

MARENGO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board Meeting Minutes  
Called Meeting

January 17, 2024

4:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. by Mr. Freddie Charleston.

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. Charleston.

Approval of Agenda

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

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

Personnel Recommendations

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

Employment of Support Employees

Aidan Busby (effective February 2, 2024)	Central Office	System Technician
Ron Taylor (effective February 1, 2024)	Central Office	Assistant Maintenance Supervisor / Worker

Employment of Certified Employee

Johnney Ford (effective February 1, 2024)	A. L. Johnson High School	Teacher and possible coaching duties
--	---------------------------	---

Leave of Absence

C. J. Dunning (effective November 27, 2023, with return date of May 1, 2024)	Central Office	Assistant Maintenance Supervisor / Worker
---	----------------	--

Retirement

Luke Hallmark (effective March 31, 2024)	Central Office	Superintendent
---	----------------	----------------

Dear Board Members:

I would like to inform each of you that I will be retiring effective March 31, 2024.

I have truly enjoyed working for the Marengo County School System and I sincerely appreciate the support provided to me during my 24 years as Superintendent. It has been a complete privilege and pleasure to work with the present and past school Board members, Central Office staff, principals, faculties, support employees, students, and communities. It made waking up and coming to work each day a pleasure.

I treasure the improvements we have made during my tenure which include:

- Academic improvement at all three schools.
- Adding Reading and Math Coaches along with a system-wide Instructional Leader.
- Providing all students with Chromebooks.
- Adding up-to-date technology in all classrooms,
- Providing on-line and dual enrollment classes.
- Adding a system-wide Mental Health Coordinator.
- Getting full-time counselors, librarians, and principals at all schools no matter their size.
- Working with the County Commissioners to re-locate the Board of Education office from the Courthouse to the annex building, along with the addition of another 1 cent sales tax for education.
- Adding field houses, a lunchroom, concession stands, new roofs, and bleachers to schools in need.

- Adding new HVAC systems to all schools with the next 2 to 3 years.
- Selling John Essex High School campus back to the original Essex family.
- Purchasing new buses.
- Buying a local building and turning it into an alternative school.
- Putting security cameras at all schools and budgeting for cameras on all buses.
- Adding security fencing and doors at all schools.
- Supporting competitive athletics.
- Developing good working relationships with the legislature, RSA, and AHSAA.
- Surviving proration multiple times.
- Creating a salary matrix for support employees.
- Working with the State Department of Education to restructure our 10-mill match.
- Managing our finances to where we are in the best position we have been in many years.

One of the things that I have enjoyed most is seeing the development of a culture of continuous improvement. The students and families in our district are fortunate to have such a dedicated and talented staff throughout our school system. With so many professional development opportunities that we take advantage of, I see the system continuing to do great things.

While I look forward to enjoying my retirement and spending more time with my family and friends, I will miss being a part of this system. I trust that the friendships I have developed here will last well into the future.

In closing, we still have important and critical work to do in the months ahead. This is an outstanding school district with outstanding people and my wish is that you continue to focus on doing what is best and keeping the school district in highest regard. Remember, it's all about working together to give our students the best opportunity to be successful!

May God bless you and thank you!

Sincerely,  
Luke Hallmark

Mr. Smith made the motion to approve item 1. A second came from Mr. McAlpine. The motion passed unanimously.

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, January 25, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn at 4:15 p.m. was made by Mrs. Joiner and seconded by Mr. Moore. It carried unanimously.