

Minutes of Mississippi Board of Education Meeting

April 16, 2020

The members of the Mississippi Board of Education met in a Board meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 16, 2020, via teleconference pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-5 for the purpose of conducting the Board meeting.

The meeting was available to the public by live stream.¹ Board members present: Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman (Clinton, Mississippi), Mr. Buddy Bailey (Brandon, Mississippi), Senator Nancy Collins (Tupelo, Mississippi), Dr. Jason S. Dean (Madison, Mississippi), Dr. Karen J. Elam (Oxford, Mississippi), Dr. John R. Kelly (Gulfport, Mississippi), Ms. Brittney Rye (Starkville, Mississippi), and Mr. Sean Suggs (Blue Springs, Mississippi). Student Representatives: Ms. Shelby Dean (Clinton, Mississippi) and Mr. Omar G. Jamil (Hernando, Mississippi). Dr. Carey M. Wright was present at Madison, Mississippi.

- I. Dr. Jason S. Dean called the Board meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Dr. Dean noted that the meeting of the Board of Education was being held via teleconference pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-5 and that the notice of this meeting included the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting. Dr. Dean also stated that an audio recording was being made of the meeting, this meeting is being live streamed and that a quorum of the Board existed at the locations stated for the purpose of conducting a meeting through teleconference means.
- II. Dr. Jason S. Dean led the Pledge of Allegiance and Ms. Brittney Rye gave the Invocation.
- III. On a motion by Dr. John R. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2020, Board meeting and the minutes of the March 26, 2020, Special-called Board meeting.
- IV. On a motion by Dr. Karen J. Elam, seconded by Ms. Brittney Rye, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.
- V. Dr. Carey M. Wright gave the following report as the State Superintendent of Education:
 - Dr. Wright thanked the Governor for his decision for the school facilities remaining closed for the remainder of the school year, but learning would continue to take place.

¹ Due to the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) and the recommendations of the CDC and the Mississippi Department of Health, gatherings should be restricted to no more than 10 people. To protect the public health, the State Board of Education met via teleconference and video means and the meeting was available to the public via video means (live stream). The SBE exercised their authority granted by the Governor in his Proclamation of a State of Emergency. See Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-31.

- Dr. Wright thanked the teachers, principals, superintendents, parents, and people out in the field everyday doing the best to provide learning experiences for our children.
- Dr. Wright stated that MDE has been providing daily updates to the superintendents, principals, and teachers including resources for them to use for online and distance learning. Dr. Wright stated that the resources provided are free and these resources have a certain level of quality and rigor. Dr. Wright stated these have been put on MDE's social media so that parents can have easier access to them. Dr. Wright stated that any information from the United States Department of Education (USDE) is included in the update. Dr. Wright stated that the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act has been passed and the Governor will be receiving \$34.6 million, K-12 will receive about \$169.9 million and this is formula driven and MDE will have a 10 percent set aside, and there is a bucket of money for post-secondary. Dr. Wright stated that this is one-time only monies and MDE has been developing guidance around the best use of these funds. Dr. Wright stated that the school districts, especially the ones struggling with distance learning, need to be thinking about how this money should be spent. Dr. Wright stated they have a year to spend the CARES funds, but they also have some waivers that have been approved that will give them flexibility in their spending and more time to spend the funds. Dr. Wright stated that the Executive Leadership Team has been working on developing the guidance so it can be distributed to superintendents and principals so they can do a needs assessment before this money arrives.
- Dr. Wright stated that she has been on each of these programs twice: WLOK from the Coast, the Paul Gallo Radio Show, and Mississippi Public Broadcasting (MPB). Dr. Wright stated that Dr. Nathan Oakley and Ms. Robin Lemonis were on MPB last week. Dr. Wright stated that MDE is trying to get as much information out to the public as possible.
- Dr. Wright stated that she is scheduling three different meetings with her Teacher's Advisory Council since they are such a large group. Dr. Wright stated that she will give them a two hour span of time and she wants to hear directly from teachers as to what they have found that has been successful, what have they struggled with, what has been some of their challenges, what do they wished they had known or had or what skill sets do they wished they would have had prior to this. Dr. Wright stated she wants to know what MDE needs to do to better prepare our teachers.
- Dr. Wright stated that she has been in contact with the Superintendent's Advisory Council and they have been a great group to bounce ideas and suggestions off during this time. Dr. Wright stated she wants to schedule a meeting with more superintendents across the state so everyone can ask their questions.
- Dr. Wright introduced Dr. Nathan Oakley to present information about two waivers that MDE applied for and received from the USDE. Dr. Oakley stated that the first waiver relates to assessment and accountability and

