

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

January 6, 2025

The Montgomery County Board of Education convened in a regular monthly meeting on Monday, January 6, 2025, at 6:30 pm in the Montgomery County Schools Boardroom. Board members present were Anne Evans – Board Chair, Lynn Epps – Vice Chair, Tommy Blake, Angela Smith, Bryan Dozier, Cindy Taylor, and Isai Robledo.

Board Chair Anne Evans called the meeting to order. Ms. Evans moved to adopt the agenda as submitted. Bryan Dozier made the motion with Angela Smith seconding. The agenda was accepted with unanimous approval from the board.

Board Chair Evans then called upon Vice-Chair Lynn Epps for the opening devotion. Ms. Epps shared a quote that was given to her when she first started in the education world as a reminder of why we are here “A hundred years from now it will not matter what your bank account was, the sort of house you lived in, or the kind of car you drove...but the world may be different because you were important in the life of a child.”

Board Chair Evans led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

No one signed up to speak during the public comments section.

Board Chair Evans presented a Resolution of Esteem for Tip Harris. Ms. Harris’s family was present and accepted the Resolution of Esteem. Ms. Harris passed away on October 1, 2024. The Resolution reads as follows:



Board Chair Evans presented a Resolution of Esteem for Wayne Lynthacum. Mr. Lynthacum’s family was present and accepted the Resolution of Esteem. Mr. Lynthacum passed away on June 8, 2024. The Resolution reads as follows:

Board Chair Evans called upon Marvin Smith, April Parsons, and Jennah King from East Middle School, for their presentation: Shifting Culture to Shift the Data. Mr. Smith stated that in their presentation last year they discussed ways to improve the culture at East Middle School and make it a more enjoyable place to be for our students and staff. They felt that those things combined would help shift the culture and the data at East Middle. Therefore, we are going to go back through last year's presentation but with the current data to back up what we discussed. Ms. Parsons began by discussing the school improvement team goals to increase the reading proficiency to 57.8% and our math proficiency to 52.8% in the 2024-25 school year. For our reading we are using the K8 Curriculum Amplify, which is a digital reading platform that exposes our students to above grade level text. We are also using our MTSS which is our multi-tiered systems of support to target students based on criteria and identify support in order to fill in the learning gaps. For math we are focusing on small group instruction, targeting students and looking at their data and using our MTSS. Ms. King then discussed the school improvement goal to increase teacher attendance by 5% for the 2024-25 school year by encouraging staff empowerment. They do this through duty-free lunches, district staff attendance recognition, and reduced transitions to increase instructional time. We also encourage student engagement through clubs, Knightly News, Knights on the Rise, intramurals, student government and morning announcements. Mr. Smith pointed out that the results of the Teacher Working Conditions surveys show a downward trend for students following the rules for student conduct, but the survey also indicates that if you break the rules, you will be held accountable for your actions. Mr. Smith also pointed out that the EOG IRR Sub-Group Data and EOG Growth Data have all improved from the 2023-2024 school year with several areas exceeding growth for the

2024-25 school year. We accomplished the goals we set for last year but that is not enough, so we strive to continue to improve and move the needle forward for the kids in our building.

Board Chair Evans called upon Mr. Auman for Mid-Year Review Dates. Mr. Auman stated that since we are reaching the end of our 2020-2025 strategic plan, the focus of our Mid-Year review will be to develop the strategic plan for the next five years. In the past our Mid-Year review consisted of limited data, therefore the memo presented has three options for board members to consider. Option 1: hold our traditional Mid-Year review; Option 2: prepare new plan and discuss at a Mid-Year review session; Option 3: prepare new plan and present at the regular February board meeting. Bryan Dozier made the motion to approve Option 3 with Lynn Epps seconding. Option 3 was accepted with unanimous approval from the board.

