



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

**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**  
**April 12, 2012**

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held a special meeting on Thursday, April 12, 2012, in the boardroom of the administration building, 810 West Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. President Jody Carreiro presided.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jody Carreiro  
Michael Nellums  
Charles Armstrong  
Greg Adams  
Melanie Fox  
Norma Johnson

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Dianne Curry

**ALSO PRESENT:**

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

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

Mr. Carreiro called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. Six members of the board were present at roll call; Ms. Curry was absent.

**II. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING**

The meeting was called for the purpose of approving an ADE required authorization for the superintendent of schools to sign documents on behalf of the board and to conduct three employee appeals hearings.

**A. ADE Assurances for Programs under ESEA / NCLB**

The Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (ACSIP) is for LEA use in requesting district funds for covered programs under the NCLB regulations. To assure eligibility, the superintendent is required to attest to compliance with all assurances for each program covered by the ACSIP plan. The board was asked to authorize the superintendent to sign the assurances as required under ADE regulations. Mr. Armstrong moved to approve. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously.**

## **B. Employee Appeal Hearings**

**Employee 1** requested an open hearing to appeal a recommendation from the superintendent for a ten-day suspension without pay. Information included in a letter dated January 17, 2012, informed Employee 1 of the suspension based on a failure to uphold a principal's recommendation to expel a student who was thought to be in possession of a handgun on the campus of J. A. Fair High School. The student completed the 2011 school year at Felder Learning Academy.

Employee 1 stated he was the hearing officer, and his decision to modify the expulsion was based on the fact he could not determine if, in fact, the student had the weapon. Other students were present when the firearm surfaced, and the student denied that it was his. He also refused to tell the school officials and security officers who actually had the weapon. Employee 1 provided background information and responded to comments from the superintendent. The assignment to the alternative school was an effort to keep the student in school, and the parent agreed to the modified sanctions.

The board took a brief recess for deliberation and returned at 9:21 p.m., and reported no action was taken.

Action 1: The board was asked to determine if the district had proven or not proven its case based on Dr. Holmes' letter. Ms. Fox made a motion to support the district's case; Ms. Johnson seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

Action 2: On a determination of whether to uphold, reject or modify the superintendent's recommendation, Ms. Fox moved to uphold the recommendation. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion, and it **tied, 3-3**. The **motion failed**, with Mr. Adams, Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Nellums voting no. An alternative motion was made by Mr. Adams, to modify the recommendation to 5 days without pay. Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion, and it **carried 4-2**, with Ms. Fox and Ms. Johnson voting no.

The second hearing was for **Employee 2**, an employee of the student hearing office. She was appealing a ten day suspension without pay for failure to follow through with procedures in the student hearing office. In May 2011, a Cloverdale student brought a weapon onto the campus of Bale Elementary School. The incident happened after school and no students were present at the time of the incident. Employee 2 was to have placed the student on a "do not enroll" list for the following school year, which she admittedly failed to do. The student was enrolled at J. A. Fair High School at the beginning of the current school year.

Employee 2 introduced herself and reviewed the circumstances for the particular incident. She admitted the incident was the result of having an overwhelming amount of paperwork at the end of the school year, and she accepted responsibility. However, since she had no other disciplinary actions since being employed with the district, she asked the board to overturn the superintendent's recommendation.

The board went into closed session for deliberations, returned at 9:55 p.m., and reported no action was taken.

Action 1: Ms. Fox made a motion in support of the administration's finding that Employee 2 was at fault for not filing the appropriate paperwork. Mr. Nellums seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

Action 2: Ms. Fox moved in support of item two in the letter to Employee 2, that she failed to place the student on the "do not enroll" list. Ms. Johnson seconded, and it **carried unanimously**.

Action 3: Ms. Fox moved to modify the recommendation for suspension from ten days to five days without pay. Mr. Adams seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

The third hearing was on a recommendation from the superintendent to suspend **Employee 3** for three days without pay for sending letters referencing the superintendent's name without appropriate authorization. The letter, dated February 27, indicated Employee 3 had been given prior verbal instructions not to use the superintendent's name in written communications.

Employee 3 addressed the board and provided brief background information regarding correspondence sent by email using Dr. Holmes' name. Dr. Freddie Fields, the employee's direct supervisor, was asked to respond to questions regarding his request to gather information and the use of Dr. Holmes' name in communications to the public in this particular incident.

The board convened a closed session and returned from deliberations at 10:35 p.m. They reported no action was taken.

Action 1: Ms. Fox moved to support the administration's allegations that correspondence was sent without the superintendent's approval. Mr. Adams seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

Action 2: On the three day suspension, Ms. Fox moved to uphold the recommendation of the superintendent. Mr. Adams seconded the motion and it **carried 5-1**, with Mr. Nellums voting no.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 10:40 p.m. on a motion from Ms. Fox.

APPROVED: 04-26-12

Originals Signed by:  
Jody B. Carreiro, President  
Charles Armstrong, Secretary