

MARION COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MARION SCHOOL DISTRICT CONFERENCE ROOM

719 North Main Street – Marion, South Carolina 29571

February 16, 2021

Board Members Present: Chair- **Ogleretta White**, Vice-Chair Patricia Atkinson, Mrs. Susan Pridgen, Mrs. Nadine Foxworth and Mrs. Linda Neal.

Board Members Virtual: Rev. Cynthia V. Brown

Call to Order & Notification of Board Meeting: The Board meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m. by the Chairperson Ogleretta White. In accordance with the S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (d) as amended, the local media were notified of the time, date and place of the meeting. Mrs. Dianne Hopper stated that the media was notified of the date, time and place of the meeting and a copy of the Agenda was also provided.

Invocation: A Moment of Silence.

Welcome to Staff and Visitors Present: Chairperson White welcomed the staff and visitors to the February 16, 2021 meeting.

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

Approval of Agenda: Mrs. Neal moved, second by Mr. Davis to approve the agenda; and the Board voted unanimously to approve. (Mrs. Neal, Mr. Davis, Mrs. Pridgen, Chairperson-White, Rev. Brown, Mrs. Foxworth and Vice-Chairperson Atkinson).

Approval of Minutes: Vice-Chairperson Atkinson moved, second by Mrs. Pridgen to approve the minutes of January 19, 2021 Regular meeting and January 28, 2021 Called Meeting; and the Board voted unanimously to approve. (Mrs. Neal, Chairperson White, Rev. Brown, Mrs. Foxworth, Mr. Davis, Mrs. Pridgen and Vice-Chairperson Atkinson).

SCSBA Board Recognitions: Dr. Bethea, along with Chairperson White recognized Board Members past and present for their services to the education system. Recognition was given to two former Board members (Mr. Charles White and Mrs. Cynthia Legette) for their years of dedicated service. Mrs. Neal who is currently servicing was recognized by the SCSBA for her ten years of servicing as a board member. Members were congratulated for their service.

EPIC Award: Dr. Bethea, along with Chairperson White and Mrs. Wimberly presented awards to three District employees (Kimberly Thompson, Tina Ferline and Pamela McDaniels) for going above and beyond the call of duty during the meeting. The Board congratulated them for their endeavor to reach their goal in educating our students. Board recessed briefly to allow those recognized to exit.

Reports from Administration / Review and Action Items:

2019 Financial Audit Overview: Mr. Finney commended the Finance Office and others for a tremendous job in assisting them with the reports. He briefly discussed the Board's assets, liabilities and adequate fund balance which was needed to cover potential shortfalls. Mr. Finney reviewed the highlights of the audit. Chairperson White thanked Mr. Finney for his presentation. Board members were asked to review the audit report for any concerns or questions that they may have later and if so; questions will be given to Dr. Bethea to be sent to Mr. Finney.

Finance: Finance Report January 2021: Mr. Lane presented the Finance Report for the month of January. After the presentation, members expressed their concerns to have a two separate budget/strategic planning workshops. Dr. Bethea stated she would send dates to Insight to see when they were available. The first budget workshop will be March 2, 2021.

Facilities/Operations Report: Mr. Blake presented the Operation's report for the month. See Attached.

Human Resources Report / Updates - Mrs. Paula Grant: Mrs. Grant presented the personnel actions to the Board for approval. Mrs. Neal moved, second by Mrs. Pridgen to approve as recommended by Dr. Bethe; and the Board voted unanimously to approve. (Mrs. Neal, Chairperson-White, Rev. Brown, Mrs. Pridgen, Mrs. Foxworth, Vice-Chairperson Atkinson and Mr. Davis).

Teaching and Learning Updates: Ms. Melonie Gordon, Mrs. Becky Ford and Ms. Shalah Sweeney presented Teaching and Learning Updates to the Board for information. The Board expressed concerns about the District's progress since the Corona Virus Pandemic and the affects it has on grades, student absenteeism, ways of getting information out to parents and how teacher retention has affected our success. The staff answered questions with brief explanations and examples. The Board thanked them for their presentation.

Superintendent's Update: Dr. Bethea presented her monthly updates to the Board from the various Administrative Departments. See Attachment.

Dates - to Remember - Conference / Meeting Reminders/ Board Comments: Chairperson-White reminded everyone of the upcoming meetings (Annual Conference on February 18-21, 2021 @ Hilton Head Marriott, Hilton Head Island; Policy Workshop on February 23, 2021 @ MCSD Central Services Office from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm; The Next Regular Board Meeting on March 16, 2021 @ MCSD Central Service Office 6:00 pm.

Chairperson White acknowledged that Rev. Cynthia Brown would be recognized by the SCSBA on Saturday, February 20, 2021 at the SCSBA Annual Conference for reaching the highest level. We will recognize her at our next regular meeting.