Board Chair Evans called upon Mr. Sam Thorp, NCSBA Assistant Legal Counsel, for an update on our Superintendent search. Mr. Thorp stated that there are several draft documents that board input and approval are required to officially begin the search. The timeline is the first document for input and approval. The application deadline date must be approved and set before the application can be posted. Bryan Dozier made the motion to approve February 10, 2025, deadline date with Cindy Taylor seconding. The board approved unanimously. The second item for input and approval is the Vacancy Announcement. Mr. Thorp stated that they will update to include the Lake Tillery community and under area information, we will remove the link to the Thomasville Chamber of Commerce. The board then discussed with Mr. Thorp the information provided to applicants in the Vacancy Announcement and how it will be used to select an appropriate candidate. Mr. Thorp also stated that they encourage an offsite location for the applicant interviews to provide privacy for the potential candidates. Bryan Dozier made the motion to approve the Vacancy Announcement with Tommy Blake seconding. The board approved unanimously. The third item for input and approval was the option for paid advertising. NCSBA will be using all available free advertising. Mr. Thorp noted that the American Association of School Administrators website cost \$559 for 30 days of advertisement but has proved to be very beneficial to school boards searching for a new superintendent. Bryan Dozier made a motion to approve the 30 days of paid advertisement with Cindy Taylor seconding. The board approved unanimously. The fourth item for input and approval is the Application. Lynn Epps made the motion to approve the Application with Bryan Dozier seconding. The board approved unanimously. The final item for input and approval is the Staff/Community Surveys. Tommy Blake made a motion to approve the Surveys as presented with Bryan Dozier seconding. The board approved unanimously. Mr. Thorp stated that the board will receive the finalized Timeline and Vacancy Announcement tomorrow, Tuesday January 7, 2025, and both will be made active for the public.

Board Chair Evans called upon Madison Lynthacum for the Marketing Plan presentation. Ms. Lynthacum stated that their objective as we move forward this school year is clear. We want to create a vibrant and connected school community by embracing diverse marketing strategies both online with social media and offline with the newspaper. This will help us to reach and retain more families. Montgomery County Schools are not only committed to achieving academic excellence but also building meaningful connections with our community. Some of our strengths include our CTE programs, exploratory classes, state of the art facilities and our dedicated faculty and staff. However, some of the challenges we face include student enrollment and retention, competing with Charter Schools, and social media miscommunication. We have a multitude of opportunities including our newly revamped website, increase in video content, billboards, and alumni spotlights. Our hope is that these will enhance current student and alumni

engagement. Some of the threats to our success are cost, time, involvement and communication. The marketing team will pursue initiatives to transform our outreach efforts with each one a step towards a more dynamic and inclusive school environment. Our initiatives include goals, action steps and measure of success for our website, social media, outreach, and video content. Our overall goal is to keep all stakeholders informed, promote positive perception of Montgomery County Schools, and to increase enrollment in our schools. Dr. Isai Robledo suggested we provide video clips of current pre-k and kindergarten parents talking about their experience with our schools. Ms. Lynthacum stated that she would share this idea with Mr. Thomas.

Board Chair Evans then called upon Dr. Emily Shaw for the 2025-2026 Calendar Options for board approval. The board has been presented with two options for the 2025-2026 school calendar. Option A follows the NC School Calendar Law guidelines; however, Option B does not follow the state guidelines. Mr. Auman and Mr. Garner went on record to remind the board that option B violates the NC School Calendar Law and is not a legal option. The board members questioned how many school districts had chosen to violate the State law by starting earlier than allowed and what if any punishments had been imposed upon those school districts. Mr. Auman stated that currently there are twenty-nine school districts in violation but currently there have been no ramifications for choosing to begin earlier than allowed by the State. Ms. Evans stated that one county was sued by a parent and another district was sued by local business owners. Mr. Garner stated that he would like to go on record with the board stating that we don't know what number it is that will make the State revert and begin filing a tax lien or an injunctive relief against them and it could potentially become monetarily difficult. Mr. Blake expressed concern about the violation especially since we were looking to seat a new superintendent and suggested possibly waiting another year before we take this step. Bryan Dozier made the motion to approve the Option B calendar with Lynn Epps seconding. Board Chair Evans then requested a vote by a show of hands. The motion was approved with a board vote of 4-3.

