



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

**MINUTES  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
October 22, 2009**

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held their regular board meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 22, 2009, in the Boardroom of the Administration Building, 810 West Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. President Charles Armstrong presided.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Charles Armstrong  
Melanie Fox  
Jody Carreiro  
Dianne Curry  
Mike Daugherty  
Baker Kurrus  
Katherine Mitchell

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Linda Watson, Superintendent  
Beverly Griffin, Recorder of Minutes

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

Mr. Armstrong called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. All members of the board were present at roll call. The teacher representative, **Michelle Kavanaugh** from Meadowcliff Elementary, and student representative, **Jameeka McCray** from Hall High School, were also present.

Mr. Armstrong welcomed members of the audience and asked Dr. Watson to proceed with the citations and commendations. He introduced Dr. Carl Cohen and Dr. Lawrence Picus, from Picus & Associates, who were observing as consultants for the district's strategic planning process.

**II. REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**A. Superintendent's Citations & Commendations**

Dr. Watson introduced students **Jessica Riddick** and **Neelam Vyas** from Central High School. These students were recently selected to receive the achievement award in writing by the National Council of Teachers of English. **Connor Thompson** from Parkview Magnet High School was also selected for this award, but was not present at the meeting.

The superintendent introduced **Joslyn Mitchell**, Parkview Magnet High School student, and recognized her selection as a finalist in the national Campaign for Tobacco Free Youth. It was noted that Joslyn was the only student from Arkansas or from the Southern Region to be selected. She will receive an all expenses paid trip to Washington, DC.

Ex-officio board representatives for the month of October were **Jameeka McCray**, student from Hall High School and **Michelle Kavanaugh**, teacher at Meadowcliff Elementary. They were given certificates of appreciation for their one-month term of service.

## **B. Partners in Education**

**Debbie Milam** reminded the board and invited the audience to participate in the annual **VIPS Jane Mendel Reading Day**, which will be held on Tuesday, November 17, 2009. Registration cards were available, and instructions for registering on-line were provided.

Three new partnerships were announced and recommended for approval:

**Hall High School**, represented by *Principal Rhonda Hall*, in partnership with **St. Mark Baptist Church**, represented by *Ramona Ellison*, Children's Ministry Director

**Dodd Elementary School**, represented by *Principal Jill Brooks*, in partnership with **Little Rock Church**, represented by *John Cook*

**Hamilton Learning Academy, Hall High School, McClellan High School, Cloverdale Middle School, Forest Heights Middle School and King Elementary School**, in partnership with the **Arkansas Martin L. King, Jr. Commission**

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

## **C. Remarks from Citizens**

**Carrie Stewart** introduced herself as a private, taxpaying citizen, and also an employee of the district. She reported that she had come to Little Rock four years ago and was assigned to teach at Watson Intermediate School. She expressed concern about the amount of Title I funding received at Watson and the need for more after school tutoring and additional support in the way of literacy and math coaches. She asked the board to assist them by allocating additional support for the students at Watson.

**Virginia Wyeth**, teacher at LR Central High School, expressed concerns regarding the state's recent notification that Central's "safe harbor" status had been withdrawn due to alternative education students who lived in the Central attendance zone but who did not attend Central. She stated a "fundamental inequity" in holding a school accountable for students who did not attend the school. The designation of academic distress has had a significant impact on the morale of the teachers, students, and parents and she requested the board's support in getting the state to reconsider.

## **D. LR PTA Council**

**Patty Barker** opened by thanking Parkview for hosting the October PTA Council meeting, especially Principal Booth and PTA President Greta Freeman. The entire school greeted the Council members including mimes, dancers, the jazz band, the choir, student council members and the ROTC.

Ms. Barker reminded listeners that November 16 – 20 was American Education Week, and in conjunction with that the annual art contest for grades kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and essay contest for students in grades 4 – 12 would be held. The contest winners will be announced at the February Founders Day luncheon. She encouraged art teachers to have their students participate in the Arkansas PTA sponsored art contest, *Reflections*. Those entries are due before December 5<sup>th</sup>.

