



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

MINUTES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
March 20, 2014

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held their regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 20, 2014, in the boardroom of the administration building, 810 West Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. Vice President Norma Johnson presided.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Norma Johnson
C. E. McAdoo
Jody Carreiro
Dianne Curry
Leslie Fisker
Tara Shephard

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Greg Adams

ALSO PRESENT:

Dexter Suggs, Superintendent of Schools
Beverly Griffin, Recorder of Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Ms. Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Six members of the board were present at roll call; Mr. Adams was absent. The teacher ex-officio, Rhonda Adams, from Gibbs Magnet Elementary, and the student representative, Cheyshayla Lognion from Parkview High School, were also present.

II. REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. Citations and Commendations

Pamela Smith recognized Gary and Gladys Godley, owners of Goddess Office Products. This business was recently awarded the state purchasing contract for office supplies, and the LRSD has supported efforts to increase business with minority vendors.

In recognition of *Theater in the Schools* month, a presentation was made by the showing of a DVD produced by Parkview drama students. Spencer Sutterfield, the drama instructor, introduced the video and provided copies for the board.

The teacher ex officio, Rhonda Adams, was asked to read the Board's Goals and Cultural Imperatives.

B. Remarks from Citizens

Nikki Roseby addressed the board regarding concerns at Hamilton Learning Academy. She believes her child's rights were violated during an incident at the school. She listed several categories from the student handbook and asked the board to do something about the way children are being treated.

Dr. Janet Behrend, a professor at UALR, addressed concerns regarding the elimination of Reading Recovery in the LRSD. She encouraged a review of the statistics which show RR is the most successful program in teaching young children to read.

Nacole Gilbert expressed concerns regarding the safety of her child at Hamilton. She said she was confused about the extreme measures taken when students are involved in altercations at the school.

James Ross said he believes "parents are being demoralized" by ignoring concerns brought to the board. He said he was speaking in defense of all the children in the district, and he expressed hope the collective voices will cause change. He expressed support for teachers and thanked them for helping him to understand what needs to be done to assist struggling readers. He also spoke in support of Reading Recovery.

John Walker asked the board to give serious consideration to the remarks of Dr. Ross. He asked them to listen to the point of view of parents and others, that it is important for children to read in order for the community to be prosperous. The inability to read leads to a lack of self-esteem which dooms them to lives of inferiority. He spoke in support of Reading Recovery. He also responded to concerns expressed by parents of students at Hamilton. He deemed Hamilton as a "throw away school" for "throw away children."

Joy Springer repeated her comments from previous meetings regarding the evaluation of programs. She asked if the LRSD is really implementing a new assessment process, and asked if they had seen any evaluation reports. The assessment reports will help the board to make the decisions regarding reading programs.

C. Donations of Property

Cheyshayla Lognion, student ex officio, read the list of recent donations to the district. Mr. Carreiro made a motion to accept the donations. Ms. Curry seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**. The donations are listed in the following chart:

DONATIONS

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	ITEM	DONOR
Baseline Elementary School	\$200.00 cash donation to the "Party with the Principal" and services valued at \$150.00 to the "75 Days Without a Fight"	First Assembly Of Little Rock

