

**Minutes of the Marion County Board of Education was held February 21, 2017 at 6:00 P.M. at the Marion School District Conference Room.**

**Board Members Present:**

Mrs. Cynthia H. Legette, Chairperson  
Mr. Levant Davis, Vice Chairperson  
Rev. Cynthia V. Brown  
Mrs. Ritta Hennecy  
Mr. Charles E. White  
Mrs. Linda Neal  
Mrs. Ogleretta White

**Call to Order:** Chairperson Legette called the meeting to order.

**Invocation:** Invocation was given by Rev. Cynthia V. Brown.

**Notification of Board Meeting:**

Chairperson Legette verified that 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.

**Welcome to Staff and Visitors Present:** Chairperson Legette welcomed the staff and visitors to the February 21, 2017 meeting.

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

**Approval of Agenda:** Chairperson Legette asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Motion by Vice-Chairperson Davis, seconded by Mrs. Hennecy to approve the agenda; and the Board voted unanimously to approve. (Vice-Chairperson Levant Davis, Mrs. Ritta Hennecy, Mr. Charles White, Rev. Cynthia V. Brown, Chairperson-Cynthia Legette, Mrs. Linda Neal and Mrs. Ogleretta White).

**Approval of Minutes –Regular Meeting – January 17, 2017, and Called Meeting – January 24, 2017:** Chairperson Legette asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Motion by Rev. Brown, seconded by Mrs. White and the Board voted unanimously to approve this request. (Mrs. Ogleretta White, Vice-Chairperson Levant Davis, Rev. Cynthia V. Brown, Mrs. Ritta Hennecy, Mrs. Linda Neal, Mr. Charles White and Chairperson Cynthia H. Legette).

**Student Recognition:** Dr. Bethea, Chairperson Legette and Vice-Chairperson Davis presented awards to outstanding students and staff members who were great achievers for education. Pictures were taken of the students, along with the Principals. As they took their Board walk, they were congratulated by Board members for their outstanding accomplishments.

**Special Presentation:** Mrs. Elista Smith, Coordinator of the RISE Program, Mrs. Janice Ellerbe, Retired DSS employee, along with the youth of the RISE program presented Dr. Bethea with several books that were made by the students. A student representing each grade level up to six presented Dr. Bethea with a book as they verbally expressed how they felt. She stated that she would start reading the books as soon as possible. The Board thanked Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Ellerbe for the RISE program and also commended the students and parents for coming out to the Board meeting.

**Student Services Updates:** Mrs. Martina Rush gave a brief update on Student Services. She stated that a Task Force was created to review discipline policies in Marion County School District because

of the increase in incidents. She stated that there were three levels of conduct. First, there is disorderly conduct which is any activity in which a student engages that tends to impede orderly classroom procedures or instructional activities, orderly operation of the school, or the frequency or seriousness of which disturbs the classroom or school. Some of the items that would be considered Level I are truancy, school tardiness, dress code violations, Id violations, bus violations, cutting class, lying, failure to complete assignments or carry out directions, public display of affection, being in unauthorized areas and cheating on examinations or classroom assignments. There are presently 37 students at the Alternative School. Second, there is the disruptive conduct which involves activities where students engage against persons or property and the consequences of which tend to endanger the health and safety of themselves or others in the school. Some may overlap certain criminal offenses, justifying both administrative sanctions and court proceedings. Some of the items that would be considered Level II are fighting, stealing, trespassing, hazing, use of an intoxicant, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, including cyberbullying and refusal to obey school personnel or agents (such as volunteer aides or chaperones) whose responsibilities include supervision of students. Third, Level III is criminal conduct in which students engage that result in violence to themselves or to another's person or property or which pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of themselves or others in the school. Usually administrative actions is required which result in immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and / or action by the Board. Some of the items that would be considered Level III are fighting, assault and battery, bomb threat, vandalism (major) extortion, false activation of the alarm, arson and threatening to take the life of or inflict bodily harm upon a teacher, principal or members of their immediate family. In the last three years the total enrollment in Marion County School District has decreased by a rate of about 3%. Racial make-up, enrollment and the percentage of students with an IEP or 504 plan has remained steady. We have had 10 drug situations, 7 cases involving weapons, six cases of bullying reported, 215 tardies and 435 refusals to obey. Mrs. Rush stated that the next steps for the Task Force is to review the MCSD Discipline Policy to ensure conformance with South Carolina Code and develop recommendations based on a review of relevant research, data, and experience of other school districts. The Board thanked Mrs. Rush for the update on Student Services.

