

MARENGO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board Meeting Minutes  
October 26, 2023

4:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Mr. Rayvell Smith, President.

Establishment of a quorum.

Members present: Mr. Freddie Charleston, Mrs. Lynda Joiner, Mr. John McAlpine, Mr. Chester Moore, and Mr. Rayvell Smith.

Members absent: none.

The invocation was given by Mr. Smith.

Approval of Agenda

The motion to approve the agenda was made by Mrs. Joiner and seconded by Mr. Charleston. It carried unanimously.

Second Approval of Previous Meetings

The motion for second approval of the September 28, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes and the September 29, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes was made by Mr. Charleston and seconded by Mrs. Joiner. It carried unanimously.

I, Luke Hallmark, Superintendent of Education of Marengo County Schools, do hereby make the following recommendations:

Business Matters

- Ms. Sherry Owen – State Examiner Report  
Ms. Sherry Owen, State Examiner, presented to the Board the results of the October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022, audit. An unmodified opinion was issued on the financial statements, which means that the Board's financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position and the results of its operations for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2022. The unmodified opinion is the best opinion from the department. There were four audit findings pertaining to:
  - Failure to ensure restricted funds were only used for allowable purposes and all accounting transactions were properly recorded.
  - Failure to ensure all funds were deposited in compliance with Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 41-14A-1 through 41-14A-4, that establishes a program for the security of public funds with financial institutions.
  - Failure to submit General Purpose Financial Statements to the Alabama State Department of Education timely and to publish the Board's financial information as required by the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 16-1-8.1(b)(3).
  - Failure to submit the required notarized affidavit to the State Superintendent that certifies all funds allocated for classroom instructional support have been properly spent and that all legal requirements have been properly observed and implemented as required by the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 16-1-8.1(b)(3).All of the findings have been addressed with a corrective action plan. The examiners also audited A. L. Johnson High School and there were no findings. The Superintendent wanted the Board members to all know that this is something that should never be taken lightly and we are always available to help the examiners with whatever material is needed.
  
- Ms. Ola Ford – A. L. Johnson High School Parent  
Ms. Ola Ford spoke to the Board about her daughter getting hurt at A. L. Johnson High School. Her daughter accidentally cut her leg on the bleachers. The Superintendent and Principal had met with Ms. Ford and allowed her to keep her daughter at home until it healed. Arrangements were made to have her lessons sent to her. Ms. Ford wanted pay for medical expenses, loss of work, and mental anguish. She was asked how much money would be needed and she mentioned \$10,000. The Board explained to her that they would get back with her.
  
- Mr. Richard Johnson – Financial Update  
Mr. Richard Johnson, CSFO, gave the Board members a financial update. In the General Fund, the cash balance as of August 31, 2023, was \$1,902,355.09. The receipts were \$1,059,750.52 while the expenditures were \$806,435.98. This left a September 30, 2023, cash balance of \$2,155,669.63. This cash balance is good.
  
- Mr. Terry Norton – Technology Update  
Mr. Terry Norton, Technology Coordinator, gave the Board members a technology update. PreACT testing has been completed for all 10<sup>th</sup> graders and the seniors will be taking the WorkKeys test on Wednesday, November 8<sup>th</sup>. October disbursement from the CCR grant has not been received causing all new items to be put on hold. The Cybersecurity Grant has been received and is being used. We are waiting to hear if we have received the AMSTI Robotics Grant. The Middle Grades Innovation Grant has been submitted. This grant will be used to extend our Virtual Reality licenses from three to five years along with an Ag / Veterinary Science license for five years. The Lieutenant Governor's Grant for Capital Improvement was submitted on Thursday. The overall focus was on school safety across the district.