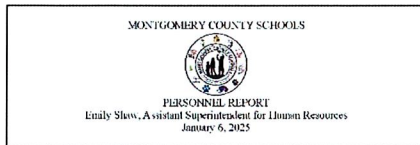
Board Chair Evans called upon Mr. Auman for the Superintendent's Comments. Mr. Auman stated that he would like to thank the staff for completing the Central Services survey this year. He apologized to the board but with the website change we lost the platform we had used previously. He stated that he was unable to analyze and compile the data like we have done in the past, but he did want to discuss the results. In an effort of continuous improvement, we will work to find a different platform to analyze the data for next year. Mr. Auman thanked the Central Office staff for the hard work they do every day. Looking at the data, everything looked in alignment with where we had been performing. There were some very positive comments as well as a few negative comments. The comments that were negative will be shared with department heads so that they may have discussions with the department or any individual who may have been named in the comment and be able to clean up the processes that may have caused the issue.

Board Chair Evans then asked for a motion to go into closed session to discuss personnel and consult the board attorney. Bryan Dozier made the motion, with Lynn Epps seconding. The board approved entering into closed session unanimously.

The following items were approved:

- 1) Board Minutes from November 25, 2024 Special-Called Meeting
- 2) Board Minutes from December 2, 2024
- 3) Board Minutes from December 10, 2024 Special-Called Meeting

4) Personnel and Auxiliary Report



A. Superintendent reports the acceptance of the following resignations/retirements:

<u>Resignation/Retirement</u>	<u>School/Assignment</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
1) Yaldeen Gonzalez Resignation	Central Office Technology Technician	12/04/2024
2) Dana Wulff Resignation	Troy Elementary Teacher Assistant/Bus Driver	1/08/2025
3) Francisco Cortes Resignation	Candor Elementary Custodian/Bus Driver	12/09/2024
4) Haley Adkins Resignation	East Middle Exceptional Children	12/16/2024
5) Juel Gonzalez No Show	Mt. Gilad Elementary Custodian/Bus Driver	1/13/2025
6) Dale Ellis Retirement	Central Office Superintendent	1/01/2025

B. Upon recommendation of the superintendent, approval of the following additions to the substitute teacher list:

<u>Non-Certified</u>	<u>Record Check</u>
1) Kiyanna Little	Yes
2) Alyssa Lindsey	Yes
<u>Certified</u>	<u>Record Check</u>
1) Joshua Joyce, West Middle School 6 th Grade Math/Social Studies Teacher	Yes

C. Upon recommendation of the superintendent, approval of recommendation for employment of the following certified Exceptional Children's employee:

<u>Employee/Effective Date</u>	<u>School/Assignment</u>	<u>Record Check</u>
1) Lyana Terry 1/07/2025	Central Office P.T. Except. Children's Testing & Compliance	Pending

II. Upon recommendation of the superintendent, the approval of the following bus driver:

<u>Employee:</u>	<u>Record Check</u>
James Golden	Yes

I. Upon recommendation, approval of the following coaches:

<u>Montgomery Central High School</u>	<u>Record Check</u>
Joshua Dowdy - Baseball Coach	Yes

J. Superintendent reports the following termination of employee:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>School/Assignment</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Antonio Garner	West Middle School, ISS Coordinator	11/30/2024

C. Upon recommendation of the superintendent, approval of recommendation for employment of the following non-certified personnel:

<u>Employee/Effective Date</u>	<u>School/Assignment</u>	<u>Record Check</u>	<u>Replacing</u>
1) Jamie Hanson 12/09/2024	Candor Elementary P.T. Media Assistant	Yes	Amber Goodwin

