



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

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
**April 28, 2011**

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held their regular board meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 28, 2011, in the boardroom of the administration building, 810 West Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. President Melanie Fox presided.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Melanie Fox  
Jody Carreiro  
Michael Nellums  
Greg Adams  
Charles Armstrong  
Dianne Curry  
Katherine Mitchell

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Morris Holmes, Interim Superintendent  
Beverly Griffin, Recorder of Minutes

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

Ms. Fox called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. All members of the board were present at roll call; the teacher ex-officio, Felicia Hayes from McDermott Elementary School also attended. The student ex officio was not present.

**II. REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**A. Citations and Commendations**

At the agenda meeting on April 14, Dr. Holmes introduced members of the Parkview and Hall High School basketball teams. These two teams won 2011 Arkansas state championships in their divisions, Parkview in the 6-A division, and Hall in the 7-A division. This is the 11<sup>th</sup> state championship for Parkview, with an overall record of 25 - 5 this year under the direction of **Head Coach Al Flanigan**.

The Hall Warriors' winning season was 11 - 4 in conference play and 23 - 11 in overall play. This is the 8th state title in Hall High's history, and the first at Hall for Coach **Jon Coleman**.

**Joseph Holloway**, a student at Metropolitan Career-Technical Center, was recognized as the first student in the state to complete the **Cisco IT Essentials: PC Hardware and Software** certification course. This course is a hands-on, lab-oriented experience that prepares students for careers in the field of computers and technology. Joseph was recommended for this citation by his instructor at Metro, **Harvey Johnson**.

Several Central High School students participated in this year's **Arkansas Council of Teachers of Mathematics competition**. The students were presented with a citation in recognition of their accomplishments and are listed below:

**Nathanael Ji (gee)**, 1<sup>st</sup> place, Algebra 2; **Alex Zhang**, 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Algebra 2; **Chevron VanRhee**, 1<sup>st</sup> place, Pre-Calculus; **Joseph Berleant**, 1<sup>st</sup> place, Calculus; **Aaron Yin**, Honorable Mention, Calculus; **Whitney Gao**, 1<sup>st</sup> place, Statistics; **Bob Zhao**, 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Statistics. Honorable Mention in Statistics went to **David Chen**, **Lillian Tong** and **David Ye**. Their sponsor, coach, and "leader" is **Summer McFarland**

**Dr. Stephen Christian** was present to announce a scholarship concert in honor of former Central High School choral music director, Mr. Robert L. Brack. All former Central High School Concert Choir and Madrigal Singers under the direction of Mr. Brack were invited to participate in the concert. They will perform with the Central High School Alumni Choir on April 17, 5:00 p.m. at St. Peter's Rock Baptist Church in Little Rock. Board members were invited to attend.

**Dr. Holmes** announced the successful efforts to become accredited districtwide by AdvancEd. He thanked Dennis Glasgow and other administrators who worked with the AdvancEd team in their review of district documentation and required artifacts. He noted the team was especially impressed with the district's pre-kindergarten program and opportunities for pre-K students in Little Rock.

The superintendent announced activities and events taking place during the following week: National Volunteer Appreciation, Administrative Professionals' Week, Child Nutrition Employees Appreciation, and Teacher Appreciation Week. The district's outstanding teachers will be recognized at the Crystal Awards banquet on Monday, May 2 at Embassy Suites.

On Sunday, May 1, student artwork and performances will be showcased at *Artistry in the Rock* at the Statehouse Convention Center. A luncheon for administrative professionals and a reception for retirees will both be held on Wednesday, May 4. Board members were provided invitations and details for each of the events.

Dr. Holmes provided information on the recent weather-related school closings and inclement weather procedures by requesting brief updates from district administrative staff.

Transportation Director **Mike Martello** began by reviewing the process of making a determination of whether school buses can safely transport children to and from school during inclement weather. Mr. Martello reported that this information begins to arrive days before a major weather event from the National Weather Service. After a winter rain, ice or snow, he begins to drive the roads beginning at 2:30 a.m. so that a decision can be made prior to 4:30 a.m. when bus drivers begin reporting to work.

