

Minutes of Mississippi Board of Education Meeting

June 15, 2023

The members of the Mississippi Board of Education met at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 15, 2023, pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-5 for the purpose of conducting a regularly scheduled Board meeting.

The public accessed this meeting via livestream or in-person at the Central High School Building, 4th Floor Boardroom, 359 North West Street, Jackson, Mississippi. Board members physically present included: Dr. Wendi Barrett, Mr. Glen V. East, Mr. Bill Jacobs, Mr. Matt Miller, and Mr. Mike Pruitt. Board members participating virtually: Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee (Biloxi, Mississippi) and Ms. Mary Werner (Saltville, Mississippi – joined at 10:04 a.m.). Student Representative absent: Mr. Charlie Frugé. Mr. Michael D. Kent, Interim State Superintendent, was also present.

- I. Mr. Glen V. East called the Board meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., after determining that a quorum of the Board existed for the purpose of conducting a meeting.
- II. Mr. Matt Miller led the Pledge of Allegiance and Dr. Wendi Barrett gave the Invocation.
- III. On a motion by Mr. Bill Jacobs, seconded by Dr. Wendi Barrett, the Board voted 5 to 0 to approve the minutes of May 18, 2023.

Members voting aye: Dr. Wendi Barrett
Mr. Bill Jacobs
Mr. Matt Miller
Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee
Ms. Mary Werner

Members voting nay: None

Member abstaining: Mr. Mike Pruitt

Members absent: None

- IV. On a motion by Mr. Bill Jacobs, seconded by Dr. Wendi Barrett, the Board unanimously adopted the Consent agenda.

On a motion by Mr. Matt Miller, seconded by Mr. Bill Jacobs, the Board approved the agenda as presented.

V. Recognition Ceremony

2023 Mississippi Rural Teacher of the Year

Kenneth Watson

Law and Public Safety Instructor

Southeast High School

Lauderdale County School District

VI. Mr. Michael D. Kent gave the following report as the Interim State Superintendent of Education:

- Mr. Kent stated that MDE staff have been busy this month closing out the 2022-23 school year and preparing for the new school year. Mr. Kent stated that MDE had the pleasure of meeting with our newest Board member, Mr. Mike Pruitt, and providing him with an initial orientation.
- Mr. Kent stated that districts are expected to receive their statewide assessment results for grades 3-8 for review tomorrow. Mr. Kent stated this is one of the first steps in the accountability process that determines school and district grades for the 2022-23 school year.
- Mr. Kent stated that as he mentioned previously, Dr. Paula Vanderford will be reaching out to the directors of each of the six Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) about conducting very focused discussions with superintendents during their meetings concerning specific areas where the Statewide Accountability System can be improved or strengthened. Mr. Kent stated that the Accountability System remains a constant area of interest to superintendents, so we want to continue to engage in discussions with them about what degree of change, if any, is needed to the system.
- Mr. Kent stated that regarding the \$100 million funding allocation to districts, MDE has done all that we can do to help districts complete their budgeting process. Mr. Kent stated that MDE still does not have confirmation from the Legislature about how to calculate the disbursement of the \$100 million appropriation to districts based on average daily enrollment. Mr. Kent stated that MDE provided the districts with guidance about estimating their allocation based on an approximate per-pupil allocation of \$236 and we hope this information will help districts get further along in their budget process. Mr. Kent stated that once MDE receives approval of the calculation from the Legislative Budget Office, MDE will immediately send the final allocations to districts.
- Mr. Kent stated that himself, Dr. Donna H. Boone, and Ms. Holly Spivey met with Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) Executive Director, Mr. Bob Anderson, to discuss the implementation of Mississippi's federal Preschool Development Grant. Mr. Kent stated this \$30 million grant will be dispersed over the next three years to improve access to high-quality early childcare and education programs. Mr. Kent stated along with MDHS and MDE, grant partners include the Mississippi Early Childhood Inclusion

Center, the Children’s Foundation of Mississippi, and the Mississippi State University Social Science Research Center.

