



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

**MINUTES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
December 19, 2013**

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held their regular board meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 19, 2013, 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 at 5:30 p.m. Six members of the board were present at roll call; Ms. Curry was not in the room at roll call, but arrived at 5:35 p.m. The teacher ex-officio, Ora Crenshaw from Franklin Elementary was also present. The student representative did not attend.

To begin the meeting, Mr. McAdoo read the board goals as approved in August 2013. Ms. Crenshaw was asked to read the cultural imperatives.

Mr. Adams made brief comments regarding information from the ASBA attorney related to board member communications through emails. Each board member had received a copy of the email.

II. REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. Remarks from Citizens

Caryn Taulbee, gifted specialist and enrichment teacher at Geyer Springs Elementary, was present with a group of students who are involved in the ETC program at Geyer Springs. The students wrote and performed a song especially for this meeting entitled, "Won't You Come to a High Ability School."

V. P. Parker introduced himself as a parent of five LRSD students, and spoke as an advocate for the two schools proposed for action at this meeting. He discussed his 4th grade experiences with an excellent teacher and he asked for the board to support changes being proposed for Forest Heights and Geyer Springs.

Don Hatfield, a retired information technology executive, addressed the board as an advocate for the STEM proposal for FHMS. He expressed encouragement for the revitalization of Forest Heights, and he asked the board to support innovative educational initiatives. "We must begin training students to achieve and succeed."

Ryan Parson addressed the board and introduced his wife, Katie Parson. Both of them teach at Central High School, and they have two students who attend Jefferson. He asked the board to consider the parents who want options specifically targeted to students with gifted abilities. Within the current school day, there is no time for activities to motivate gifted students to achieve at greater levels. "If we want to put kids first we need to meet the needs of all students." The proposals for Forest Heights and Geyer Springs offer options no schools in the district currently offer.

B. Donations of Property

Teacher ex-officio Ora Crenshaw read the list of recent donations to the district. Mr. Carreiro made a motion to accept the donations. Ms. Shephard seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**. The donations are listed in the following chart:

DONATIONS

| SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT | ITEM | DONOR |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Central High School | \$100.00 cash to the Baseball Team | Paul Chesser |
| Central High School | \$400.00 cash to the Baseball Team | Drew Firth VCC, LLC |
| Central High School | \$1200.00 cash to the Baseball Team | Justin Wittenburg |
| Central High School | \$400.00 cash to the Baseball Team | Richard Harvey Construction |
| Central High School | \$200.00 cash to the Baseball Team | Gary Thomas and Paula J. Korte |

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Central High School | \$400.00 cash to the Baseball Team | Neal Keating |
| Central High School | \$300.00 cash to the Baseball Team | Rownd Asset Management |
| Central High School | \$400.00 cash to the Baseball Team | Bass Charitable Foundation |
| Central High School | \$300.00 cash to the Baseball Team | Alan and DeVonda Byrd (Salon DeVal) |
| Central High School | \$100.00 cash to the Baseball Team | Leon and Lea Nolen |
| Forest Heights Middle School | \$500.00 cash to the maintenance and support of Math and/or Science | B-H-T Investment Company |
| Romine Interdistrict School | \$200.00 in gift cards to Kids with Character Program | 100 Black Men of Greater Little Rock |
| Romine Interdistrict School | \$350.00 cash for Fall Carnival | Affirmative Risk Management |
| Romine Interdistrict School | School supplies and toys valued at \$350.00 to Kids with Character and Honor Roll Program | Wal-Mart |

C. Little Rock PTA Council

Sarah Bernhardt, PTA council president, made announcements regarding upcoming meetings. January 11th, 11:30 a.m. the PTA Council will meet at Forest Heights Middle School. February 11th is PTA Founders Day. Ms. Bernhardt encouraged board members to join the PTA's in the schools within their zones.

D. Little Rock Education Association

Cathy Kohler addressed the board and asked them to contemplate what is truly best for our community and our students. We have to decide if we want to go forward or go backward... we shouldn't make hasty decisions at any time. She wished the audience a blessed holiday.

IV. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. Remarks from Board Members

Ms. Curry reported she had visited gifted and talented students at Cloverdale Middle School this week. She commended Nona Whitaker for the work she does with the students of Cloverdale, and she was impressed by the projects of the students who participated in the Invention Convention this week.

Ms. Fisken thanked the people who work every day with the students in our schools. She complimented Connie Green on the work she is doing at Forest Heights, and reported she had toured the school. She visited classrooms, observed instruction, and was pleased to find a very well-run school.

Mr. McAdoo wished season's greetings to all listeners. He noted the LRSD had a good first half of the year, and he thanked everyone who had contributed to that success.

Ms. Johnson stated her belief in insuring all students succeed. She "believes in pushing from the bottom up" and in building a stronger foundation as we move forward. She expressed concern in that the reconfiguration proposals are bringing out a lot of energy, which could be redirected to other initiatives at no expense to the district.

Mr. Carreiro expressed appreciation for the communications and comments received through Facebook and email. He reported attending the Central high choir concert last Friday night, and he thanked the members of the committees who have worked hard on the reconfiguration proposals. He expressed hope that we continue to find opportunities to ensure we serve all children, and he wished the audience happy holidays.

Ms. Shephard expressed appreciation for all of the employees of the district. She reported on attending a PTA meeting at Geyer Springs, and she acknowledged the people within the PTA who work to build links with the community. She had also visited Cloverdale, and she thanked the teachers and community organizers who collaborated on the recent event there.

