



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

**MINUTES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
June 25, 2009**

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held their regular board meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 29, 2009, in the Boardroom of the Administration Building, 810 West Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. President Dianne Curry presided.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dianne Curry
Charles Armstrong
Jody Carreiro
Mike Daugherty
Melanie Fox
Baker Kurrus

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Katherine Mitchell

ALSO PRESENT:

Linda Watson, Superintendent
Beverly Griffin, Recorder of Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Ms. Curry called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. Five members of the board were present at roll call; Dr. Mitchell was absent, Dr. Daugherty arrived at 5:50 p.m. **Janet Rossi**, teacher from Jefferson Elementary was present as ex officio member of the board for the month of June. The student ex officio did not attend.

Ms. Curry welcomed members of the audience and asked Dr. Watson to proceed with the citations and commendations.

II. REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

A. Superintendent's Citations & Commendations

There were no citations to be presented. A certificate of appreciation was presented to the ex-officio teacher for the month of June, Janet Rossi, from Jefferson Elementary School.

B. Strategic Planning: Report from the Commission

Senator Jim Argue and Terrance Bolden, co-chairmen of the Strategic Planning Commission, provided brief remarks regarding the Strategic Planning process and progress. The Commission has met several times and has developed a "game plan" to move the district toward higher levels of student achievement. Senator Argue commended Dr. Watson for recruiting a highly qualified, talented, and committed group of citizens to serve on the Commission.

A scope of work and proposal for services was requested from Picus & Associates (Picus, Odden & Cohen). These consultants will conduct a fact-finding session within the district and hold a series of five meetings in an effort to develop a realistic plan for the district. They will make a conscientious effort to build community support for the plan as it is developed. Two budget alternatives were provided for the board's review. One was in the amount of \$145,000, and the more extensive plan would be \$200,000. The Commission requested approval of the more comprehensive plan, estimated at \$200,000, expressing concerns about limiting the consultants' ability to provide the widest range of services proposed.

Ms. Fox moved to suspend the rules to reorder the agenda in order to take action on the strategic planning proposal at this point in the agenda. Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**. Action was taken at this time, but will be reported as ordered in the agenda.

C. Remarks from Citizens

Cornelius Roberts, teacher at Parkview Magnet High School, congratulated the board and superintendent on a good school year. Mr. Roberts expressed his opinions on a variety of topics including use of stimulus funds, the student rights and responsibilities handbook in general, and specifically the short-term suspension policy. His concerns were related to allowing students to make up work when they return to school instead of being required to complete the work while they are out of school on suspension.

D. Little Rock PTA Council

Henri Smothers spoke on behalf of the PTA Council. Ms. Smothers serves as first vice president, and reported that the Council officers were using this time over the summer to plan for the upcoming school year.

E. Little Rock Classroom Teachers Association

Michael Coleman addressed the board on behalf of the CTA. He reported that Ms. Kohler was attending the NEA meeting in San Diego as a delegate from Arkansas. He commented on the potential for change provided by the ARRA / stimulus funds, and expressed hope that the use of these funds will result in permanent improvement to America's school system and overall academic achievement. He closed by commending Dr. Watson for including principals and teachers in the process of setting the district's priorities for spending the stimulus funds.

IV. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. Remarks from Board Members

Dr. Daugherty commented on a letter received by board members from City Manager Bruce Moore supporting the creation of a district truancy board.

Mr. Carreiro congratulated Hall High student Roosevelt Harris on his appointment as governor of Boys State. He also commended the students and faculty at Central High School on being listed on the Newsweek poll of best high schools in America.

Mr. Kurrus encouraged the public to drive by the construction site of the new Roberts Elementary School on Highway 10 and Taylor Loop Road. He encouraged administrators to begin planning for a middle school, and he asked for consideration to be given to spending stimulus funds on “bricks and mortar” instead of on personnel costs. He reminded the board that the district faces tremendous financial challenges, especially as the desegregation funding phases out.