She reviewed upcoming events for the LRSD including the early “Check Us Out” dates, November 10 – 12 and November 17 – 19, 2009. “Check Us Out” is for parents new to the LRSD who are interested in visiting schools and touring classrooms. This has been moved from January to November to accommodate parents and to encourage them to make their decision earlier about where to send their children for the upcoming school year.

The district is also hosting a Middle and High School fair at Parkview Magnet High School on Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This activity is for parents whose students are entering middle and high schools next year. All district secondary schools will be represented at the event.

The next PTA Council meeting is scheduled for November 10<sup>th</sup> at Jefferson Elementary School. The agenda will focus on parent involvement and arts in education. Ms. Barker closed by asking the audience to support “Just Communities of Arkansas” in their upcoming Walk for CommUnity on Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup>.

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

Cathy Kohler also referenced the upcoming American Education Week and announced that there would be a special program for educational support professionals that week. Additional details will be provided when available.

Ms. Kohler expressed pride in the partnership relationship between the CTA and the district's administration, noting that the students benefit from the solid working relationship. She listed the various committees she serves on in her role as president of the teacher's union, including the middle school task force, the PRE evaluation group, the ViPS board, the strategic planning commission, and the committee working to make recommendations for closing the achievement gap. She stressed the importance of parent-teacher conferences and she encouraged parents to take the time to visit their child's teacher and to form a partnership with the school.

Ms. Kohler reported that she had also attended the community forum on the formation of a charter school at Cloverdale Middle School. She was encouraged by the parents who attended, the questions they asked, and the administration and faculty staff of Cloverdale.

She announced that four schools, Cloverdale and McClellan, Forest Heights and Hall, were selected to participate in the National Learn and Serve Challenge, funded by the U.S. Congress. This initiative will assist in coordinating curriculum in the classroom to help students develop skills to improve their community. The LRSD was only one of six in the nation to be selected and will provide an opportunity for the community to focus on the students and to highlight the good things going on in those schools.

## **PRESENTATION:**

Mr. Armstrong presented a gavel to Ms. Curry in recognition of her term of service as the board president.

## **IV. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

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

**Mr. Kurrus** reported that he had seen Michelle Rhee's presentation at the Clinton School. He had also attended the Hall & Parkview football game and he encouraged our student athletes to continue to play hard, do their best, and "play with the heart of a champion." He also encouraged the audience to continue attending the games and encouraged students to continue to do their best, win-or-lose.

Mr. Kurrus also briefly addressed the situation referenced by Ms. Wyeth concerning the Central High School ACTAAP / school improvement status, expressing encouragement for the teachers. He noted that they had met standards for the kids in their school, and he encouraged them to challenge themselves, but to recognize successes instead of failures.

**Dr. Mitchell** congratulated Kaye Rainey on the success of the recent Parent Institute which was coordinated by the Parent Involvement Office. She encouraged parents to continue to participate and she thanked Dr. Dee Cox from the Arkansas Department of Education for her participation as the keynote speaker.

Dr. Mitchell also encouraged parents to participate in an exhibition that would be held on October 31 at the Mosaic Church on Colonel Glenn Road. Various service providers for children, youth and families will be available to assist parents with needed social services.

She closed by thanking Dr. Watson and staff for coordinating the day-long session with the Strategic planning consultants. She expressed appreciation for the input provided by the staff.

**Ms. Fox** commended the Central High teachers for the wonderful job they have done educating the students who attend Central. She also expressed appreciation for the district's support staff and especially the bus drivers. She noted the number of recent rainy days and the excellent safety record of our drivers. She also thanked the nursing staff for their extra duty in providing the school-based flu clinics. She had attended one of the clinics at McDermott and noted that Ms. Bushmiaer and her team were providing excellent service to the community.

**Mr. Carreiro** encouraged parents to attend the parent teacher conferences next week. He also echoed remarks made by Mr. Kurrus regarding the teachers and staff at Central High School. He congratulated the district's middle school bands and choirs for their participation in the all region tryouts, noting pleasure that six of our seven middle schools participated. He announced that, for the first time, the all region band and choral group performances would be held in November in Little Rock at Robinson Center. He expressed appreciation to UALR for making that a possibility.

