

Monroe City School Board of Education
2006 Tower Drive
Monroe, Louisiana 71201

MINUTES

The Monroe City School Board met in regular session, Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at Monroe City School District Central Office, 2006 Tower Drive, Monroe, Louisiana 71201. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Board President Jennifer Haneline. Jennifer Haneline offered prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item 1C – Roll Call

Present: Ms. Jennifer Haneline, Mr. Bill Willson, Mr. Daryll Berry, Ms. Betty Ward Cooper, Mr. Brandon Johnson, and Brenda Shelling

Absent: Mr. Michael Sampognaro

Action Item 1D – Adoption of the Agenda

On a motion by Mr. Berry and seconded by Mrs. Shelling, the Board approved the agenda as printed. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 2A - Approval of one vote method of electing Monroe City School Board of Education Officers

On a motion by Mr. Berry and seconded by Mrs. Cooper, the board approved the one vote method. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 2B – Election of 2025 Monroe City School Board of Education President

Superintendent Moore declared all positions vacant and call for nominations for board President.

It was moved by Mr. Berry and seconded by Mrs. Shelling to nominate Mrs. Betty Ward Cooper as President.

In favor of Ms. Jennifer Haneline, Mr. Willson, Mr. Berry, Mrs. Cooper, Mr. Johnson, and Mrs. Shelling,

The motion carried unanimously.

Action Item 2C Election of 2025 Monroe City School Board of Education Vice President

It was moved by Mr. Berry and seconded by Mr. Johnson to nominate Mrs. Brenda Shelling as Vice president of the Board.

In favor of Ms. Jennifer Haneline, Mr. Willson, Mr. Berry, Mrs. Cooper, Mr. Johnson, and Mrs. Shelling,

The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 3A - 2025 Louisiana School Board Recognition Month

Superintendent Moore read a resolution and issued certified board member certificates in honor of school board members for School Board Recognition Month.

Agenda Item 4 – A-J Consent Agenda

Public Comment: Mrs. Krutzer inquired about the decodable text Just Right Reader booklets and how it will be implemented.

Dr. Herron responded, “Just Right Reader were required to have parental involvement budget. This would go to the parents whose students come to the parental involvement nights. They will get a decodable text. They will receive a package that is a customized backpack as well as a quick video that the Superintendent will create as a greeting that will go before the involvement nights. This will support our label schools as required by the state. This will be implemented utilizing parental involvement act for out label schools as required by the state.

Public Comment: Mrs. Krutzer inquired about EIS and asked who we currently collect Medicare funding from and asked if an RFP been done. Superintendent stated not to his knowledge and noted he will get this information for her.

Board member Haneline inquired and voiced her concerns about the EIS contract. Attorney Lawrence reported that this company processes Medicaid billing and reimbursements. He stated to Board President that he is not sure if this is time sensitive or not but to let them know the direction she would like to take. Ms. Haneline recommended holding agenda item 4J (approval of EID contract for contracted services) the EIS contract out and moving it to consent items for separate consideration 5A.

On a motion by Ms. Haneline and seconded by Mr. Johnson the board approve moving the consent agenda item 4J (to consent items for separate consideration agenda item 5A. The motion carried unanimously.

On a motion by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Ms. Haneline the board approved Board of Education Minutes for December 10, 2024; Awarding of RFP#25-02 E-Rate Category 2 Products and Services; Curriculum Pending Contracts; Permission to advertise for bids for Carroll High Band Uniforms; Permission to Travel Neville High School Bengal Belles to Chicago, IL; Permission to Travel Neville High School Cheerleaders to Orlando, FL; Permission to Travel Neville High School Senior Class to London, England, Caen, France, Paris, and Munich Germany; Approval/Ratification of the Just Right Reader instructional support contract and Ratification of authorization granted to Neville High School BOOM Team to travel to Dallas, Texas January 17-19, 2025

Agenda Item 5 – Items for separate Consideration

On a motion by Ms. Haneline and seconded by Mrs. Shelling, the board approved to table the EIS contract until more information is obtained and the Attorney can negotiate the contract.

Board Member Willson stated, if possible, to bring this back to the board next month for approval.

