

MOORESVILLE GRADED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION
Board Business Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, October 7, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

The Board of Education of the Mooresville Graded School District met in a Board Business Meeting on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, at the Mooresville Town Hall, 413 N. Main Street, Mooresville, NC 28115.

Board Members Present: Greg Whitfield, Board Chair; Dr. Debbie Marsh, Vice-Chair; Monica Bender; Rakeem Brawley; Kerry Pennell.

Also Present: Dr. Jason Gardner, Superintendent; Dr. Sandra Albert, Chief Student Services Officer; Angela Davis, Chief Financial Officer; April Kuhn, Chief Human Resource Officer; Tanae McLean, Chief Communications Officer and Title IX Coordinator; Dr. Michael Royal, Chief Operations Officer; Mark Childers, Board Attorney; and, Lisa Neckameyer, Board Clerk.

Mr. Whitfield, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and called for a moment of silence before reflecting on autumn being a time of transition, and noting that with transition comes growth.

Approval of the Agenda: Kerry Pennell moved to amend the agenda to extend the public comment period beyond 30 minutes, allowing all 13 speakers to use their full three minutes. Rakeem Brawley seconded the motion, and the motion passed 5-0. On a motion by Kerry Pennell, seconded by Monica Bender, the board voted 5-0 to approve the amended meeting agenda.

Approval of the Minutes: On a motion by Debbie Marsh, seconded by Monica Bender, the board voted 5-0 to approve the minutes from the September 2, 2025 meeting as presented.

Schedule Next Meeting: The next regular school board meeting will be held on Monday, November 3, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Mooresville Performing Arts Center, 161 South Magnolia Street, Mooresville, NC 28115.

School Highlights: NF Woods Principal, Melanie Allen, and Assistant Principal, Tim Anselmo, shared the learning journey of NF Woods Middle School, the newly implemented alternative learning program. The program was able to begin the year fully-staffed and focuses on building relationships, hands-on career exploration, positive behavior reinforcement and on-campus activities. NF Woods teachers, Dr. Hope Wilson and Amanda Berridge introduced two students, Kailyn Hartley and Milan Dale, who both shared their personal, positive experiences with NF Woods.

Staff Reports:

Superintendent Comments: Superintendent Gardner reported strong academic outcomes for the 2024–2025 school year.

- The district achieved a graduation rate of over 95%, placing MGSD among the highest-performing districts in North Carolina.
- MGSD was also the only district in the region with no schools designated as low-performing.
- The district's overall state ranking improved from 20th to 13th out of 115 districts statewide.
- Mooresville Middle, East Mooresville Intermediate, and Mooresville Intermediate all exceeded state growth expectations. These schools ranked as the top-performing in Iredell County and placed in the top 3% statewide for academic growth. Notably, Mooresville Middle's math growth ranked 5th in the state.
- Two schools saw significant gains in performance grades: Mooresville Intermediate improved from a C to a B, and Selma Burke Middle improved from a D to a C, with both schools increasing by 10 points.

- In subject-specific performance, 8th grade math ranked 3rd in the state, 4th grade math ranked 4th, and 7th grade math ranked 7th. In reading, 4th grade ranked 6th and 5th grade ranked 9th statewide.

Superintendent Gardner praised the efforts of students, staff, and families and reaffirmed MGSD's commitment to academic excellence.

Board Events: Chairman Whitfield, provided information on several events that will take place in the district and the community including:

- NCSBA Fall Law Conference, Oct 8th - 10th in Asheville, NC
- Hispanic Heritage Community Event, Oct 9th from 5pm - 7pm at MIS
- Homecoming Game (MHS vs N Iredell), Oct 10th at 7pm at MHS Coach Joe Popp Stadium
- Oct 13th - 17th: Fall Break - No School for Students
- 44th Annual Blue Devil Classic, Oct 18th at 8am at MHS
- November BOE Regular Meeting, Nov 3rd at 6pm at the MHS PAC

