

MARION COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MARION SCHOOL DISTRICT CONFERENCE ROOM
719 North Main Street – Marion, South Carolina 29571
March 19, 2024

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

Call to Order & Notification of Board Workshop: The Board meeting was called to order at 5:30 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 Bishop Michael Blue. The Board thanked Bishop Blue for the invocation.

Welcome to Staff and Visitors Present: Chairperson Atkinson welcomed everyone to March 19, 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 Mr. Dozier to approve March 19, 2024 agenda; and the vote passed. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, 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 February 20, 2024. Vice Chairperson Foxworth moved, seconded by Ms. White to approve the minutes and the vote passed. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Rev. Brown, Ms. White, Mrs. Pridgen and Mr. Dozier).

Marion County School District Special Presentations: Dr. Bunch presented the MCSD Proud Award recipient. Dr. Bunch also recognized select students and staff for their outstanding accomplishments. The Marion High School JAG Officers presented the Board with certificates of appreciation. 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 February 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 Aramark and surplus properties listed on Gov.deals; Mr. Dozier asked a contractual question. Attorney Boykin advised Mr. Dozier to discuss the contractual matter in executive session. Ms. White asked for updates on the gym floors and for specifics on the athletic fields. Mrs. Pridgen asked for an explanation of the facilities needs compilation handout. Vice-Chairperson Foxworth and Mr. Dozier had concerns about the baseball fields. Mr. Jordan explained that the custodians will be trained how to maintain the gym floors; athletic field have been manicured and are ready for spring sports. Dr. Bethea gave an update from Adam's Outdoors and a new digital billboard will be erected near Walmart.

Human Resources Report / Updates – In Mrs. Wilbanks' absence, Dr. Bethea is asking for executive session for personnel actions

Superintendent's Report / Update: Dr. Bethea asked Ms. Melonie Gordon to present the MCSD 2024-2025 school calendar. The Board asked questions during this time. Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to approve the request. Ms. White moved, seconded by Mrs. Pridgen. The Board voted. Motion carried. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Mr. Dozier, Rev. Brown, Ms. White, Mr. Hill and Mrs. Pridgen).

Dr. Tracy Holcombe gave an update on the Elevate initiative and answered some frequently asked questions about Elevate i.e. what is elevate or does Elevate take the place of the teacher? The Board asked questions during this time.

Dr. Bethea gave a brief update on the happenings in MCSD. She continued with updates from each department. She introduced potential program: Twilight, Alternative/Nonpunitive, .5 Models and CTE Camp. 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/out of state travel for approval:

- MaHS Varsity Wrestling Team – State Wrestling Championship – Anderson Civic Center
- ACT – First Robotics – Civic Center of Anderson, SC
- ACT – First Robotics – The City of North Charleston Athletic Center – North Charleston, SC
- MuHS JAG – National Career Development Conference – St. Louis, MO

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

Dr. Bethea presented Student Transfers and Releases to the Board for approval. Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to approve the request. Vice Chairperson Foxworth moved, seconded by Ms. White. Motion carried. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice Chairperson Foxworth, Mr. Dozier, Mrs. Pridgen, Mr. Hill and Ms. White).

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. Mr. Hill stated that the Athletic Committee met and will have some upcoming information. Rev. Brown gave an update on Policy BD AR BD-R Organization of the Board. After speaking with the SCSBA attorney, there are no corrections to be made to the amended policy. Rev. Brown shared a copy of the email from the SCSBA attorney. Dr. Bethea informed the Board that Healthcare Partners will be on the April agenda to present a potential partnership with the District. Vice Chairperson Foxworth inquired about policy updates i.e. voting time for the board members. Attorney Boykin advised the Board the election dates and times are set under a statue and if the Board had question or concerns, to speak with the local delegation. Ms. White has additional information about Workforce Housing and will share it with Dr. Bethea. She also shared concerns about Career Specialists and gave information from FDTC Mullins campus. Rev. Brown volunteered to meet for the March agenda meeting.

Executive Session: Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to go into executive session for Personnel / Legal Briefing / Contractual Matters / Superintendent's Evaluation. Ms. White moved, seconded by Vice Chairperson Foxworth 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 Ms. White 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.

Personnel: Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion. Ms. White moved that we accept the recommendations from the Superintendent as it relates to personnel actions and personnel actions addendum, seconded by Chairperson Foxworth 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 Mrs. Pridgen 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 8:45 pm.