D. Report of the following transfers:

<u>Transfer/Effective Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Replacing</u>
1) Jennifer Bass 1/07/2025	Troy Elementary NC Ed Corp Tutor	MGLS/PSIS/TIS STEM Teacher Asst.	Aubrey Epps
2) Aubrey Epps 1/07/2025	MGLS/PSIS/TIS STEM Teacher Asst.	Troy Elementary Teacher Asst/Bus Driver	Dana Wulff
3) Jamie Williams 12/16/2024	Candor Elementary Child Nutrition	Candor Elementary Custodian/Bus Driver	Stephanie Gomez

E. Upon recommendation, approval of principal recommendation for the following probationary contracts for currently employed personnel for the 2024-2025 school year as provided by General Statute H5C-325:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>School/Assignment</u>
1) Zachary Strong	Montg. Central High School - Exceptional Children's Teacher

F. Upon recommendation, approval of principal recommendation for the following interim contracts for currently employed personnel for the 2024-2025 school year as provided by General Statute H5C-325:

<u>Employee/Effective Date</u>	<u>School/Assignment</u>	<u>Record Check</u>	<u>Replacing</u>
1) Natalie Smith 1/07/2025	West Middle School 6 th Grade Teacher	Yes	Shawanna Long
2) Sabrina Dunn 1/07/2025	Central Office Except. Children's Coordinator	Yes	Frances Morris
3) Gail Vaughan 1/28/2025	West Middle School 7/8 Grade Math Teacher	Pending	Karen Dunas

<u>Expense Code</u>	<u>Description of Code</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
STATE FUNDS			
Revenues			
1 3100	Farmine Hygiene Program	\$1,600.00	
1 3100	Non-Instructional Support	\$100.00	
1 3100	Summer Reading Camp		\$3,281.00
	Net Change in State Revenues	-\$1,681.00	
Expenses			
1 6000 099	Farmine Hygiene Program	\$1,600.00	
1 6000 093	Non-Instructional Support	\$100.00	
1 6000 016	Summer Reading Camp		\$3,281.00
	Net Change in State Expenses	-\$1,681.00	
	Net Change in State Budget	-\$1,681.00	
Explanation: Adjustments made for actual revenues and expenditures.			
Total Appropriation in Current Budget			\$31,100,760.00
Amount of Increase			-\$1,681.00
Total Appropriation in Current Amended Budget			\$31,099,068.00

6) Atrium Health Virtual Therapy Expansion Agreement

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SECOND AMENDMENT TO PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT (Montgomery County Schools)

THIS SECOND AMENDMENT TO PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT (this "Amendment"), dated as of December 19, 2024, is by and between The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Hospital Authority d/b/a Atrium Health ("Provider") and Montgomery County Schools ("Schools").

This Amendment amends the Professional Services Agreement, dated May 30, 2021, by and between Provider and School (as amended, modified, restated or supplemented from time to time, the "Agreement"). All capitalized terms not otherwise defined in this Amendment shall have the meanings assigned to them in the Agreement.

BACKGROUND STATEMENT

The parties entered into the Agreement pursuant to which Provider agreed to provide school-based therapy and educational services to a specific list of schools. The parties desire to amend the Agreement to address initiating the same services for additional schools. The new startup costs will be reimbursed to Atrium Health by an outside philanthropic organization. The parties now desire to memorialize their prior understanding by signing this Amendment.

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises and mutual agreements contained herein, and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the parties hereto agree as follows:

1. **Amendment of Agreement.** Effective as of January 15, 2025, the Agreement is hereby amended as follows:

(a) **Exhibit C** is added to the initial agreement attached hereto.

