

# MARION COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

## MARION SCHOOL DISTRICT CONFERENCE ROOM

719 North Main Street – Marion, South Carolina 29571

### Virtual Zoom Screening

August 18, 2020

**Board Members Present: (Virtual Screening / You-tube/Live):** Chairperson Ogleretta White, Vice-Chairperson Patricia Atkinson, Mr. Levant Davis, Rev. Cynthia V. Brown, Mrs. Susan Pridgen, Mrs. Linda Neal and Mrs. Nadine Foxworth.

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Call to Order & Notification of Board Meeting:** The Board meeting was called to order by Chairperson White at 6:13 p.m. 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. The media was notified of the meeting and a copy of the Agenda was also provided.

**Moment of Silence:**

**Welcome to Staff and Visitors Present:** Chairperson White welcomed the staff and visitors to the August 18, 2020 meeting. Dr. Kandace Bethea, Attorney Charles Boykin and other District staff participated.

**Establishment of Quorum:** Roll Call was conducted by Mrs. Dianne Hopper. Chairperson White verified that a quorum was present.

**Approval of Agenda and Minutes:** Chairperson White asked that the agenda and minutes be approval. Mrs. Neal moved, second by Mrs. Pridgen to approve August agenda and the Minutes of July 21, 2020; and the vote was unanimous. (Chairperson- White, Mrs. Neal, Mr. Davis, Rev. Brown, Mrs. Pridgen, Vice-Chairperson Atkinson and Mrs. Foxworth).

**Election of Secretary:** Vice-Chairperson Atkinson asked that the election of the Secretary be tabled. Chairperson White asked for a motion to table the Secretary position. Vice-Chairperson Atkinson moved, seconded by Mrs. Neal to approve this request; and the vote was unanimous. (Rev. Brown, Chairperson-White, Mrs. Neal, Mr. Davis, Vice-Chairperson Atkinson, Mrs. Foxworth and Mrs. Pridgen).

**Reports from Administration / Review and Action Items:**

**Finance Report June 2020:** Mr. Gary Lane began his brief update of the financial status of the District by stating that we are starting the 2020-2021 School year in good standing. Our revenue for the month of July exceeds the expenditures and the encumbrances by approximately \$900,000. We are initialing a meeting with the Auditor regarding the 2019=2020 school year. Hopefully, when the Legislature return back into Session, we should learn the funding level for 2020-21. After the review the Board thanked Mr. Lane for the finance report.

**Facilities/Operations Report:** Mr. Blake presented the Operation's report in Mr. Sturkey's absence.

**Marion High School Gym Floor Replacement:** After installing the gym floor at Marion High School, Southern Flooring of Greenville SC is now preparing to complete the court lines, and other items specifically asked for in the RFP.

**Spring Branch Property:** Mr. Tim Harper, Marion County Administrator, sent an email on August 13, 2020 stating that County Council had no problem with a reverter clause being placed in the agreement between Marion County School District and Marion County for the Spring Branch property. He also stated that the timber on the land would remain property of Marion County School District.

**Britton's Neck Elementary School:** The new limited warranty deed has been signed and filed with the Marion County Clerk of Court on August 10, 2020.

**Spring Branch Property:** After a brief discussion about the transferring of Spring Branch property, Chairperson White asked for a motion to approve this request. Mrs. Neal stated that we move forward with transferring Spring Branch property to Marion County with the reverter clause being placed in the agreement and also obtain rights to the timber, seconded by Rev. Brown; and the vote was unanimous. (Rev. Brown, Mrs. Foxworth, Chairperson-White, Mrs. Neal, Mr. Davis, Vice-Chairperson Atkinson and Mrs. Pridgen).

**Executive Session:** Mr. Blake stated that an executive session was also needed for contractual matters.

**Human Resources Report / Updates** – Mrs. Paula Grant presented the personnel actions. Dr. Bethea stated that an executive session was needed.

1<sup>st</sup> Reading Approval: Policy GBAA (Sexual Harassment and Retaliation – Staff). Mrs. Grant presented Policy GBAA for 1<sup>st</sup> Reading Approval. Vice-Chairperson Atkinson moved, seconded by Mrs. Neal to approve this request and the vote was unanimous. (Mrs. Foxworth, Mrs. Pridgen, Mr. Davis, Vice-Chairperson Atkinson, Rev. Brown, Chairperson-White and Mrs. Neal,).

**Student Services Report / Update:** Mrs. Martina Rush presented to the Board Policy JIAA-R (Sexual Harassment-Student) along with Administrative Rule JIAA-R and Exhibit JIAA-E for 1<sup>st</sup> Reading Approval. Mrs. Neal moved, seconded by Mr. Davis to approve this request and the vote was unanimous. (Mrs. Nadine Foxworth, Rev. Brown, Mr. Davis, Vice-Chairperson Atkinson, Chairperson-White Mrs. Neal and Mrs. Pridgen).

