



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

**MINUTES
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
Thursday, March 13, 2014**

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held a Special Board Meeting on Thursday, March 13, 2014, immediately following the regular agenda meeting, in the Boardroom of the Administration Building, 810 West Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. President Greg Adams presided.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

ALSO PRESENT:

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

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Mr. Adams called the meeting to order 7:37 p.m. All members of the Board were present at roll call.

II. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

The agenda for the meeting included the following action items:

- A. Consideration of Fact-Finders Recommendations – Employee Compensation and Benefits
- B. Student Expulsion Recommendation
- C. Employee Hearing

III. ACTION AGENDA

A. Consideration of Fact-Finders Recommendation – Employee Compensation and Benefits

The Board was provided with a copy of the recommendation from the arbitrator which determined a compromise of a 3% raise to all employees, with insurance benefits to be paid at the current rate.

Dr. Suggs recommended approval of the recommendation from the fact-finder. Ms. Curry made a motion to accept the administration's recommendation; Ms. Johnson seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

The board took a brief recess at 7:47 p.m., and returned at 8:10 p.m.

B. Student Expulsion Recommendation

Dr. Fields provided summary information on a student expulsion recommendation. The student, MM, was found in possession of a weapon on the campus of McClellan High School. The administration recommended expulsion for a full calendar year as required under Arkansas law.

Ms. Curry moved to approve the administration's recommendation to expel MM for a full calendar year. Ms. Fisker seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

C. Employee Hearings

Three employees requested a board hearing to appeal findings returned from the state police on their required criminal background checks. Robert Robinson presented information and gave each employee an opportunity to address the board.

JG: The employee reported he had participated with another individual twenty-three years ago to steal speakers out of a car. He had been charged with breaking and entering and theft of property in Washington County, Arkansas. The employee's record had been expunged and he had a copy of the expungement letter in his possession. He made restitution for the property damage, and has not been in any trouble since that time.

After hearing the evidence and considering the facts, the board **voted unanimously** to grant the waiver as requested. Mr. Carreiro made the motion; Ms. Johnson seconded.

RH: The employee addressed the board in his appeal to remain employed as a custodian for the LRSD. The incident in question occurred in 2009, where he was charged with stealing a purse. He stated he went to court for about a year with a court appointed public defender, and although he was not guilty, he was offered a plea deal to take five years of probation in exchange for a "no contest" plea. He was promised his record would be expunged as a first time offender. He said his probation was terminated early, and he believed his record had been expunged.

After hearing the evidence and considering the facts, the board **voted unanimously** to grant the waiver as requested. Ms. Shephard made the motion; Mr. McAdoo seconded.

CM: The employee reported she had been substituting in the Child Nutrition department since 2011. Her position became permanent in August, 2013. She had been charged and convicted of second degree forgery and theft of property in Jefferson County, Arkansas in 1999. She was under the impression her record had been expunged at the time the probationary period was over, and only found out there was still a charge on her record when this action was returned by the State Police.

After hearing the evidence and considering the facts, the board **voted unanimously** to grant the waiver as requested. Ms. Curry made the motion; Ms. Johnson seconded.

SH: The hearing was called to order at 8:49 p.m. Attorney Khayyam Eddings presented information for the District regarding the background and history of <the employee> within the Child Nutrition Department of the LRSD. In 2005, the position of CN Director was vacant, and <the employee> interviewed for the position. Subsequently, Ms. Lilly Bouie was selected for the position and hired by the LRSD. Since that time, there was difficulty in the working relationship between Ms. Bouie and <the employee>, eventually resulting in the recommendation for termination.

In November, 2012, the administration conducted a level 2 grievance hearing regarding the recommendation for termination; documentation from that process was provided for the board's review. The hearing officer upheld <the employee's> grievance, and her employment was not terminated. <The employee> was on leave with pay from that time until March 27, 2013, when then Interim Superintendent Marvin Burton assigned her to a position in the Adult Education Department. Since the time of that reassignment, <the employee> contested the reassignment to Adult Education.

John Walker represented <the employee>. He addressed the board regarding this proceeding, which he stated originated as a result of incident in 2011 where Child Nutrition Director Lilly Bouie felt threatened by <the employee>. An incident occurred at a school in SWLR, and as a result Ms. Bouie requested action be taken. <The employee> was suspended with pay pending the investigation by safety and security. <The employee> contested the suspension, and requested she be returned to her job at Child Nutrition. Ms. Bouie asked that <the employee> not be returned to Child Nutrition, and maintains that request at this time.

A copy of a negotiated settlement agreement dated August, 2008, was presented for the board's consideration and review. In that settlement, <the employee> was given the title of Coordinator of Child Nutrition for the 2009-2009 school year. The annual salary for that period of time was specified, as well as the pay grade on the salary schedule.

District employees called as witnesses included Chief Financial Officer, Kelsey Bailey; Child Nutrition Director, Lilly Bouie; and Human Resources Director, Robert Robinson.

<The employee> addressed the board, requesting consideration of her appeal. She stated willingness to work with Ms. Bouie and to cooperate with assignments given to her as an employee of Child Nutrition. She also discussed an incident whereby former superintendent, Linda Watson, invited her and Ms. Bouie to a dinner at her home to attempt to settle differences between them, asking them to set aside their personal differences and work together. She stated she believed they could work together without further problems.

The board convened an executive session at 11:45 p.m. They returned at 12:26 a.m. and reported no action was taken.

Mr. Carreiro made a motion to deny <the employee's> grievance and to sustain her reassignment; in addition, the administration was directed to meet with her to find an existing position that meets her skill-set and to report the results of that reassignment to the board by the April board meeting. Ms. Curry seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously.**

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 12:30 a.m.

APPROVED: 03-20-14

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