**Tiffany Hoffman**, director of communications reviewed the process implemented once she receives notification from the superintendent that school will be closed. The computerized Parent Link system provides a recorded message to home and cell telephone numbers registered at the schools. The district's webmaster and television technician post notifications and television and radio stations are notified. Ms. Hoffman also utilizes postings to Facebook and Twitter for spreading the word as quickly as possible.

**Sadie Mitchell** reviewed the notification of building principals when school will be closed. There are several stages in making notification, especially when electricity is out at one or more schools. She felt it was important to note that at the elementary level, schools are not automatically closed when the electricity is out. If the school has windows, access to meals, water and restrooms, the school day can be modified so that additional days don't have to be made up. If children arrive at school and the decision is made to dismiss before the end of the day, the school staff has to ensure notification of parents before dismissal so that there is assurance someone is at the home to receive the children.

**Junious Babbs** reported that secondary principals are part of the decision to hold school or close when there are power failures or other weather related emergencies. Safety and security officers assist in assessing the conditions to determine if students are safe at school. He noted the decision to close Henderson during power failures is based on there not being windows or other natural lighting.

**Bobby Jones** credited the board with allocating the funds for upgrades to the district's security and alarm systems over the past three or four years. With the current alarm system, conditions can be monitored inside the school buildings twenty-four hours a day. District security personnel are on call to respond to alarms, and they work closely with the LR Police Department.

**Wayne Adams** reported on Maintenance and Operations department procedures to assess damage and clean up campuses after a severe storm or weather event. They clear parking lots and driveways after ice and snow storms, and have hired as many as eight independent contractors to clear parking lots when schools reopen after icy weather. A chemical "ice melt" is delivered to the schools so that building custodians can clear walkways and steps. In cases of power outages, Mr. Adams maintains contact with Entergy to determine which schools are restored and which will remain for a period of time without electricity. His department then works one-on-one with building principals to make necessary repairs as needed.

**Dennis Glasgow** reported that the Benchmark exams were affected at some schools during the most recent power outages. The Arkansas Department of Education provided approval for the rescheduling of the exams at seven LRSD schools where testing conditions were not acceptable or where power was out on scheduled testing days.

**David Hartz** addressed the calendar revisions and communication with school services to determine which schools have days to be made up. Those affected in the most recent storms included Forest Park, Henderson, Jefferson, and Hall High Schools and those students will attend additional days after the remaining schools are dismissed for the summer.

**Ms. Curry** thanked the staff for their reports and commended Dr. Holmes for sharing with the public how important these decisions are and how much work goes into making the communications decisions. Ms. Fox asked that the television stations be notified earlier in the process so that parents have the information as soon as possible.

**Dr. Holmes** reported and responded to questions in the recent news media regarding the district's spending of state desegregation funding. He emphasized for the public that the Superintendent is responsible for every expenditure in the district even though many people manage the funds. He took exception to implications that desegregation money is not being appropriately spent and he asked Attorney Heller to provide a written review of the situation surrounding the accusations and insinuations from the ADE.

**Mr. Heller** provided a copy of a report requested by Dr. Holmes, and responded to questions from the board. He reviewed the background on the ADE investigation in spending of desegregation funding which is being conducted by Navigant. Navigant was hired by the Attorney General to investigate the three Pulaski County school districts in conjunction with the state's desire to eliminate desegregation funding. Navigant has completed their review of North Little Rock and Pulaski County School Districts, and has reported on those districts' accounting of desegregation expenditures.

Regarding the court-approved LRSD settlement agreement with the state, Mr. Heller reported that he had met with district staff to look at financial documentation and he believes that every dollar we receive from the state for desegregation funding is spent for its' intended purpose. It is important to note, district desegregation budgets are developed by the Magnet Review Committee, and Majority to Minority (M-M) transfer funding is calculated by the state and paid according to their calculations. The districts are reimbursed for transporting magnet and M-M students based on a formula the state agreed to pay. That formula for calculation has been in place a long time, however the state has a right to take over transportation if they believe they can save money by doing so.

Mr. Heller also reported the LRSD spends more each year for desegregation purposes than is received from the state for desegregation funding, including expenditures for early childhood education and summer school programs. There has never been a disagreement with the state over funding since the 1989 settlement agreement, and the purposes for funding are specified within that agreement.

