

BIBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Dr. Dan A. Sims, Superintendent

ACTION MEMORANDUM

To: Bibb County Board of Public Education

From: Dr. Dan A. Sims, Superintendent
Daphne Bailey, Coordinator of Board Services

Subject: Committee and Board Meeting Calendar for CY 2024

Summary:

This memorandum recommends a calendar for the Bibb County Public Board of Education (BoE) and Bibb County School District (BCSD) that includes Committee, Board, and Retreat meetings for February 2024 through January 2025. The proposed calendar meets the requirements of Georgia's Open Meetings Act and includes some best practices of school board meetings as suggested by GSBA.

Background:

- 1) Georgia School Board Association (GSBA) eBoardsmanship
 - a) Since 1951, GSBA has served Georgia's educational community, bringing professional development programs, premier conferences, eSolutions technology services, risk management services, communications, and publications services.
 - b) GSBA provides its members access to "A Guide to Effective Boardsmanship," which GSBA considers a revision of "What School Board Members Must Know." Last published in 1996, this handbook has served school board members, superintendents, and others well over the years.
 - c) Today, this Guide is on the GSBA website under the "More" tab and is entitled eBoardsmanship. Chapter 9 – School Law: The Basics refers to the Open Meetings Law and includes the following:
 - i) The law allows local boards of education to meet by teleconference under very limited circumstances "necessitated by emergency conditions involving public safety or the preservation of property or public services." Such meetings still must meet the requirements of the Act and there must be a way for the public to have "simultaneous access" to the teleconference.
 - ii) For any other board meeting, if a quorum is present in person, a board member may participate by teleconference due to health reasons or absence from the jurisdiction, but, except with a doctor's note that "reasons of health" prevent the member's physical presence or other "emergency

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- conditions,” no board member is allowed to meet by teleconference more than twice in one calendar year.
- iii) The board of education must hold a regularly scheduled monthly meeting at a time and date established by the board at the beginning of each calendar year. Notice must be given to the public of the date and time the board has established for its regular monthly meetings by advertisement in the official organ of the county or another county paper of equal or greater circulation at the beginning of each year. The notice must also be posted in a “conspicuous” place available to the public at its regular place of meeting as well as on its website. The board may change the date and time for holding its regularly scheduled monthly meeting only once during any calendar year and the public must be advised of any change by advertisement in the newspaper two weeks in advance.

2) Open Meetings Laws in Georgia

- a) The Georgia Open Meetings Act provides the public with a right of access to the meetings of many government bodies at the state and local level in Georgia. The law entitles the public to notice of these meetings and gives the public the ability to inspect and copy meeting minutes.
- b) According to the Georgia Attorney General's Sunshine Law Citizen's Guide to Open Government, the public must be given full access to all open meetings and may make video and audio recordings of all open meetings. In addition to mandating open meetings, the Law requires that agencies provide notice to the public in advance of all meetings, even emergency meetings.
- c) That means agencies must make information available to the public by posting a notice containing the information in a conspicuous location at the agency's regular meeting place.
- d) The notice must do more than simply meet the technical requirements of the Law. It must be sufficient to reasonably apprise a concerned party of an upcoming meeting and must not be misleading. Meetings that are not held at the regularly posted time and place require more rigorous notice procedures.

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Factors to Consider:

1) Best Practices

- a) A regularly scheduled monthly meeting is not clearly defined. During training with GSBA, a best practice was identified as having the board meeting at the same time every month. An example is the third Thursday of every month at 4:00p.m.
- b) An issue can develop when a meeting is not at the regularly posted place and time. A rule of thumb is to not deviate more than once a year.

2) Known Conflicts

- a) With an eight-member board, conflicts will occur. The open meetings act provides guidance in these situations. One solution used is to plan for absent members to telephone or remote into the meeting. If a quorum of members is physically present, the meeting is legal.
- b) Having the superintendent present at all meetings is desirable, but conflicts can exist and not be eliminated. For example, the BCSD superintendent is authorized by contract to attend the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) national conference. The conflict is this conference occurs every February on the third Thursday. Solutions that have been used in the past include the superintendent not attending the conference, having his/her designee sit-in for the superintendent, or changing the meeting date.
- c) At last month's board meeting, a previous version of this calendar was presented for approval.
 - i) The previous version had the February meeting date on a Tuesday. This was to accommodate the superintendent attending the AASA conference. The current proposed calendar does not have this accommodation.
- d) The following is a proposed schedule of regular Committee and Board meetings for the BCSD BoE for CY 2024.
 - i) The meeting dates run from February 2024 through January 2025.
 - ii) Committee Meetings will begin at 4:00 p.m., followed by the Board Meeting at 6:30 p.m. All meetings will be held at the Bibb County Professional Learning Center, located on Riverside Drive, Macon, GA.

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Proposed Meeting Calendar

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Date</u>
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, January 18, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, February 15, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, March 21, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, April 18, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, May 16, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, June 20, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, July 18, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, August 15, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, September 19, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, October 17, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, November 21, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, December 19, 2024
Committee/Board Meeting	Thursday, January 16, 2025

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve the proposed schedule of regular Committee, and Board meetings for February 2024 through January 2025.

Superintendent's Comments and Approval:

Superintendent's Comments	Select One
Dr. Dan A. Sims	Approved