**Ms. Curry** thanked everyone who had spoken earlier, especially noting the comments made by the teacher at Watson. She also expressed support for the teachers at Central High School, and stated that the board would support whatever efforts were needed to change the ADE's decision.

**Dr. Daugherty** stated his appreciation for his fellow board members, stating that he was “grateful to have the opportunity to serve with a wonderful group of people.”

**Mr. Armstrong** stated the greatest need of the district was to have more parental and community support for public education. “If we lose public education, we lose our country. The only way to turnaround the times we are in, is to educate our students. They are our future.” He thanked everyone for their involvement in the schools, and he asked others to come on board, to tutor a child or read to students.

## **B. Legal Update**

Chris Heller was present to review recommendations and suggestions for financial settlement of the desegregation case. Scott Richardson from the Arkansas Attorney General’s office was also present. Mr. Heller reported that information had been provided to the desegregation litigation committee today, and he hoped to have a recommendation for the board’s review by the November 5 agenda meeting.

Spreadsheets were provided which provided an estimate of district funding if magnet and M-to-M programs were eliminated in the future. Continuation of these programs would be difficult without the state’s contribution because the district would assume the cost of providing all of the transportation.

Mr. Heller noted that the administration and the district would be faced with determining what would happen in the classroom, what impact would be made on teaching, if we were to settle for the amount the state has offered. He also noted the non-financial issues which exist between the district and the state, especially the state’s continuing to approve charter schools.

Mr. Heller offered to meet individually with board members to discuss the issues and to gain their feedback in the drafting of the proposed settlement.

## **C. 2009-2010 Enrollment Report**

The official October 1 enrollment report was attached to the agenda. Ms. Fox requested a breakdown by grade level, districtwide, and Dr. Watson agreed to provide that information.

## **D. Update: Closing the Achievement Gap Committee Recommendations**

A copy of the Closing the Gap Committee’s report was provided as part of the board’s agenda. Dr. Watson reported that the staff had developed the recommendations from the committee and had assigned the appropriate persons to their areas of responsibility. Those recommendations without a financial component were being implemented immediately. Members of the committee were available to respond to questions.

## **E. Update: Middle School Advisory Task Force Committee**

Information from the Middle School Advisory Committee was included in the board’s agenda. Mr. Babbs was present to respond to questions, and reported that the recommendations were being implemented by the appropriate district staff.

## **F. Update: AYP Status**

The Annual Yearly Progress report was provided as part of the agenda. Staff from the Planning, Research and Evaluation department was present to respond to questions. In addition to this report, Ms. Fox requested a synopsis of the districtwide school improvement efforts.

Ms. Curry asked Dr. Watson to invite Dr. Dee Cox from the Arkansas Department of Education to attend the November agenda meeting to respond to questions from the board. Dr. Watson asked that questions from the board be forwarded to her so that Ms. Cox can prepare her response. Mr. Carreiro requested a report from the school improvement specialists in November.

Mr. Glasgow responded to questions from the board regarding the intervention plans for schools in year 4-5-6 of school improvement. Ms. Fox asked for a school profile or "one page snapshot" that would provide information on which programs are provided, what resources are available to students, and the demographics of the student population in order to concentrate resources and determine how to address the needs of students who aren't meeting standards. Mr. Bailey responded that staff was working toward a data dashboard to provide the information requested.

The board and superintendent briefly discussed comments made earlier in the agenda about resources needed at Watson Elementary. Dr. Watson reminded the board that the class sizes at Watson were reduced as an intervention strategy and that they had math and literacy coaches and other support services in place. It was also noted that Watson is involved in the state directed America's Choice program and that one of the school improvement specialists was assigned to Watson on a half-time basis.

## **G. Update: Supplemental Education Services Program**

Linda Young provided a brief overview of the supplemental education services program. She reported that 667 applications had been received to date with enrollment open until October 30. Approximately 75% of funding will be spent during the first period, November 30 – February 20. Most of the providers offer approximately 28 hours of tutoring services to each student. The second session will run from February 10 to May 17, and will offer services to first and second grade students in addition to the other elementary grade levels.