Agenda Item 6 A&B – Report of Superintendent/November 2024 Financial Report

Superintendent Moore Reported on November 2024 summary for the general fund and sales tax for January

- General fund revenue is slightly more than the previous year \$675,000
- The district currently has an increase in salaries and benefits of \$1.1million dollars in part due to the following:
salaries and benefits that were in ESSER grant ended 9/30/2024 the LDOE restructuring of some grants requested in added salaries and benefits to be moved from that to the general fund
- Sales tax total revenue received November 2024 for September 2024 collections decreased by 5.96 % a total of \$188,000
- November sales tax supplement checks were distributed on November 15, 2024
- 1968 sales tax revenues have an overall total decrease of \$6,000, which is .1% less than the prior year overall.
- 1994 sales tax revenue have an overall decrease of \$500
- 2001 sales tax revenue approximately increase of \$104,000 which is 2.64% more than the previous year
- The deadline for the ESSER reimbursement was Monday, December 16, 2024
- One on one training with principals is continuing
- The audit report for June 30, 2024 was submitted by the December 31, 2024 deadline and waiting on the final approval from the legislative auditors.
- Sallie Humble project was budgeted for \$1.5 million dollars because of the deadline came out of general funds and was able to get several invoices prior to the deadline and looks like we are slightly under \$900,000 which is a difference of about \$600,000.

Dr. Watson, (COO) reported that it needs to be a system put in place for weather days. He would like to see procedures and protocols in place and keep the campuses presentable throughout the year. Neville High School has not been using their lawn mowers like they should. Dr. Watson spoke with the building supervisor and explained to him that he will mow the school lawn just like everyone else on the other campus. Board Member Brandon Johnson asked what professional service company mows and who they paid through at Neville High School. Mr. Willson did not remember the name of the company. He stated because of the other duties of the janitorial staff and the size at Neville they did not have time to fully mow but did mow some areas, is what he was told. He believes Neville High School itself pays for the lawn, possibly NAFA he's not sure. Dr. Watson reported there have been several instances throughout the school year where they had to travel to campuses due to lockdowns. He stated again there needs to be a policy in place for this. A meeting was held with Superintendent Moore, Dr. Bush, Mr. Marshall and Monroe Police Department to help develop a policy. It will be ready for next week or so for them to look over. Dr. Watson reported on the transportation policy that needs to be reviewed and updated.

Mr. Willson noted for the past three years he's been trying to get help for J.S. Clark. He stated they have so many needs. He asked Dr. Watson what they could do to address this issue. Mr. Johnson noted this must be brought to the facilities committee meeting. Dr. Watson reported once the online system is put in place, he will submit for review and approval. Mr. Willson asked if the board could have the contract ready for the next board meeting. Dr. Watson and Superintendent Moore responded, yes.

Dr. Watson noted the risk assessments are underway. They've started at Wossman High School and will be at Carroll High School on Thursday. The high schools will be completed first, due to larger needs. Once high schools are completed, middle schools and elementary schools will follow. He reported child nutrition was underway, Director Ms. Wanda Shaw. Under her direction, the Department has been following all the regulations. The meal options have been expanded. Utilizing some of the expired funds. A lot of funds have not been used over the years. Mrs. Krutzer called Dr. Watson about a month ago and said there is about \$50,000 that we've not used. It's been there for about two years. At that point, he started making calls and figuring it out. The meal selection was expanded and now they can provide some meals that our kids really enjoy. Board member Haneline inquired about Mrs. Wanda Shaw Interim position, (Child Nutrition). Superintendent Moore noted that they are giving her the opportunity and seeing how this works out. He's working close to Dr. Watson and if it continues to progress the way it is right now and will know by the end of the school year. Ms. Haneline inquired about the funds for the project at Neville High School Mrs. April Temple previously discussed. Dr. Watson Stated those funds are still there and will follow up.

Dr. Watson reported on the current projects:

- The Sallie Humble project is near completion
- Martin Luther King Jr Junior High School Outdoor Learning Center is under construction
- Homeland Security are in the district updating the security cameras
- The RAVE panic system (panic button) has been in place, but the district has not been using it to its fullest capacity. This is free and the principals were reminded of this alert.

Ms. Haneline voiced concerns about the new gym electricity at Neville.

Superintendent Moore wanted to state publicly thank the faculty, staff and district leadership staff for their support in moving the district in a positive direction.

