

## Minutes of Mississippi Board of Education Meeting

May 18, 2023

The members of the Mississippi Board of Education met at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 18, 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, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom, 359 North West Street, Jackson, Mississippi. Board members physically present included: Dr. Wendi Barrett, Mr. Glen V. East, Mr. Bill Jacobs, Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, and Mr. Matt Miller. Board member participating virtually: Ms. Mary Werner (Saltville, Mississippi). Student Representative present: 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. Bill Jacobs led the Pledge of Allegiance and Mr. Matt Miller gave the Invocation.
- III. On a motion by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, seconded by Mr. Bill Jacobs, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of April 19, 2023, Board meeting and the minutes of Special-Called Board meeting on April 19, 2023.
- IV. On a motion by Mr. Bill Jacobs, seconded by Mr. Matt Miller, the Board unanimously adopted the Consent agenda.

On a motion by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, seconded by Mr. Matt Miller, the Board approved the agenda as presented.

- V. Recognition Ceremony

### **Mannsdale Upper Elementary School 4th Grade Students**

Proposing legislation to create and pass a bill to adopt the blueberry as the state fruit for Mississippi

### **Mississippi Department of Education**

Mississippi School of the Arts Phoenix Award

- VI. Mr. Michael D. Kent gave the following report as the Interim State Superintendent of Education:
  - Mr. Kent stated he spent most of the month traveling the state for the Regional Superintendents meetings at each of the state's six Regional Education Service Agency (RESAs).

- Mr. Kent stated that during the meetings with superintendents, staff had some discussions with superintendents about what degree of change, if any, was needed to the Statewide Accountability System.
  - Mr. Kent stated that he tasked the RESA directors with conducting very focused discussions with superintendents during their RESA meetings about specific areas where the accountability system can be improved or strengthened. Mr. Kent stated that Dr. Paula Vanderford will be following up with the RESA directors with additional instructions.
  - Mr. Kent stated that another issue emerged during the Regional Superintendents meetings involving the annual single audits that districts are required to submit to the Office of the State Auditor. Mr. Kent stated many districts are having trouble getting their audits completed within state and federal deadlines because there is a limited pool of state auditor approved CPAs available to complete the audits. Mr. Kent stated his intention is to recommend to the Commission of School Accreditation and then to the State Board a temporary relief from MDE's sanctions related to these late audits. Mr. Kent stated that MDE's sanctions stem from federal law and requirements from the State Auditor, which are beyond our authority to change. Mr. Kent stated he is requesting a meeting with the State Auditor in the upcoming weeks to discuss this issue.
  - Mr. Kent stated that MDE has continued to work with the Legislature to finalize the calculation for allocating the \$100 million the Legislature appropriated for districts based on average daily enrollment. Mr. Kent stated this process has been illuminating because it has tested some assumptions about whether average enrollment is higher during months 2 and 3 of the school year or whether it is higher when you take the average across months 1 through 8 of the school year. Mr. Kent stated MDE has performed several calculations and conducted state- and district-level analyses of various scenarios and found the difference in enrollment between months 2 and 3 and months 1 through 8 to be 7/10 of one percent. Mr. Kent stated that MDE will send allocations to districts once we receive approval of the calculation from the Legislative Budget Office (LBO).
  - Mr. Kent stated he was privileged to take part in the announcement and celebration of the 2023 Mississippi Teacher of the Year and Administrator of the Year. Mr. Kent stated that the Teacher of the Year is Louise Smith of Gautier Middle School, and the Administrator of the Year is Dr. Catterria Payton, Principal at Pascagoula High School. Mr. Kent stated that both recipients are in the Pascagoula-Gautier School District. Mr. Kent stated that he was extremely impressed by these two educators and all the honorees in attendance.
- VII. Mr. Glen V. East, Acting Chair of the State Board, gave the following report:
- Mr. East thanked Mr. Michael D. Kent for stepping in as the Interim State Superintendent.



- Mr. East stated he had 24 hours' notice that he would serve as the Acting Chair, and he thanked MDE for making all this work.