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	ITEM	DONOR
Baseline Elementary School	Services valued at \$500.00 for "Party with the Principal", door prizes valued at \$300.00 for "Donuts for Dads", and gift bags valued at \$250.00 for students who scored Proficient/Advanced on testing	First Assembly Of Little Rock
Baseline Elementary School	Refreshments valued at \$100.00 for "Parent Math Night"	Exalters of Christ Ministries International
Baseline Elementary School	\$300.00 cash to purchase ink for the Science Fair	Fellowship Bible Church
Central High School	Yarn and needles valued at \$2278.07 to the Knitting Club	Shawne Leach
Central High School	Original artwork, RememberingRosey,	Rex Deloney
Central High School	30 hours of labor on the bell restoration and 15 hours of labor on the trophy case valued at \$1350.00	Kent Bryant
Henderson Middle School	\$500.00 cash to the Math and Science Departments	B-H-T Investment Co and B-B Oil Company
Henderson Middle School	\$200.00 cash for lunch money for disadvantaged students attending the field trip to the Museum of Discovery	Mr. Marc Verbos, ASA Group
Henderson Middle School	\$500.00 cash to the AVID Program	Little Rock Black Police Officers Association
Mabelvale Elementary School	\$1000.00 cash to the Little Gentlemen's Club	St. Mark Baptist Church
Mabelvale Elementary School	Food and clothing valued at \$2500.00 for students during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays	Mabelvale United Methodist Church
Mabelvale Elementary School	Food and clothing valued at \$750.00 for students during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays	Village Creek Baptist Church
Mabelvale Elementary School	Food valued at \$150.00 for students and their family during the Christmas holiday	Mrs. Zinn Carrigan
Mabelvale Elementary School	Food valued at \$750.00 for students and their family during the Thanksgiving holiday	That Church
Mabelvale Elementary School	Food valued at \$750.00 for students and their family during the Thanksgiving holiday	Crosswalk Family of God Church
Pulaski Heights Middle School	\$100.00 cash to the Dance Program	Brian and Erin Bush
Pulaski Heights Middle School	\$100.00 cash to the Science Olympiad Program	Nikolai and Leslie Fisker
Pulaski Heights Middle School	\$25.00 cash to the Science Olympiad Program	Paul and Wendy Wood

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	ITEM	DONOR
Pulaski Heights Middle School	\$200.00 cash to the Science Olympiad Program	Timothy and Monica Kimbrell
Pulaski Heights Middle School	\$50.00 cash to the Science Olympiad Program	Scott and Kristy Moody
Romine Inter-district School	\$200.00 cash to be used for school uniforms	Calvary Church of the Nazarene
Metropolitan Career-Technical Center	Donation of chipping hammer, wire brushes, welding hoods with hardware, welding hats, and welding hats with quarter sleeves to the Welding Program	Caterpillar, Inc.

D. Little Rock PTA Council

Sarah Bernhardt, PTA Council president, announced the next Council meeting on Tuesday, April 15th, 11:30 a.m. It will be held at Forest Park Elementary School. She announced to those who might be interested in serving as an officer in the Council, to contact Ms. Henri Smothers for information.

E. Little Rock Education Association

Cathy Kohler thanked board members on behalf of the employees who will soon receive raises after the board voted to accept the recommendation for a 3% increase. She reported the custodial unit had ratified their contract last night, and the result would be that these employees will soon have the same benefits as other groups of employees.

She expressed some concern regarding the recently approved Memorandum of Understanding regarding the schools scheduling activities on school board meeting nights. Some schools have scheduled events on board meeting nights. She passed out a packet of information regarding employee grievances, and asked the board to review the packet. It is her belief the superintendent is trying to undermine an employee's right to a fair hearing before the board.

IV. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. Remarks from Board Members

Ms. Shephard reported on attending parent night at David O. Dodd Elementary School. She was pleased with the work being done by the faculty and staff to ensure parents are prepared to help their children with the upcoming literacy and math tests.

Ms. Curry wished the audience a pleasant spring break. She encouraged students to come back prepared to finish up the year.

Mr. McAdoo announced that March is Women's History month. He wanted to highlight the contributions of women in history, especially those who work for the LRSD, by celebrating women of character, courage, and commitment.

Ms. Johnson greeted the audience and said she loves the LRSD, and believes she is a part of the solution, not a part of the problem. She said she wanted everyone to work together to ensure every student is getting the education they need in order to be successful. All students are not the same, some don't learn as quickly as others, but all deserve a quality education.

B. Legal Update

Mr. Heller reported on several topics of interest to the Board. Judge Marshall has scheduled a hearing in federal court on April 4th at 9:00 a.m. Topics for discussion include the Pulaski County Special School District's status regarding unitary status, the Office of Desegregation Monitoring, and the future of the Magnet Review Committee. Board members are welcome to attend if they are interested, but are not required to be there.

