

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

**MINUTES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
November 15, 2001**

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held its regularly scheduled meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 15, 2001, in the Boardroom of the Administration Building, 810 West Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. President Baker Kurrus presided.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Baker Kurrus
Judy Magness
Tony Rose
Larry Berkley
Micheal Daugherty
Katherine Mitchell
Sue Strickland

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

ALSO PRESENT:

T. Kenneth James, Superintendent of Schools
Beverly Griffin, Recorder of Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

President Baker Kurrus called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Six members of the Board were present at roll call; Dr. Daugherty arrived at 6:04 p.m. Charlotte Cornice, teacher at Baseline Elementary School and Amy Blackwell, student at Hall High School, were present and served as ex-officio representatives to the Board for the month of November.

II. PROCEDURAL MATTERS / WELCOMING COMMENTS

Prior to the board meeting, a reception was held honoring school nurses. Presentations were made to the school nurse of the year and to the exceptional new school nurse. Those individuals will be recognized during the Superintendent's Citations section of this report.

Students from the McClellan Pride Choir, under the direction of Douglas Hoffman, performed for the Board.

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III. REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. Superintendent's Citations

Dr. James introduced *Margo Swanson*, coordinator of nursing for the District, and announced the names of school nurses who had been recognized at a reception prior to the board meeting. School Nurse of the Year nominees were: *Vicki Barney*, who serves at Otter Creek and Meadowcliff Elementary Schools; *Amy Stuff*, nurse at Dunbar Magnet Middle School; *Terrie Ellington*, from Cloverdale Elementary School, and *Kim Hayman*, who serves at Wakefield, Baseline, and Central High School.

There was a tie for School Nurse of the Year honors. *Lucia Perry* from Fulbright Elementary School and *Jo Ann Curry* from Cloverdale Middle School will share this title. The First-Year Nurse of the Year award was presented to *Doug Harrison* from Chicot Elementary School.

Anita Farra, Director of Central Arkansas Career Opportunities, attended the meeting to make a presentation to the District. Over the past three years, Central Arkansas Career Opportunities has granted a total of \$300,000 for development of youth school to work initiatives. The final grant award, in the amount of \$54,431 was presented to JoEvelyn Elston in the form of a large mock-check.

Lillie Carter, principal of Pulaski Heights Elementary School, was recognized as being one of six state finalists in the Arkansas Association of Elementary School Principals Distinguished Principal program. Mrs. Carter was congratulated for the hard work and dedication she exhibits in service to the children of our District.

Charlotte Cornice, a special education teacher at Baseline Elementary School, and *Amy Blackwell*, student at Hall High School, were presented certificates of appreciation for their service as ex-officio representatives to the Board for the month of November.

B. Partners in Education: New Partnerships

Debbie Milam presented information regarding City Year, an AmeriCorps program scheduled to begin operation in Little Rock next year. City Year is a national service organization that enlists young adults aged 17 to 24, for a year of full-time community service and leadership development. They will work with the LRSD in recruiting young people for participation, and will place these young people in our schools for yearlong service projects. Representatives from City Year National office were present to provide additional information for the Board's consideration. Melody Myers, Greg Carroll, and Ebony Winston provided a personal perspective on City Year and provided details regarding the on-going community service projects and leadership development activities available through City Year. The ten-month program provides a living allowance and awards an educational stipend in the amount of \$4,721 at the end of the service year.

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Ms. Milam also presented certificates to businesses and individuals that recently established working partnerships with District schools. Ms. Magness made a motion to accept the new partnerships, Mr. Berkley seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

Newly established partnerships were:

Dunbar Magnet Middle School, represented by *John Bacon*, in partnership with **Master Tech Car Care Centers**, represented by *David Keltner*

Fulbright Elementary School, represented by *Deborah Mitchell*, in partnership with **Barnes & Noble Booksellers**, represented by *Carolyn McNutt* and with

Orbit Valve represented by *Duane, Nicole*, and *Ashley Morgan*

C. **Remarks from Citizens**

None.

B. **Little Rock Classroom Teachers Association**

No report.

C. **Joshua Intervenors**

No report.

IV. **REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

A. **Remarks from Board Members**

Dr. Mitchell reported that she had read to students at Washington Magnet Elementary School on the recent VIPS Districtwide Reading Day. She complimented the students for being very attentive and she thanked all the volunteers who came into our schools to read.

Ms. Magness thanked the VIPS staff and parent coordinators who worked to coordinate the reading day. She also complimented them on the Saturday Parent Involvement workshop held on Saturday, October 27. She noted that the parents who attended received valuable information on ways to help their children learn. Ms. Magness also thanked the students in Ms. Miller's second grade class at Gibbs for giving her the chance to read and visit with them.

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Ms. Magness had participated in a panel discussion with the Superintendent's Student Cabinet at Mabelvale Middle School. She complimented these students on their knowledge of pertinent issues and for their good listening skills. *Dr. Daugherty* had also attended this Student Cabinet meeting, and he thanked them for inviting him to participate in the discussion on semester test exemptions for senior students.