Ms. Curry reported that she had attended two fifth grade graduations, Watson and Baseline Elementary. She encouraged students to participate in remedial programs and to continue learning over the summer.

B. Legal Update

No report.

C. Middle School Advisory Task Force Committee Update

Short- and long-term priorities were submitted to the administration by the Middle School Advisory Task Force. Dr. Watson reported that the recommendations would be reviewed by the administration and that those with no budget implications would be implemented over the course of the next school year. Mr. Carreiro served as the board’s representative on the Middle School Task Force and reported that they envisioned an ongoing process for improving education at the middle level. He reported that the recommendations brought forth at this time did not include anything that would require a policy change, and that the committee would recommend a process to review progress along the way. Additional recommendations will be made in the future and submitted for the board’s review.

D. Budget Update

Mr. Bailey briefly reported that there was little change in the status of district’s revenues and expenditures. He stated that expenditures are remaining fairly stable due to conservative steps in hiring. He reported that additional information is being developed and that he expected he would be prepared to conduct a budget review in July.

E. Internal Auditors Report

Mr. Becker’s report was provided in the agenda. No additional information was requested.

V. APPROVAL OF ROUTINE MATTERS

A. Board Meeting Dates, 2009-2010 School Year

The annual schedule of monthly meeting dates was provided for the board’s review and approval. As specified in board policy, regular meeting dates were set on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. For the 2009-2010 school year, dates were adjusted in November and December for the Thanksgiving and Christmas / winter break, in March for spring break, and in May to accommodate the dates for high school graduations. Ms. Fox made a motion to approve the schedule as presented. Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

B. Donations of Property

The Board was asked to approve the acceptance of recent donations to the District. Teacher ex officio, Janet Rossi, read the listed donations.

Ms. Fox made a motion to accept the donations as listed; Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**. Donations are listed in the following chart:

DONATIONS

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	ITEM	DONOR
Bale Elementary School	\$420.00 cash for good citizen rewards	Bale Chevrolet / Honda
	\$1,000.00 cash for completion of student projects	UALR / Children International
Geyer Springs Elementary	\$500.00 Cash to assist with field day activities	Central Arkansas Water
Pulaski Heights Middle School	\$2,000.00 cash for the Skyriders Team	Lisenne Rockefeller

C. Minutes

Minutes from the regular board meeting of May 21, 2009 and from special meetings held on June 11 and June 18, were presented for the board's review and approval. Mr. Armstrong moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Ms. Fox seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

VI. ADMINISTRATION

A. Strategic Planning: Report & Recommendation for Consultant's Contract

In February 2009 the board approved the formation of a strategic planning commission to collaborate on the development of a new plan for the district. The Commission includes representatives from the LRSD Board, the city of Little Rock, the faith-based community, institutions of higher education, the legislature, the Hispanic community, Joshua Intervenors, the PTA Council and other parent representatives.

Action was taken earlier in the agenda after hearing a brief report from the Commission's co-chairmen Senator Jim Argue and Mr. Terence Bolden. Ms. Fox moved to approve the recommendation to contract with Picus & Associates for the development of a comprehensive strategic plan. Mr. Kurrus seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

Ms. Curry commended the members of the commission for volunteering to serve in this effort, especially Mr. Kurrus for serving as the board's representative. Mr. Kurrus also thanked the other members of the commission and stated that he believed that Picus & Odden, nationally recognized school reform consultants, would provide the organizational skill and experience to make long-term effective change in the LRSD. He noted that this would be a perfect use of our stimulus funds by making a one-time expenditure for long-term improvements in the way business is done in the LRSD.

VII. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

A. 2009-2010 Evaluation Agenda

Dr. DeJarnette provided a brief review of the information provided in the board's agenda and responded to questions regarding the evaluation plan for the 2009-10 school year. Ms. Fox asked for additional information including a comprehensive list of programs, expenditures and budgets and requested that those items be tied to the evaluation process. She asked that the progress of the programs be tracked to see if they are working as intended to meet the overall goals of the district. She asked that a list be developed showing which schools have which program in order to assess effectiveness and determine which programs work to improve achievement.