Mr. Adams reflected on the past year, noting that the board had hired a superintendent, purchased land, begun a districtwide facilities plan, and had negotiated a new desegregation settlement agreement to finalize the ongoing desegregation controversies in the LRSD. He reported that he had the pen used to sign the 1989 settlement given to him by the board president at that time. He expressed hope that by this time next year, we will have passed or be prepared to pass a millage increase to ensure we can truly have a new Little Rock School District.

Mr. Adams also noted the importance of having community support to ensure we can find common ground to move forward. When we go to the community, they have to be assured they can trust the board and the district administration. "How we handle things will make a difference... there is potential to do great things."

B. Legal Update

At the agenda meeting Khayyam Eddings provided an update on property in the Pankey community that once belonged to the LRSD, but was given to the community for the purposes of building a neighborhood education center. There is ongoing communication to determine how to resolve issues regarding the ownership of the property.

At the December 19th meeting, Mr. Heller provided a brief desegregation update. Judge Marshall tentatively approved the proposed settlement agreement in November. As part of the process, notice has been provided to anyone who would like to have the opportunity to file objections or address the court. As of this meeting, only three objections had been received. Mr. Heller didn't anticipate any serious impediments to

the approval of the settlement. A two-day hearing has been scheduled for January 13th and 14th, 2014 to determine if the Judge will approve.

Mr. Heller also reported on the appeal to the 8th circuit court of ADE charter school approvals. A hearing is set for January 15th for oral arguments. If the settlement agreement is approved, the LRSD will be obligated to dismiss the appeal.

It was noted that the State board of education had declined to review the approval of Exalt Charter School, but had agreed to a review of the Quest School. That appeal is scheduled on January 10th.

On questions from the board regarding the recent information from the City of Little Rock on a tax increment financing district in the southwest part of the city, Mr. Heller reported the LRSD board had approved the proposed TIF in 2003. The district has objected to some TIF districts before, but generally agreed to support the TIF if it promoted development of land that would not normally be developed. Tax increment financing provides an incentive, through bond issues, to encourage development of property not currently in use. The LRSD agreed in 2003 to give up a portion of the tax rate for a period of time. During that time, the money is diverted to bonds. The district continues to have 37 mils on that property, and we will receive 75% of the taxes after a period of time.

Ms. Shepard questioned Mr. Heller about the impact of the settlement agreement on M-M transfers and magnet school enrollment. Mr. Heller responded that fewer students will leave the LRSD to attend school in the county, and fewer students will transfer into the LRSD from North Little Rock and Pulaski County. If everyone attends school in their home district, we will likely have an increase in enrollment.

Ms. Curry encouraged wide distribution of this information prior to open enrollment. All information will be posted on LRSD.org.

C. Update: Forest Heights and Geyer Springs Transformation Committee Report

Dr. Sadie Mitchell provided an overview to the board for the transformation of Geyer Springs to a High Ability Academy. She introduced Ann Robinson, Director of the UALR Mahoney Center for Gifted Education. Ms. Robinson addressed the board about the curriculum and impact on methods used to teach gifted students.

Linda Young provided information on the Forest Heights STEM Academy, and introduced Dr. Eric Sandgren, Dean at the UALR College of Engineering and Information Technology. Also, Jerry Adams, CEO of Arkansas Research Alliance, encouraged support for the STEM school as a means to encourage and enhance workforce development and the creation of 21st century jobs.

Pamela Smith provided a brief overview of the communications planning, Dr. Frederick Fields provided information on enrollment and the application process, and Kelsey Bailey reviewed budget projections which were provided to the board in their report.

D. Update: Facilities Review – Fanning Howey

At the board agenda meeting, representatives from Fanning Howey were present to provide an overview of the process being used to conduct a review of all LRSD facilities. They will be here every month to provide an update for the board. Present were Carl Becksmeyer, Troy Glover, and Ed Schmidt. Copies of the PowerPoint presentation were distributed to the board in their Friday update.

E. Role, Responsibilities and Activities of External Provider

At the agenda meeting, Mr. Glasgow provided a review of services provided by Pearson, which was formerly Americas Choice. He reported that demographic information would be accessible through the data dashboard, and one page summary documents can be developed for parents to provide a better way of informing them of what the supplemental support services provide for their students.

III. CONSENT ITEMS

Ms. Fisker made a motion to approve the items included in the consent agenda. Mr. McAdoo seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

A. Minutes

Minutes from the regular board meeting held on November 21st, and a special meeting held on December 12th, were presented for review and approval. .

B. Personnel Changes

Routine personnel changes were printed in the board's agenda.

C. Internal Auditors Report

Mr. Becker's report was included in the board's agenda.

IV. BOARD POLICY AND REGULATIONS REVIEW

A. Board of Education Policy Revision – Second Reading: IKF – General Education Graduation Requirements

The existing policy IKF General Education Graduation Requirements required a revision to ensure the district is in compliance with ADE regulations. The revisions also delete outdated information as it pertained to the graduating class of 2012 - 2013. There were no objections to approval on second reading; it was, therefore, approved on second reading.

V. FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

A. Budget Update

B. Minority and Women Business Enterprise Monthly Report

C. Financial Statements

Information was provided in the board's agenda, and Mr. Bailey was present to respond to questions from the board.

VI. CLOSING REMARKS

A. Announcements & Reminders

Mr. Adams reminded the board of upcoming employee hearings:

- One hearing will be held following the agenda and special meeting on January 9
- Hearings will be held on Thursday, Jan 30th and on February 13th.

B. Superintendent's Comments

Dr. Suggs asked parents to spend 20-30 minutes each day reading to their children. He commended Parkview and Hall for their winning in the recent basketball tournaments. Hall and Parkview teams will also be playing in a tournament on December 21st. He also reminded listeners of the elementary basketball games held on Saturday mornings at Mabelvale Middle School.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 10:34 p.m.

APPROVED: 01-23-14

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