

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

**MINUTES
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
May 11, 2006**

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held a special meeting in conjunction with the regularly scheduled agenda meeting on Thursday, May 11, 2006, in the Boardroom of the Administration Building, 810 West Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. President Robert M. Daugherty presided.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Robert M. Daugherty
Baker Kurrus
Bryan Day
Larry Berkley
Tom Brock
Katherine Mitchell
Tony Rose

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

ALSO PRESENT:

Roy G. Brooks, Superintendent of Schools
Beverly Griffin, Recorder of Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Dr. Daugherty called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. All members of the board were present at roll call. In addition, the ex-officio teacher representative for the month of May was also present: Kathleen Runder, teacher at Fair Park Early Childhood Center.

II. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

The agenda for the special meeting included:

- A. Legal Update – Attorney Chris Heller
- B. Appointment of Summer School Coordinator for the 2006 Summer School Session
- C. Salary Recommendation / Reopened Negotiations for 2005-06
- D. Southwest Middle School Conversion
- E. Report: Internships – David Hartz

III. **ACTION AGENDA**

A. Legal Update – Attorney Chris Heller

Chris Heller prepared a written summary report for distribution to the board. He responded to questions regarding the State Desegregation Litigation Subcommittee and expectations for the LRSD from the Gordon Report.

B. Appointment of Summer School Coordinator for the 2006 Summer School Session

Patricia Boykin was selected by an interview team to serve as the district's summer school coordinator. Ms. Boykin is an assistant principal at Mann Magnet School and she was present for introduction to the Board. Dr. Brooks recommended the appointment, and Mr. Kurrus moved to approve the superintendent's recommendation. Mr. Rose seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

C. Salary Recommendation / Reopened Negotiations for 2005-06

The 2006 special legislative session provided additional foundation funding to districts across the state, increasing the per-pupil allocation from \$5,400 to \$5,528. A portion of this money would be allocated to pay for the district's share of increased teacher retirement benefits; however, the administration presented a proposal to add 1.6% to the base of the current year teacher salary schedule. Other employee groups would also receive this additional salary increase, and the adjustment would be included on the June 15 payroll. Mr. Milhollen was present and responded to questions from the board. Mr. Kurrus moved to approve the administration's recommendation; Dr. Mitchell seconded the motion. It **carried unanimously**.

D. Southwest Middle School Conversion

The administration presented a proposal to redefine the district's alternative education programs and reconfigure the use of the Southwest Middle School campus. Hugh Hattabaugh, deputy superintendent, presented a report and provided statistics and comparative information regarding the current enrollment at Southwest and other LRSD middle schools. If approved, the district would begin the process of notifying parents and students of their school assignment for the 2006-2007 school year, reassigning teachers, and appointing the new administrative team for the alternative campus.

Board members discussed the impact of closing the school and questioned the administration's intent to do so without taking into consideration Board Policy FB, which requires a year to plan the closure and discuss the proposal with the community. Dr. Brooks and Mr. Hattabaugh assured the board and audience that this was not intended as a "closing," but instead as a reconfiguration or re-use of the facility for a different educational purpose.

The reconfiguration of Fair Park Elementary School into a Fair Park Early Childhood Center was used as a recent example of a successful transition for educational re-use.

Mr. Berkley noted that Southwest Middle School had experienced an enrollment decrease over several years that could partially be attributed to the school's NCLB academic school improvement status. There is a perception that a quality education cannot be afforded at Southwest Middle School.

Mr. Hattabaugh responded to questions regarding the number of students who might be assigned to Southwest from the Apperson and Garland ALC sites. He also assured the Board that students who had pending legal cases or who had been involved in serious criminal incidents would continue to be assigned to Felder Academy. Fewer students would be assigned to classes at Southwest, and they would receive additional support services to meet their educational, social, and emotional issues.

Dr. Daugherty read Policy FBC regarding school closings. He then called on members of the audience who asked to address the Board.

Sherry Keaton, teacher at Southwest, voiced opposition to the conversion to an alternative learning center. She stated that Southwest has been "on the bottom" for years, and that they had worked hard this year to turn things around. She also expressed concern about placing an alternative center next door to an elementary school and suggested there were safety issues that should be considered.

A second speaker (*no name given*) identified herself as a Southwest Middle School parent and community member. She expressed support for Southwest and stated that she had worked with UALR Children International to establish a partnership between the middle school and the university. She suggested that additional partnerships between the school and the community could be established to make positive change in the middle school environment.

C. H. Clark, Southwest PTA president, asked the Board to postpone action until additional communication with the community and Southwest parents could take place.

Dr. Mitchell moved to follow board policy and postpone voting on the issue of converting Southwest Middle School to an alternative learning center. The **motion died** for lack of a second.

Mr. Kurrus offered a motion to postpone action until the May 25th board meeting to allow the Board sufficient time to review the information and listen to the community's concerns. Dr. Mitchell seconded the motion.

Mr. Berkley assured the audience that the Board expects this to be a quality and effective learning environment for students whose needs aren't being met in the regular school environment.

Mr. Ledbetter responded “no” to a question from Mr. Rose regarding the two-week delay and whether any resistance from the union would result from a late decision on the issue. The motion **carried unanimously**.

E. Report: Internships – David Hartz

The Board asked David Hartz, director of Human Resources, to investigate the possibility of utilizing graduate students in social work and psychology as interns in our schools. These students could help us address the needs of some of our more challenging students. Mr. Hartz provided a brief oral report and indicated that he had contacted UALR and UCA regarding an agreement for their students to intern in our schools.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Berkley.

APPROVED: 05-25-06

Originals Signed by:
Robert M. Daugherty, President
Bryan Day, Secretary