The status of the MRC concerns the LRSD because it will impact how we are to maintain the inter-district magnet school characteristics and how we will process inter-district transfers. Since the Board approved opting in to school choice for the coming school year, he will prepare and propose adoption of a policy for implementing school choice. Dr. Fields will provide assistance as he will grant school choice requests based on the board policy.

Mr. Heller report he had also been working with Dr. Suggs to secure the exchange of titles on the buses that were included in the desegregation settlement and a written agreement regarding forgiveness of the desegregation loan from the state. He's hopeful these decisions may be made before the next board meeting.

As required by the settlement agreement, all appeals to the desegregation issue on charter schools were dismissed by the Eighth Circuit Court. There is also a hearing scheduled before the Arkansas Charter School authorizing panel regarding Quest Charter school. Quest has asked to move the location of the school; and no argument has been raised against that move. One of the initial concerns was the proximity of the initial site to the property purchased by the LRSD for building a new school. Mr. Heller will provide a written summary of pending legal issues by the next meeting.

Khayyam Eddings reported briefly on the conveyance of the property in Pankey; a draft quit claim deed had been presented to the city of LR Board for consideration. When it is returned, it will be brought to the board for authorization and for execution of the deed. The city is working with the Pankey community groups to ensure there is an educational component to that facility upon conveyance of the property.

C. Discussion: Dress Code for Vendors and Contractors

Dr. Suggs responded to a question from Mr. McAdoo regarding a stipulation in contracts with vendors and independent contractors, requesting their employees abide by the LRSD dress code. This component would need to be included as a line item when contracts are drawn and approved. This will be done with large vendors to ensure they abide by the dress code.

SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

Mr. McAdoo made a motion to suspend the rules to take action on an item not included in the board's agenda. Mr. Carreiro seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

Mr. McAdoo made a motion to insure all employees understand they are covered under the dress code policy. Ms. Curry seconded the motion.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Carreiro offered a substitute motion to resolve the Board of Directors intends for the dress code policy to be consistent among all employees and staff members. Mr. McAdoo agreed to the substitute motion, and seconded. The vote was **unanimous**.

D. Report: Student Mental Health Services

Information on the requested information will be included in the Board's Friday update. A presentation will be made at the April agenda meeting.

E. Update: Facilities Review – Fanning Howey

At the agenda meeting, Carl Baxmeyer reported and introduced Troy Glover for a brief discussion on the progress of the facilities review. A worksession was scheduled for the following Monday, and information will be provided at that time to explain the methods of projecting enrollment trends with an explanation of how the numbers were generated for building capacity. Each building's report will list the attributes of the school and how the current facility aligns with the future expectations for the school. Examples of the facilities conditions assessments and demographics will be provided at the worksession.

F. Report / Presentation: LRSD Literacy Programs

Sabrina Stout, elementary literacy specialist for the LRSD, presented a PowerPoint overview of the proposed literacy program. Board members were provided a copy of the presentation, and Ms. Stout responded to questions.

Additional information requested included:

- information on how Reading Recovery teachers currently assess students who need assistance, and how many students are being served with RR. Can the report be generated by race and gender?
- Information on the "rate of dismissal." Is there exit data for reading recovery?
- Is there a sampling of data which shows progress at Terry and other schools within the district that are using the proposed literacy model.

Dr. Suggs further explained and discussed the proposed literacy initiative, emphasizing that it is not a "program," but is a districtwide instructional method to increase and sustain progress in literacy. Programs are defined as "outside entities with costs attached." Initiatives are embedded within the current operational cost.

He also explained that Reading Recovery would not be completely removed from the district's elementary schools, but would be used in conjunction with effective instruction and professional development to ensure students are receiving appropriate support.

Building principals will be given the opportunity to continue using Reading Recovery in their schools via their discretion, utilizing auxiliary funding options including Title I, NSLA, and grants.

