

MARION COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MARION SCHOOL DISTRICT CONFERENCE ROOM
719 North Main Street – Marion, South Carolina 29571
January 16, 2024

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

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 Rev. Cynthia Brown. The Board Rev. Brown for the invocation.

Welcome to Staff and Visitors Present: Chairperson Atkinson welcomed everyone to January 16, 2024.

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 Ms. White to approve January 16, 2024 agenda; and the vote passed. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Mr. Hill, Rev. Brown, Ms. White, Mrs. Pridgen and Mr. Dozier).

Approval of Minutes: Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting for December 12, 2024. Rev. Brown moved, seconded by Mr. Dozier to approve the minutes and the vote passed. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Rev. Brown, Ms. White, Mrs. Pridgen, Mr. Hill and Mr. Dozier).

Marion County School District Special Presentations: Dr. Bunch recognized the January MCSD Proud Award Recipient. Dr. Bunch recognized select students and staff for their outstanding accomplishments. The Board commended the students and staff for their outstanding accomplishments. Dr. Bethea expressed gratitude and appreciation to the students and staff.

Reports from Administration / Review and Action Items:

Finance Report: Mrs. Angel Cooper presented the January 2024 financials. This report was presented as information. No executive session requested.

Facilities/Operations Report: Mr. Jason Jordan presented the Operations and Facilities update. Mr. Jordan briefed the Board on all facility projects in the district (completed and in progress). He also gave updated information for food service and activities buses; Bethel AME Church presented a letter requesting the baseball field in Britton's Neck. Ms. White asked questions about the cleaning process and training for custodians to maintain the gym floors at the several schools. Vice Chairperson asked if back-up generators could be an option for schools. She also asked for clarity on the requested property in Britton's Neck. Attorney Boykin advised the Board to discuss the Britton's Neck property in executive session. Rev. Brown had concerns about the estimated cost of in-house lawn maintenance. Dr. Bethea explained that the handout was requested information from the board to use during an upcoming special called meeting. Mr. Dozier asked about the future plans for the portable buildings at

CBSA. Mr. Jordan stated that the contents will be inventoried and removed by the summer. Ms. White asked for a cost assessment to remove a portable.

Human Resources Report / Updates – In Mrs. Wilbanks' absence, Dr. Bethea is asking for executive session for personnel actions and Dr. Bunch presented two policies for 2nd Reading: Policy GBEBE: Gavin's Law (Sexual Extortion) (Staff) and Policy JICFB Gavin's Law (Sexual Extortion) (Student). Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to accept 2nd Reading for both Policies GBEBE: Gavin's Law (Sexual Extortion) (Staff and Student). Vice Chairperson Foxworth moved, seconded by Mrs. Pridgen to accept the 2nd Reading for both Policies GBEBE: Gavin's Law (Sexual Extortion) (Staff and Student); and the Board voted unanimously to accept. (Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Mrs. Pridgen, Chairperson Atkinson, Rev. Brown, Ms. White, Mr. Hill and Mr. Dozier).

Superintendent's Report / Update: Dr. Bethea asked Dr. Holcombe to give an academic update on mid-year iReady data. The Board asked questions during this time. Dr. Bethea gave updates on Student Retention Data and Retention Policy, Montessori 4K for the 2024-2025 school year and semester two initiatives i.e. IGNITE, Intercession, Instructional and Behavioral Assistance. Dr. Bethea gave a brief update on the happenings in MCSD. She continued with updates from each department. Dr. Bethea briefed the Board on upcoming events. The Board comments and concerns were addressed during this time.

Review and Action:

Dr. Bethea presented overnight travel for approval:

- MaHS Senior Beta Club Convention – Hilton Head Island

Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to approve the request. Rev. Brown moved, seconded by Vice Chairperson Foxworth. The Board voted. Motion carried. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Mr. Dozier, Rev. Brown, Ms. White, Mr. Hill and Mrs. Pridgen).

Dr. Bethea presented in-district Student Transfers and Releases to the Board as information.

No Public Participation

Agenda Items for Next Month / Calendar Reminders: Board members were given the opportunity to express any concerns or comments that they may have.

Executive Session: Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to go into executive session for Personnel / Legal Briefing / Contractual Matters / Cognia Contractual Matter. Vice-Chairperson Foxworth moved, seconded by Mrs. Pridgen to approve this request; and the Board voted unanimously to approve. (Rev. Brown, Mr. Hill, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Mrs. Pridgen, Mr. Dozier, Ms. White and Chairperson Atkinson).

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

Chairperson Atkinson stated that no action was taken in executive session. She also stated that because the letter from Bethel AME Church was addressed to Mr. Jason Jordan, he will be in contact with the updates.

Personnel: Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion. Ms. White moved that we accept the recommends from the Superintendent as it relates to resignations, retirements and other personnel actions, seconded by Mrs. Pridgen to approve the motion and the Board voted unanimous to approve. (Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Rev. Brown, Mr. Hill, Mr. Dozier, Ms. White, Mrs. Pridgen and Chairperson Atkinson).

Adjournment: Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to adjourn. Vice-Chairperson Foxworth moved, seconded by Rev. Brown to approve this request; and the vote was unanimous (Rev. Brown, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Chairperson Atkinson, Mr. Dozier, Mrs. Pridgen, Ms. White and Mr. Hill). The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.