**AdvancEd Updates:** Mrs. Deborah Wimberly presented a brief overview of the five standards that AdvancEd based their ratings on. Standard 1 (Purpose and Direction) overall rating was 2.75. The system maintains and communicates at all levels of the organization a purpose and direction for continuous improvement that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning. Although, the District's strength was displayed in all forms of communication and used in system programs, plans and meetings, they liked strength in test results. Standard 2 (Governance and Leadership) overall rating was 2.67. This system operates under governance and leadership promoting and supporting student performance and system effectiveness. Strength is displayed through community involvement in strategic planning, attendance of professional development classes by Board members and online accessibility of updated board policies and practices. We are faced with the challenge of students performance records not reflecting a culture in which they are held to high standards in all courses of study, leadership roles both at the district and school level being occupied by new people and the like of stakeholder agreement on the governing board giving the autonomy to the district and school leadership to manage day to day operations of the schools. Standard 3 (Teaching and Assessing Learning) overall rating was 2.0. The assessment practices, instructional design and curriculum guide and ensures teacher effectiveness and student learning. Students are graded by policies and procedure established by the District. A standardized lesson plan template submitted by OnCourse is used by our teachers. But yet, there is still a need to improve the quality of instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection and

development of critical thinking skills and the need to implement processes and procedures for vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment. Standard 4 (Resources and Support Systems) overall rating was 2.12. To ensure success for all students, the school has resources that provide services that support its purpose and direction. The RTI teams are in place to monitor student achievement Assessment, counseling, referral, educational and career planning are provided for all students using a variety of teams and human capital. We are still faced with the staff retention, maintaining clean and well-kept facilities and providing sufficient and updated technology equipment. Standard 5 (Using Results for Continuous Improvement) overall rating was 2.0. The results used to guide continuous improvement is implemented through comprehensive assessment system that generates a range of data about student learning and school effectiveness. "Train the Trainer" models is used to train administrators at all levels along with curriculum facilitators, reading coaches and other academic support personnel to assist schools in data gathering and interpretation. We are faced with several challenges that deal with continuous improvement. All schools must continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources. Support and Professional staff must be regularly and systematically assessed and trained in a professional development program.

The AdvancED team is scheduled to arrive on Sunday, February 26, 2017. They will meet with the Board on Tuesday, February 28, 2017 @ 12:30 during a working lunch. On March 1, 2017 @ 2:00 p.m. the Board will need to have a Called meeting so that AdvancED can state their findings. The Board thanked Mrs. Wimberly for the AdvancED Update. Chairperson Legette checked with the board members to make sure that everyone could be present at the Called Meeting. The Board thanked Mrs. Wimberly for her report.

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

**Facilities/Operations:** Dr. Bethea stated that Mr. Sturkey was presently in Charleston, South Carolina for the playoffs. We will address the facilities issues after the AdvancED meeting on March 1, 2017.

**Finance: Finance Report January 2017:** Mr. Russell Causey gave a brief update on the Finance Report for January 2017 by stating that the year to date revenue for January 2017 was \$19,164,855 and the year to date expenditures were \$17,639,542. The amount of revenue over the expenditures are (\$1,525,313). Our IDEAL remaining percentage is 40%. Mr. Causey stated that we have received over 83% of tax revenue through February. The Board thanked Mr. Causey for his report.

**Superintendent's Update:** Dr. Bethea gave a brief update on the events and meetings that will be taking place during the month. She stated that three teams have conducted site visits to various Early Childhood Centers throughout the state (Lake City, Darlington and Lexington). An additional team is scheduled to visit the Lexington Center on Friday, February 17, 2017. We will begin meeting to discuss our findings and to determine the future course for Early Childhood Education in Marion County.

**Workforce 911:** In our efforts to develop a more strategic approach to building better and stronger pathways to workforce and career readiness, Dr. Julie Norman, Economic Development Director, will be partnering with the school district. In order to determine the current and future skill sets needed for our local workforce, we need to work closely with local businesses and industry. We'll jointly develop several initiatives in support of this goal.

**Human Resources:** Letters of intent were issued in January to help us be proactive in January. On February 15, 2017 from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m., in our efforts to recruit teachers from within our community the Office of Alternative Certification from the State Department of Education held a workshop /

information session. We are able to provide a Praxis workshop to assist ones qualifying for a certification route such as PACE, ABCTE and/or Teach for America, that will best prepare these candidates for successfully passing the qualifying Praxis test. This workshop is funded by the Rural Recruitment and Retention proviso and will be at no cost to the participants. The District will once again host its annual Teacher Recruitment Fair on Saturday, March 4, 2017.