deals with the actions that the Board took in March. Dr. Oakley stated this is an allowance for this school year to waive the requirements for statewide assessments to be administered, to waive requirements for accountability and school identification for school improvement, to waive report card provisions around accountability system and assessments, and other academic indicators for the statewide report card. Dr. Oakley stated that we will not have a report card this year because we did not administer any assessments. Dr. Oakley stated the second waiver deals with the fiscal piece. Dr. Oakley thanked Mr. Quentin Ransburg, Ms. Elisha Campbell, Dr. Felicia Gavin and her team along with the staff of Federal Programs for their hard work over the last several weeks. Dr. Oakley stated that they have put on a webinar for districts to walk through a lot of this information. Dr. Oakley stated this waiver allows for several flexibilities: first, is a waiver on the three-year carryover limitation and this gives districts the authority to carryover a little more than 15% of their funds at the end of this year. Dr. Oakley stated that this fiscal waiver allows the FY18 funds to carry forward to September 2021 instead of September 2020 for several of their title funds.

- Dr. Wright stated there is a new feature on the Mississippi Succeeds Report Card, and she introduced Mr. John Kraman to tell the Board about it. Mr. Kraman stated that on the Report Card there is a new feature that has been released titled, “Outcomes for High School Graduates” and is listed under Other Measures. Mr. Kraman stated this is the first time MDE has used data from the statewide data system at National Strategic Planning and Analysis Research Center (NSPARC) and incorporated National Student Clearinghouse data in the Report Card. Mr. Karman stated that the outcomes are employment, post-secondary enrollments that include MS public colleges and universities but also the private colleges and universities and out-of-state colleges. Mr. Kraman stated that the outcomes also includes first year performance, such as GPA and credit accumulations, course and program enrollment, and course outcomes for degree attainment.
- Dr. Wright stated that the districts will have a lot of flexibility, but they will also have a lot of money on their hands, a longer period of time to spend the money they have now, influx of the CARES Act money, and July 1 they will have their federal dollars and it is very important to spend the money in a very thoughtful way. Dr. Wright stated that is the reason that MDE is preparing the guidance documents so the agency can guide them through what they need.

VI. Dr. Jason S. Dean, Chair of the State Board, gave the following report:

Dr. Dean thanked Dr. Wright and her Executive Leadership Team for all their hard work during this time. Dr. Dean stated that Governor Tate Reeves has appointed him to a new committee titled, “Commission for Economic Recovery.” Dr. Dean stated that they will be looking at how to make K-12 education better at the end of this and to take advantage of all the opportunities available.

VII. Report of Student Representatives

Dr. Jason S. Dean introduced Ms. Shelby Dean stating that this is her last Board meeting as the first Senior State Representative. Ms. Dean stated that her term as Senior Student Representation has been a journey of personal growth, it has taught her the value of diligent preparation for important meetings, to never be afraid to ask questions, and how to stand out and stand up for her opinions on decisions. Ms. Dean stated that she has learned how to read policy and this position has taught her the background information that goes into a singular classroom setting but also how and why a school district operates as it does. Ms. Dean stated that time in this position has solidified the notion that teaching is what she is supposed to do. Ms. Dean stated that through the Student Advisory Council she has met a lot of amazing students and they all share the passion about education. Ms. Dean stated that she hopes that the Student Advisory Council continues to grow and flourish. Ms. Dean stated that creating the Report of the Student Representatives on the regular Board agenda is an outstanding way to get student representatives involved in the conversation. Ms. Dean stated that she hopes there can be more work on the social media platforms that Mr. Jamil and she started because most students are glued to social media. Ms. Dean stated that having platforms directed toward MS students is an immediate way to get feedback and be more in touch with students. Ms. Dean wished the best of luck to the upcoming junior representative. Ms. Dean thanked everyone for letting her be a part of the vital role of decision makers in Mississippi. Ms. Dean thanked the first people from MDE that she met: Ms. Donna Hales, Ms. Heather Mitchell, and Ms. Sonya Amis for their help and for exemplifying a love of helping others. Ms. Dean thanked Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman and Dr. John R. Kelly who were the first Board members that she met during the interview process for the student representative position. Ms. Dean thanked all of the Board members for sharing parts of their lives and for being role models of what leaders should be like in our state. Ms. Dean thanked the MDE staff that have helped getting her set up for the position and making sure that she was always taken care of and that she never felt misunderstood.

