



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

**MINUTES  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
September 24, 2009**

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held their regular board meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 24, 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  
Katherine Mitchell

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Linda Watson, Superintendent  
Beverly Griffin, Recorder of Minutes

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

Ms. Curry called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. Six members of the board were present at roll call; Dr. Daugherty arrived at 5:40 p.m. The teacher representative, **Lori Kirchner** of McDermott Elementary and student representative, **Donje Turner** from Fair High School were also present.

Judge Marion Humphrey was in attendance to administer the oath of office to Melanie Fox, Charles Armstrong, and Dianne Curry, board members who were each re-elected to three-year terms.

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**

Dr. Watson introduced **Katie Parson**, a biology teacher at Central High School. Ms. Parson was recently named the recipient of the 2009 Arkansas Outstanding Biology Teacher Award. This honor has been given annually since 1961, and identifies a teacher from each state who has made valuable contributions to the teaching profession. Ms. Parson designed a

400-question "Biology Trivial Pursuit" game for students as an aid in reviewing for the End-of-Course biology exam. In addition, she wrote the curriculum for an oceanography course, which was approved by the ADE, and she assists with the Central Arkansas Regional Science Fair and the Arkansas State Science Fair.

**Roosevelt Harris**, a senior at Hall High School, was elected Governor at Arkansas Boys State this past summer. He is a quarterback for the Hall High Warriors football team, point guard for the basketball team, is the "Warrior" mascot and sings in the school choir.

**Carla Thomasson** and other representatives of ***Give a Kid a Chance*** were introduced to the Board. *Give a Kid a Chance* is currently in its seventh year in Little Rock and provides school supplies, uniforms and backpacks to students who attend Wilson, Franklin, Wakefield, Otter Creek, Bale, Watson and Stephens elementary schools. This school year approximately 1,600 students received backpacks; 2,500 students received school supplies, and 1,800 students received uniforms. Participating volunteer groups included: St. Andrew's Church, Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church, Fellowship Bible Church, Geyer Springs First Baptist Church and UALR Children's International.

**Lori Jolley** and other members of the ***Junior League of Little Rock*** were recognized for their annual service project called ***Stuff the Bus***. In 2006, *Stuff the Bus* provided back-to-school items for 518 students at Watson Elementary. The program has since grown to include approximately 2,000 students at four schools: Baseline, Geyer Springs, Chicot and Watson. This year the total amount spent on supplies was \$35,000. The Junior League partners in this project with UALR Children's International, Perks.com and Verizon Wireless.

**Sarah Spencer**, President of ***Rotary Club 99***, was introduced and recognized for the annual Rotary Club dictionary project. This group provides a dictionary to every third-grade student in the Little Rock School District. The volunteers who deliver the books to each elementary school also read to students and participate in other literacy activities.

**Reggie Merritt** briefly addressed the board regarding the upcoming LRSD United Way fund drive. Employees are encouraged to participate in the annual campaign by signing up for payroll deduction or by making a one-time donation to the United Way.

Ex-officio board representatives for the month of September were **Donje Turner**, student from J.A. Fair High School and **Lori Kirchner**, teacher at McDermott Elementary. They were given certificates of appreciation for their one-month term of service.

## **B. Partners in Education**

**Debbie Milam** announced the annual ***ViPS Jane Mendel Reading Day***, which will be held on Tuesday, November 17, 2009. Board members and the public audience were encouraged to sign up to read in one of the district's elementary classrooms. Registration cards were available, and instructions for registering on-line were provided.

One new partnership was announced and recommended for approval:

- **LRSD Parent Involvement Office**, represented by *Kaye Rainey, Reggie Merritt and Leon Adams*, partnering with the **City of Little Rock Community Programs Department**, represented by *Adrian Harris and Barbara Osborne*

Mr. Carreiro made a motion to accept the partnerships, Ms. Fox seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

### **C. Remarks from Citizens**

**Stephen Green**, student at Episcopal High School, addressed the board as a representative of *Arkansas' Enough is Enough*. He spoke out against teen violence and bullying, and announced an upcoming rally on the steps of the state capitol, October 18, 2009. He encouraged youth in the LRSD to attend the rally, and invited board members and other adults within the LRSD to attend and support efforts to change the attitude of acceptance of violence among young people.