Board members asked for a “compact” report to explain the literacy component; something that teachers, staff and administrators can use as a reference.

G. Update: LRSD Prekindergarten Program

Karen James provided an overview of the LRSD Pre-K programs. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation was attached to the agenda.

III. CONSENT ITEMS

The items on the consent agenda were approved as submitted.

A. Minutes

Minutes from meetings held on February 27th and March 13th were attached to the agenda.

B. Internal Auditors Report

Mr. Becker’s month report was included in the Board’s agenda.

IV. BOARD POLICY AND REGULATIONS REVIEW

A. First Reading: Board of Education Policy KFA – Joint Use of District Facilities

The administration recommended adoption of Board policy KFA – Joint Use of District Facilities on first reading. This policy regulates collaborative use of LRSD facilities by local government agencies, colleges, universities, and/or community organizations during non-school hours.

In January 2014, the district was awarded two Joint Use Agreement Grants through the Arkansas Department of Education. As part of the grant process, a Joint Use of Facilities policy was to be developed. The two funded projects include:

- Mabelvale Middle School in partnership with the Federation of Latino Basketball. Funded at \$28,000 for repair to the gym floor.
- Gibbs Magnet School in partnership with the City of Little Rock Parks and Recreation. Funded at \$13,000 to construct an oval walking track around the open practice field between Dunbar and Gibbs.

Linda Young was present to respond to questions. Mr. Carreiro moved to approve on first reading; Mr. McAdoo seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

B. First Reading: Board of Education Policy DJF – Minority and Women Owned Enterprises

To comply and be consistent with the laws of the State of Arkansas, the existing policy *DJF Minority and Women Owned Enterprises* required revision to add a category “service-disabled veterans” to the Minority definition within contracts.

Mr. Carreiro moved to accept the revisions to DJF on first reading; Ms. Curry seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

C. Regulation Revision: DJF-R Minority and Women Owned Enterprises

Regulation DJF-R was provided for the Board’s review. No action was required.

D. First Reading: Board of Education Policy Revisions: BEB Special School Board Meetings; BEDDB Suspension of Rules of Order; BEDF Voting Method

The revisions to LRSD policies regarding voting methods remained on the table. An opinion has been requested from the State Attorney General to determine if LRSD policy, State Law, and Roberts’ Rules of Order are in conflict.

V. HUMAN RESOURCES

A. Personnel Changes

General personnel changes were printed in the Board’s agenda. The motion to approve was made by Ms. Fisken. Ms. Curry seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

B. Superintendent’s Evaluation Document / Tool

Review and adoption of the evaluation instrument was postponed until the April agenda meeting. Mr. Carreiro identified one item where there was a typographical error. Ms. Curry expressed concern regarding the ten-point rating scale, and suggested going back to a five-point guide. Board members were asked to send their suggestions for revision of the document to Ms. Griffin by the end of next week.

VI. FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

A. Budget Update

Mr. Bailey reported briefly commenting on expected decreases in federal funding and Title I. A budget worksession will be held within a few weeks for a more in-depth review of the expected reductions in operating funds.

B. Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) Monthly Report

The monthly MWBE report was included in the Board’s agenda.

C. Monthly Financial Statements

The monthly reports were included in the agenda.

VII. CLOSING REMARKS

A. Announcements & Reminders

Pamela Smith made brief announcements regarding activities in the schools this week, including a visit by Actor Jeff Bridges, who was at Stephens Elementary School, and Jared the Subway spokesman, who visited Rockefeller Elementary.

Students are out of school tomorrow and next week for spring break. She announced calendar dates for upcoming achievement testing in the schools.

The dates for the school and community meetings for the facilities review have been updated and will be posted on the website.

B. Superintendent's Comments

Dr. Suggs congratulated Parkview boys and girls basketball teams on their success in the tournaments. They will be recognized at an upcoming board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

APPROVED: 04-24-14

Originals Signed by:
Greg Adams, President
C. E. McAdoo, Secretary