

Minutes of Mississippi Board of Education Meeting

June 16, 2022

The members of the Mississippi Board of Education met in a Board meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 16, 2022, via video conference means pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-5 for the purpose of conducting the Board meeting.

The Board made this meeting available to the public via live stream at the Central High School Building. Board members present in the 4th Floor Boardroom at the Central High School Building, 359 North West Street, Jackson, Mississippi included: Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman, Dr. Wendi Barrett, Dr. Angela Bass (joined the meeting at 10:06 a.m.), Mr. Glen V. East, Dr. Karen J. Elam, Mr. Bill Jacobs, Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, and Mr. Matt Miller. Board member absent: Ms. Mary Werner. Student Representative absent: Ms. Micah Hilll. Dr. Carey M. Wright was also present at the 4th Floor Boardroom at the Central High School Building, 359 North West Street, Jackson, Mississippi.

- I. Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman 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 through video conference means in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-5.
- II. Mr. Bill Jacobs led the Pledge of Allegiance and Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee gave the Invocation.
- III. On a motion by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, seconded by Mr. Matt Miller, the Board voted unanimously to approve the May 26, 2022, Board meeting minutes.
- IV. On a motion by Dr. Karen J. Elam, seconded by Dr. Wendi Barrett, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.
- V. There was no Recognition Ceremony.
- VI. Dr. Carey M. Wright gave the following report as the State Superintendent of Education:
 - Dr. Wright thanked everyone for attending her last Board meeting. Dr. Wright stated it has been a joy to have been with MDE for 8½ years. Dr. Wright stated that she wanted to thank the current and past Board members because the Board has been steadfast to support the work of the agency and to support her. Dr. Wright stated that she could not do this work without the support of the Board. Dr. Wright thanked the Executive Leadership Team because this is the finest group of professionals leading their respective works and they are all nationally recognized leaders. Dr. Wright stated that this is a team effort. Dr. Wright thanked the staff at MDE with all the talent supporting the districts, teachers, and leaders across the state. Dr. Wright thanked Governor Reeves for meeting with her on a regular basis even when

he was Lt. Governor and speaking about the great work that is happening around our state. Dr. Wright thanked the Speaker and the Lt. Governor for working with MDE. Dr. Wright stated that Gray Tolleson was the Senate Education Chair and John Moore was the House Education Chair when she arrived, and they embraced her and were committed to doing whatever was needed to be done to get education moving forward. Dr. Wright stated that Representative Moore in 2013 said that his dream was to have planes land in Jackson wanting to know how Mississippi accomplished what it has accomplished. Now in 2022, MDE is up to 21 states that have consulted with MDE because the outstanding achievements that have been made. Dr. Wright thanked Representative Richard Bennett and Senator Dennis DeBar, Jr. who are the current Education Chairs who have been supportive. Dr. Wright stated that it takes hard work for education to get better, and we have to support the teachers and leaders across the state and all the Education Chairs understand that. Dr. Wright stated that if you think about where we were and where we are now, she cannot say enough about the teachers and leaders across the state who make the magic happen. Dr. Wright stated that the MDE is here to support their every effort. Dr. Wright stated that when she arrived, Mississippi was 50th in the nation and now we are 35th. Dr. Wright stated that the Governor asked her what she would do next for the state, and she replied she would keep on climbing because there are 34 states above Mississippi. Dr. Wright stated that when Quality Counts ranked Mississippi in 2013, we were an F and now we are a C and we have been ranked the second most improved state in the nation for three consecutive years, even during COVID. Dr. Wright stated that early childhood efforts in Mississippi have benefited the children, and Mississippi is only one of five states in the nation that meets all ten quality indicators from the National Institute of Early Education Research. Dr. Wright stated that the Legislature has been so supportive. Dr. Wright stated that MDE does not ask for funds for the Department, but funds to support our initiatives across the state and they have been good about supporting MDE. Dr. Wright stated that in 2019 when our NAPE results came in Mississippi ranked number one in the nation for their gains in fourth grade reading and fourth grade math. Dr. Wright stated that MDE has done a lot for the children of Mississippi, and they can do and will do what you expect them to do and give them the support to get there. Dr. Wright thanked all for giving her the opportunity.