- Mr. Kent stated that himself, Dr. Boone, and Ms. Spivey met with State Workforce Development Board Chairman, Mr. Patrick Sullivan, to clarify an issue regarding industry certifications. Mr. Kent stated the State Workforce Development Board known as SWIB is responsible for approving industry certifications for program offerings, accountability, and reimbursement to districts. Mr. Kent stated that on June 20, 2023, MDE will go back to determine the final list of industry certifications to bring to the Board in July.
- Mr. Kent stated that he wanted to highlight how much national and international coverage Mississippi has been getting lately for our successful work in the areas of student achievement and teacher preparation. Mr. Kent stated at your table you have two examples: the first is a May 31st article by the two-time Pulitzer Prize winning New York Times columnist, Mr. Nicholas Kristof. Mr. Kristof traveled to Jackson and the Mississippi Delta in April because he was skeptical about the progress Mississippi had made in education. Mr. Kent stated that you can see in his article that he is no longer skeptical. Mr. Kent stated this past month MDE hosted a documentary film crew from South Korea’s public educational broadcasting company, which is featuring Mississippi in a 10-part documentary about reading and literacy.
- Mr. Kent stated MDE received positive media coverage this month for our literacy work from national news outlets including Fox News, PBS, and Education Week, and local news outlets including Mississippi Today, WLBT, and WJTV.
- Mr. Kent stated that the second example at your table is the executive summary and our news release about a report from the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) that recognizes Mississippi as one of the top two states for ensuring scientifically based reading instruction in their teacher preparation programs. Mr. Kent stated the report provides the most up-to-date information available on how teacher preparation programs prepare aspiring teachers to teach children to read.
- Mr. Kent stated he wanted to commend the entire MDE staff and all the teachers and administrators in the field who raised standards for what students can accomplish and equipped themselves to help students reach those higher academic standards. The world is taking notice.

VII. Mr. Glen V. East, Acting Chair of the State Board, gave the following report:

- Mr. East welcomed the new Board member, Mr. Mike Pruitt, who was appointed by Speaker Gunn on May 16, 2023.
- Mr. East stated that Mr. Pruitt attended a new Board member orientation session with MDE leadership on June 8, 2023.
- Mr. East stated that 28 applications were received from across the state for the Junior Student Representative position, the State Board conducted interviews with the top four finalists yesterday. Mr. East stated that all of the

candidates were exceptional students and the Board enjoyed getting to know each of them through the process. Mr. East stated the following Junior Student Representative appointments were made: Ms. Kate Riddle from Lafayette County School District was selected as the Junior Student Representative and Ms. Yaerim Choi from Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science was selected the Junior Student Representative alternate. Mr. East stated that the Junior Student Representative will serve a two-year term on the State Board starting July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2025.

- Mr. East read a Resolution for Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman.

VIII. No report from Student Representative.

IX. No reports on State Board of Education Subcommittee meetings.

X. Discussion and/or Approval of Board Items

01. Action: Approval of a temporary rule and to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code: 7-24, *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2022* specifically Appendix H [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)

On a motion by Mr. Matt Miller, seconded by Mr. Bill Jacobs, the Board unanimously approved item 01. (copy attached).

02. Action: Approval of the MDE Contracts [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)

02.A. Action: Employment agreement for Dr. Jennifer Wilson to continue to serve as Interim Superintendent for the Holmes County Consolidated School District [Goals 1, 2, 4, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Michael D. Kent)

02.B. Action: Employment agreement for Dr. Earl Watkins to continue to serve as Superintendent for the Achievement School District [Goals 1, 2, 4, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Michael D. Kent)

02.C. Action: IT contract with Canvas by Instructure to provide and host an on-line instructional learning management system for the Office of Career and Technical Education [Goal 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Donna Boone)

02.D. Action: Contract with Management Services for Education Data to provide a unique software (MIS2000) for migrant children [Goals 1, 2, and 4 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Donna Boone)