### **D. LR PTA Council**

**Patty Barker** thanked the LRSD and St. Mark Baptist church for hosting the first PTA Council meeting of the year. She also thanked the J. A. Fair choir for their performance and their teacher, Choral Director Keith Hearnberger, for his efforts in coordinating their participation.

Ms. Barker reported that she and Henri Smothers had attended the very first PTA meeting at the new Woodruff Early Childhood Center, where officers were elected for the current school year. The next PTA Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 13 at Parkview Magnet High School. New officers and other building level PTA leaders will receive training.

Ms. Barker closed with a reminder about the importance of parental and community involvement and the significant role of parent representatives on district level commissions and committees.

### **E. Little Rock Classroom Teachers Association**

**Teresa Gordon**, vice president of the LRCTA, addressed the board and announced that Ms. Kohler was attending a meeting in Washington, DC. Ms. Gordon introduced members of the CTA who were present, including members of the negotiations team.

Ms. Gordon reported that she had attended the Strategic Planning Commission meeting and the Central High School open house. She expressed appreciation for Ms. Rousseau and her efficient and effective management of the school. She reminded the audience that the opening ceremonies for the new field at Quigley Stadium would be held at the Central football game Friday night, and she invited the audience to attend the pre-game tailgate party.

## **IV. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **A. Remarks from Board Members**

**Dr. Mitchell** reported that she had visited Booker Elementary School on the national day of service and had read to a classroom of students. She expressed pride in that the school was very inviting and the classroom teachers were pleasant and focused on instruction. Dr. Mitchell further reported that the students were attentive and polite, and that Principal Carson had assured her that they have the resources needed to serve their students.

Dr. Mitchell had attended the Strategic Planning Commission meeting, the recent Project Graduation seminar, and forums recognizing the 52<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the desegregation of CHS. She closed by encouraging parents to attend the upcoming parent institute on Saturday, October 3. She asked her fellow board members to consider inviting the Arkansas School Boards Association to hold a session in the LRSD on board governance in order to become better, more effective board members.

**Ms. Fox** reported that she had also attended the Strategic Planning Commission meeting. She thanked Stephen Green for his comments earlier in the meeting on prevention of youth violence, and she thanked Ms. Curry for serving as president for the past year.

**Mr. Carreiro** also thanked Ms. Curry for the work she had done as board president. He reported that he had attended an elementary, middle and high school open house, and that he was happy to see participation by parents, students and teachers. He encouraged parents to stay in touch with their principals, teachers and others in the schools and to be involved in school activities.

**Mr. Armstrong** reported that he had attended the Romine open house and that he was pleased to see attendance improved over previous years. He had received a welcoming reception from the parents and he continued to encourage parents and others in the community to become involved in the public schools. He also encouraged attendance at the upcoming parent institute.

**Dr. Daugherty** thanked Dr. Watson and staff for the flu prevention strategies that had been on-going since the outbreak of the flu in the district. He noted that building staff had been working overtime including nights and weekends to wash walls, doorknobs, computers, desks and other surfaces to help prevent the spread of the flu virus.

**Mr. Kurrus** reported that he was excited about the open house at Central. He reported that the school looks beautiful and that Central has exceptional teachers who take pride in their school and their students. He encouraged listeners to visit Central and to become active in what goes on in their schools. He invited the audience to attend the Tiger tailgate party on Friday night and to attend the game and opening of the new field.

**Ms. Curry** thanked Stephen Green for his comments and for his efforts to reduce violence in our schools and community. She reported that she had attended a middle and high school open house. She encouraged parents who were unable to attend open house to go visit the school at another time and to meet their child's teacher and principal. She thanked Ms. Elston for the recent graduation summit, and she encouraged school administrators to track achievement at the middle school level where we seem to lose the most students. She closed by encouraging the Cloverdale students to read 25 books this year.

#### **A. Legal Update**

Mr. Heller reported briefly, stating that he was still in the process of preparing reports for submission to the state on the proposed desegregation settlement. He has been working with Mr. Bailey to compile a financial report to demonstrate the impact of various settlement scenarios and proposals. The state's attorney, Scott Richardson, was present.