2. **Severability.** If any portion of this Amendment shall, for any reason, be invalid or unenforceable, such portion shall be ineffective only to the extent of any such invalidity or unenforceability, and the remaining portion or portions shall nevertheless be valid, enforceable and of full force and effect; provided however, that if the invalid provision is material to the overall purpose and operation of this Amendment, then this Amendment shall terminate upon the severance of the illegal, invalid or unenforceable provision.

3. **Full Force and Effect.** This Amendment is limited as specified and shall not constitute a modification, acceptance or waiver of any other provision of the Agreement. As expressly amended hereby, the Agreement shall continue in full force and effect in accordance with the provisions thereof on the date hereof. As used in the Agreement, "hereinafter," "hereto," "hereof," and words of similar import shall, unless the context otherwise requires, mean the Agreement after amendment by this Amendment.

4. **Counterparts.** This Amendment may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

2024 2nd Amendment to MCS Prof Services Agreement

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5. **Captions.** The section and paragraph headings or captions contained in this Amendment are solely for the purposes of reference, are not part of the agreement of the parties and shall not in any way affect the meaning or interpretation of this Amendment.

6. **Governing Law.** This Amendment shall be construed and interpreted in accordance with the internal laws and judicial decisions of the State of North Carolina, without giving effect to the conflict of laws principles thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed the day and year first written above at Charlotte, North Carolina.

THE CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG HOSPITAL
AUTHORITY D/B/A ATRIUM HEALTH

By: Kate Rising
Name: Kate Rising, LCMHC
Title: Vice President & Facility Executive,
Behavioral Health Charlotte
Date: 12/19/2024 | 2:09:14 PM EST

MONTGOMERY COUNTY SCHOOLS

By: Jack Cagle, EdD
Name: Jack Cagle, EdD
Title: Associate Superintendent of Administrative
Services
Date: 12/19/2024 | 1:10:22 PM EST

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Exhibit C

Service: Provide school-based virtual therapy services for 4th and 5th graders in six elementary schools of MCS.

Scope of Services

MCS has requested Atrium Health's School-based Virtual Therapy (SBVT) Program be expanded to provide services to 4th and 5th graders at six (6) additional schools: Candor Elementary, Green Ridge Elementary, Mount Gilead Elementary, Page Street Elementary, Star Elementary, and Troy Elementary. Atrium Health will provide virtual school-based therapy during the hours of 8:00 am to 4:00 pm on weekdays (non-holidays) throughout the school year and over the summer break.

The additional virtual school-based therapy resource is expected to be able to provide up to approximately 112 virtual therapy sessions during a 12-month period. Rollout of services to the additional schools will be conducted using the same approach as the initially selected high schools detailed in the section titled "Implementation Workplan & Operations" of **Exhibit A** in the original Agreement.

Atrium Health does not require any financial support from MCS to cover the startup or operational costs associated with this program such as IT equipment and staffing. MCS will continue to be responsible for ensuring the necessary network connectivity and an appropriate space for students to complete virtual therapy sessions. Parents and guardians should expect to pay a co-pay or coinsurance payment following each therapy session provided. Consent from a parent or guardian is required prior to any therapy being scheduled. For students who are uninsured or underinsured, Atrium Health's School-based Virtual Therapy Program team will assist students with applying for financial assistance through Atrium Health's Financial Assistance Program (<https://atriumhealth.org/for-patients-visitors/financial-assistance>).

If regulations and/or potential reimbursement significantly changes, such as Medicaid and/or commercial payors cease reimbursing school-based virtual therapy sessions making the program no longer self-sustaining, Atrium Health will seek to amend or discontinue to the services agreement with MCS.

If demand grows beyond the capacity of the provided virtual therapist(s) and/or additional resources are requested by MCS, Atrium Health and MCS may reconvene to discuss and develop an agreement for adding the desired services.

In addition to the teletherapy services, Atrium Health will offer educational sessions to MCS school staff. These sessions will be offered once per semester and focus on teaching participants ways to promote mental healthcare. The participants will also learn how to recognize symptoms in their students and assist in determining the level of services needed. These educational sessions can be provided onsite or via virtual platforms.

