

MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SESSION OF THE MARSHALL BOARD OF
EDUCATION HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2021 AT 7:00 PM
VIRTUALLY @

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo_Dw2K8ptX5eFKauouPJZQ/

PRESENT: LINDSEY, NICHOLSON, MIDDLETON, M. DAVIS, LANKERD, R.
DAVIS, JONES, WILLIAMS JOINED AT 7:04 PM, GAMBLE JOINED AT 7:07 PM

ABSENT: NONE

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Lindsey. A moment of silence was observed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Trustee Lankerd.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by M. Davis, supported by Lankerd, that the agenda be approved with the two opportunities for public comment being combined into one with the remainder of the agenda as presented. A roll-call vote unanimously carried the motion. Treasurer Williams and Trustee Gamble were not present for the vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

President Lindsey stated the Board of Education was not involved in “Black Lives Matter” mural on the cafeteria window at Marshall High School. The NAACP Student Group at Marshall High School asked the building principal for permission and obtained approval to put it up. He indicated the Board would listen to those wishing to comment about it; and that questions would not be answered, board members would only listen. He called for any members of the virtual audience to address the Board.

Christi Barrett has not been part of the debate related to the BLM mural. She believes the mural was meant to spark conversation. She suggested Hach McGhee’s research be explored. She implored that schools need to be a safe place.

Katy Reed indicated she supports the board, leadership, students, BLM and what it stands for.

Garrett Brown thanked the Board of Education for its statement. Two communities were brought together and there is still a lot to learn. He supports the students. He asked that black history be imbedded in curriculum and that the school district should change its name to Marshall-Albion.

Robert Giles indicated much has been said about the mural. Until race issues are worked through it will continue to perpetuate mistrust and lack of healing. Discussing race is hard for folks to handle, it must be done for the better good of all. He added there needs to be more diversity in the staff as students are more comfortable talking with someone that looks like them.

Lisa Reed applauded the kids involved in putting up the BLM mural. She wants to see it left up as it sparks conversation

Derek Allen supports the students and the NAACP Youth Group. He is glad BLM has been expressed and that students are encouraged to expand their capacity to be able to work through their feelings. There is still much work the community still needs to do.

Adam Hankey asked why BLM was in school; he doesn't believe it should be; and does not believe it is part of Black History Month. He referenced it being a kind of communism.

Jessica Attis shared concerns that teachers at MHS are not united on the BLM mural. Racism at MHS continues to be an issue. She suggested working together in another way rather than such displays.

Jess Roberts spoke in support of the mural and that the work the students put into it should be valued. She commended the students for their bravery and thoughtfulness to think with their hearts and minds and to continue showing up at everyday at school.

Jessica Kane echoed Mr. Giles and Ms. Roberts comments. She added a lot more needs to be done.

John Cox applauded efforts of students and the support they've been given by administration. He is disappointed by many of the comments being made on social media about the BLM mural. He agrees with Principal Turner's path to unity at MHS; and suggests continued discussions to work toward better understanding for all.

Kathy Miller supports kids and what they are doing. She is glad to see the diversity that Marshall now has as there was none for many years when she first moved to here. She asked adults to listen to the kids and added it would not hurt to rename the school district to Marshall-Albion.

Audra Granger indicated she is the interventionist and the NAACP Youth Group leader at MHS. She shared that students came to her a couple weeks ago asking how to celebrate Black History Month. The students suggested a mural of hope to include inspirational ideas. They sought Principal Turner's support and were given permission to move forward. They spent a full Wednesday working on it and met on Sunday to finish it. She related that students were hurt because of the posts on social media, something she could not buffer for them. She thanked the Board for its support and its message on Facebook; Principal Turner for his support; and for the shift in support for the students. She cautioned that racial trauma stays with kids and she cautioned making comments as such.

Lori K-C/Calhoun knows her children support diverse expression. She indicated as traumatic as the merge was, she was hoping it would help change Marshall and Albion. She supports the students and wants the community to be a place all people would want to be a part of.

Meg Vandeboss shared she was attacked on Facebook because of her post; that she is okay with renaming the district Marshall Albion if that would help; and believes it is ridiculous that the mural created such a division.

Meredith Meeder is saddened to see the division in the community. She added none of this is about sides. Schools/Teachers need to teach students about important events; more education is needed, and open dialogue needs to occur.

Felisha Coats is disappointed that kids are still referred to as Albion kids and Marshall kids. The mural is helping black students demonstrate the hardships they are faced with and that they are not being included; common ground is needed.

Nels Christiansen thanked the Board for supporting the NAACP Youth Group, the post made by the Board on Facebook, and for the leadership of Principal Turner and Interventionist Granger for supporting the students. He is proud of the students, impressed and inspired by them. He likes seeing the support from the top and asked that kids continue to be lifted up.