**Curriculum and Instruction:** On Wednesday, February 1, 2017, a 'Data Talk' was held with Principals and Central Services Leadership. Principals were asked to develop 'plans of support' to address areas of deficiencies. The Office of Curriculum and Instruction and Central Services Leadership Staff will monitor 'plans of support' and attend School Leadership meetings to continue to discuss data.

On Tuesday, February 14, 2017, Read to Succeed Letters (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Retention) were delivered to North Mullins Primary, Easterling Primary and Britton's Neck Elementary by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. The letters will be sent home with students along with interim reports.

Principals have been provided a timeline to begin working towards the completion of the school's Reading Plan and Strategic Plan (update). All plans will be uploaded on or before April 30, 2017.

The 2017-2018 Professional Development Survey has been launched. This year, an area was added for feedback in regards to summer professional development for support staff.

The first session of 'An Afternoon with Curriculum and Instruction' was held February 8, 2017 at Central Services from 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. The topic was 'Data Analysis for the Classroom Teacher' and was facilitated by Ms. Melonie Gordon.

The Board thanked Dr. Bethea for the Administrative updates.

**Review and Action: Out-of-State Travel:** Dr. Bethea presented the following Out-of- State travel request for approval. She stated that it would be no cost to the district and the amount of chaperones needed were also listed as required.

- a. OVER – NIGHT TRAVEL: ACADEMY FOR CAREERS AND TECHNOLOGY / MARION COUNTY FIRST ROBOTICS 2017- PALMETTO REGIONAL MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA MARCH 1 – 4, 2017
- b. OUT-OF –STATE TRAVEL: MULLINS HIGH SCHOOL – BASEBALL GAME TABOR CITY, NORTH CAROLINA MARCH 4, 2017
- c. OVER – NIGHT TRAVEL: ACADEMY FOR CAREERS AND TECHNOLOGY / HOSA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA MARCH 8 – 10, 2017
- d. OUT-OF –STATE TRAVEL: CREEK BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL- SENIOR CLASS TAMPA, FLORIDA APRIL 20 – 23, 2017
- e. OUT-OF –STATE TRAVEL: JOHNAKIN MIDDLE SCHOOL- JR BETA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE – CAROWINDS FORT MILL, SOUTH CAROLINA /NORTH CAROLINA BORDER APRIL 28, 2017
- f. OUT-OF –STATE TRAVEL: MULLINS HIGH SCHOOL- BAND NC A& T STATE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL BLOWOUT – GREENBORO, NORTH CAROLINA APRIL 29, 2017

- g. OVER – NIGHT TRAVEL: MARION HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY WRESTLING - AAA SC STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP  
- ANDERSON SOUTH CAROLINA CIVIC CENTER FEBRUARY 23 -25, 2017

The Board reviewed the request for travel briefly and Chairperson Legette asked for a motion to approve. Motion by Rev. Brown, seconded by Mrs. Neal to approve the Out-of-state travel. (Chairperson Legette, Vice-Chair Davis, Mrs. O. White, Rev. Brown, Mr. C. White, Mrs. Neal and Mrs. Hennechy).

**Student Transfer and Release:** Dr. Bethea presented the Student Transfer and Release request to the Board for approval. Mrs. Hennechy moved, seconded by Mrs. White to approve Student Transfer and Release request; and the Board voted unanimously to approve. (Rev. Brown, Mrs. Neal, Vice-Chair Davis, Mr. C. White, Chairperson Legette and Mrs. O. White).

**Concerns/ Conference / meeting Reminders:** Chairperson Legette reminded the Board of upcoming events and meetings. Members did a brief discussion on their concerns.

**Executive Session:** Chairperson Legette asked for a motion to go into executive session for personnel, contractual matters and legal briefing. Motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mrs. Hennechy; and the Board voted unanimously to approve. (Chairperson Legette, Vice-Chair Davis, Mrs. Neal, Mrs. O. White, Rev. Brown, Mrs. Hennechy and Mr. C. White).

**Out of Executive Session:** Chairperson Legette asked for a motion to come out of executive session. Motion by Mrs. Neal, seconded by Mrs. White; and the Board voted unanimously to approve this request. (Mr. C. White, Vice-Chair Davis, Rev. Brown, Mrs. Hennechy, Mrs. Neal, Mrs. O. White and Chairperson Legette).

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

**Adjournment:** Chairperson Legette asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion by Mr. White, seconded by Rev. C. Brown; and the Board voted unanimously to adjourn. (Mrs. Hennechy, Vice-Chair Davis, Mrs. O. White, Mrs. Neal, Mr. C. White, Rev. Brown and Chairperson Legette).