

MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SESSION OF THE MARSHALL BOARD OF EDUCATION HELD ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2020 AT 7:15 PM VIRTUALLY @ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo_Dw2K8ptX5eFKauouPJZQ/

PRESENT: DESMET, NICHOLSON, MIDDLETON, WILLIAMS, LANKERD, GAMBLE, LINDSEY, DAVIS, JONES

ABSENT: NONE

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President DeSmet. He apologized for the delay due to technical difficulties. A moment of silence was observed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Treasurer Williams.

MEETING CHANGED TO VIRTUAL

Superintendent Davis indicated that due to the increased number of COVID-19 cases in Calhoun County the health department advised that meetings be held virtually rather than in-person until such time the number of COVID-19 cases improve.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Lindsey, supported by Williams, that the agenda be approved as presented. A roll-call vote unanimously carried the motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

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

Items included on the consent agenda were minutes of the September 28, 2020 Business Session and October 12, 2020; August disbursements in the amount of \$2,222,784.80; and employments of Daniela Bethel as noon-hour supervisor at Hughes Elementary and Bridget Hicks as paraprofessional at Marshall Middle School.

Moved by Lindsey, supported by Lankerd, 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.

UPDATE ON VIRTUAL ONLY SCHOOL: Superintendent Davis introduced Gail Rodgers, the district's Math Coach and now Virtual Only Coordinator for the district's elementary schools. Ms. Rodgers presented a slide show that included elementary virtual only statistics since the start of the school year to-date. The presentation included

outcomes of the first nine weeks of school; week at-a-glance; program and classroom culture; supporting the staff; and ongoing and future challenges.

Board members asked questions and made comments as follows:

- What is the plan to bring back virtual students to in-person should they want to; the district is working to make this happen at the start of second semester.
- What support do elementary teachers that are teaching face-to-face have when they are teaching virtually; there has been discussion about training/support. Much training occurred over the summer to prepare teachers for virtual delivery of instruction.
- What can be done for the lack of internet for some families; mobile hot spots have been made available. It was noted that parents that enrolled their students in virtual education only had to agree to put internet in their home if they did not already have it.
- There are concerns regarding class sizes and textbook availability; the district has posted an additional teaching position for a virtual only teacher and has addressed the need for texts. It has proven to be difficult to find individuals to fill teaching positions; people are just not applying.
- How is the district planning to teach virtually for all students should shut down of in person instruction be necessary; building principals are coaching their staff and learning for teachers is being coordinated.

RECENT COVID-19 IMPACT ON SCHOOLS: Superintendent Davis introduced Eric Pessell, Health Officer of the Calhoun County Public Health Department. He explained that every Monday morning a meeting is held with all superintendents of school district in the county to review current COVID-19 trends. He indicated there is concern for the unprecedented numbers of cases and hospitalizations that are at an all time high; as well the number of deaths that have occurred. He emphasized the importance of wearing a mask, socially distancing and hand washing.

Questions and comments were made by board members as follows with responses made by Mr. Pessell and Superintendent Davis:

- There is concern in the public that the school is not telling the truth about the number of positive cases; the health department and the district have the same information. The process for contract tracing was explained. There have been no school associated cases; this means the individuals did not get COVID-19 from school.
- What is the trigger point for when the district will have to go virtually for a period of time; if there were school associated cases, meaning transmission occurred at school, then changing to remote learning may occur for a specific building. The pause that occurred recently at Harrington Elementary was due to there were a number of staff that needed to be quarantined and there were not enough resources to conduct in-person learning; this decision was made by the superintendent not the health department.
- What is being seen is that transmissions are occurring due to extra-curricular activities; those activities outside of school.

- It is more likely that in-person instruction would be changed to remote learning by school building. However, there may be situation where district-wide remote learning may occur.

Superintendent Davis welcomed MPS School Nurse Danielle Siebert to the meeting. He indicated that Ms. Seibert has been tracking COVID-19 statistics for the district. Ms. Seibert reviewed charts that demonstrate the district's data.

Questions and comments were made by board members as follows with responses made by Superintendent Davis:

- A dashboard should be created on the district's website where people can see weekly statistics; this is something the district could do.
- Why are notices of COVID-19 cases only being reported to the building staff and parents in which the infected individual attends; up until October 12th this is how the district has handled communications. The district now has a COVID-19 page on its website and all notices since October 12th have been announced as an alert.
- Staff across the district should be notified of all positives and in what building they occurred; the district will email all staff moving forward.
- The table presented by Ms. Seibert should be posted on the district's website; this will be considered.
- Provide definitions of what "school associated" means to parents; this will be considered.
- A short message posted to Facebook on Fridays as well as FAQs would be helpful.

LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORTS: Superintendent Davis indicated that Leadership Team Reports were included in the board's packet. Board members commented there are many great things being done across the district; and that it is good to hear students and teachers are adapting to the changes.

DISCUSSION

MONTHLY REVIEW OF COVID-19 EXTENDED PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLAN FOR LEARNING: Superintendent Davis explained the district is required to review its COVID-19 Extended Preparedness and Response Plan for Learning every 30 days. State law requires the district to report its statistics through GEMS system by November 6th; beginning in December the district must submit its reconfirmation plan within five days of the Board of Education's approval of it.

PUBLIC COMMENT – COVID-19 EXTENDED PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLAN FOR LEARNING

Members of the virtual audience were invited to make comment. There were none.

Consensus of board members was to provide the public another opportunity to participate in making comments before the board would consider reconfirming the learning plan.

APPROVAL OF ACTION ITEM – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
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.

Superintendent Davis reported the percent of student engagement as demonstrated through two-way interactions.

As indicated earlier in the meeting consensus was to allow additional time for public comment regarding the plan before reconfirming it.

Trustee Lankerd asked that all constituents be included in the survey; the district will show evidence this is done as a response.

Moved by Lindsey, supported by Williams, that the Board of Education table Action Item – Curriculum and Assessment and review it further at the next meeting of the Board. The vote was taken and Trustee Gamble’s connection to the virtual meeting was lost. She casted her favorable vote when she rejoined the meeting. The vote carried the motion unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Secretary Middleton recommended a free webinar based on the book *Happiness Advantage* by Shawn Achor and encouraged individuals to attend. The webinar is titled the Orange Frog Virtual Experience October 27 at 1:00 PM.

Trustee Lankerd indicated she would be happy to brainstorm communication ideas with Superintendent Davis and staff.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

LISA MIDDLETON, SECRETARY

KIMBERLY VANWORMER, RECORDING SECRETARY