Mr. Heller reviewed additional information on the impact of charter schools on the LRSD and the state's continued practice of approving charter schools without regard to the future of the district. He also reported that the ADE had refused to provide information regarding former LRSD students who are currently attending charter schools. It was believed that this information should be made available under the freedom of information act, but that a similar problem was encountered when trying to gain information on former students from the Pulaski County School District. Additional information will be reviewed one-on-one with board members over the next week, and a recommendation will be provided for the board's consideration within a few weeks.

Mr. Heller closed with a reminder that the first hearing before Judge Miller would be held on September 30 at the federal courthouse. Board members were welcome, but not required to attend.

## **B. Budget Update**

No report.

## **C. Internal Auditors Report**

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

# **V. APPROVAL OF ROUTINE MATTERS**

## **A. Election of Officers**

As specified in LRSD Board Policy BDA, Board Organizational Meeting, the Board reorganizes annually at its first regular meeting after the annual school election. "At this meeting, the Board will elect a president, a vice president, and a secretary from its members."

The floor was opened for nominations for the office of Secretary: Dr. Daugherty nominated Mr. Carreiro. After no additional nominations, Dr. Daugherty moved the nominations be closed and moved that Mr. Carreiro be elected by acclamation. Ms. Fox seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

The floor was opened for nominations for the office of Vice President: Ms. Curry nominated Ms. Fox. After no additional nominations, Dr. Daugherty moved the nominations be closed and moved that Ms. Fox be elected by acclamation. Mr. Kurrus seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

The floor was opened for nominations for the office of President. Dr. Mitchell nominated Mr. Armstrong. No other nominations were offered, and Dr. Daugherty moved to close the nominations. Ms. Fox moved to elect Mr. Armstrong by acclamation. Dr. Mitchell seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **B. Board Disbursing Officers**

Arkansas Code 6-13-618 requires the Board of Directors to designate, by resolution adopted by majority vote, one of its members to serve as the primary Board disbursing officer of the District and one as an alternate Board disbursing officer in the absence of the primary Board disbursing officer.

The administration recommended approval of a resolution to appoint the President and Vice-President as the district's disbursing officers. Dr. Mitchell moved to approve the recommendation, Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

### **C. Donations of Property**

The Board was asked to approve the acceptance of recent donations to the District. Donje Turner, student ex officio, read the listed donations.

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

#### **DONATIONS**

<b>SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>DONOR</b>
Chicot Elementary School	\$85.00 cash to the Early Childhood Program to purchase play dough	Mr. & Mrs. Carl Jones. Elizabeth Jones, and VBS Missions
Williams Magnet School	Playground equipment and two tire swings for the intermediate playground, valued at \$8,500.00	Williams Magnet PTA

### **D. Minutes**

Minutes from the regular board meeting of August 27, 2009, were presented for the board's review and approval. Dr. Mitchell moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Ms. Curry seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **VI. BOARD POLICY AND REGULATIONS REVIEW**

### **A. First Reading: Policy BEDB – Agenda**

Board Policy BEDB, was first adopted in 1999 and revised in 2001. This policy details how board meetings are organized and conducted. At the request of the board, the proposed policy revision would provide an option to present new partnerships, conduct public recognition, and announce superintendent's citations and commendations during the monthly agenda meeting. Required action to approve new partnerships would be conducted at the regular meeting. One minor change was requested prior to return for second reading approval: in the third paragraph of the policy it was requested that wording be changed from "may be scheduled" to "will be scheduled." Mr. Carreiro moved to approve the revised policy on first reading. Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

### **B. First Reading: Policy KC – Community Truancy Board**

The Board requested development of a policy to support a collaborative approach to addressing truancy issues in the Little Rock School District. As a result, policy KC was developed to address and incorporate participation by parents and various community entities who serve the young people in Little Rock. Dr. Watson reported that she had appointed Reginald Merritt, Coordinator of Safe and Drug Free Schools and Dropout Prevention, to work with volunteers from various community groups in order to establish a working committee.

