

## Minutes of Mississippi Board of Education Meeting

December 19, 2024

The members of the Mississippi Board of Education met at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 19, 2024, pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-5 for the purpose of conducting a regularly scheduled Board meeting.

The public accessed this meeting via livestream or in-person at the Central High School Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom, 359 North West Street, Jackson, Mississippi. Board members physically present included: Mr. Glen V. East, Dr. Wendi Barrett, Mr. Bill Jacobs, Mr. Matt Mayo, Mr. Matt Miller, Mr. Mike Pruitt, and Ms. Mary Werner. Board members attending virtually: Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee (Franklin, North Carolina) and Ms. Billye Jean Stroud (New Albany, Mississippi). Student Representative present: Ms. Kate Riddle. Student representative absent: Mr. Crosby Parker. Dr. Lance Evans, State Superintendent, was also present.

- I. Mr. Glen V. East called the Board meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., after determining that a quorum of the Board existed for the purpose of conducting a meeting.
- II. Mr. Mike Pruitt led the Pledge of Allegiance and Mr. Matt Mayo gave the Invocation.
- III. On a motion by Ms. Mary Werner, seconded by Mr. Bill Jacobs, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of November 7, 2024 Board meeting.
- IV. On a motion by Mr. Matt Mayo, seconded by Mr. Matt Miller, the Board approved the Consent Agenda.

On a motion by Mr. Matt Mayo, seconded by Mr. Bill Jacobs, the Board approved the agenda as presented.

- V. Recognition Ceremony

### **2024 National Blue Ribbon Schools for Mississippi**

Magnolia Park Elementary School  
Ocean Springs School District

Mannsdale Upper Elementary School  
Madison County School District

Ripley High School  
South Tippah School District

Stone Elementary School  
Stone County School District

- VI. Dr. Lance Evans gave the following report as the State Superintendent of Education:
- Dr. Evans thanked Mr. Glen V. East, Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, and Mr. Mike Pruitt for joining the Superintendents meeting on December 3, 2024. Dr. Evans stated he provided information in preparation for the Legislative Session, introduced MDE leaders from across the agency, and got great feedback from the superintendents. Dr. Evans recognized special guests from Mississippi State University Provost and Executive Vice President Dr. David Shaw, Associate Vice President for Enrollment John Dickerson, and College of Education Dean Dr. Teresa Jayroe.
  - Dr. Evans stated he and Ms. Holly Spivey met Senate Education Chair Dennis DeBar, House Education Chair Rob Robertson and Vice-Chair Kent McCarty, House Speaker Jason White, Rep. Donnie Bell, and Rep. Steve Massengill to lay the groundwork for the upcoming Legislative Session.
  - Dr. Evans stated he met with Rep. Donnie Bell, House Speaker White's Education and Workforce Policy Advisor Cole Butler, and Accelerate Mississippi Executive Director Courtney Taylor for Workforce Development Collaboration.
  - Dr. Evans stated a report was delivered on the Use of ACT for Required ACT Assessment to the Legislature. Dr. Evans stated the report was based on research and meetings with four states (Alabama, Nebraska, Nevada, and Wyoming) that currently or previously used the ACT as federally required assessment. Dr. Evans stated the states reported benefits and challenges of using the ACT as the state assessment. Dr. Evans stated most reported challenges with measuring growth and state standards.
  - Dr. Evans stated he met with Secretary of State Michael Watson and Maxwell Leadership Foundation about possibly piloting Maxwell's values-based leadership development program for students in a Mississippi middle school and high school.
  - Dr. Evans stated he had several meetings with partner organizations and stakeholders, including:
    - Mississippi Superintendent Institute (MSI) Advisory;
    - Accountability Task Force;
    - Mississippi School Boards Association;
    - Mississippi Community College Board and Community College Presidents;
    - Mississippi Rural Education Association;
    - Mississippi Council on Economic Education; and
    - Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Project (based at Ole Miss).
  - Dr. Evans stated he had speaking engagements at the Louisville Rotary Club; Education Commission of the States (ECS) Winter Commissioners meeting; and Learning Policy Institute Webinar.