- VII. Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman, Chair of the State Board, gave the following report:
- Ms. Aultman thanked Dr. Wright for the brief recap of all the work that has taken place. Ms. Aultman stated that she and Dr. Wright came in at the same time and it has been fun and rewarding to watch what has gone on in this Department. Ms. Aultman stated that she would reiterate her comments about the Executive Leadership Team and the staff at MDE. Ms. Aultman stated that Dr. Wright mentioned early childhood and that is something that is all very special to the Board, and she has represented MDE all across this

country. Ms. Altman stated that Mississippi is 35th in the nation now and that others want to know what has been done to move the state forward. Ms. Aultman stated the struggling school districts in the state can use what has happened with this agency to hone that down to a local school district and do the same thing, but you must have the vision and the leadership and the willingness to make those hard decisions and you need the support.

- Ms. Aultman stated that the last month has been spent setting up meetings with the Department getting ready to advertise for a vendor to be a search firm to help us find a new superintendent.
- Ms. Aultman thanked Dr. Bass, Dr. McGehee, and Mr. Jacobs for serving on the subcommittee and looking for our new student representative who will replace Ms. Amy Zhang. The Board had interviews yesterday morning to interview the four finalists. Mr. Charlie Frugé from the Oxford School District was selected as the junior representative. Ms. Katheryn Newman from Ethel was chosen as the alternative. Ms. Aultman stated that all the finalists will be on the Student Advisory Council.
- Ms. Aultman read a Resolution for Dr. Wright (copy attached). Ms. Aultman thanked Ms. Sonya Amis and Ms. Donna Hales for their work on coordinating the student representative program, working with the subcommittee, and bringing this to fruition.
- Ms. Aultman stated that Ms. Micah Hill, senior representative, is attending the Governor's School at Ole Miss.

VIII. There was no report from the Student Representative.

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

X. Discussion and/or Approval of Board Items

01. Information: Overview of Digital Learning services and supports [Goals 1, 2, and 4 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Kim Benton)

Dr. Kim Benton and Ms. Melissa Banks gave an overview of the Digital Learning services and supports provided by the Department (copy attached).

02. Action: Approval of School of Innovation status for the Mississippi School of the Arts and the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science [Goal 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Kim Benton)

On a motion by Mr. Bill Jacobs, seconded by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, the Board unanimously approved item 02. (copy attached).

03. Action: Initiate the process to return the Tunica County School District and authorization for the Mississippi Department of Education to seek

applications for board members for the Tunica County School District [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Carey Wright)

On a motion by Mr. Glen V. East, seconded by Dr. Karen J. Elam, the Board unanimously approved item 03. (copy attached). Ms. Aultman thanked Dr. Margie B. Pulley for her work as Interim Superintendent of the Tunica County School District.

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

- 04.A. Action: Renew contract with NWEA for Fiscal Year 2023 to administer the English Language Arts and Mathematics in Grades 3-8, End-of-Course (EOC) in Algebra I, English II, and options for Geometry and Algebra II as part of the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)
- 04.B. Action: Renew contract with NWEA for Fiscal Year 2023 to administer the English Language Arts and Mathematics in Grades 3-8; Science Grades 5 & 8; and High School Algebra I, English II, and Biology I as part of the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program – Alternative, (MAAP-A) for students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SCD) and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)
- 04.C. Action: Modify contract with EMS LINQ, Inc. to extend the contract date for additional modules, hosting, maintenance, and support to the Mississippi Department of Education relative to the Mississippi Comprehensive Automated Performance-based System (MCAPS) [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)
- 04.D. Action: Renew contract with Guidesoft Inc., d/b/a Knowledge Services under the terms of the Master Consulting Services Agreement to Provide for the acquisition of Network and Technical Support IT Professionals for local school districts [Goal 5 – MBE Strategic Plan] (John Kraman)
- 04.E. Action: Renew contract with Business Computers of Memphis, Inc. [Goal 1 – MBE Strategic Plan 2018-2022] (Felicia Gavin)
- 04.F. Action: Modify contract with Hupp Information Technologies, Inc. to provide maintenance and support for the Educator Licensure Management System (ELMS) [Goal 4 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)