- 02.E. Action: Emergency contract with Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) for the Fiscal Year 2024 to administer the LAS Links, English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)
- 02.F. Action: Emergency contract with Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) for Fiscal Year 2024 to administer the 5th and 8th Grade Science assessment, and End-of-Course assessments in Biology and U.S. History as part of the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program, (MAAP) [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)
- 02.G. Action: Award competitive contracts to various produce distributors to supply and deliver produce to local organizations in the State Food Purchasing Program [Goal 1 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)
- 02.H. Action: Contract with Applied Engineering Management Corporation to provide CEDS Generate Consulting Services [Goal 5 – MBE Strategic Plan] (John Kraman)
- 02.I. Action: Award competitive contracts to various full-line distributors to supply and deliver food products to local organizations in the State Food Purchasing Program (All 7 Regions in the State) [Goal 1 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)
- 02.J. Action: Approval of Pupil Transportation Equipment Bids [Goals 1, 2, and 3 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)

On a motion by Dr. Wendi Barrett, seconded by Mr. Matt Miller, the Board unanimously approved items 02.A., 02.B., 02.C., 02.D., 02.E., 02.F., 02.G., 02.H., 02.I., and 02.J. (copy attached).

- 03. Action: Approval of the MDE grant awards [Goals 1, 2, ,4, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)
 - 03.A. Action: Award competitive grants for the Nita M. Lowery 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Donna Boone)
 - 03.B. Action: Award competitive grant for the Technical Support for Combined Services Grant Program [Goals 2, 4, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Donna Boone)

On a motion by Mr. Bill Jacobs, seconded by Dr. Wendi Barrett, the Board unanimously approved items 03.A. and 03.B. (copy attached).

04. Consent Agenda (All consent items are action items which require vote, unless otherwise noted.)
 - A. Approval of monthly expenditures for the Mississippi School of the Arts (Donna Boone)
 - B. Approval of monthly expenditures for the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (Donna Boone)
 - C. Approval of certified personnel for the Mississippi School of the Arts, Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, and Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science (Donna Boone)
 - D. Approval of the 2023-2024 Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science Student Handbook and the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science Employee Handbook (Donna Boone)
 - E. Approval of the 2023-2024 Mississippi School of the Arts and Brookhaven School District Memorandum of Agreement (Donna Boone)
 - F. Approval of methodology to award Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) grant funds to support “high need LEAs” in providing students with safer and healthier learning environments, in accordance with Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) of 2015 (Donna Boone)
 - G. Approval to revise the methodology of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant, in accordance with Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as reauthorized by the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) (Donna Boone)
 - H. Approval of methodology to award Migrant Education Program grant dollars in support of local efforts for providing supplemental services to migrant students in accordance with Title I, Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as reauthorized by the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) (Donna Boone)
 - I. Approval of contract with American Sentry Services to provide security services for the Mississippi School of the Arts (Donna Boone)

- J. Approval of contract with Topps Private Investigation & Security Firm, LLC to provide security services on the campus of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind for the 2023-2024 fiscal school year (Donna Boone)
- K. Approval of Blue Mountain Christian University's request to establish two new licensure-track educator preparation programs in the areas of Vocal Music Education and Instrumental Music Education (Paula Vanderford)
- L. Approval of Delta State University's request to modify its existing Elementary Education licensure-track program and establish a new Master of Arts in Teaching Mild/Moderate Disabilities (K-12) Special Education licensure-track program (Paula Vanderford)
- M. Approval of Mississippi State University's request to modify its existing State Board of Education approved Elementary Education and Music Education licensure-track educator preparation programs (Paula Vanderford)
- N. Approval of Mississippi University for Women's request to modify its existing State Board of Education approved supplemental endorsements licensure-track educator preparation programs in the areas of Gifted Education and Reading (Paula Vanderford)
- O. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code 7: Part 142: Career and Technical Education Licensure Guidelines to amend licensure Career Pathway, 965 Transportation Logistics; establish two (2) new licensure Career Pathways in the areas of Barbering and Software Development; and amend the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) supplemental endorsement requirements (Paula Vanderford)
- P. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12 to amend supplemental endorsement licensure options, 405 Business Management; and 411 Business Technology (Paula Vanderford)
- Q. Approval of Tougaloo College's request to establish a new licensure-track supplemental endorsement educator preparation program in the area of Health Education (Paula Vanderford)
- R. Approval of William Carey University's request to modify its existing State Board of Education approved licensure-track Master's and Education Specialist level Educational Leadership programs; Master of

