

MARENGO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board Meeting Minutes  
November 16, 2023

4:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Mr. Freddie Charleston, Vice-President.

Establishment of a quorum.

Members present: Mr. Freddie Charleston, Mrs. Lynda Joiner, and Mr. Chester Moore.

Members absent: Mr. John McAlpine and Mr. Rayvell Smith.

The invocation was given by Mr. McAlpine.

Approval of Agenda

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

Second Approval of October 26, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes

The motion for second approval of the October 26, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes was made by Mr. Moore 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

- **Financial Update / Child Nutrition Program Update**  
Mr. Richard Johnson, CSFO, gave the Board members a financial update. In the General Fund, the cash balance as of September 30, 2023, was \$2,155,669.63. The receipts were \$938,253.19 while the expenditures were \$1,099,084.46. This left an October 31, 2023, cash balance of \$1,994,838.36. The finances continue to look good.
- **Instructional Update**  
Mrs. Wendy Joiner, Instructional Leader, was unable to attend the Board meeting but left a handout for everyone to look over. There were walkthroughs with Dr. Tiffany Davis at A. L. Johnson High School and Sweet Water High School. The site visit will include a report that reflects what is being observed in the K – 3 classrooms. Math Nation training for 6 – 12 Math Teachers was held on October 31<sup>st</sup> and November 6<sup>th</sup>. There has been a total of three professional opportunities with Math Nation. K – 3 Teachers and Reading Specialists from each school met at each school to focus on support for our teachers. Math resources for PreK were received in each classroom that included manipulatives and books to be used. There are some upcoming events that include PD for Summer Learning planning, Safety Audits, District MTSS Team meeting, Benchmark testing for all students beginning on December 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>, and visits from Judge Laurie Hall and Kenny Freeman. Ms. Kenyetta Evans left a Mental Health report. She has completed the Mental Health Awareness training at all schools. She is working on getting information on Self Care and what can be offered for our employees. The Employee Assistance Program, which can be found on page 6 in the Campus benefit book, can be used as a resource for this information. Ms. Evans attended the Regional MHSC along with other MHSC's in our region. The State Department of Education was pleased with all of the work that is being done at each of our schools. The Math Coaches sent a newsletter that discussed the research for small group learning. Math centers provide structure that takes pressure off the teacher and can provide more individualized help.
- **Technology Update**  
Mr. Terry Norton, Technology Coordinator, gave the Board members a technology update. The WorkKeys for our seniors has been completed. The test site went down statewide on Wednesday, November 8<sup>th</sup> and testing was rescheduled. The remaining testing will begin on March 4<sup>th</sup>. A \$25,000 computer programming grant has been submitted for our middle grades. It will include district-wide Robotics Professional Development. Grants have also been applied to fund VEX Robotics at all three schools. The grants are a \$60,000 CCR Grant that would pay for equipment, competition kits and professional development for grades 4 – 12, a \$10,000 AMSTI Robotics grant for grades K – 3, and a \$25,000 middle school computer programming grant. We got notification that we will receive \$800,000 from the Lt. Governor's grant. Sweet Water High School and Marengo High School will each get \$300,000 and A. L. Johnson High school will get \$200,000. It appears the money will go for funding to replace most exterior doors and door frames at each school. If any funds are left over, they could go for new bus cameras at A. L. Johnson High School, Phase 2 of the fencing project at Marengo High School, and working to fix the mold problem at Sweet Water High School.
- **ADM Numbers**  
The Superintendent gave the Board members a historical report on Average Daily Membership numbers from FY 1998 to FY 2025 for school systems in our area. The decline in enrollment is alarming. Another report compared the ADM numbers by school at the three school systems in Marengo County. Once again, there continues to be a decline.

- **Legislative Update / Revenue Abstract**  
The Superintendent mentioned a few items that appear to be discussed at the next legislative session. One is crafting a comprehensive gambling bill. It appears there are presently over a thousand illegal gambling operations in the state. Legalizing some forms of gambling that are controlled by a gambling commission might be an option. One senator is proposing safety audits by law enforcement at every public school in the state to identify and fix potential security weaknesses. Designated law enforcement officers would conduct regular evaluations every three to five years to ensure safety precautions at all schools. The State Department of Education approved a budget request for struggling readers beyond Grade 3 for \$22 million. The money would go to professional training for teachers. Tax revenues in the state's education fund were down 13.8% in October compared to the prior year. This could be because last year was higher than expected and this year, it is about where it was projected.
  
- **Black Warrior Telecommunications Consortium Report**  
The Black Warrior Telecommunications Consortium financial statement balance for October 31, 2023, was \$84,020.75 in the checking account and \$90,908.14 in a CD. The utilities report for September, 2023, was unavailable at this time.

#### New Business

1. That the Financial Reports for October, 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 October, 2023, be accepted.
  
3. That the Superintendent be authorized to borrow \$500,000 from the bank within Marengo County that offers the lowest interest rate for 30-day loan for the purpose of paying Marengo County employees on December 19, 2023. This will be repaid from the December, 2023, Foundation Program revenues on or about December 31, 2023. However, if Foundation Program revenues are received by December 19, 2023, this loan will not be needed.
  
4. That the Board designate one elector to participate in the election for AASB District 2 Director. The election for AASB District 2 Director ended in a tie so under AASB's Bylaws, a second election must be held during the AASB's convention.

Mr. Charleston was designated to participate in the election for AASB District 2 Director since he was elected to be the system's delegate representative at the AASB Annual Convention.

5. That the Board elect a member to serve as President and one to serve as Vice-President.

Mr. Charleston was nominated by Mr. Moore and seconded by Mrs. Joiner to be the new President. It carried unanimously.

Mr. Moore was nominated by Mrs. Joiner and seconded by Mr. Charleston to serve as the Vice-President. It carried unanimously.

Personnel Recommendations

6. That the Board approve the Superintendent’s personnel recommendations as follows:

Resignations

Alexis Lewis (effective December 8, 2023)	A. L. Johnson High School	Counselor
Dea Powe (effective December 14, 2023)	A. L. Johnson High School	Math Coach

Mr. Moore made the motion to approve items 1 through 6. A second came from Mrs. Joiner. The motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent’s Report

- Grow Marengo Article
- Annual School Bus Inspection
- School Safety Summit – December 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup>
- AASB Annual Convention in Birmingham – November 30<sup>th</sup> through December 2<sup>nd</sup>
- AHSAA Football Playoffs
- AHSAA Football State Championship Games in Tuscaloosa – December 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>
- AHSAA Fall Classification Meeting – December 18<sup>th</sup>
- Thanksgiving Holidays – November 20<sup>th</sup> through 24<sup>th</sup>
- Christmas Holidays – December 20<sup>th</sup> through January 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Professional Development – January 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Students Return – January 4<sup>th</sup>
- FY 2024 Premiums for GAP and GAP PLUS
- Digital Management Document System
- Cybercrime
- Veterans’ Day Program
- High School Diploma for Veterans
- PreK Concerns

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, December 14, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn at 5:27 p.m. was made by Mr. Moore and seconded by Mrs. Joiner. It carried unanimously.