Dr. Watson was asked to read the proposed policy. It was reported that several community entities had expressed support including the city manager's office, the Little Rock police department, the Pulaski County sheriff's department and the Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Daugherty made a motion to approve the policy on first reading. Ms. Curry seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

**C. Second Reading: Policy KBA – Title I District Wide Parental Involvement Policy and KBA-R Regulation**

Revisions to Policy KBA, Title I District Wide Parental Involvement, were proposed to ensure alignment and compliance with state and federal parental involvement laws. Dr. Daugherty moved to approve the revisions on second reading. Ms. Fox seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

**VII. ADMINISTRATION**

**A. Appeal of Open Enrollment Charter School – Friends Academy of Health & Environmental Sciences**

**B. Appeal of Open Enrollment Charter School – LR Urban Collegiate Public Charter for Young Men**

Mr. Heller reported to the board regarding his recommendation to oppose the creation of new charter schools within the LRSD. Both of the charter school proposals before the board had been considered and opposed by the Pulaski County Special School District. Their objections had been submitted to the ADE for many of the same reasons the LRSD has raised, including the negative effect of recruiting students from the existing public school districts and the possible effect on the Pulaski County District's continuing efforts to achieve unitary status.

Mr. Heller stated his firm belief that the Arkansas Department of Education should suspend the approval of any additional charter schools until the unitary status of the PCSSD has been determined. He offered suggestions for conditions that might lessen the impact on the district's desegregation efforts, enrollment, and financial status, including but not limited to recruitment of students of lower socio-economic groups, inclusion of special education and special needs students, and provision of transportation.

In response to questions from the board, Dennis Glasgow stated that he didn't believe there was anything included in either of the charter applications that could be considered new, different or innovative from what the LRSD already provides. In addition, he expressed concern that neither of the proposals included a formal literacy program or any indication as to how they would meet the needs of students who don't meet the high achievement goals expected by creators of the proposals. He reported that the applications stated students would receive experiential learning, but that much of the instruction would be by computer-based programs.

Mr. Kurrus and Dr. Mitchell also expressed concerns regarding the proposal including the limitation of one proposal to serve only males, the conditions placed on enrollment, and the state's continuing to approve charter schools without regard for the local school district's best interests.

In response, Mr. Heller agreed and stated that the local school districts still have a legal obligation to maintain a desegregated school system and abide by the desegregation plans which brought us to unitary status. When high-achieving students are removed from the LRSD and enrolled at charter schools, the remaining students are those whose educational needs are more difficult and more expensive to meet.

Dr. Watson reminded the board that they were required by the ADE to vote separately on each charter proposal and to provide findings and considerations to the state board of education. The district's response is due to the ADE on or before September 30, and the applicant has a right to appeal within thirty days. The applications would then be considered at the November or December state board meeting.

Mr. Carreiro moved to approve the recommendation to send a negative impact statement to the ADE in opposition to the *Friends Academy of Health & Environmental Sciences*. Ms. Fox seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

Mr. Carreiro moved to approve the recommendation to send a negative impact statement to the ADE in opposition to the *LR Urban Collegiate Public Charter for Young Men*. Ms. Curry seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **VIII. GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

### **A. Resolution in Support of Renaming City Street**

The City of Little Rock is in the process of renaming Taylor Loop West to LaMarche Drive, which affects the street address of the new Don Roberts Elementary School. The board was asked to adopt a resolution in support of this renaming prior to the opening of the new school. Dr. Daugherty moved to approve the resolution as presented. Ms. Fox seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **IX. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

### **A. Grant Proposal: Enhancing Education Through Technology**

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) released the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) grant competition with a due date of October 1, 2009. These grants are made available for the purpose of improving student academic achievement through the effective integration of technology.

Through the grant, the administration hopes to improve student achievement through the use of technology; to assist every student to become technologically literate by the end of the eighth grade; and to encourage the effective integration of technology. The district proposes to offer extensive professional development opportunities for fourth through eighth grade teachers over the course of one school year. The board was asked to approve the submission of the grant application. If awarded, the grant would provide approximately \$138,191 for one year. Dr. Mitchell moved to approve the recommendation; Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **B. LRSD Secondary Literacy**

The LRSD Secondary Literacy program was redesigned for the 2009-2010 school year to ensure that student needs are being met and that strategies are in place to improve achievement.

Suzi Davis and Carol Carter provided an overview by PowerPoint presentation on the district's secondary literacy program. Quenton Suffren with The Learning Institute reviewed their website and demonstrated the data available to teachers and administrators through that online tool.

