

MARION COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MARION SCHOOL DISTRICT CONFERENCE ROOM
719 North Main Street – Marion, South Carolina 29571
March 21, 2023

Board Members Present: Chairperson-Patricia Atkinson, Vice Chairperson-Nadine Foxworth, Rev. Cynthia V. Brown, Ogleretta White, Mr. Donnie Hill 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 Bishop Carolyn Wilson. The Board thanked Bishop Wilson for the invocation.

Welcome to Staff and Visitors Present: Chairperson Atkinson welcomed everyone to the March 21, 2023 meeting.

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

Approval of Agenda: Chairperson Atkinson asked for approval of the agenda. Ms. White made a motion to amend bullet 2 under Board Committees/Calendar Reminders to Capital Projects and Salary Studies. Vice Chairperson Foxworth moved, seconded by Mrs. Pridgen to approve March 21, 2023 agenda; and the vote passed. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Mr. Hill, Rev. Brown, Ms. White, Mrs. Pridgen and Mr. Dozier).

Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to accept the amended agenda for March 21, 2023. Vice Chairperson Foxworth moved, seconded by Mrs. Pridgen to approve March 21, 2023 amended 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 February 21, 2023. Vice-Chairperson Foxworth moved, seconded by Mrs. Pridgen 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 select students and staff for their outstanding accomplishments. Dr. Bunch recognized the February MCSD Superhero Award Recipient. The Board commended the students 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 2023 financials. This report was presented as information. Mrs. Cooper asked for approval for the General Obligation Bond. Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to approve the General Obligation Bond. Ms. White moved, seconded by Mr. Dozier to approve the GO Bond and the vote passed. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Rev. Brown, Ms. White, Mrs. Pridgen, Mr. Hill and Mr. Dozier). Because the Board had questions about the last line in Policy DKC: Expense Authorization/Reimbursement., Mrs. Cooper researched other districts to see what verbiage is used. Rev. Brown suggested to change the

last line to read..."If cancellations are necessary, the employee or board member maybe responsible for reimbursing the district for monies not refundable **except in documented cases of a medical or family emergency**". Vice-Chairperson Foxworth asked that the word "maybe" in the last line be changed to "**should**". The changes will be made and brought back to the April meeting for 1st Reading. Mrs. Cooper clarified that the Emergency Pay is a Procedure and not a policy. It will be added to the Accounting Procedure Manual. Dr. Bethea clarified a change to the Budget Calendar. The Special Called Meeting will be on Thursday, April 27, 2023. No executive session requested.

Facilities/Operations Report: Mr. Jordan gave a brief Operations and Facilities update. He informed the Board that the weapons protections stations are expected to be delivered on April 17 and training will be done as well.

Food Service Management Company RFPs went out for proposals on March 16 and are due back on April 17. All interested companies must meet at the Central Services Office on March 27 for a pre-conference and site visit. The committee will score the proposals according the State guidelines. The State must approve before it can be presented to the Board.

Landscaping Contracts will be continued through the 2023-2024. Mr. Dozier suggested that landscaping contracts be opened for new bids. The Board agreed. Mr. Jordan asked for executive session for contractual matters.

Facilities 3 Year Plan – Met with principals for their list of needs and we are now prioritizing the plans. Dr. Bethea explained that with the 3 year plan, we will be looking at deferred maintenance as well as some major capital projects, i.e. K-3 configurations contingent upon capital funding from the State.

Human Resources Report / Updates – Mrs. Paula Grant presented personnel actions and Professional Staff Recommendations for approval. She is asking for executive session.

Policy GCLE and Administrative Rule Regarding Unencumbered Time – 2nd Reading - Asking for approval. Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to approve the Policy GCLE and Administrative Rule Regarding Unencumbered Time. Ms. White moved, seconded by Mrs. Pridgen to approve Policy GCLE and the vote passed. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Rev. Brown, Ms. White, Mrs. Pridgen, Mr. Hill and Mr. Dozier).

Academics and Accountability: Ms. Sweeney presented AR IKE-R Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students as information.