2024 2nd Amendment to MCS Prof Services Agreement

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7) NCSBA/MCBOE Consulting Agreement

CONSULTING AGREEMENT

The Montgomery County School Board of Education (the "Board") hereby retains the North Carolina School Boards Association (the "Association") to provide consulting and administrative services to the Board in the Board's search for a new superintendent.

Duties of the Association. The Association hereby agrees to provide the administrative services necessary to support the Board's search for a new superintendent, including:

1. Consulting with the Board about the superintendent search process
2. Advertising in multiple media
3. Sending and compiling applications
4. Answering telephone calls and corresponding with applicants
5. Arranging interviews
6. Checking references
7. Arranging for background checks
8. Protecting confidentiality
9. Conducting and processing surveys

In addition, the Association shall conduct sex offender registry checks on each of its employees or agents who, pursuant to this Contract, will perform any duties on a school campus or at a school-sponsored event, except that checks shall not be required for individuals who are solely delivering or picking up equipment, materials or supplies at the administrative office or loading dock of a school, at non-school sites, at schools closed for renovation, or at school construction sites. Such checks shall include an annual check of the State Sex Offender and Public Protection Registration Program, the State Sexually Violent Predator Registration Program, and the National Sex Offender Registry. No employee who appears on any of these registries may provide any services on school system property or at a school-sponsored event.

Duties of the Board. The Board hereby agrees to the following financial terms:

1. After the superintendent search process has been completed, the Board agrees to pay to the Association the sum of \$21,500.00 for services rendered.
2. The Board further agrees to reimburse the Association for all reasonable and documented out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the Association in conducting the search, such as the cost of advertising for the position, the travel, hotel and meal costs reimbursed to those candidates interviewed, any mileage or hotel costs for NCSBA employees, and costs incurred by NCSBA for extensive copying or supplies.

For-Cause Termination by NCSBA. The Board understands that under NCSBA's organizational bylaws, NCSBA may provide superintendent search services only to school systems that are members of NCSBA. If at any time the Board chooses to

rejoin its membership in NCSBA this consulting agreement will terminate at the end of the last fiscal year in which the board is a member of NCSBA.

Effect of Termination. Termination of this agreement shall not cancel the Board's responsibility for payment of any applicable fees for services rendered prior to termination. Upon termination, the Board agrees to provide NCSBA payment for services rendered as of the date of payment, calculated as follows: (1) a total hourly fee of \$150/hr for estimated attorney time spent working on the search and \$75/hr for estimated administrative staff time spent working on the search; or (2) the full consulting fee of \$21,500. In addition, the Board agrees to reimburse the Association for any reasonable and documented expenses incurred by the Association in conducting the search, up to the date of termination.

Executed this _____ day of _____, 2024.

For the MCS Board of Education

By: Ms. Anne Evans

Title: Chair

Date of Board Approval: 12/11/24

Signature: Anne Evans

For the North Carolina School Boards Association

By: Leanne Winner

Title: Executive Director

Signature: _____

Attest: Mr. Wade Auman

Title: Interim Superintendent

Signature: Wade Auman

This instrument has been procured in the manner required by the School Budget and Fiscal Control Act.

By: Mitch Taylor

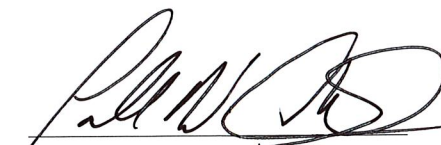
Title: Chief Financial Officer

Signature: Mitch Taylor

Upon return to open session, Board Chair Evans asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bryan Dozier made the motion with Lynn Epps seconding; the meeting was duly adjourned.

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, February 3, 2025, at 6:30 pm at the Montgomery County Central Office.


Anne Evans, Board Chairman


Wade Auman, Interim Secretary