Public Comment: There were 13 individuals signed up for public comment. The public comment period began at 6:44 p.m. Jenna Taylor of 114 Cornelius Road spoke on the topic of school board social media use. Lynn Martin of 122 Easy St spoke on the topic of school board support. Theresa Knight of 156 Fellspoint Rd, spoke on the topic of MHS's Hispanic Heritage book list. Kelli Harris of 127 Corona Circle spoke on the topic of school board social media etiquette and provided a handout. Roger Ward of 146 W Steward Ave spoke on the topic of school board social media etiquette. Kim Lucas of 108 Lockerbie Ln spoke on the topic of school board support. Mandy Brown of 131 S. Sycamore St spoke on the topic of school board support. Julie Hornsby of 202 Abingdon Cir spoke on the topic of school board support. Kate Shirley of 144 Laurel Glen Dr spoke on the topic of school board support. West Caudle of 142 Laurel Heights Drive spoke on the topic of democracy. Iam Moye of 102 Vincent Place spoke of school board social media etiquette. Ron Higdon of 216 S. Academy spoke on the topic of school board support. Tom Burky of 149 Culpeze Rd spoke on the topic of Board Policy 1310/4002. **Public comments concluded at 7:22 p.m.**

Items for Information:

- A. Policy Updates:** MGSD works with the North Carolina School Board Association (NCSBA) to ensure we complete timely revisions of our BOE policies. All of the policies listed below have been recommended by the NCSBA with revisions made specific to Mooresville Graded School District policies and procedures. These specific changes are due to recent legislation signed into law this summer.

Policy Number(s):	Name(s):
i. 1310/4002	Parental Involvement
ii. 3210	Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials
iii. 3320	School Trips
iv. 3510	Religious-Based Exemptions from School Programs
v. 3620	Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations
vi. 4120	Domicile or Residence Requirements
vii. 5024/6127/7266	Emergency Epinephrine Delivery Systems
viii. 5070/7350	Public Records – Retention, Release and Disposition
ix. 4318	Use of Wireless Communication Devices (Option A & Option B)
x. 6125	Administering Medicines to Students
xi. 6340	Transportation Service/Vehicle Contracts
xii. 7100	Recruitment and Selection of Personnel
xiii. 7820	Personnel Files

The recommendation is that the Board review the policy updates and ask any questions, and select Option A, Option B or a hybrid version for Policy 4318. The policy updates will be presented for approval at the November 2025 business meeting.

- B. District Mental Health Plan:** MGSD's School Mental Health (SMH) Plan, developed under NC SBOE Policy SHLT-003, aims to strengthen student and staff well-being through evidence-based SEL practices, mental health services, and community partnerships. State requirements include that by July 1, 2021 each K–12 public school unit (PSU) must adopt and implement a plan to promote student mental health and well-being. Plans must be reviewed every five years (starting in 2025) and approved by the local governing board.
- The recommendation is that the Board review the School Mental Health (SMH) Plan and ask any questions. The SMH will be presented for approval at the November 2025 business meeting.

Items for Approval:

- A. School Improvement Plans:** On September 30, 2025, at the Board of Education work session, each school leader presented their school improvement plan for the 2025-26 academic year. These documents are created annually by a school improvement team composed of staff members and parents at each school as required by North Carolina legislation. Each plan has four goals total with one goal for each of the district's identified priority areas. Each school will return to present a mid-year update at a future BOE work session. **On a motion by Debbie Marsh, seconded by Kerry Pennell, the board voted 5-0 to approve the School Improvement Plans as presented on 9/30/25.**
- B. NCSBA 2025 Voting Delegates:** The annual meeting of NCSBA's delegates is scheduled during lunch on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, in Greensboro, NC. This meeting is part of the NCSBA Annual Conference. Consistent with NCSBA Bylaws, member boards may appoint up to four voting delegates and as many alternates as deemed necessary. Ms. Pennell shared that she was unable to attend the conference. Mr. Whitfield recommended that four remaining Board members be nominated as the NCSBA 2025 voting delegates. **On a motion by Rakeem Brawley, seconded by Monica Bender, the board voted 5-0 to approve Greg Whitfield, Debbie Marsh, Monica Bender and Rakeem Brawley as the NCSBA 2025 Voting Delegates.**

