Force will meet on March 13, 2023 at 3:30. The Board voted to not use the verbiage “Zero Tolerance” as a policy for Marion County School District. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Rev. Brown, Mr. Dozier and Mr. Hill).

The Board asked the Discipline Task Force to create a policy with a stronger response for certain behaviors and present it at the May 16th Board meeting. Vice-Chairperson Foxworth would like to create a policy just for bullying.

Dr. Bunch was given the opportunity to explain the Evidentiary Hearing process.

Rev. Darryl Woodberry reviewed the Student Transition Process from their base school to SAPEC. He also shared the transition process from other districts.

Dr. Bethea outlined the MCSD Recommendations as it pertains to the Code of Conduct.

Chairperson Atkinson asked for volunteers to serve on the Discipline Task Force. Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Rev. Brown and Mr. Dozier (nominated) agreed to serve. Dr. Bethea suggested only two Board Members since there are two reps from each school. The Board voted Rev. Brown (Mr. Dozier, Mr. Hill and Rev. Brown), Mr. Dozier (Chairperson Atkinson, Rev. Brown, Mr. Hill and Mr. Dozier) and Vice-Chairperson Foxworth (Vice-Chairperson Foxworth)...Rev. Brown and Mr. Dozier will represent The Board on the Discipline Task Force.

Adjournment: Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Hill moved, seconded by Mr. Dozier to approve this request; and the vote was unanimous (Rev. Brown, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Chairperson Atkinson, Mr. Dozier and Mr. Hill). The meeting adjourned at 7:09 pm.