Dr. Dean thanked Ms. Dean for being the first Senior Student Representative and wished her the best in the future.

Mr. Omar G. Jamil stated that he would miss Ms. Dean and that she has been the best Senior Student Representative that the Board will have.

VIII. There were no reports on State Board of Education Subcommittee meetings.

IX. Discussion and/or Approval of Board Items

01. Action: Approval by the SBE to suspend strict compliance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-21-51 for the 2019 - 2020 school year following Governor Tate Reeves' Proclamation of a State of Emergency as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on school districts during the Spring of 2020 in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1) [Goals 3 and 4 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)

On a motion by Dr. Karen J. Elam, seconded by Mr. Sean Suggs, the Board unanimously approved item 01 (copy attached).

02. Action: Approval by the SBE to suspend strict compliance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-173-1 et seq. for the 2019 - 2020 school year following Governor Tate Reeves' Proclamation of a State of Emergency as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on school districts during the Spring of 2020 in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1) [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)

On a motion by Dr. John R. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Buddy Bailey, the Board unanimously approved item 02 (copy attached).

03. Action: Approval by the SBE to suspend strict compliance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-175-1 et seq. for the 2019 - 2020 school year following Governor Tate Reeves' Proclamation of a State of Emergency as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on school districts during the Spring of 2020 in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1) [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)

On a motion by Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman, seconded by Ms. Brittney Rye, the Board unanimously approved item 03 (copy attached).

04. Action: Approval by the SBE to suspend specific policies and process standards in Miss. Admin. Code 7-24: *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards 2019* for the 2019 - 2020 school year following Governor Tate Reeves' Proclamation of a State of Emergency as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on school districts during the Spring of 2020 in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1) [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford and Nathan Oakley)

On a motion by Dr. John R. Kelly, seconded by Dr. Karen J. Elam, the Board unanimously approved item 04 (copy attached).

05. Action: Approval of the MDE Contracts [Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6– MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)
 - 05.A. Action: Renew contract with Tann, Brown, and Russ, Co., PLLC for Fiscal Year 2021 for the calculations of the FY2022 Based Student Cost and Mississippi Adequate Education Program Cost [Goal 4 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)
 - 05.B. Action: Renew contracts with School Improvement Coaches for Fiscal Year 2021 [Goal 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)
 - 05.C. Action: Modify contract to increase PERS fee for services from 15.75% to 17.40% effective July 1, 2019 [Goal 4 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)
 - 05.D. Action: Renew contract with Voyager Sopris Learning, Inc. for Fiscal Year 2021 for the operation of the Mississippi K-3 Literacy Professional Development Training System [Goals 1 and 4 - MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)
 - 05.E. Action: Renew contracts with vendors for Fiscal Year 2021 for the adoption of textbooks in the areas of Health Education 9-12, Family and Consumer Science 9-12, and Business and Technology Education 6-12 [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)
 - 05.F. Action: Renew contract with Reading Language Arts Centers, Inc. d/b/a Brainspring for Fiscal Year 2021 to provide professional development training system based on Orton Gillingham reading methodology [Goals 2 and 4 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)
 - 05.G. Action: Renew contract with Riverside Assessments, LLC d/b/a Riverside Insight for Fiscal Year 2021 to provide as assessment system as required by the State Performance Plan [Goals 1 and 3 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)
 - 05.H. Action: Renew contract with Prime Care Nursing for Fiscal Year 2021 to provide professional nursing services for students at the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)
 - 05.I. Action: Renew contracts with Custodians for Fiscal Year 2021 for the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind [Goal 1 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)