Policy JLIB: Student Dismissal Precautions - Ms. Gordon is asking for 1st Reading on the amendment to Policy JLIB: Student Dismissal Precautions. Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to approve the 1st Reading on the amendment to Policy JLIB: Student Dismissal Precautions. Vice-Chairperson Foxworth moved, seconded by Mr. Dozier to approve the amendment to Policy JLIB and the vote passed. (Chairperson Atkinson, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Rev. Brown, Ms. White, Mrs. Pridgen, Mr. Hill and Mr. Dozier).

Special Services: Dr. Bunch gave a brief update on the Discipline Task Force meeting. Rev. Brown and Mr. Dozier were in attendance. They stated that really enjoyed working with the Discipline Task Force.

Superintendent's Report / Update: Dr. Bethea gave a brief update on the happenings in the schools in MSCD. She gave additional 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 Student Transfers and Releases to the Board for approval. Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to approve the request. Ms. White moved, seconded by Rev. Brown 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). Dr. Bethea is requesting executive session for personnel actions, contractual matter and legal matters.

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. Ms. White would like to have a committee for Salary Study and Facilities. Ms. White, Mrs. Pridgen and Chairperson Atkinson will serve on this committee. Ms. White will Chair the committee. Chairperson Atkinson asked for an Athletics Committee. Mr. Hill and Mr. Dozier will serve on this committee. Mr. Hill will Chair the committee.

Professional Services RFP – It is time to review the Auditor’s contract and all other professional services.

Vice-Chairperson Foxworth asked if she could be added to the Discipline Task Force. Attorney Boykin explained that another Board member could attend but could not interact with any discussions.

Policy BD: AR BD-R Organization of the Board – Rev. Brown made a motion to amend Policy BD: AR BD-R to say, “Whenever the Chair or Vice-Chair meets with the Superintendent, another Board Member must be present, along with the Secretary of the Board who shall record the minutes of such a meeting and make the minutes available to the other Board Members in Executive Session”, seconded by Mr. Dozier to approve the amendment; and the Board voted to approve. 5 Yes (Rev. Brown, Mr. Dozier, Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Mrs. Pridgen, Ms. White) 1 No (Chairperson Atkinson) 1 abstain (Mr. Hill). Additional amendments for Policy BD:AR BD-R will be discussed at the April 18 Board meeting.

Vice-Chairperson Foxworth asked if there was assistance for parents or grandparents with the student appeal process. Dr. Bethea explained that assistance is available.

Chairperson Atkinson asked for attendees for the Greater Mullins Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet and attendees for the Day at the Capitol.

Executive Session: Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion to go into executive session for Personnel / Legal Briefing / Contractual Matters / Superintendent Evaluation. 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. Mrs. Pridgen 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, through attrition, eliminate four (4) District Office positions and use the funds to increase salaries to improve the District’s competitive edge in hiring, seconded by Rev. Brown to approve the motion and the Board voted to approve. (Rev. Brown, Mr. Hill, Mrs. Pridgen, Vice-Chairperson-Foxworth, Ms. White, and Chairperson-Atkinson).

Personnel: Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion. Mrs. Pridgen move that Employee A.7.a with initials G.G. listed on the March 21, 2023 regular personnel actions be reported to SC State Department of Education for breach of contract and ask that this person have their certificate

suspended in accordance with law for failing to honor their contract with Marion County School District for the 2022-2023 school year. I further move that we approve the Personnel recommendations and addendum as presented except for the breach recommendation for employee A.7.a., seconded by Ms. White to approve the motion and the Board voted to approve. (Rev. Brown, Mr. Hill, Mrs. Pridgen, Vice-Chairperson-Foxworth, Ms. White and Chairperson-Atkinson).

Contractual Matter: Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion. Vice-Chairperson Foxworth move that the Board accept the Town of Sellers' request to purchase property subject to a reverter clause, seconded by Mr. Hill to approve and the Board voted unanimously to approve. (Vice-Chairperson Foxworth, Rev. Brown, Mr. Hill, Mr. Dozier, Ms. White, Mrs. Pridgen and Chairperson Atkinson).

Superintendents' Evaluation: Chairperson Atkinson asked for a motion. Mr. Hill move that the Board conclude the Superintendents' evaluation for the 2022-2023 school year and authorize the Board Chair to execute the letter to provide to the Superintendent, seconded by Vice-Chairperson to approve and the Board voted unanimously 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 8:48 pm.