

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE MARSHALL BOARD OF  
EDUCATION HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2021 AT 7:00 PM VIRTUALLY  
@ [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo\\_Dw2K8ptX5eFKauouPJZQ/](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo_Dw2K8ptX5eFKauouPJZQ/)

PRESENT: LINDSEY, NICHOLSON, MIDDLETON, WILLIAMS, M. DAVIS,  
GAMBLE, LANKERD, R. DAVIS, JONES

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 as presented. A roll-call vote unanimously carried the motion.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

President Lindsey called for any members of the virtual audience to address the Board. There were none.

**BOARD TOPIC**

*COVID CURRENT IMPACTS:* Superintendent Davis provided current impact of COVID over the past two weeks. Statistics indicate that district percentages are under that of the county; it put the district at moderate risk; a good place to be as the district is experiencing a downward trend. However, today's report from the county health department reports hospitalizations remain unchanged. He added there is concern that the variant called B.1.1.7, a mutation of COVID, is now present and found in Kalamazoo and Calhoun Counties. This variant is not any more dangerous than COVID but it is more contagious. The district continues to monitor impacts of COVID and will continue to do so especially as the restart of athletics and contact sports occurred today. Currently, there are 12 cadets/students at MYCA that have either tested positive for COVID or are probable positive, a direct reflection of cadets/students starting the program and coming from across the state. The effected students/cadets have been isolated.

Superintendent Davis reminded everyone of the upcoming vaccination clinics which will include not only staff from Marshall Public Schools but staff from Mar Lee and Marshall Academy. The clinics are on February 26<sup>th</sup> and March 19<sup>th</sup> 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 reported that surrounding district in the county have either received the first vaccination or are scheduled to do so.

**REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT RELATED TO THE DISTRICT'S COVID-19 EXTENDED PREPAREDNESS PLAN FOR LEARNING ONLY**

Superintendent Davis asked if there were any comments or questions about the district's COVID-19 extended preparedness plan for learning now that recommendations have been presented. There were none.

**ACTION ITEM – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION – OTHER**

*RECONFIRM COVID-19 EXTENDED LEARNING PLAN:* As required the district must hold a Reconfirmation Meeting every 30 days to review the COVID-19 Extended Preparedness and Response Plan for Learning and to consider reconfirmation of the plan.

Moved Williams, supported Gamble, that Action Item – Curriculum and Instruction be approved as presented. A roll-call vote unanimously carried the motion.

**DISCUSSION**

*CONTACT SPORTS/ATHLETICS AND BOARD MEETINGS:* Superintendent Davis reported that contact sports/athletics started back up today with stipulations; and that the current executive order does not allow boards to meet in person through March 31, 2021.

*NEW BOARD RETREAT DATES:* Superintendent Davis asked board members to suggest dates to hold retreats.

Consensus was to meeting Thursday, March 4<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-7:00 p.m. The meetings will be conducted virtually.

*BOND UPDATE:* Superintendent Davis reviewed the table of contents in the School Bond Binder that was provided to board members last week. Board members were encouraged to share their questions with the superintendent prior to the February 15<sup>th</sup> special meeting so that answers could be prepared.

Trustee Gamble asked to see where money comes from and if there is alternate funding available for financing projects to which Director of Business Operations Becky Jones responded she would prepare the requested information for the special meeting.

*DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION:* Superintendent Davis referred the Board to an outline he emailed to them as an eyeopener about some of the work the district has done toward diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice. The outline lists actions the district has taken toward diversity and inclusion that included: 1) Professional Development 2) State-Level Engagement 3) Curriculum and Instruction 4) Personnel and 5) Board Governance. He suggested the district adopt an Equity Policy; there are only a few district's in the state that have such a policy; and the district's policy holder NEOLA does not currently have one either. He wants to adopt something specific to the district. He added there is a lot of work to do and it will be a long haul to achieve results in the future. He wants to hire the right consultants and people who want to be a part of the process.

Board member comments, suggestions and concerns were shared as follows:

- A committee should be formed that can bring all the pieces together; it should include one to two board members.
- What about ABCs have they discussed sharing a Director of Diversity and Inclusion? – *not a director only social and emotional learning representatives (coaches) are currently shared.*
- It's important to have a plan as well as the results of the equity audit as it is important.
- What does all the work being done add up to, what is the district trying to achieve and what does it look like. It could look different to different people.
- Where was the idea obtained to do any of the stuff that has been done? Has some outside entity whose job is to look at these things to know if these things we have done and are doing will lead us beyond a simple foundation but actually changing the culture of the district?
- This is not work that any of us have expertise in, so how can you ask your leadership team to conduct an equity audit thus putting them in a position to be ridiculed about something they know nothing about. Having a third party is a necessity.
- Who defines the things the district should do?
- How do we know the direction the district should go in?
- How can you ask staff to do something they don't know about?
- A good foundation is needed.
- Nobody can tell us what to do as a district; this is not acceptable.
- This is frustrating as change needs to occur and it does not feel like it has.
- Concrete timelines need to be set and change needs to occur soon.
- Dr. Johnson would be helpful to have participate in a board meeting.
- There should be a committee established to seek input from many.
- KCC's president would be helpful; their board adopted an equity and inclusion policy and it was done in a professional and positive manner.
- While the district has made small steps to improve the environment since 2013 it doesn't feel as if impactful change has occurred.

Superintendent Davis indicated he has participated in conversations for quite a while with the Civil Rights Commission primarily to start with and with other districts that experienced much like our district has and what their growing pains were. Working with Administrators and using Mid-Atlantic to give feedback where holes are to see where they think the issues are separate from the issues that he is aware of. This is an ongoing evolution; nothing has been set in stone. He added that an equity audit was sent to administrators to complete as a springboard tool to receive feedback and to gauge the temperature. It is meant to be thought provoking toward moving forward. The district has done much since 2013 to educate, inform and make progress toward change. The equity audit will help prepare and RFP when going out to bid when seeking a company to consult with to conduct a completed Equity Audit of the district and to provide recommendations.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Moved M. Davis, supported by Lanker, that the Board move into executive session under Section 8 (c) of the Open Meetings Act for a strategy and negotiation sessions connected with the negotiation of a collective bargaining agreement at 8:17 p.m. A roll-call vote unanimously carried the motion.

**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

The Board returned to open session at 8:25 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF ACTION ITEMS – FINANCIAL OTHER**

*RATIFY TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH IUOE LOCAL 324:* Approve the ratification of the tentative agreement with the IUOE Local 324 for the 2020-21 school year.

Moved by Lanker, supported by Middleton, that the Board of Education approve Action Item – Financial Other as presented. A roll-call vote carried the motion unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

President Lindsey called for any members of the virtual audience to address the Board. There were none.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

There were none.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

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LISA MIDDLETON, SECRETARY

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KIMBERLY VANWORMER, RECORDING SECRETARY