Closed Session: According to **NC G.S. §143-318.11 subsections (a)(1), (a)(3) & (a)(6)**, Mr. Whitfield, Board Chair, requested the board go into a closed session to prevent the disclosure of information that is not considered public record, review personnel and consult with the board attorney. **On a motion by Kerry Pennell, seconded by Debbie Marsh, the board voted 5-0 to go into closed session.**

New Employees:

Quincy Carter, PE Teacher, MHS, 10/06/2025
Pamela Ford, Science Teacher, MHS, 09/17/2025
Bryan Lape, PE Teacher, MIS, 10/20/2025
William Cranford, EC Teacher, MMS, 10/15/2025
Elizabeth Hunt, 6th ELA/SS Teacher, MMS, 11/03/2025
Adena Diggs, Small Group Instructor, EMIS, 09/15/2025
Renata Ferrara, Tutor, EMIS, 09/10/2025
Jillian Beswick, SN Substitute, MGSD, 09/10/2025
Martha Clarkson, SN Substitute, MGSD, 09/10/2025
Crawford Deveaux, Sub Bus Driver, MGSD, 09/23/2025
Kumar Kalaiselvi, Substitute, MGSD, 09/10/2025
Kevin Mays, PT Bus Driver, MGSD, 09/10/2025
Mackenzie Myers, SN Substitute, MGSD, 09/10/2025
Roderico Rickett, Sub. Bus Driver, MGSD, 10/06/2025
Carla Rosas Riquelme, Substitute, MGSD, 09/24/2025
Marissa Warnig, Substitute, MGSD, 09/10/2025
Sarah Yousefinejad, SN Substitute, MGSD, 09/10/2025

Dion Williams, Football Coach, MHS, 09/15/2025
Noah Barrientos, Custodian, MIS, 10/06/2025
Joshua Miller, Asst. Basketball Coach, MMS, 09/18/2025
Michael Mansfield, Teacher Assistant, NF Woods, 09/15/2025
Sheri Petit, Teacher Assistant, SES, 09/03/2025

Role/Location Change:

Angel Faulkner, Substitute, MGSD, 10/06/2025
Deborah Harvell, Sub. Bus Monitor, MGSD, 09/10/2025
Ryan Weiss, Custodian Coordinator and General Maintenance Tech., MGSD, 10/13/2025
Penny Cooper, Custodian, MHS, 09/04/2025
Sade Williams, Custodian, MMS, 09/16/2025
Lisa Dagenhart, Small Group Instructor, RRES, 09/03/2025

Retiring:

Charles Gibson, NJROTC Instructor, MHS, 12/31/2025, 12 years of service to MGSD
Karen Martin, Family Consumer Science Teacher, MHS, 12/31/2025, 20 years of service to MGSD

Non-Continuing:

Shane Murphy, Bus Driver, MGSD, 08/22/2025
Colleen Kennedy, Student Support Facilitator, MHS, 09/24/2025
Tyler Balentine, Custodian, MIS, 09/16/2025
Angel Faulkner, Technology Assistant, MIS, 09/29/2025
Cynthia Swales, EC 1:1 TA, MIS, 09/19/2025
Sharon Simpson, Custodian, RRES, 09/12/2025
Isabel Margarita Sepulveda Villa, Dual Immersion Teacher, RRES, 09/05/2025

On a motion by Debbie Marsh, seconded by Monica Bender, the board voted 5-0 to adjourn from closed session.

On a motion by Kerry Pennell, seconded by Rakeem Brawley, the board voted 5-0 to approve the personnel list as recommended by the Superintendent.

There being no further business, on a motion by Debbie Marsh, seconded by Monica Bender, the board voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Jason D. Gardner, Secretary
Board of Education