Snyder Victori G applauded the Board for supporting the students. She is concerned for the wellbeing of Albion students attending Marshall schools. She feels the comments are disheartening; that the students want to be acknowledged for what they stand for; and appreciates the great strides made at the start of the districts coming together. She would like to see the youth collaboration done again that was done at the start of the merger, at least have a similar event every four years.

Sonya Brown is impressed and appreciates the statement that was made by the Board on Facebook. She is proud the young people were supported in expressing themselves as strong independent leaders are needed for the future; that they were allowed to do make the mural; and that students need to have a voice and be part of the equity discussion.

Hubka believes BLM is of a political nature. He asked to know who to contact and where he can sign up to have political views posted in the schools.

Dr. Mathew Johnson of Albion College thanked the Board for its statement, district leadership and for supporting Mr. Turner, teachers and most of all the students. He welcomes such students to attend the college.

Trish supports the BLM movement and the parade that occurred last year. She applauded the students for seeking unity and inclusiveness.

Bob Dunklin spoke in support of BLM and that students were allowed to express their feelings. He indicated that students have been feeling the pain for six years that their lives didn't matter. He thanked Mr. Turner and Ms. Granger for supporting the students.

**APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA
MINUTES, EXPENDITURES AND PERSONNEL**

Items included on the consent agenda were minutes of the January 25, 2021 business session, February 8, 2021 work and executive/closed sessions and February 15, 2021 special session; January disbursements in the amount of \$1,918,924.99; employments of

Svenja Chapman as noon hour supervisor at Walters Elementary, Mackenzie Nicholls as bus aide and McKenzi Schueller as noon hour and bus supervisor at Walters Elementary.

Moved by Lanker, supported by M. Davis, that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda – Minutes, Expenditures and Personnel as presented. A roll-call vote carried the motion unanimously.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SPECIAL RECOGNITION: Superintendent Davis presented background information about each hire included in the consent agenda.

Superintendent Davis recognized the retirement of Lori Dopp a bus driver of the district with an estimated 27.5 years of service with the district.

RECENT COVID-19 IMPACT ON SCHOOLS: Superintendent Davis reviewed the last six-week trend for Calhoun County and Marshall Public Schools. Overall, the trend is good. He reminded everyone the district would be holding a vaccine clinic on February 26th and March 19th from noon to 4:00 p.m. by appointment only. Both days will be half days of school for students and staff to provide time for staff go get vaccinated. He added that Mar Lee School and Marshall Academy staff have been invited to the clinic as well.

Vice President Nicholson asked if there is no increase in spread when could elementary students return to school on Wednesdays.

Superintendent Davis responded the district is investigating ways to get elementary students in-person five days a week. He added that middle and high school students are at a higher risk of spreading COVID.

LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORTS: Superintendent Davis indicated that Leadership Team Reports were included in the board's packet.

DISCUSSION

REVIEW OUTCOME OF SPECIAL BOARD SESSION: Superintendent Davis thanked Board members for establishing a clear future regarding a bond. A specific timeline is being developed for a bond vote in November 2021. Scenarios with costs are being developed for the Board to consider.

President Lindsey asked what needs can be accomplished through other revenue resources outside of a bond.

EVALUATING THE SUPERINTENDENT: Superintendent Davis explained the Board evaluated him March 2018 and March 2019; he was not evaluated in March of 2020 as it was determined to be appropriate to skip that year. There are eleven more constructs yet to be evaluated; his focus will be on presenting evidence of achieving the eleven constructs when he is evaluated next month. The evaluation process will begin in executive/closed session March 8, 2021 and will be completed March 22, 2021 when results will be presented in open session.

President Lindsey indicated he and Secretary Middleton will meet individually with each member of the Board to review the evaluation process so that all members understand it and that everyone is on the same page.

APPROVAL OF ACTION ITEM – BOARD BUSINESS

RESOLUTION TO PERMIT SCHOOL BOARDS TO MEET IN-PERSON: Approve a resolution that requests the state to allow school boards to meet either virtually, in-person or a combination of the two beginning immediately as presented.

Moved by M. Davis, supported by Middleton, that the Board of Education approve Action Item – Financial – Other as recommended. A roll-call vote carried with Lindsey, Nicholson, Middleton, Williams, M. Davis, and Lankerd in favor; Gamble opposed. The motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Moved Gamble, supported by Nicholson, that the Board move into executive session under Section 8 (e) of the Open Meetings Act to consult with its attorney regarding defense strategy pending litigation and under Section 8 (h) attorney client privileged communication at 8:58 p.m. A roll-call vote unanimously carried the motion.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

The Board returned to open session at 9:47 p.m.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

LISA MIDDLETON, SECRETARY

KIMBERLY VANWORMER, RECORDING SECRETARY