Executive Session: Chairperson White asked for a motion to go into executive session for Contractual matter, Personnel and legal updates. Mrs. Foxworth moved, seconded by Mrs. Neal to approve; and the Board voted unanimously. (Mrs. Neal, Mr. Davis Mrs. Pridgen, Chairperson White, Vice- Chairperson, Atkinson, Mrs. Foxworth and Rev. Brown).

Open Session: Chairperson White asked for a motion to come out of executive session. Vice-Chairperson Atkinson moved, seconded by Mrs. Foxworth to come out of executive session back into open session; and the Board voted unanimously to approve. (Chairperson -White, Mrs. Neal, Vice-Chairperson Atkinson, Rev. Brown, Mr. Davis, Mrs. Pridgen and Mrs. Foxworth).

Chairperson White stated that no action was taken in executive session.

Adjournment: Chairperson White asked for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Neal moved, seconded by Mrs. Pridgen to adjourn; and the Board voted unanimously to approve. (Mrs. Foxworth, Mrs. Pridgen, Mr. Davis, Rev. Brown, Mrs. Neal, Vice-Chairperson Atkinson and Chairperson White). Adjourned 9:30 pm

Marion County Board of Education

Operations Report

February 2021

Facilities/Operations Report

Facilities Study

As previously mentioned, the district is in the beginning stage of a facilities study. It is our goal to have the following evaluated in the study: comfort, security, accessibility, illumination, ventilation, aesthetics, mechanical system, plumbing, electrical systems, telecommunications, fire suppression, athletic facilities, playgrounds, and parking lots. The study will also look at having facilities repurposed if necessary in the future. In conversations with different design professionals, the cost can rise above \$100,000.00 depending on the size of the district, and the scope of the services requested. The staff is asking permission to issue an RFP for a facilities study.

Old Britton's Neck Elementary School

I spoke with Mr. Earl Watson, the President of the Britton's Neck Fire Department, on February 9. Mr. Watson provided written background information on the history of the school. The Britton's Neck fire department was evaluated in November of 2019. During the evaluation, it was stated in a private conversation that if the building was demolished, the ISO (Insurance Services Office) rating would decrease in the community. ISO creates ratings from 1 to 10, and 1 is the best possible rating and 10 means the department does not meet the minimum ISO requirements. The ISO rating calculates how well equipped fire departments are about to put out fires in their communities. The ISO did not provide any written documentation to the Britton's Neck fire department concerning the demolition of the building. A copy of the letter from the fire department will be presented at the meeting.

Review and action GovDeals.com

At the January meeting it was approved that district could use GovDeals.com to assist with selling of unused property. The South Carolina State Department of Education Office of School Facilities (OSF) now has written protocols for the next sale of property that was built after 1952. Prior to listing the property, the district must complete the following checklist six weeks prior to the next State Board of Education (SBE):

- Tax map number and street address
- Amount of Acreage
- The original cost of the property
- The asking price of the property

- Is there a potential buyer at this time?
- Resolution passed by the local school board declaring the property to be unnecessary and/or unsuitable for the education or administrative purposes of the district's facilities. A copy of an example resolution is attached to this report.
- OSF will need to notify the SC Department of Transportation (SCDOT) before the SBE approves the disposal.

PPE Measures

A brochure of the PPE used in the district will be presented at the meeting. The brochure details the types of PPE used in Marion County School District.

RESOLUTION
DECLARING SCHOOL PROPERTY
FOR SALE
Marion, SOUTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, The School Board of Trustees declares that Britton's Neck Elementary School, and Southside Elementary to be unnecessary for educational and administrative purposes according to the district's facilities plans;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the School Board of Trustees requests approval from the State Board of Education to sell Britton's Neck Elementary School, and Southside Elementary School; and

BE IT RESOLVED, That the sale of Britton's Neck Elementary School, and Southside Elementary School) will not have a discernible negative impact upon any other district school facility or site; and

BE IT RESOLVED, That assurance is hereby given that the proceeds from the sale of Britton's Neck Elementary School and Southside Elementary School shall go to the district's capital budget for subsequent use.

Adopted February 16, 2021 by the School Board of Trustees of Marion County School District.

Chairperson School Board of Trustees

Date



Superintendent's Monthly Update to the Board

Tuesday, February 16, 2021

We Are Marion County! Educate • Prepare • Inspire

General Administrative Reminders/Updates from the Office of Superintendent:

▪ **Tentative Vaccination Roll-out Plan:**

Marion County School District has partnered with MUSC-Marion to be our provider for COVID 19 Vaccines. The SDE has not provided formal guidance on the criteria for Vaccination Plans but hopefully it will be forthcoming. Please see the attached Roll-out Plan.

▪ **Return to Phase 3: Full 5-Day/Traditional Schedule:**

The MCSDD Safe Start Guide provided guidance on three phases of reopening. Please see the attached information which will be discussed in detail at the Board meeting.

▪ **CARES ACT/ ESSER II Funds:**

As you are aware, districts are scheduled to receive a substantial amount of funds under ESSER II. Marion County primarily used the initial CARES ACT funds to purchase devices to move the district to one-to-one and placing a device in every student's hands, health and safety measures, and the remaining to be used to supplement shortfalls within General Fund as a result of the pandemic and enrollment.