- Mrs. Wendy Joiner – Instructional Update  
Mrs. Wendy Joiner, Instructional Leader, gave her academic report to the Board members. There have been several professional development opportunities this past month. They included Progress Learning ACT and WorkKeys Prep for grades 7 – 12, ACT and ACAP Data Days, iReady Webinar, MTSS Turnaround Training, and a PreK Conference. Upcoming professional development training includes Math Nation, Alabama Practice Test for the Summative Assessment, MTSS Turnaround #2, and Coaching Community Reading Instruction. Civics Exam results are in at A. L. Johnson High School and Sweet Water High School. At A. L. Johnson High School, 100% passed and two seniors will retake the test at Sweet Water High School. Marengo High School seniors will take the test on November 2, 2023. At all schools, 100% of the seniors have applied to at least one college. The Literacy Act and Numeracy information meetings were held at all three schools but were not very well attended. The Career Coach report included meetings with all 4<sup>th</sup> graders to continue with career research projects, working on 8<sup>th</sup> grade career research projects by practicing oral presentation skills, following up with dual enrollment students to make sure they have all of their supplies and books, and coordinating the World of Works program at Shelton State. The Mental Health Coordinator update included that all report card conferences have been completed at all schools and discussion was provided with students to think of ways to improve their grades.
  
- Legislative Update  
The Superintendent spoke to the Board members about the Alabama Department of Revenue Abstract Report. The report shows that Fiscal Year 2023 had a gain of 1.5%. This may not sound like much, but it is close to \$225 million. September, 2023, receipts were up 0.64% from this time last year. Attendance is up at all three schools. Total enrollment is close to 920 students. The Superintendent mentioned that he is working closely with SSA to try and get a 0.5 assistant principal unit for all schools having under 250 students. Presently, there is a push to have all schools with over 250 students earning a full assistant principal.
  
- Black Warrior Telecommunications Consortium / Utilities Report  
The Black Warrior Telecommunications Consortium financial statement balance for September 29, 2023, was \$83,877.36 in the checking account and \$90,908.14 in a CD. The utilities report for September, 2022, was \$48,297.23 while September, 2023, was \$43,278.56.

### New Business

1. That the Financial Reports for September, 2023, be accepted.
  
2. That the General, Federal, Capital Projects, Accounts Payable, and Payroll account bank statements as reconciled by Chief Financial Officer and reviewed by the Superintendent for September, 2023, be accepted.

3. That the Board approve a Resolution regarding indemnity for each elected or appointed Board member and Superintendent of the Marengo County Board of Education for and in all claims (including matters before the Ethics Commission), litigation matters (including criminal charges), and proceedings arising from, or in any way connected to the performance of that Board member's or Superintendent's duties and responsibilities, excluding The School Board Governance Improvement Act of 2012 and the Alabama Open Meetings Act. This resolution covers and indemnity (including payment of defense costs) is afforded to, all current, past and future elected and appointed Board members and Superintendents.
4. That the following be approved as a substitute bus driver upon completion of all requirements:

Tangela Noid

#### Personnel Recommendations

5. That the Board approve the Superintendent's personnel recommendations as follows:

#### Acting Administrator

Pat Thompson                      Sweet Water High School                      Acting Principal  
(effective October 2, 2023, Mr. Thompson will serve as the Acting Principal until the position is filled)

Mr. Charleston made the motion to approve items 1 through 5. A second came from Mr. McAlpine. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Superintendent's Report

- Mold Issue at Sweet Water High School (Elementary Building)
- Vape Courts for Students
- AASB Advocacy Days in Montgomery – November 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>
- Lieutenant Governor's Grant
- Whole Board Training – October 24<sup>th</sup>
- District 2 Superintendent Meeting – October 24<sup>th</sup>
- Alabama School Choice – Vouchers
- AHSAA Update – Football / Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) / Volleyball
- Governor Ivey and West Alabama Corridor

- Veterans' Day – November 10<sup>th</sup>
- Parenting Day – October 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Early Dismissal – November 15<sup>th</sup>
- Clarke County Bus Driver
- 25 Lowest Earning Counties in Alabama
- Fall Break – October 9<sup>th</sup>

Date and Time of Next Regular Meeting of the Board

The date and time of the next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn at 6:17 p.m. was made by Mr. Moore and seconded by Mrs. Joiner. It carried unanimously.