Arts in Teaching Mild/Moderate Disabilities Special Education licensure-track program; Mild/Moderate Disabilities K-12 supplemental endorsement; and Master's in Education Special Education Mild/Moderate Disabilities licensure-track program (Paula Vanderford)

- S. Approval of Statewide Purchasing Programs FY23 Financial Statement and FY24 fee structure (Felicia Gavin)
- T. Approval to establish Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: Chapter 55, Rule 55.2: Data Classification Policy
(Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process without public comments) (John Kraman)
- U. Approval to revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-24: *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2022* specifically the business rules of the Mississippi Statewide Accountability System, Section 9, *Acceleration*, Section 10, *Banking Scores: End-of-course, subject area assessments taken before 10th grade*, Section 15, *English Learners (EL)*, Section 19, *Rounding*, Section 25, *College- and Career-Readiness Indicator*, and Section 27, *Other*
(Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process without public comments) (Paula Vanderford)
- V. Approval of a temporary rule and to begin the Administration Procedures Act process: To establish Miss. Admin. Code 7-240: Mississippi Minimum Specifications for School Buses
(Paula Vanderford)
- W. Approval to extend the Period of Performance of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind and Jackson Public School District (Donna Boone)
- X. [PULLED]
- Y. Approval of methodology to award formula grants to school districts for the purpose of providing reimbursement for the Textbook Inventory Management System (TIMS 2.0) (Donna Boone)

On a motion by Mr. Bill Jacobs, seconded by Mr. Mike Pruitt, the Board unanimously approved items A., B., C., D., E., F., G., H., I., J., K., L., M., N., O., P., Q., R., S., T., U., V., W., and Y (copy attached).

XI. Consideration of Executive Session

Mr. Matt Miller moved that the Board consider making a closed determination of the need to go into Executive Session. Mr. Bill Jacobs seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a unanimous vote. Mr. Glen V. East asked for Legal Counsel, Ms. Sonya Amis, and Mr. Michael D. Kent to remain in the room.

Mr. Matt Miller, then moved that the Board go into Executive Session in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-7(4)(b) to discuss strategy sessions or negotiations with respect to prospective litigation or issuance of an appealable order, and pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-7(4)(a) and (k) to discuss discrete personnel matters relating to positions within the MDE.

Ms. Mary Werner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Ms. Jennifer Nichols informed the public of the Board's vote to go into Executive Session for the above stated reason.

Minutes of the Executive Session

During the Executive Session, the Board in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-7(4)(b) discussed strategy sessions or negotiations with respect to prospective litigation or issuance of an appealable order, and also pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-7(4)(a) and (k) discussed discrete personnel matters related to positions within MDE.

On a motion by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, seconded by Ms. Mary Werner, the Board voted 6 to 0 to come out of Executive Session.

The public came back into the Board meeting and Mr. East stated the Board took action on two items during the Executive Session.

01. On a motion by Mr. Bill Jacobs, seconded by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, the Board voted unanimously to approve for the Interim State Superintendent to request that State Personnel Board reclassify the SEC2 position/title of Sonya Amis to Chief Deputy/Chief of Staff, Tier III, Occu 9990, Pay Grade MS20, a position comparable to a Deputy Superintendent appointed by the State Board of Education with the advice and consent of the Senate.
02. On a motion by Ms. Mary Werner, seconded by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, the Board voted unanimously to approve a salary adjustment for Deputy State Superintendent, Sonya Amis, PIN # 854, to a salary of \$166,730.84, a salary commensurate with other MDE Deputy State Superintendents.

XII. State Board of Education

1. No report on meetings attended.
2. No request to attend a meeting.

XIII. Other Business

Mr. Glen V. East stated the July Board meeting will be held on July 27, 2023, in Jackson, MS at the Central High School Building, 4th Floor Boardroom, 359 North West Street starting at 10:00 a.m.

XIV. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Bill Jacobs, seconded by Ms. Mary Werner, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Approved:



Glen V. East, Vice-Chair/Acting Board Chair
Mississippi Board of Education



Raymond C. Morgigno
Interim Executive Secretary
Mississippi Board of Education