## **C. The Learning Institute – Periodic Assessments and Systematic Reporting**

The board was asked to approve renewal of the contract with The Learning Institute (TLI) of Hot Springs. This partnership began in 2007 in an effort to improve academic achievement through a periodic assessment program, SOAR. The Institute provides immediate feedback through a variety of reporting services on the TLI Web Portal so that teachers and administrators can take the "academic pulse" of their classrooms and schools on a regular basis. Ms. Fox moved to approve the administration's recommendation; Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **X. STUDENT SERVICES**

### **A. Discussion: Criteria for Establishing Roberts Elementary Attendance Zones**

The administration was directed by the Board to develop criteria for drawing attendance zones for the new Don Roberts Elementary School. Board Member Kurrus provided input and has made some suggestions for additional discussion including:

- Geography of the area
- Current number of existing LRSD students in the area
- Existing general demographics
- Future demographics
- Neighborhood and subdivision
- Location and utilization of other LRSD facilities
- Safety and security
- Diversity
- Special geographic factors

Dr. Watson reported that she would be working with the staff to develop a recommendation for the board to review at the next agenda meeting. It was anticipated that action to approve the recommendation could be taken at the October board meeting.

*The board took a brief recess at 8:20 p.m. and returned at 8:30 p.m.*

## **XI. HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **A. Approval of the 2009-2011 Professional Negotiated Agreement for Little Rock Classroom Teachers**

The 2009-2011 negotiated agreement for Little Rock Classroom Teachers was provided for the board's review. The administration recommended approval. Dr. Mitchell moved to approve the contract and Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion. It **carried unanimously**.

### **B. Personnel Changes**

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

In addition to routine staffing changes, three of the school improvement specialists were presented for approval. *Phillip Clark, Icipine Jones* and *James Jennings* were recommended to fill the positions of school improvement specialist.

Dr. Mitchell moved to approve the recommendations, Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**. In follow up discussion, it was noted that the specialists will provide monthly reports to the superintendent's cabinet, but will also report quarterly to the board.

## **XII. FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **A. 2009-2010 Budget**

In accordance with Arkansas law, the District's 2009-2010 Budget must be approved by the Board of Directors and submitted to the Arkansas Department of Education no later than September 30, 2009. On August 13, 2009 the Board held a work session to review the preliminary budget data. Mr. Bailey was present to review the final budget and respond to any questions from the board.

Ms. Fox expressed concerns about several aspects of the budget including total administrative costs, federal budget details, Title I and Reading First position funding. She stated that she had voiced her concerns in January and had asked for the administration to place higher priority on budgeting to address the district's academic shortcomings and reduce central administrative costs. She did not feel that these concerns and priorities were given sufficient consideration in the budget development.

Mr. Kurrus asked that the administration accelerate the process and end the "cart-before-the-horse" method of creating a budget. He expressed concerns about the reorganization of the administration, and the difference between the ways salary increases are calculated on the teacher salary schedule vs. the administrative salary schedule.

Dr. Watson asked board members to conference with her and Mr. Bailey to review which administrative costs are still of concern and to provide insight on what they would like to have included in the budgeting procedures.

Mr. Carreiro requested inclusion of his written motion for the record:

I move for the approval of the 2009-10 school budget as presented by administration and further that the board clarify our expectations for the 2010-11 budget by requesting that:

1. Mr. Bailey prepare a schedule for the budget approval process to present to the board next month as part of the budget update, that includes at least the following:
  - a budget workshop in February or March;
  - a complete draft budget before the end of April
  - budget approval in June or July
2. Administration will develop new budget update reports that are smaller and more user-friendly. Our expectation for next year is that the budget document that we approve would be less than 30 pages and the 750 page book is only for administrative use and questions.
3. Budget documents (monthly updates and annual budgets) will be updated so that all sources are in a similar or side by side format. That is, operating, federal programs, magnet, charter, etc. will all look the same. We need this type of information to be able to make the decisions we need to make in the months ahead. For example, what is the cost per student at our magnet schools compared to our other schools?
4. The board will determine and express in a measurable fashion exactly how much we expect administrative costs to be reduced for the 2010-11 school year by the November meeting.

Ms. Curry seconded the motion to approve the budget and to create a process for next school year's budget. The motion **carried unanimously**.

## **B. Monthly Financial Statements**

No reports were presented at this time.

## **X. CLOSING REMARKS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

APPROVED: 10-22-09

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