



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

MINUTES
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
Thursday, July 10, 2014

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held a Special Board Meeting on Thursday, July 10, 2014, in the Boardroom of the Administration Building, 810 West Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. President Greg Adams presided.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Greg Adams
Jody Carreiro
Dianne Curry
Leslie Fisker

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Norma Johnson
C.E. McAdoo
Tara Shephard

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 at 6:24 p.m. Four members of the Board were present; Ms. Johnson, Mr. McAdoo and Ms. Shephard were absent.

II. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

The agenda for the meeting included:

- A. Annual School Election Budget
- B. Annual School Election Polling Sites
- C. Employee Hearing

III. ACTION AGENDA

A. Annual School Election Budget

In order to satisfy various legal requirements concerning school elections, the Board of Directors is required to approve a proposed budget for the 2015-2016 school year together with a rate of tax levy sufficient to provide such funds. Arkansas Code states in part..."The requirement of the Arkansas Constitution, Amendment 40, for publication of the budget shall be discharged by the board of directors of each school district by publication of its budget one (1) time in a newspaper published in the county in which the school district lies.

The publication shall be made not less than sixty (60) days before the annual school election at which annual ad valorem property tax for the school district is decided by the electors."

Mr. Carreiro made a motion to approve the budget resolution recommended by the administration. The motion was seconded by Ms. Fisken, and it **carried unanimously**.

B. Annual School Election Polling Sites

Arkansas Code Annotated 6-14-102 provides that polling sites for the annual school election may, by resolution of the District's Board of Directors, be reduced in uncontested Board races if there are no other ballot issues. By eliminating polling sites in zones where no issues are to be considered by the voters of those zones, election expenses paid by the District are reduced significantly. Mr. Carreiro moved to approve the resolution; Ms. Fisken seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

Prior to the hearing, the board took a brief recess at 6:30 p.m. They returned at 6:56 p.m. to convene a closed hearing

C. Employee Hearing

Employee TA was represented by Attorney Clayton Blackstock in an appeal to the Board to allow her to remain in the position of social worker at Hamilton Learning Academy. The District was represented by Attorney Khayyam Eddings.

A decision was made by the administration to replace the social worker with a certified counselor. This decision was based on a realignment of staff to best meet the needs of the student population. The administration did not make the recommendation based on poor performance, but only as a decision to replace that position with a counselor.

Clayton Blackstock addressed the board regarding the students at Hamilton and the difficulty of meeting their specific social and emotional needs. He maintained belief that the social worker position was necessary, and he expressed concern that with three counselors presently there the social worker was still needed to fulfill an important role.

Willie Vinson, coordinator at Hamilton Learning Academy, was called as a witness for the administration. He discussed the mental health services offered by contracted providers at the Hamilton campus. He was also asked to address the varying ways the needs of individual students who attend Hamilton are met. He was asked about the referral process for these students and noted social workers had not been previously used in the referral of students to mental health support agencies. School counselors and administrators make the referrals.

Gloria Parker, one of the guidance counselors at Hamilton, was called by Mr. Blackstock as a witness for Ms. Allen. Ms. Parker stated she had previously worked at Felder and at J. A. Fair, with a background in psychology and counseling. She spoke on behalf of <the employee> and in support of keeping the position of social worker.

<The employee> addressed the board regarding her responsibilities at Hamilton. She reported her social work background was in mental health, with 14 years of experience, including time working at Living Hope. It was noted Living Hope is one of the external providers who work with Hamilton students.

Prior to the assignment at Hamilton, <the employee> worked at Cloverdale and Henderson. She reviewed some of the processes used and circumstances surrounding her involvement with students who need counseling services. She also discussed the mental health intake procedures used at Hamilton. Although she met one-on-one with most students, she had previously held group counseling sessions with students. The group sessions had been discontinued because she was more heavily involved with the intake and placement process.

The board recessed at 9:15 p.m. for deliberations. They returned at 10:00 p.m. and reported no action had been taken.

Ms. Fisken made a motion to uphold the superintendent's recommendation to eliminate the social worker position. Mr. Carreiro seconded the motion and it **carried 3-1** with Ms. Curry voting no.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:02 p.m.

APPROVED: 07-24-14

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