- 05.J. Action: Renew contracts with Bus Drivers for Fiscal Year 2021 for the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind [Goal 1 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)
- 05.K. Action: Renew contracts with Monitoring and Compliance Specialists for Fiscal Year 2021 for the Office of Federal Programs [Goal 5 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)
- 05.L. Action: Renew contract with Research and Curriculum Unit, Mississippi State University for Fiscal Year 2021 for the operation of the Mississippi Career and Planning and Assessment System, Third Edition (MS-CPAS3) [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)
- 05.M. Action: Renew contract with Renaissance Learning, Inc. (RL) for Fiscal Year 2021 to provide a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment tool using Renaissance Data Integration (RDI) services [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)
- 05.N. Action: Renew contract with ACT, Inc. for Fiscal Year 2021 to administer the ACT to all juniors in the state [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)
- 05.O. Action: Modify Contract with Ciber Global, LLC., for the K12 Network Support Services to provide onsite technical support for Mississippi public school districts [Goal 5 – MBE Strategic Plan] (John Kraman)

On a motion by Dr. John R, Kelly, seconded by Mr. Buddy Bailey, the Board unanimously approved items 05.A., 05.B., 05.C., 05.D., 05.E., 05.F., 05.G., 05.H., 05.I., 05.J., 05.K., 05.L., 05.M., 05.N, and 05.O. (copy attached).

- 06. Action: Approval of the MDE grant awards [Goals 1, 2, and 4 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)
 - 06.A. Action: Modify the funding amount of the Educator-in-Residence (EIR) grants to school districts for literacy coaches [Goals 1, 2, and 4 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Nathan Oakley)

On a motion by Mr. Sean Suggs, seconded by Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman, the Board unanimously approved item 06.A. (copy attached).

07. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Certified Personnel Due Process Policy for the Mississippi School of the Arts (Nathan Oakley)

- B. Approval of the 2020 MIRC Policies and Procedures Manual (Nathan Oakley)
- C. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: to revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-3:55-1, State Board Policy Chapter 55, Rule 55.1 (John Kraman)
- D. Report of monthly contracts with former State Employees receiving retirement benefits (Felicia Gavin)

On a motion by Dr. Karen J. Elam, seconded by Dr. John R. Kelly, the Board unanimously approved items A., B., and C. (copy attached).

X. Consideration of Executive Session

Mr. Buddy Bailey moved that the Board consider making a closed determination of the need to go into Executive Session. Dr. Karen J. Elam seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a vote of 7 to 0. Dr. Jason S. Dean asked Dr. Carey M. Wright, Ms. Erin Meyer, and the Executive Leadership Team to remain in the Executive Session.

Mr. Buddy Bailey, then moved that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-7(4)(a) and (k) related to: (1) the approval of the appointment of an Educ-Bureau Director II to serve as Director of Project Management within the Office of Technology and Strategic Services. Ms. Brittney Rye seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 7 to 0. Ms. Erin Meyer 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 discussed personnel matters in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-7(4)(a) and (k) related to: (1) the approval of the appointment of an Educ-Bureau Director II to serve as Director of Project Management within the Office of Technology and Strategic Services.

On a motion by Mr. Buddy Bailey, seconded by Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman, the Board voted 7 to 0 to come out of Executive Session.

The public came back into the Board meeting and Dr. Dean reported the action taken during the Executive Session.

- 01. On a motion by Dr. Karen J. Elam, seconded by Dr. John R. Kelly, the Board voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Mr. Eric M. Shirley as Educ-Bureau Director II to serve as Director of Project Management within the Office of Technology and Strategic Services at a salary of \$84,000.00.

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XI. State Board of Education

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

XII. Other Business

Dr. Jason S. Dean stated that the May Board meeting will be held on May 21, 2020, starting at 10:00 a.m.

Dr. Dean thanked everyone for being able to attend the meeting by live stream.

- XIII. On a motion by Dr. Karen J. Elam, seconded by Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:13 a.m.

Approved:



Jason S. Dean, Chair
Mississippi Board of Education



Carey M. Wright
Executive Secretary
Mississippi Board of Education