- Dr. Evans stated he attended ExcelinEd National Summit on Education and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Annual Policy Forum where math was a big focus at both meetings.
- Dr. Evans stated he visited Pontotoc City Schools for their Impressive English Learner program and Lake Elementary School's A-Rating Celebration in the Scott County School District.
- Dr. Evans introduced Mr. John Ferrell, Chief of School and District Transformation, to discuss Miss. Code Ann. 37-17-6.1. Mr. Ferrell stated that the Mississippi Achievement School District shall be dissolved effective July 1, 2025. Mr. Ferrell stated the two school districts would transition into two separate school districts under Districts of Transformation on July 1, 2025. Mr. Ferrell stated that in January 2025 an advertisement will go out for a superintendent for the school district that currently does not have a superintendent.

VII. Mr. Glen V. East, Chair of the State Board, gave the following report:

- Mr. East thanked the MDE staff and Board for their work this year.
- Mr. East thanked MDE for working through the issues of MSIS 2.0 and extending deadlines to school districts across the state to make sure information could be collected.

VIII. Report from Student Representative

Ms. Kate Riddle spoke on future-focused education.

IX. Report on State Board of Education Subcommittee meeting

Mr. Bill Jacobs, Chair, Internal Accountability Subcommittee, stated they met this morning to discuss the Office of State Auditor's 2023 single audit management audit report, and they did find a very minor finding and that has been resolved. Mr. Jacobs stated that another finding of two school districts that were late with their reports, and we do not concur with that. Mr. Jacobs stated that back in February 2023 the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) notified MDE of a shortage of CPA firms throughout Mississippi to do audits which is a major problem which means that many school districts cannot get their audits done on time. Mr. Jacobs stated that OSA is working to figure out how to correct this problem. Mr. Jacobs stated they approved the appointments of the Ad Hoc Committee for the recruitment of our junior representative for the Board. Mr. Jacob stated the Committee will meet in May and report back to the Board in July.

X. Discussion and/or Approval of Board Items

01. Action: Approval of an immediate temporary rule and to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-191: *MS Early Learning Guidelines for Classrooms Serving Three- and*

*Four-Year Old Children* to amend criteria regarding the Rate of Readiness Determination to hold harmless grant programs if a program does not meet a successful score and is placed on probation for the 2025 – 2026 academic year [Goal 3 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Donna Boone)

On a motion by Ms. Mary Werner, seconded by Mr. Mike Pruitt, the Board unanimously approved item 01. (copy attached).

02. Information: Educator Workforce Development Update [Goal 4 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Paula Vanderford)

Dr. Paula Vanderford and Dr. Courtney Van Cleve gave an update on Educator Workforce Development.

03. Action: Approval of the MDE Contract [Goal 5 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)

03.A. Action: Contract with DELL Marketing, L.P. to provide for Microsoft Premier and Unified Support Services [Goal 5 – MBE Strategic Plan] (John Kraman)

On a motion by Mr. Matt Mayo, seconded by Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee, the Board unanimously approved item 03.A. (copy attached).

04. Action: Approval of the MDE grant awards [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Felicia Gavin)

04.A. Action: Award Title IV, Part B Nita M. Lowey 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program under the Every Student Success Act (ESSA) supplemental grant funds [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan] (Donna Boone)

On a motion by Ms. Mary Werner, seconded by Mr. Matt Mayo, the Board unanimously approved item 04.A. (copy attached).

05. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of monthly expenditures for the Mississippi School of the Arts (Donna Boone)
- B. Approval of monthly expenditures for the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (Donna Boone)
- C. Approval of certified personnel for the Mississippi School of the Arts (Donna Boone)