On a motion by Mr. Glen V. East, seconded by Dr. Angela Bass, the Board

unanimously approved items 04.A., 04.B., 04.C., 04.D., 04.E., and 04.F. (copy attached).

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

05.A. Action: Award Educator-in-Residence Grants to school districts for literacy coaches for Cohort V [Goals 1, 2, and 4 – MDE Strategic Plan] (Kim Benton)

05.B. Action: Award competitive grants to school districts for the Mississippi Community Oriented Policing Services in Schools Grant (MCOPS) FY23 (2022-2023) [Goal 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)

05.C. Action: Award grant to Mississippi School Boards Association to conduct basic and continuing education for local school boards as required by Miss Code Ann. § 37-3-4 [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)

On a motion by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, seconded by Dr. Karen J. Elam, the Board unanimously approved items 05.A., 05.B., and 05.C. (copy attached).

06. Consent Agenda (All consent items are action items which require vote, unless otherwise noted.)

A. Approval to appoint a certificated public-school classroom teacher to the State and School Employees' Health Insurance Advisory Council (Carey Wright)

B. Approval of monthly expenditures for the Mississippi School of the Arts (Kim Benton)

C. Approval of monthly expenditures for the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (Kim Benton)

D. Approval of the revised 2022-2023 Student Handbooks for the Mississippi School for the Blind and the Mississippi School for the Deaf (Kim Benton)

E. Approval of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Operations Manual (Kim Benton)

- F. Approval of the revised School Wellness Plans for the Mississippi School of the Arts and the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (Kim Benton)
- G. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code: 7-24: *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2022*, Appendix A-6 – A-10, A-12, and C-2 and Miss. Admin. Code 7-163: *Mississippi Nonpublic School Accountability Standards, 2022*, Appendix A-6 – A-10, A-12, and C-2 (Kim Benton)
- H. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-24: *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2022*, specifically Process Standard 2.2 (Paula Vanderford)
- I. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To Revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-24: *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2022* specifically Process Standard 17.4: Special Education (Kim Benton)
- J. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code: 7-24: *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2022*, specifically Process Standard 2.4, and Miss. Admin. Code: 7-163: *Mississippi Nonpublic School Accountability Standards, 2022*, specifically Process Standard 2.4 – Student Support Services (Kim Benton)
- K. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-24: *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2022*, specifically to establish Process Standard 17.9 – Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Training and to revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-163: *Mississippi Nonpublic School Accountability Standards, 2022*, specifically to establish Process Standard 14.9 – Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Training (Kim Benton)
- L. Approval to repeal, amend, or establish Mississippi State Board of Education Policies in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-43-3.114 (Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process without public comments) (Paula Vanderford)
- M. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise certain criteria for Career Pathway licensure options, 954

Information Technology; 964 Instrumentation; and 967 Collision Repair Technician (Paula Vanderford)

- N. Approval of educator preparation programs as recommended by the Division of Educator Preparation (Paula Vanderford)

On a motion by Mr. Glen V. East, seconded by Mr. Matt Miller, the Board unanimously approved items A., B., C., D., E., F., G., H., I., J., K., L., M., and N. (copy attached).