In addition, *Dr. Daugherty* apologized to Dr. Lesley for a comment he had made in a previous meeting regarding lower socio-economic group performance on standardized tests. He stated he has a new perspective on the relationship between SES and student achievement.

Mr. Rose reported that he had read to a fifth grade class at Chicot Elementary School. He had also read to a group of students at the UALR Neighborhood Homework Center and noted that he felt uplifted after spending time with these kids.

Ms. Strickland stated that she was thankful for each and every District staff member; and that our staff truly cares about all the kids. She noted that she had recently been thinking back over her past seven years on the Board, and she was grateful for the opportunity to know all the people that she would not have had a chance to meet if not for her service on the Board. She noted that these were stressful times, as we all prepare for court hearings, but that we must remember whatever the outcome, we are all winners.

Mr. Kurrus noted that he was "touched" whenever he has a chance to go into our schools. He remains impressed with the sharp minds and quick wit of our students. He chastised the patrons who do not show greater support for our student athletes, especially during the recent Central and McClellan football tournament games. He noted that small town support for athletic games is very high, and that our athletes deserve the same support. He noted that these kids "played their hearts out."

Mr. Kurrus remarked that we are in for some tough financial times. The State has announced unprecedented revenue shortfalls and the funding cuts will go beyond the expected funding shortages. We will be facing deep personnel reductions and we may need to close some schools and eliminate some programs in order to remain in operation.

Mr. Kurrus continued by reminding us of the court hearings scheduled to be on Monday, November 19. He asked for all parties involved to remember that we have a "unity of purpose" to deliver the best possible education to all the kids we serve. He noted good will for the people on the other side of the issues.

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B. Desegregation Update

Mr. Babbs provided a brief report, also noting preparations for the upcoming days in court. Dr. Terrence Roberts is in the District all week providing additional sessions of "Coping with Differences," for employee groups. He is scheduled to meet with the District's counseling staff in an intensive two-day session.

He reminded the Board that student registration efforts will be "stepped up" after the first of the year. Registration dates will be widely announced and are printed in the school calendar. Open enrollment for school choice options is to be held January 28 through February 8, 2002. "Check Us Out" open houses are also scheduled and published in the calendar. Additional information will be distributed through the media after the first of the year.

C. Budget Update

Dr. Stewart reported that we are waiting for official notification from the State as to exactly how severe the budget cuts will be. He expects the amount to be in excess of \$2 million. Planning for the end of the year has begun, and it is hoped that we will end the school year with the same ending balance that we started with this year. It will be difficult, but all budget managers are being notified to provide recommendations for reductions within their budgets over the next few weeks. It is understood that salary obligations have been made, so there will not be a lot of savings within the salary lines, except in areas where positions are vacant and can remain unfilled.

Dr. James briefly echoed Dr. Stewart's remarks, and reminded the Board that statewide budget cuts will be in excess of \$142 million. He stated that it will not be "business as usual" in our District, or in any school district in Arkansas, as this is the largest funding reduction in the history of the State.

D. Construction Report: Proposed Bond Projects

Mr. Goodman's construction report was printed in the Board's agenda and Mr. Eaton was present to report. He announced that Baldwin & Shell Construction Management Services had been selected in the District's competitive bidding process to oversee the multitude of on-going construction projects.

C. Internal Auditors Report

Mr. Becker's report was printed as a part of the Board's agenda. As a report item, Mr. Becker reported that sixteen schools had been included in ShareFest activities this past weekend, whereby local businesses and church groups participate in improvements to the school buildings and grounds. Additional ShareFest information will be provided to the Board at a later date.

V. APPROVAL OF ROUTINE MATTERS

A. Minutes

Minutes from the regular meeting of the Board of Directors held on October 25, 2001 were presented for review and approval. Ms. Magness made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Berkley seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

VI. INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

A. Regulation: Revision of IHBEA-R, English as a Second Language

Bonnie Lesley provided a written report and review of the regulations governing Board Policy IHBEA, English as a Second Language. This revision results in the discontinuation of the elementary school Newcomer Centers as they currently exist. ESL students will continue to receive services currently provided, and will be able to attend school within their attendance zone. The regulations were presented for the Board's information only, and no action was required.

B. Regulation: Revision of IKF-R, Graduation Requirements

Revisions to the Graduation Requirements regulations were presented for the Board's review. Dr. Lesley was present to report and to respond to questions. No action was required.

C. Proposed New / Modified Middle School Courses, 2002-03

D. Proposed New / Modified High School Courses, 2002-03

Pursuant to policy IG, all new courses must be submitted for Board approval. A summary of the proposed changes to middle school and high school curriculum for the 2002-03 school year was provided for the Board's review. Dr. Lesley was present to provide information and respond to questions.

Ms. Magness made a motion to approve the middle school courses as submitted. Mr. Berkley seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**. On the high school submission, Ms. Magness moved to approve the courses presented. Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

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E. Grant Proposals – Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration

The Arkansas Department of Education requested grant submissions for the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program. Meadowcliff and Wilson Elementary Schools are in the process of preparing applications for submission. These funds would provide financial incentives for schools in need of assistance in raising student achievement and in need of additional resources to enable low-achieving students to meet the State's performance standards. The proposals must focus on basic academics and parental participation in the educational process. If awarded, the \$50,000 grant would provide professional development, literacy materials, technology hardware and software. Ms. Strickland made a motion to authorize submission of these grant applications. Mr. Berkley seconded the motion and it **carried 7-0**.

