



LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT  
810 WEST MARKHAM STREET  
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201

**MINUTES  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
November 8, 2012**

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held a special meeting on Thursday, November 8, 2012, in the boardroom of the administration building, 810 West Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. President Dianne Curry presided.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dianne Curry  
Greg Adams  
Norma Johnson  
Jody Carreiro  
Leslie Fisker  
Michael Nellums

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Morris Holmes, Superintendent of Schools  
Beverly Griffin, Recorder of Minutes

**I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

Ms. Curry called the meeting to order at 8:43 p.m. All members of the board were present at roll call. The Zone 6 position was vacant due to the death of board member, Michael Peterson.

**II. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING**

The agenda for the meeting included:

- Modifications to the ALE program at Felder Alternative School
- NCS Pearson Professional Development Contract
- 2011-2012 Annual Report
- Resolution in Recognition of Michael Peterson and Declaration of a vacancy in Zone 6 of the LRSD
- Employee Hearings

### **III. ACTION AGENDA**

#### **A. Alternative Learning Environment (ALE) Program Modifications**

The administration presented a recommendation to transfer current Felder Middle School students to a separate wing of the building housing Hamilton High School. Current staff members at Felder Middle and Hamilton High would be utilized to staff the Hamilton / Felder Schools, and any displaced staff would be placed throughout the district in vacant positions for which they are qualified.

These recommendations are based on budgetary considerations and efforts to contain costs of educating students in the alternative programs.

Dr. Nellums moved to approve the administration's recommendation; Mr. Adams seconded the motion and it **carried 6-0**.

#### **B. Professional Development Contract: NCS Pearson, Inc.**

The Arkansas Department of Education's Flexibility Plan requires that each Priority School utilize an external provider to assist with implementing school improvement strategies. There are eight LRSD schools designated as Priority Schools: Hall, McClellan, JA Fair, Henderson, Cloverdale, Geyer Springs, Baseline and Wilson.

The District released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) in June 2012 to solicit proposals from entities interested in serving as external providers of professional development and technical assistance services. A multi-step process was used to review the responses, develop a list and make the final selection by school. The school committees made their recommendations, and the eight Priority schools each selected to receive services from NCS Pearson, Inc. A total of 888 days of services will be provided across the eight eligible priority schools.

Mr. Carreiro moved to approve the administration's recommendation; Dr. Nellums seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

Dr. Nellums requested additional information regarding the ACSIP Plan from Hall High School and how well the students performed using the Pearson interventions. He was to discuss with Dr. Holmes and make a request for additional information.

#### **C. 2011-2012 Annual Report**

Arkansas law requires the district's annual report to be presented in a public meeting and published in the local newspaper. The 2011-12 annual report was provided as part of the board's agenda, and Ms. Smith was present to respond to questions.

Mr. Carreiro moved to approve the report as presented; Ms. Johnson seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

#### **D. Resolution: Vacancy Zone 6**

By board policy BBBE, Unexpired Term Fulfillment/Vacancies, the board is required to take formal action to declare a position on the board "vacant." In this instance, the vacancy was due to the unexpected death of newly elected Zone 6 representative, Mr. Michael Peterson.

Dr. Nellums made a motion to declare the Zone 6 position on the LRSD board vacant. Ms. Fisken seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

The board then adopted a resolution honoring Mr. Peterson for his years of service to the LRSD. The resolution was read aloud and will be presented to the family at Mr. Peterson's funeral service on Friday, November 9.

The motion on the resolution was made by Mr. Carreiro and seconded by Ms. Johnson. It **carried unanimously**.

#### **E. Employee Hearings**

The first hearing was in response to a request by <Employee 1> for the board to reconsider Superintendent Holmes' recommendation to non-renew her 2010-11 contract. The letter to <Employee 1> was dated April 29, 2011, where she was offered an alternate contract for 2011-12 which specified only that she would be reassigned to a vacant position for which she was qualified.

Khayyam Eddings represented the LRSD in the hearing; <Employee 1> was represented by Britt Johnson.

Laureen Isom, Director of Counseling, was a witness for the LRSD. She reported <Employee 1> was assigned to work as a guidance counselor, but not assigned to any particular group of students. She was assigned the responsibility of writing elementary and secondary curriculum guides and lesson plans. Ms. Isom was <Employee's> supervisor, and she also worked with Dr. Freddie Fields as the coordinator of the superintendent's student cabinet meetings.

Mr. Isom responded to questions from Mr. Johnson regarding the placement of <Employee 1> as the interim coordinator and administrator at Felder during the last school year. Dr. Linda Watson had appointed <Employee 1> to that position; Ms. Isom was not in support of that decision. <Employee 1> is currently assigned as a counselor at Henderson.

Daniel Bowman, a business technology teacher at Central High School, was previously assigned to Felder. He testified on behalf of <Employee 1>, as well as Felder's Registrar Michelle Bonds Hall.

The board convened a brief executive session to review the information provided. They returned to open session at 11:56 p.m. Ms. Fisken made a motion to uphold the superintendent's recommendation to non-renew the terms of <Employee's> contract. Mr. Carreiro seconded the motion, and it **carried 5-1**, with Ms. Curry abstaining.

*Norma Johnson exited the meeting at 12:00 a.m.*

The second hearing was requested by <Employee 2>, an employee in the Child Nutrition Department. He asked the board to overturn the superintendent's recommendation to terminate his employment with the LRSD. On July 23, 2012, Mr. Rhodes was selected to appear for random drug screening. He failed to appear at the drug testing site, and instead went to his personal physician's office. He stated he was in distress, having trouble breathing, and was given an emergency treatment for blood pressure to prevent a heart attack.

Don Allen, the assistant director of Safety & Security, testified as to the procedures followed for random selection and was questioned about the day <Employee 2> failed to appear at the Safety & Security office for a urine screening.

The board convened a closed session to deliberate and returned to open session at 12:31 p.m.

Dr. Nellums made a motion to uphold all five of the allegations contained in the superintendent's recommendation for termination. Mr. Carreiro seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the board, meeting adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

APPROVED: 11-15-12

Originals Signed by:  
Dianne Curry, President  
Norma J. Johnson, Secretary