Mr. Heller further reviewed the reasons for the Navigant investigation, stating that he believed it was not about accountability, but about litigation and the Attorney General's attempts to affect discovery in the pending issues before the courts regarding continuation of desegregation funding. He noted that the LRSD has been before the joint budget committee and the desegregation litigation oversight committee, and there has never been a question about lack of accountability.

## **B. Update: Volunteers in Public Schools**

Debbie Milam reported on the *ViPS Evening for the Stars* and thanked those who attended. She provided copies of the programs with all volunteer recognitions listed. She also provided copies of the most recent issue of the Arkansas Times where there is an ad recognizing the LRSD award winners. The annual number of volunteer hours was valued at \$15,521,842.00, and a large mock check was presented to the Board.

### C. Remarks from Citizens

**Adele Simmons** introduced herself as the parent of three children; two attend Williams Magnet and one attends Dunbar. Ms. Simmons reported that they live in the Roberts Elementary attendance zone, but she chose to remain at the magnet schools where her children have been successful. She expressed concern regarding the registration of gifted and talented students at Dunbar. She complimented the Dunbar staff, teachers, and the dedicated and caring volunteers. She has recommended Dunbar to many of her family and friends, they complete the paperwork to enroll at Dunbar, but are denied the opportunity to attend. She doesn't believe gifted and talented students across the district are given an opportunity to attend Dunbar and she asked the board to provide assistance.

**Latrice and Eric Hill** reported they have a problem at J. A. Fair High School. They believe their son is being targeted for disciplinary sanctions and his educational opportunities are being jeopardized because of he has "an attitude and ego." Ms. Fox asked the parents to work with Mr. Fields to address their concerns.

**Will Dunn** introduced himself as a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, and expressed concern with discipline at the elementary school level. He noted that the elementary ALE sites can't accept additional students at this time of the school year, and therefore teachers aren't allowed to follow protocol for disciplinary infractions as specified in the student handbook. He asked the administration to do more than pass over discipline just because ALE sites are full, and he asked for help in developing discipline strategies in elementary schools.

### D. Donations of Property

The board was asked to approve the receipt of recent donations to the district. Mr. Carreiro read the list of donations, and moved approve acceptance. Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

#### DONATIONS

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	ITEM	DONOR
Mann Magnet Middle School	\$500.00 to purchase books entitled, "How to be Confident, Capable, Cool, and In Control" for 6 <sup>th</sup> grade girls	National Dunbar / Horace Mann Alumni Association of Little Rock, AR, Inc.
	\$3,100.00 cash to the H2O Club	The Clinton Foundation
McClellan Magnet High School	\$35,000.00 check to be used to implement Texas Instruments Navigator Systems for Math classrooms and libraries in English classrooms	Cameron Corporation
Roberts Elementary School	Four yards of bulk blended soil, valued at \$178.00 for the science lab to develop outdoor vegetable gardens	The Good Earth Garden Center
	Discount and free delivery of lumber, valued at approximately \$130.00 for science lab to develop outdoor vegetable gardens	Kaufman Lumber Company

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	ITEM	DONOR
Roberts Elementary	Two wheelbarrows, a shovel and other gardening supplies, valued at \$74.00 for science lab to develop outdoor vegetable gardens	The Home Depot
Wilson Elementary	\$1,000.00 cash for Field Day activities  Eight \$25.00 gift cards for use by Saturday School students with perfect attendance  \$500.00 cash to be used for student and staff incentives and activities	UALR – Children International  Affirmative Risk Management Insurance Adjuster  St. Andrew's Church

**E. Little Rock PTA Council**

Nelia Chambers reported for the LR PTA Council. The statewide PTA convention will be held in Springdale, AR. She thanked those who were involved in the annual teacher appreciation week in the schools, and invited everyone to attend the PTA council spring luncheon on May 12, 2011, at Second Presbyterian Church.