- D. Approval to adopt policies required by state statute for the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind to be placed on the District Policy Service website established by the Mississippi School Boards Association (Donna Boone)
- E. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) process: To revise the title of twelve (12) endorsement areas; to change the title “Vocational” to Career and Technical Education (CTE) throughout the CTE Licensure Guidelines Document; to add “approval by CTE statements” to endorsement areas that are no longer being issued; to add the veteran teacher experience statement to Career Pathway: Software Development CTE endorsement area; to add additional occupational experience options to two (2) CTE endorsement areas; and to remove the approved courses from all CTE endorsements throughout the CTE Guidelines Document (Paula Vanderford)
- F. Approval of Delta State University’s request to delete its approved traditional teacher education preparation licensure-track Bachelor of Science programs in English Education 7-12 (119), Mathematics Education 7-12 (154), Music Education K-12 Instrumental (165), Music Education K-12 Vocal (166), Physical Education K-12 (144), and Social Studies 7-12 (192) (Paula Vanderford)
- G. Approval of Delta State University’s request to establish a traditional teacher education preparation Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education program leading to licensure in two (2) areas, with the major emphasis area including English 7-12 (119), Mathematics 7-12 (154), Music Education K-12 Instrumental (165), Music Education K-12 Vocal (166), Physical Education K-12 (144), Social Studies 7-12 (192), and Biology 7-12 (181) (Paula Vanderford)
- H. Approval of nonpublic school accreditation statuses for School Year 2024-2025 (Paula Vanderford)
- I. Approval of final calculation of the Mississippi Student Funding Formula for Fiscal Year 2026 (Felicia Gavin)
- J. Approval of final calculation of the Mississippi Student Funding Formula Base Student Cost for Fiscal Year 2026 (Felicia Gavin)

- K. Approval of textbooks as recommended by the 2024 State Textbook Rating Committee for adoption in the areas of Art (K-12), Career Technical Education (9-12), Math (K-12), and Social Studies (K-12) Fiscal Year 2025 (Donna Boone)
- L. Approval of a temporary rule and to begin the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code Title 7: Part 240: Minimum Bus Specifications by amending certain existing criteria and establishing new criteria for minimum bus specifications for the sale of new buses effective July 1, 2025 (Paula Vanderford)
- M. Information: Report on action of the Commission on School Accreditation concerning the assignment of district accreditation statuses (Paula Vanderford)
- N. Information: 2024 Annual Educator Preparation Provider Teacher Preparation Performance Report in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-101-29 (Paula Vanderford)

On a motion by Mr. Matt Miller, seconded by Mr. Matt Mayo, the Board unanimously approved items A., B., C., D., E., F., G., H., I., J., K., L., M., and N. (copy attached).

XI. Consideration of Executive Session

Mr. Matt Miller moved that the Board consider making a closed determination of the need to go into Executive Session. Mr. Matt Mayo seconded the motion, and the motion passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Glen V. East asked for legal counsel, Ms. Jean Cook, and Ms. Holly Spivey to remain in the room.

Mr. Matt Miller, then moved that the Board go into Executive Session in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-7 (4)(a) and (k) for discussion of discrete personnel matters, Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-7 (4)(b) for discussion and strategy sessions or negotiations with respect to prospective litigation, ongoing litigation, or issuance of an appealable order, and Miss. Code Ann. § 25-41-7 (4)(h) for discussion of discrete matters involving a student and/or parent. Ms. Mary Werner seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote. Ms. Jennifer Nichols informed the public of the Board's vote to go into Executive Session for the above stated reasons.

**Minutes of the Executive Session**

During the Executive Session, the Board discussed discrete personnel matters, strategy sessions or negotiations with respect to prospective litigation, ongoing

litigation, or issuance of an appealable order, and discrete matters involving a student and/or parent.

01. On a motion by Mr. Matt Mayo, seconded by Ms. Mary Werner, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Michael D. Kent as hearing officer for an employee termination appeal.
02. On a motion by Mr. Mike Pruitt, seconded by Dr. Wendi Barrett, the Board unanimously voted to uphold superintendent's decision regarding a student disciplinary decision.

Ms. Werner left the meeting at 11:53 a.m.

On a motion by Mr. Matt Miller, seconded by Mr. Matt Mayo, the Board unanimously voted to come out of Executive Session.

The public came back into the Board meeting.

Mr. East stated a subcommittee was established to explore the future growth of the Mississippi School of Mathematics and Science.

XII. State Board of Education

1. No report on meetings attended.
2. No request to attend a meeting.

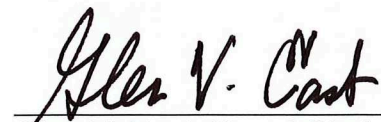
XIII. Other Business

Mr. East stated the January Board meeting will be held on January 16, 2025 in Jackson, MS at the Central High School Building in the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom starting at 10:00 a.m.

XIV. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Billye Jean Stroud, seconded by Mr. Matt Mayo, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 12:33 p.m.

Approved:



Glen V. East, Board Chair  
Mississippi Board of Education



Lance Evans  
Executive Secretary  
Mississippi Board of Education