**COVID Addendum:** Mrs. Rush presented this as information.

**Office of Teaching and Learning:** Ms. Melonie Gordon briefed the Board concerning the changes to the 2020-2021 School Calendar stating that the start date would be September 8, 2020. After her briefing, the 2020-2021 School calendar was presented to the Board for approval. Mrs. Pridgen moved, seconded by Mrs. Neal to approve this recommendation; and the vote was unanimous. (Rev. Brown, Mrs. Pridgen, Mrs. Foxworth, Chairperson-White, Mrs. Neal, Mr. Davis and Vice-Chairperson).

**Superintendent's Update:** Dr. Bethea presented an update of her report to the Board. (See attached report).

**Review and Action: Student Transfer and Release:** Dr. Bethea presented student transfer and

releases recommendations to the Board for approval. Mrs. Neal moved, seconded by Mrs. Foxworth to approve the transfer request; and the Board voted unanimously to approve. (Mrs. Pridgen and Vice-Chairperson Atkinson, Mrs. Neal, Mr. Davis, Mrs. Foxworth, Rev. Brown and Chairperson White).

**Public Participation:** None

**Dates - to Remember - Conference / Meeting Reminders/ Board Comments:** Chairperson White extended an invitation to Board Members to express their concerns or comments. She also reminded them of the next scheduled meeting on September 17, 2020 and any upcoming events.

**Ribbon Cutting:** Tentative August 25, 2020 @ 10:00 am. Dr. Bethea gave brief update about the apartments that the District purchased and the ribbon cutting ceremony that has been scheduled. Apartment will be staged for the ceremony.

**Board Comments:** Mrs. Foxworth commented on the Academy for Careers & Technology School and the Montessori Program in reference to how they would be starting up due to COVID -19. We do not want to lose our students to other School Districts.

**Executive Session:** Chairperson-White asked for a motion to enter executive session for Contractual matters, Personnel and Legal updates. Vice-Chairperson Atkinson moved, seconded by Mrs. Foxworth to enter into executive session; and the vote was unanimous (Mrs. Pridgen, Mrs. Neal, Mrs. Foxworth, Mr. Davis, Chairperson White, Vice-Chairperson Atkinson and Rev. Brown).

**Open Session:** Chairperson White asked for a motion to exit executive session and re-enter open session. Rev. Brown moved, seconded by Mrs. Neal to approve this request; and the vote was unanimous (Mrs. Neal, Chairperson White, Vice-Chairperson Atkinson, Mrs. Pridgen, Rev. Brown, Mr. Davis and Mrs. Foxworth).

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

**Personnel:** Vice-Chairperson Atkinson moved, seconded by Davis to approve not to accept Teacher A's contract and therefore deemed breach of contract as discussed in executive session; and the Board voted unanimously to approve (Mrs. Neal, Chairperson White, Rev. Brown, Mrs. Foxworth, Vice-Chairman Atkinson, Mr. Davis and Mrs. Pridgen).

**Personnel:** Mrs. Neal moved, seconded by Rev. Brown to approve personnel actions as discussed in executive session; and the Board voted unanimously to approve (Chairperson White, Rev. Brown, Mrs. Foxworth, Mrs. Pridgen, Mrs. Neal, Vice-Chairman Atkinson and Mr. Davis).

**Adjournment:** Chairperson White asked for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Neal moved, seconded by Mrs. Foxworth to approve this request; and the vote was unanimous (Vice-Chairperson Atkinson, Rev. Brown, Mrs. Foxworth, Chairperson-White, Mrs. Pridgen, Mrs. Neal and Mr. Davis). Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm



## Superintendent's Monthly Update to the Board

Tuesday, August 18, 2020

*We Are Marion County! Educate • Prepare • Inspire*

### Reopening Plan Update/Timeline:

- Friday, July 10 -SDE provided a memo requesting Re-opening plans to be submitted by July 17. The memo included the option for districts to apply for an extension. Marion like the majority of the districts in the state requested an extension, due to the MCBOE meeting being scheduled for Tuesday, July 21.
- Wednesday, July 22 - The Marion County School District Safe Start Plan was submitted to the SDE. Along with the required state paperwork, a copy of the Board presentation was submitted as well.
- Friday, July 31 - The Marion County School District Safe Start Plan was approved with a contingency that the District has a plan in place to offer an in-person option no later than September 14, 2020. Based on this contingency the District will offer one day of intervention and support each Wednesday in order to meet this contingency.
- Wednesday, August 12 - Additional guidance was provided from the SDE that there is a new expectation that every two weeks after the official start date, all districts must reevaluate the status of their face to face offerings and make necessary adjustments.