VIII. Report of Student Representative

Mr. Charlie Frugé reported on the importance of service in a community and highlighted an individual that has excelled in his service to his community.

IX. Report on State Board of Education Subcommittee meetings

Mr. Glen V. East, Chair of the Academic Achievement PreK-12/Early Childhood Subcommittee, reported they met yesterday, and discussed the grants for the summer reading camps that will be presented to the Board today.

Mr. Bill Jacobs, Chair of the Legislative Subcommittee, reported they met today, and discussed some meetings that have been held recently with members of the Legislature regarding the upcoming search for the State Superintendent.

Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, Chair of the School Performance and Accountability Subcommittee, reported they met today. Dr. McGehee stated he, Mr. Bill Jacobs, and Ms. Mary Werner met on May 11-12, 2023, for interviews of the 12 semifinalists to choose four finalists. Dr. McGehee announced that the four finalists are: Yaerim Choi, Starkville-Oktibbeha Consolidated School District, Starkville High School; Kate Riddle, Lafayette County School District, Lafayette High School; Alex Ritchie, Oxford School District, Oxford High School; and Grace Taylor, Rankin County School District, Northwest Rankin High School. Dr. McGehee stated the four finalists will be interviewed by the State Board on June 14, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. where a student representative will be chosen along with one alternate.

X. Discussion and/or Approval of Board Items

01. Information: Update on Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funded Projects [Goals 1, 2, 4, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Donna Boone)

Dr. Courtney Van Cleve, Dr. Tenette Smith, Ms. Kymberly Wiggins, Mr. Scott Clements, and Mr. Brian McGairty presented an update on Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funded projects.

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

- 02.A. Action: Contract with Gay, Jones, and Kuhn PLLC to provide supplementary legal counsel and policy and guidelines support to the

Office of Special Education relative to the enforcement of and compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) [Goal 4 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Donna Boone)

- 02.B. Action: Emergency contract with Renaissance Learning, Inc. for Fiscal Year 2024 to provide an integrated assessment system that will include a Pre-K Collaborative Star Assessment Bundle and a K-Readiness Assessment using Renaissance Data Integration (RDI) services [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)
- 02.C. Action: Contract with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) for Fiscal Year 2024 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)
- 02.D. Action: Contract with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) for Fiscal Year 2024 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 - Alternate, (MAAP-A) for students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SCD) [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)
- 02.E. Action: Contract with ACT, Inc. to administer the ACT test to all juniors (approximately 34,000 students each year) in the State of Mississippi [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)
- 02.F. Action: Contract with Forvis, LLC to provide accounting services to monitor ESSER programs [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)

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., and 02.F. (copy attached).

- 03. Action: Approval of the MDE grant awards [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)
  - 03.A. Action: Award a grant to school districts to support the implementation of K-3 Literacy Support: Summer Reading Camps [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Donna Boone)
  - 03.B. 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 Mr. Bill Jacobs, seconded by Mr. Matt Miller, the Board unanimously approved items 03.A. and 03.B. (copy attached).

04. Information: Spring 2023 Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) 3rd Grade Initial Reading Summative Assessment Results [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)

Dr. Paula Vanderford and Ms. Kristen Wynn presented the Spring 2023 Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Initial Reading Summative Assessment Results with 76.3% of 31,623 third graders passing the initial administration of the third-grade reading assessment given this spring for the 2022-23 school year.

05. Consent Agenda

- 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 Student Handbooks for the State Schools (Donna Boone)
  - 01. Mississippi School of the Arts
  - 02. Mississippi School for the Blind
  - 03. Mississippi School for the Deaf
- E. Approval of the 2023-2024 Operations Policy Manuals for the State Schools (Donna Boone)
  - 01. Mississippi School of the Arts
  - 02. Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
- F. Approval to revise Miss. Admin. Code: 7-24, *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2022*, Process Standard 13, 27, Appendices A-6 – A-10, A-12, B-2, and glossary and Miss. Admin. Code 7-163:

*Mississippi Nonpublic School Accountability Standards, 2022*, Process Standard 11, 23, Appendices A-6 – A-10, A-12, B-2, and glossary (Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process with one public comment) (Donna Boone)

- G. Approval to revise the 2020 Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards for the College and Career Readiness course (CCR) (Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process without public comments) (Donna Boone)
- H. Approval to revise the Work-Based Learning: Credit Bearing Course Guidelines to *Mississippi Work-Based Learning (WBL) Manual* (Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process without public comments) (Donna Boone)
- I. [PULLED]
- J. Approval of a temporary rule and to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: *Licensure Guidelines K-12* to establish Performance-Based Teacher License criteria (Paula Vanderford)
- K. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Mississippi Admin. Code 37-1-3 State Board Policy Chapter 3, Rule 27.1 – Criminal Records Background Checks on Applicants for Employment, State Department of Education Staff, Mississippi School for the Deaf and Blind, Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science, and Mississippi School of the Arts (Felicia Gavin)
- L. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Mississippi Admin. Code 37-61-9(4). State Board Policy Chapter 3, Rule 31.1 – Drug Testing, State Department of Education Staff (Felicia Gavin)
- M. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Mississippi Admin. Code 37-61-9 (4). State Policy Chapter 3, Rule 3.1 – Administrative Expense Reduction (Felicia Gavin)
- N. Approval to release the Wayne County School District from the Mississippi Department of Education oversight in accordance with MS Code Section 37-9-18 (2) (e) (Felicia Gavin)
- O. Approval of a temporary rule and to begin the Administration Procedures Act process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 81.3, State



Board Policy Chapter 81, Rule 81.3: Driver Training/Motor Vehicle  
Record Check (Paula Vanderford)

- P. Approval to award formula grants to school districts for the purpose of providing reimbursement for K-3 universal screening assessments (Paula Vanderford)

On a motion by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, seconded by Mr. Bill Jacobs, the Board unanimously approved items A., B., C., D., E., F., G., H., J., K., L., M., N., O., and P. (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. Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a vote of 5 to 0. Mr. Glen V. East asked for Legal Counsel 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)(a) and (k) to discuss discrete personnel matters related to the appointment of an Interim State Superintendent and the candidate profile that will be used for the State Superintendent search.

Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee seconded the motion, which passed on a motion of 5 to 0. 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)(a) and (k) discussed discrete personnel matters related to the appointment of an Interim State superintendent and the candidate profile that will be used for the State Superintendent search.

On a motion by Mr. Matt Miller, seconded by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, the Board voted 5 to 0 to come out of Executive Session.

The public came back into the Board meeting and Mr. East stated that the Board will have a Special-Called meeting on June 15, 2023, to consider the position of Interim State Superintendent.

On a motion by Mr. Matt Miller, seconded by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, the Board unanimously approved that the individual named as Interim State Superintendent would be eligible to apply for the permanent position of State Superintendent.

May 18, 2023

XII. State Board of Education

1. Mr. Matt Miller stated he attended the Regional Superintendents meeting in Hattiesburg where they were discussing the accountability system.

Mr. Glen V. East stated he attended the Regional Superintendents meeting on the Coast and appreciated the transparency.

2. No request to attend a meeting.
3. Approval of meeting dates for Fiscal Year 2024

On a motion by Mr. Bill Jacobs, seconded by Dr. Wendi Barrett, the Board unanimously approved the meeting dates for Fiscal Year 2024.

XIII. Other Business

Mr. Glen V. East stated the Board will have a work session for the Finalist Interviews for Student Board Representatives and Fiscal Year 2024 Budget meeting on June 14, 2024, in Jackson, MS at the Central High School Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom, 359 North West Street starting at 8:30 a.m.

Mr. East stated the June Board meeting will be held on June 15, 2023, in Jackson, MS at the Central High School Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom, 359 North West Street starting at 10:00 a.m.

XIV. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Matt Miller, seconded by Mr. Bill Jacobs, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Approved:



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



Michael D. Kent  
Interim Executive Secretary  
Mississippi Board of Education