Public Comments: Mrs. Vicki Krutzer thanked Superintendent Moore for the financial reports. She stated to the board that she was on their side and Dr. Watson was a wonderful addition. She attended a meeting in Baton Rouge where she was asked "why haven't Monroe City spent their funds from the Farm to Table Grant. Mrs. Krutzer researched this and contacted Dr. Watson, and he got right on it. This would have been \$50,000 we lost. She stated Computer Science needs to be added to the budget. Mrs. Krutzer stated to the board that the policy says the budget should be revised quarterly. Several of the funds were not issued when Mrs. Howard made the budget. There is an education excellence fund that's \$228,000 that needs to be looked at. She stated you can go to EGMS to see how your federal dollars are being spent. Mrs. Krutzer recommends looking at all finances. She inquired about the remaining electric buses.

Superintendent Moore noted the Computer Science grant is \$35,262. Computer science funds have just been released on January 14, 2025 and have not obtained final approval on spending. Education Excellence has actual amounts of \$228,494. Education Excellence fund EF was reported during the budget overview that required board approval that Dr. Herron previously spoke on. This fund source is pending as it could be eliminated if House Bill 5 is approved. High dosage tutoring amount from the state was \$384,012. This item was approved by the Curriculum Committee and the Board. The fund will be paid for “On Your Mark” whose services will exhaust the entire budget. The previous Chief of Academic Officer (Serena White) selected this company. Superintendent Moore currently has the Board Attorney reviewing this contract and renegotiating it by paying them after the first semester and other half after second semester. The IDA set aside is \$73,407. This money is spent to support Professional Development through the Bailey Educational Group. Redesign is \$438,000 in the budget book but reflects the P3 section of the budget. However, there are funds allocated to P5 that total \$147,550 and offset a total of \$586,332 which includes indirect cost for this budget totally approximately \$60,000. There was \$132,354 budget for NIET. The remainder of the funding \$351,810 for textbooks to support “Great Minds” and “Bayou Bridges” and \$41,771 for “The Writing Revolution” to train 39 educators. Ms. Haneline asked for a summary of the curriculum cost that’s been incurred for this fiscal year. He responded, yes.

Agenda Item 6C – Report of Board Members

Board Member Brandon Johnson congratulated Betty Ward Cooper as Board President, Brenda Shelling as Vice President, and Jacqueline Anderson as Chief Academic Officer. He thanked the administrators for being in attendance.

Board Member Daryl Berry – No comments

Board Member Jennifer Haneline wanted to acknowledge the departure of Serena White who has served in the district for over 12 years and was the current Chief Academic Officer of Monroe City Schools. She has moved on to another position outside of the district. Ms. Haneline wanted to thank her for all her hard work. Ms. Haneline stated she would like the administrators to make a deliberate effort to identify why staff have lost confidence in our system as it is today. Ms. Haneline expressed concern regarding threats that were made if the Board did not vote in favor of the proposed charter. It was noted that such threats implied that rejecting the charter could lead to damaging the school system. She stated it would be up to the charter association if they want to damage our community and our system. This Board voted based on the information that was presented. Ms. Haneline chose not to vote one way or another because she asked for changes and to come back on next year.

Board Member Bill Willson noted Serena White will be missed and has done great work from an academic standpoint. She also did a good job serving as co-superintendent. He wishes her the best. Mr. Willson stated he requested to have the forensic audit added to the agenda this past Wednesday, January 15th and it was not added to the agenda. He believes it was about 4 months ago when the board voted to proceed with the process of naming or contracting with an accounting firm to complete the forensic audit. He would like to see an update on this, if possible, at the next

board meeting. He would like to be as transparent as possible and see where changes need to be made.

Superintendent Moore thanked Serena White for the work she did. She took another job opportunity and wished her and her family the best. The 4th community engagement will be held on Thursday, January 23rd at Miller Square on Powell Avenue with our partnership with the Housing Authority.

Agenda Item 7 – Future Meetings

Board Meetings – February 11, 2025, and March 18, 2025, at 6:00pm

Action Item 8 – Recess/Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the board, on a motion by Ms. Haneline and seconded by Mr. Johnson the meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

/Betty Ward Cooper

Betty Ward Cooper
Board President

/Sam Moore, III/

Sam Moore, III
Superintendent

Note: These minutes summarize the final decisions made by the Board at the referenced meeting. This meeting was also audio recorded, and that recording is available for review by contacting the Board clerk at tonya.robinsons@mcschools.net.