### General Updates:

- The Marion County School District Virtual Academy Program received an overwhelming response from families. On the closing day for enrollment, there were over 2100 applications received. Due to the overwhelming response to the MSCD Virtual Academy Program (VAP) it is requiring each school in the district to operate with a combination of traditional and virtual staff to meet dual models of instructional delivery that will be offered this year. Though this is new territory for the district, and many fluid or moving parts, we still remain excited about our ability to offer choice for our families!
- LEAP (Learn, Evaluate, Analyze and Prepare) Week is fast approaching. To provide clarity on LEAP days: The South Carolina General Assembly approved the funding for five additional face to face days before the start of the 2020-2021 school year for students in grades Pre-K through 8th grade. LEAP days will be held Wednesday, August 26, 2020 – Tuesday, September 1, 2020. Principals have the responsibility of scheduling and grouping students for LEAP days based on the staffing and varying needs of the individual locations. Currently, we are asking to the extent possible, that schools not exceed over 50% of their total enrollment to be on campus during student attendance days.
- Safe Start Reopening Guide: Our district team and external stakeholders did a great job in developing the Safe Start Reopening Guide. This guide was developed in our efforts to communicate important information related to the reopening process. The guide is complete and will be released to staff next week. The contents of the guide address the following key areas;



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- Academics
- Social Emotional Health and Student Supports
- Health and Safety Protocols
- Food and Nutrition and Transportation
- Communications
- General Logistics

There is also a "Staff Addendum" to the guide that addresses the following;

- Clearly defined Staff Roles and Responsibilities
- General Operational Tidbits for Schools and Staff

\*MCBOE members will receive a hard copy of this guide at the meeting.

- Staff Children enrolled in MCSD: Several staff members have inquired about possible child care issues once school resumes due to school opening with a remote learning model. At this time, we are asking staff to look at all their options for childcare to include the assistance of family and friends, childcare centers and babysitters. However, after all other options have been exhausted, we will allow each school to open a computer lab for children of staff to come to school to do their school work. Children must meet the following criteria:
  - Enrolled in a Marion County School District School
  - A student in grades 4K – 5<sup>th</sup> grade only
  - Although all staff play an important role in our schools, classroom teachers will be given 1<sup>st</sup> priority.

Labs will be occupied at 50% capacity. Therefore, no more than 12 students may attend. Slots will be assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis after staff members have discussed their specific need with the Administrator. Administrators will assign a support staff member to monitor students in the lab. Administrators may choose to rotate this person if needed according to scheduling needs. No child will be allowed to be in their parent's work space at any time during the school day.

Parents will be responsible for their child's materials, snacks, lunch, etc. The school will not be providing this for students. Children must follow all social distancing protocols and wear masks while in the building / lab. Although we anticipate that all children will follow guidelines, Administrators can deny this privilege for children who may have difficulty.

- Executive Session for:
  - Personnel
  - Legal Guidance (Operating a Paid Childcare Program for families)
  - Contractual Matter

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## **Teaching and Learning:**

- 2500 hotspots have arrived to be distributed to students for the Fall semester.
- 48% of the student body chose the Virtual Academy option.
- Professional development has been held to assist teachers with transition to virtual instruction.
- LEAP Week will be held August 26 - September 1. A percentage of students will be on campus for testing and assessment.

**Human Resources:** The Office of Human Resources was excited to work closely with new employees and first year teachers this month. New Employee Orientation was held on Wednesday, August 5th. First year teachers in the profession also attended their first Induction I class on Tuesday, August 4th. They were able to meet their mentors in person to begin connecting and working together.

**Technology:** We are continuing the summer imaging process at all schools and laptop prep. The new devices for 1:1 rollout for grades 6-12 have been ordered and have begun shipping to the configuration center. We've completed our image prep on the test device and have sent it off to the configuration center so that the other 2299 devices can be imaged and delivered to the schools. ETA is still unknown at this point as not all of the devices have shipped at this point and none of the protective covers have shipped.

**Student Services:** MCSD provided the SDE with information regarding our current implementation of Social-Emotional Learning practices and supports within our district. Overall, respondents indicated on all eight items that SEL supports have been partially planned or implemented in our district. The SEL design team, which is comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders, has been using the data submitted to the SDE to guide our efforts in communicating SEL as a district-focus while supporting schools with their implementation efforts.

**Federal Programs:** The Office of Federal Programs is diligently working on several projects simultaneously to include claims and new plans for federal funding, virtual services for SPED students, and roles and responsibilities for virtual delivery of those services.