XI. Consideration of Executive Session

Mr. Glen V. East moved that the Board consider making a closed determination of the need to go into Executive Session. Dr. Angela Bass seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a vote of 7 to 0. Ms. Rosemary G. Aultman asked Dr. Carey M. Wright, Ms. Baylea Blough, Ms. Erin Meyer, and the Executive Leadership Team to remain in the Executive Session.

Mr. Glen V. East, then moved that the Board go into Executive Session in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-7(4)(a) and (k) to discuss discrete personnel matters related to the approval of appointments to certain positions and/or approval of the salaries or contracts of certain positions within the Mississippi School of the Arts, Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, and Mississippi Achievement School District. Dr. Karen J. Elam seconded the motion, which passed on a motion of 7 to 0. Ms. Baylea Blough informed the public of the Board's vote to go into Executive Session for the above stated reasons.

Minutes of the Executive Session

During the Executive Session, the Board in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-7(4)(a) and (k) discussed discrete personnel matters related to the approval of appointments to certain positions and/or approval of the salaries or contracts of certain positions within the Mississippi School of the Arts, Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, and Mississippi Achievement School District.

On a motion by Mr. Glen V. East, seconded by Dr. Karen J. Elam, the Board voted 7 to 0 to come out of Executive Session.

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

01. On a motion by Mr. Glen V. East, seconded by Mr. Matt Miller, the Board voted unanimously to approve Dr. Earl Watkins as the Superintendent for the Achievement School District contingent upon a decision by the State Board of Education at a salary of \$183,500.00.

02. On a motion by Dr. Karen J. Elam, seconded by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, the Board voted unanimously to approve the 2022-2023 contract for the Mississippi School of the Arts (copy attached).
03. On a motion by Mr. Glen V. East, seconded by Dr. Wendi Barrett, the Board voted unanimously to approve Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind contracts for Fiscal Year 2023 (copy attached).

XII. State Board of Education

1. Dr. Bass stated she attended an introductory meeting with the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) since she is a part of the Early Literacy Work Group and she got to meet people from other states.

Ms. Aultman stated that Ms. Micah Hill has been nominated to serve on the Student Collaborative Council of NASBE. Ms. Aultman stated this is for students across the country who are part of state boards of education, and this is a new group they are forming to learn about developing policy, long-range planning, strategic planning, and those kinds of things. Dr. McGehee will serve as her mentor if she needs help on anything.

2. No request to attend a meeting.

XIII. Other Business

01. Approval to change the date of September 2022 meeting of the Mississippi Board of Education from September 22, 2022 to September 29, 2022
02. Approval to change the date of the regularly scheduled October 2022 meeting of the Mississippi Board of Education from October 20, 2022 to October 27, 2022
03. Approval to change the date of the regularly scheduled November 2022 meeting of the Mississippi Board of Education from November 17, 2022 to November 10, 2022

On a motion by Mr. Bill Jacobs, seconded by Dr. Karen J. Elam, the Board unanimously approved items 01., 02., and 03. (copy attached).

Ms. Aultman stated the July Board meeting will be held on July 21, 2022, and we are moving to Ridgeland, Mississippi at the Mississippi School Boards Association, 380 Zurich Drive starting at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Aultman stated that we are having to relocate because of construction that will be going on in this building.


Ms. Aultman stated that Mr. Pete Smith will be leaving the Department and that Ms. Holly Spivey was hired as Director of Government Relations. Ms. Aultman stated that we look forward to working with her. Ms. Aultman stated that Ms. Spivey has been working in the Governor's Office.


Ms. Aultman stated that the Communication Team would like to bring something to the Board. Mr. Pete Smith thanked Ms. Jean Cook, Ms. Corie Jones, and the Communication Team for putting together the video where some of the leaders that Dr. Wright had the opportunity to work with over the past eight years thanked her for her service.

XIV. Adjournment

On a motion by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, seconded by Mr. Bill Jacobs the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Approved:


Rosemary G. Aultman, Chair
Mississippi Board of Education



Kim S. Benton
Interim Executive Secretary
Mississippi Board of Education