F. Report: Fine Arts Program

Dr. Lesley introduced the Director of Fine Arts, Mr. Danny Fletcher. He thanked the Board for giving him the opportunity to provide leadership to the District's fine arts program and he expressed appreciation to Sandy Becker and Mary Zies for their assistance in assessing all of the individual arts programs in the District's schools. He has completed an inventory of the equipment and supplies, and noted that some of our instruments are 40 to 50 years old. He estimated that approximately \$500,000 is needed in order to bring all the school programs up to the high standards that our students deserve; in addition to newer instruments, our students need uniforms for bands and choir robes or uniforms for the choral ensembles.

Mr. Fletcher concluded his report, noting that Terry Elementary staff has submitted a grant application to the Little Rock Education Commission in the amount of \$10,000 for a piano lab. He is also working with the Arkansas Symphony Outreach program and UALR / KUAR in a partnership to establish awareness of our arts programs, and will continue to seek outside funding sources to benefit our arts and music programs.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

A. Personnel Changes

Personnel items were presented as a part of the Board's agenda and the administration recommended Board approval. Dr. Mitchell made a motion to approve the personnel changes as presented. Ms. Magness seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

VIII. BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION

A. Donations of Property

The Board was asked to approve acceptance of recent donations to the District. Mr. Berkley made a motion to graciously accept the donations. Dr. Mitchell seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**. Mr. Berkley read the list of items as noted in the following chart:

DONATIONS

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	ITEM	DONOR
Central High School	\$5,000 cash to be distributed equally to each of the following organizations: Tiger Newspaper; Student Council; Black Cultural Society; Tiger Football Program; and Student Government Athletic items to the Central basketball program valued at \$3,135. as listed below: 30 pairs of athletic shoes; 15 athletic bags; 6 coaches polo shirts; 4 pair coaches shoes; and purchase of warm-up suits at cost	Mr. Sam Stueart, Central High Teacher Mr. Don Crenshaw, NIKE, Inc.
Mann Magnet Middle School	\$300 cash for institutional needs \$250 cash to purchase library books	Stephanie Gardner Eunita Holmes, former employee
Parkview Magnet High School	43 pairs of tennis shoes, valued at approximately \$140 each to boys basketball program	Mr. Derek Fisher, Parkview graduate / LA Laker team member
Southwest Middle School	Snare drum, valued at approximately \$150 to the band class	Ms. Kim Montgomery

B. Cash Flow Loan Resolution

The recent passage of Amendment 79 and the lag in tax collection, has resulted in the necessity to arrange a short-term loan to meet the District's obligations until anticipated tax revenue is received. A resolution authorizing the District's representatives to enter into an agreement with Bank of American for a loan not to exceed \$15 million was presented for the Board's review and approval. Dr. Stewart was present to discuss this resolution and to respond to any questions. Dr. Mitchell made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

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C. Financials

Mark Milhollen was present to review the financial reports printed in the Board's agenda and to respond to any questions. Dr. Mitchell moved to approve the reports as printed. Mr. Berkley seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

IX. SCHOOL SERVICES DIVISION

A. Authorization to Submit an Application for Teacher Assistance Program (TAP)

Dr. James reviewed a Powerpoint presentation on the Teacher Assistance Program model. This initiative is underwritten by the Milken Family Foundation and focuses on five principles: multiple career paths for teachers; market-driven compensation; performance-based accountability; ongoing and applied professional development; and expanding the supply of high quality educators.

Two LRSD schools have expressed an interest in pursuing the TAP Model for the 2002-03 school year. Dr. James asked the Board to authorize the staff to submit the applications to the ADE in order to be considered a TAP pilot site for the 2002-03 academic year. Mr. Berkley made a motion to authorize the required submissions. Dr. Mitchell seconded the motion, and it **carried unanimously**.

B. Report: School Resource Officer Program

Bobby Jones, Director of Safety and Security, provided a brief review of the school resource officer program. A written report was provided prior to the meeting for the Board's information.

X. DISTRICT OPERATIONS

A. Request for Land Easement: Woodruff Elementary School Right of Way Easement: Wilson Elementary School

Mr. Eaton presented a request for easement at Woodruff Elementary School and a right of way easement at Wilson Elementary School. Both of these requests are due to construction and utility projects in the areas around the schools. Ms. Magness made a motion to approve the items as submitted. Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

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XI. CLOSING REMARKS

A. Superintendent's Report:

Dr. James briefly noted that he had enjoyed the VIPs Reading Day; he read to students in the second grade at Stephens Elementary School.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, Dr. Mitchell moved to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. Ms. Magness seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

APPROVED: 12-13-01

Original documents signed by:
H. Baker Kurrus, President
Tony Rose, Secretary