**F. Little Rock Education Association**

Ms. Kohler stated cooperation from the LREA in attaining the \$40,000 starting salary for teachers. She expressed willingness to begin the negotiations process, but she asked the board to remain mindful that the support staff also deserves a living wage. "... you cannot leave them behind in order to get to the \$40,000 starting salary for teachers."

She thanked Mr. Babbs and Dr. Mitchell for being available to assist the building administration whenever schools are closed for any reason. She also thanked them for maintaining communication with her so that she can effectively communicate with the employees.

She referred to a page from the strategic plan where teachers would be asked to give up another professional development day. She reminded the board that the calendar is negotiated and that time for PD is included in the negotiations discussions.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Mr. Nellums made a motion to go into executive session to discuss a personnel issue. Dr. Mitchell seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**. The board remained in executive session from 7:02 p.m. to 8:17 p.m. They returned from executive session and reported no action was taken.

Mr. Carreiro made a motion to remove Dr. Hamer's name from the list of candidates invited for interview, and to replace him with Hugh Hattabaugh at the suggestion of the consultants. Mr. Adams seconded the motion. The motion **carried 4-3** with Ms. Curry, Dr. Mitchell, and Mr. Nellums voting no.

### **III. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **A. Remarks from Board Members**

Ms. Fox noted a recent announcement that the LRSD had four of the six semifinalists for the National Presidential Scholars. Additional information will be provided as the finalists are announced.

#### **B. PRE Quarterly Update, April 2011**

Karen DeJarnette was present to review the report which was provided as part of the board's agenda. She explained the process used to evaluate the programs, and noted that they work with 26 researchers to provide a comprehensive evaluation process.

Ms. Curry asked for a report which would compare last year's student enrollment data with the current information. She expressed continuing concern that there are programs operating without enough students participating to be effective. She asked to be provided with the number of students involved in each program, and indicators of which programs are effective in addressing the needs of African American males.

Dr. DeJarnette promised to provide additional information in a Friday Update within a few weeks.

#### **C. Report: Felder Alternative Learning Academy**

A recap of the recommendation for Felder and Hamilton was provided as a written report in the board's agenda. The subject had been discussed in detail at the April 14 agenda meeting. Students in middle school alternative programs will attend the Felder site beginning in the fall of 2011. High school alternative students will attend the Hamilton site.

#### **D. LRSD Response to ADE Audit of Gifted & Talented Programs, 2011**

The Gifted and Talented Program of the Little Rock School District was monitored by the Arkansas Department of Education on February 23-25, 2011. The information contained in the report includes findings regarding the district's compliance with Arkansas rules governing programs for gifted and talented students K-12.

Lori Altschul, Director of Gifted Programs, presented information regarding the monitoring and addressed one recommendation in the report to have seminar classes at all middle schools. Beginning next year, every student has to meet with a certified GT specialist and GT offerings will be expanded at all middle schools. A copy of the report including compliance issues and agreed resolutions were printed in the board's agenda.

#### **E. Update: 2011 Summer Programs**

Sadie Mitchell and Junious Babbs provided an overview of the reports printed in the board's agenda. This year's City of Little Rock summer recreation sites include Baseline, Brady, Fulbright and Romine.

District summer school sites include literacy support at Washington, Terry, Mabelvale, and Otter Creek. In addition, Early Reading First will be held at Chicot Early Childhood Center; Mabelvale, Terry and Otter Creek Elementary schools will host 21<sup>st</sup> Century Summer Programs for students in grades 3-5; Wakefield Elementary will host 150 students in the UALR Summer Camp; and Dodd Elementary will host a summer enrichment camp. Camp Can Do for ESL students will also be held for students in kindergarten through fifth grade at Bale Elementary School. Staff is currently hiring teachers, organizing transportation and lining up grant funding.

At the secondary level, Mr. Babbs reported the summer space camp at Cloverdale Aerospace Charter School, credit recovery programs at Pulaski Heights middle school and each high school will host credit recovery through NovaNet. Summer school isn't free at the secondary level; however, students on free and reduced lunch are provided no cost summer remediation.