Mr. Kurrus also asked for more detailed reporting and asked that the administration "narrow the scope" and refine the programs that work in order to eliminate the programs that don't meet the needs of our students. He specifically focused his comments on *Target Teach* and the way curriculum is aligned to standards in order to achieve higher achievement test scores. He asked how achievement is measured comparing *Target Teach* to the strategies already in place in the classroom. "What does *Target Teach* do for us that we cannot do for ourselves?"

Mr. Carreiro agreed with previous comments and stated that test data should be included with the evaluations, but he acknowledged the lag in receipt of test data when program development and evaluation is done. He asked Dr. DeJarnette to include a measure for effectiveness of professional development and whether that can be targeted to special needs for training teachers. He also asked that the cost of professional development be attached to the programs evaluated.

Mr. Carreiro moved to approve the evaluation agenda as presented. Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

VIII. HUMAN RESOURCES

A. Position in Financial Services (request to table)

A proposal to create a new position in the Financial Services department was included in the board's agenda. This position would be funded with ARRA stimulus funds and would be for the term of eligibility for those funds. Ms. Fox made a motion to create a new position in financial services; Dr. Daugherty seconded. No vote was taken on the motion.

The administration asked that action be tabled at this time so that creation of this position could be included with the full proposal of stimulus fund requests. Mr. Kurrus moved to table action as requested by the administration; Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

B. Personnel Changes

Routine personnel matters were printed in the board's agenda. Dr. Daugherty moved to approve the recommendations as presented. Mr. Carreiro seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

IX. FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

A. Annual School Election Budget

As required by Arkansas statute 6-13-622, school districts must publish their annual budget and school millage rates not less than sixty (60) days prior to the annual school election in September of each year. The administration presented the required budget for the period July 1, 2010 through June 20, 2011 for the board's review and approval. Mr. Kurrus moved to approve; Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

B. Extension of Technology Consultant Contract

The administration presented a request to approve a two-year extension of the contract with Sharon Dowdy / Education Innovations. Ms. Dowdy provides support for the information services and technology departments in the areas of maintenance, e-rate funding, new school technology initiatives and administrative support and development. Mr. Kurrus noted for the record that he had previously voted in opposition to funding for this support position, with his preference being to assign these responsibilities to someone within the district's technology department.

Ms. Fox moved to approve the two year extension. Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried 4-2** with Mr. Kurrus and Mr. Armstrong voting no.

C. Issuance & Delivery of Bonds

At the February 26, 2009 meeting, the board voted to authorize the issuance of second lien bonds in the amount of \$21,390,000 to fund the completion of the new Don Roberts Elementary School and other capital projects across the district. The bond sale was held on June 23, and a resolution awarding the sale of the bonds was presented for the board's adoption.

Ms. Fox moved to approve the resolution authorizing the issuance and delivery of the bonds. Mr. Carreiro seconded the motion and it **carried 5-0-1**. Dr. Daugherty exited the room during the vote citing a conflict of interest. His vote was recorded as an abstention.

D. Financial Audit Services

As directed by Board Policy DIE, Audits / Financial Monitoring, the audit committee met to review proposals for conducting the district's annual financial audit. Three candidates were interviewed and ranked according to the proposals submitted. The committee selected Hudson Cisne & Company and recommended approval for a three-year contract beginning with the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Mr. Carreiro moved to approve the committee's recommendation; Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

E. Monthly Financial Statements

The monthly financial statements were attached to the board's agenda. No additional information was requested.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Fox moved that the board convene in executive session for the purpose of conducting the evaluation of the superintendent. Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously.**

The board convened in executive session from 7:20 p.m., returned at 8:06 p.m., and reported that no action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Kurrus, seconded by Dr. Daugherty.

APPROVED: 07-23-09

Originals Signed by:
Dianne Curry, President
Jody Carriero, Secretary