The **Weekly Brief** for Monday, February 15 will be heavily focused on ESSER II funds and information regarding the impact of the pandemic on the overall budget.

▪ **Marion County Strategic Plan**

I, along with several Board members, participated in the presentation of the Marion County Strategic Plan on Wednesday, February 10. I was extremely pleased to see that several of the key tactics regarding the Education and Workforce component of the plan aligned with our Reconfiguration Plan as well as several key aspects that are being addressed in our new strategic plan. Some of the tactics mentioned: The need for a consolidated high school, a focus on an increase in salaries, expanded opportunities for CTE related activities, enhanced soft skills training, and increased partnerships to foster more career experiences for students (internships, job shadowing etc.).

Human Resources:

We have been very surprised and excited with the success we have had with our Virtual Teacher Recruitment Fairs. Each Thursday afternoon in January was devoted to a specific grade band for teacher recruitment. We grew every week with more and more attendees. Principals and school team members who have participated have given positive feedback and we have worked together each week with suggestions on how the process can be "tweaked". We will continue our virtual recruitment fairs each Thursday afternoon through the months of February and March.

Student Services:

All faculty, staff and students were asked to complete a confidential survey regarding their experiences in our district. The survey window closed February 5th for the adult survey and February 12th for the student survey. Data from both surveys will be used to support the needs of students, faculty and staff.



Superintendent's Monthly Update to the Board

Tuesday, February 16, 2021

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Federal Programs:

- Next Annual Review window is March 8-20.
- We are conducting an internal audit of documentation in ENRICH to ensure parent contacts are made and are timely.
- Also working on internal audits regarding federal funding (ie carryover funds and grants that will end June 30, 2021).
- Collecting data for 2nd Quarter CARES Act Reporting

Technology:

The Technology department continues to operate the help desk a couple of hours per day Monday through Thursday to help troubleshoot student device problems. The volume of calls has decreased significantly so we are now just manning the helpdesk with one tech each morning. We're experiencing delays again receiving replacement parts and devices so badly damaged that they are sent to the depot for repair. We are experiencing 12-18 day turnaround times.



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DR. KANDACE BETHEA
Superintendent

2021 Vaccination Roll-out Plan

Overview:

Marion County School District (MCSD) has partnered with MUSC - Marion to serve as the provider to administer COVID-19 Vaccinations to educators. A staff survey was administered and currently an estimated 295 educators expressed an interest in taking the vaccine, when it becomes available. We have 30 employees that have indicated that they have already been vaccinated.

The Process:

- Tentatively the MUSC/MSCD is planning to host two vaccination clinics with the initial one scheduled for February 2021 and the second clinic scheduled for March 2021. It has not been determined if these clinics will be drive through or traditional clinics.
- Tentatively clinics will held on Saturdays and hosted on a MCSD campus.
- If there is a need to categorize or tier staff the following tiered model would be recommended:
 - Category I
 - Phase 1A, Special Services Teachers/Staff and Teachers (K-2)
 - Category II
 - Teachers (3-12 & Programs) and Support Staff
 - Category III
 - Virtual Teachers and Administrators

Special Notes:

- MUSC – Marion will be hosting Community Clinic(s) prior to the district's clinics and are allowing special populations among staff that fit into the predetermined categories.
- When MUSC has extra vaccines, non-Phase 1A individuals are able to secure vaccinations.

District Contacts:

- Dr. Kandace Bethea, Superintendent
- Mrs. Karen Scruggs, Lead Nurse

MUSC-Marion Contact:

- Mr. Spencer Twigg, Assistant CEO
- Rachelle Ball, Vaccination Lead



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DR. KANDACE BETHEA
Superintendent

Memo

To: Marion County Board of Education

From: Dr. Kandace Bethea

Date: February 16, 2021

Re: **Recommended Schedule for: Phase 3 –Traditional Five (5) Day Face-to-Face**

Marion County School District is taking proactive measures in planning for Phase 3, which is a full return to five (5) day in-person instructional schedule. The recommendations below are aligned with the information provided in our Marion County School District Safe Start Guide.

Phase 3 - Traditional 5 Day Face-to-Face Guidance:

- During Phase 3, the student body will be on campus five days a week with enhanced health and safety protocols. *If five days are not mandated legislatively, the District may consider transitioning to a modified traditional schedule first, where students are on campus four days a week and have one eLearning day at home for the duration of Quarter 3 only and begin a full schedule for Quarter 4.*
- Students will continue the Hybrid Schedule until grade spans are transitioned using the following schedule:
 - March 8th: Grade 4K-5 students begin the Traditional Schedule
 - March 22th: Grades 6-8 students begin the Traditional Schedule
 - March 29th: Grades 9-12 students begin the Traditional Schedule

This schedule will have all students in Marion School District back to full face to face by April 1, which is the start of a new quarter.