#### **F. Update: Reading / Literacy**

A reading and literacy report was provided via PowerPoint presentation by Karen James, Director of Elementary Literacy and Early Childhood. The report stressed the importance of reading and literacy instruction as they relate to meeting the goals of the district's strategic plan. She introduced Shoutelle Richardson, principal of Chicot Primary School, and teachers who assisted in the preparation of the PowerPoint presentation, Ashley Davis and Danielle Walters. Chicot Primary School has been recognized as ranking second in the nation for implementation of pre-kindergarten programs.

#### **G. Update: Strategic Plan / Reading & Literacy**

Dennis Glasgow discussed the recommendations in the strategic plan and reported there was a "share site" where the individuals assigned to track progress toward the goals can enter updates as needed. He reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted some of the charts which are being utilized to provide a visual tracking of progress.

Board members commented on the presentation and commended the teachers, principals and administrators for working together to focus on student achievement. Mr. Glasgow reported that once it is determined a progress report to the public needs to be presented, the updated results of the strategic plan tracking will be used to provide the background for that report. He notified the Board that in the near future they would need to develop a policy which would require mandatory summer school for students who are not achieving at grade level in the primary grades.

#### **H. Report: Procurement / Minority Vendor Information**

Darral Paradis provided a written report which was provided as an attachment to the board's agenda. He was present to review the information and respond to questions. Mr. Nellums requested the calculation of percentages based on the numbers included in the reports. Mr. Paradis agreed to provide the information.

## **I. Internal Auditors Report**

Mr. Becker's report was provided as part of the board's agenda. No additional information was requested.

## **IV. APPROVAL OF ROUTINE MATTERS**

### **A. Minutes**

Minutes from the regular board meeting held on March 17 and from special meetings held on April 20 and April 25, 2011 were presented for review and approval. Mr. Armstrong made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Curry seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **V. BOARD POLICY AND REGULATIONS REVIEW**

### **A. First Reading - Board Policy Adoption: GCCAC Family and Medical Leave**

Mr. Hartz was present to review the first draft policy presented in the agenda and requested approval. Mr. Carreiro made a motion to approve / Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**. Second reading and adoption will be included on the agenda in May.

### **B. First Reading - Board Policy Revision: GBAA Sexual Harassment**

Mr. Hartz also presented a revision to board policy GBAA and requested board approval on first reading. Mr. Carreiro moved to approve the revised policy on first reading, Ms. Curry seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**. Second reading and adoption will be included on the agenda in May.

## **VI. ADMINISTRATION**

### **A. 2011-2012 Budget Plan Recommendation**

Dr. Holmes recommended the board authorize the administration to begin putting a budget plan in place which would provide two options for consideration. These plans were provided to the board by memorandum earlier in the month, and would be provided for periodic review as revisions are made. The final plan would be presented for approval during the months of July and August.

Ms. Curry made a motion to approve; Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **VII. HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **A. Proposed Initiative for Land Bank Property Program for LRSD Teachers**

Mr. Hartz provided a report on the City of Little Rock's proposed initiative for a land bank property program for LRSD teachers. No action was requested at this time; the report was provided only for the board's information and discussion. This program would provide an opportunity for teachers to purchase abandoned property located within 10 miles of a school. The teacher would be required to assume responsibility for improving the property and paying the taxes and improvement expenses. If the city's initiative develops further, the district would then request the board's additional review and approval.

### **B. Personnel Changes**

Routine general personnel changes were printed in the board's agenda. Ms. Curry made a motion to approve; Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

Also included were the administration's recommendations for elementary summer school program administrators. Mr. Armstrong made a motion to approve; Mr. Nellums seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **VIII. FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **A. Monthly Financial Reports – March 2011**

Financial reports were provided in the board's agenda. No action was required.

### **B. Budget Update**

Mr. Bailey reported on the current year budget, with no major differences in previous year's spending. The 2011-2012 budget will be different than what has been presented in the past, and will be further explained in the upcoming budget worksessions.

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

Mr. Carreiro reminded the audience that *Artistry in the Rock* would be held on Sunday, May 1, starting at noon.

Ms. Fox announced the interviews for the superintendent candidates would be scheduled for May 9, 10, and 11. The daily schedule is posted on the website.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

APPROVED: 05-19-11

Originals Signed by:  
Melanie Fox, President  
Michael Nellums, Secretary