It was noted that the LRSD was approved to be a SES provider and would serve approximately 1,000 students. Ms. Young responded to questions from the board, and offered to provide periodic updates as the programs begin.

## **H. October 2009 PRE Quarterly Update**

The Quarterly Update to the board was provided as part of the board's agenda. Maurecia Robinson was present to respond to questions.

## **I. Federal Programs Budget**

Board members were provided with information on the federal programs and Title 1 budget. Mr. Adams and Mr. Bailey were present to respond to questions.

Ms. Fox referenced a letter she had provided to the superintendent in January, which included prioritizing classroom instruction and reducing administrative costs. She questioned Mr. Adams about the administrative costs included in the budget, including those costs that were related to private schools which serve LRSD students.

Mr. Kurrus requested information on school level Title 1 budgets. He noted that approximately 700 students left the district, which resulted in a decrease in funding per pupil at the local schools. Mr. Adams reviewed the report provided by Mr. Bailey. The board requested additional information, including a breakout of the expenditures listed on the spreadsheet provided.

#### **J. Presentation: Mathematics K-12**

Vanessa Cleaver, Director of Mathematics, and math specialists Marcelline Carr, Carl Romain, and Beth Clifford provided information regarding instructional and remedial mathematics programs. Ms. Cleaver reviewed a PowerPoint presentation which highlighted the methods used in the math department to determine how to revise curriculum, monitor, and adjust classroom instruction to meet the needs of students. She provided examples of curriculum alignment resources available through The Learning Institute (TLI) SOAR testing.

#### **K. Budget Update**

Mr. Bailey reported briefly to the board. He reviewed a proposed timeline for development of the 2010-2011 budget as requested by board members.

#### **L. Internal Auditors Report**

Mr. Becker's monthly update was included in the agenda.

#### **M. Policy Addendum: Exhibit CC Organizational Chart**

The current organizational chart was provided for the board's review, and had been added as supporting documentation for policy CC.

### **V. APPROVAL OF ROUTINE MATTERS**

#### **A. Donations of Property**

Dr. Mitchell made a motion to accept the donations as listed; Ms. Curry 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>
Central High School	\$10,000 cash to the Ronald Smith Memorial Scholarship fund	Dr. Joseph & Rebecca Wheeler
Fair Park Early Childhood Center	\$15,000 cash to be used to purchase playground and media center equipment	The Roy & Christine Sturgis Charitable and Educational Trust

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	ITEM	DONOR
Franklin Elementary School	Sidewalk valued at \$7,000 on the south side of the campus	Pulaski County Election Commission / City of Little Rock
Otter Creek Elementary School	\$1,000 cash to be used for teacher and student incentives	Wal-mart Store / Baseline Road
Pulaski Heights Middle School	\$5,100 cash to the summer enrichment program for students to visit to the Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, TN	Lisenne Rockefeller
Woodruff Early Childhood Center	\$400 cash to provide incentives and materials for faculty and staff	Day Spring Behavioral Health Services of Arkansas

## B. Minutes

Minutes from the regular board meeting of September 24, 2009, were presented for the board's review and approval. Mr. Carreiro requested a correction to the minutes by inclusion of his written motion with respect to approval of the 2009-10 school year budget. He then moved to approve the minutes with the stipulated addendum; Ms. Fox seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## VI. BOARD POLICY AND REGULATIONS REVIEW

### A. Second 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." Ms. Fox moved to approve the revised policy on second reading. Mr. Kurrus seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

### B. Second 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. A roster of committee members was presented for the board's review and approval.

Ms. Curry made a motion to approve the policy on second reading. Dr. Daugherty seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

After approval Dr. Dennis Burrows addressed the board regarding the composition of the committee and his suggestions for operation of the Truancy Board. He suggested an initial meeting within the month and stated that they would report directly to the Board and not through the administration of the district. Once final constitution of the committee is determined, the board would be asked to formally make the appointments.

## **VII. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

### **A. Standards Based Instructional District Wide Literacy and Math Intervention / Target Teach**

Dr. Huddle provided an overview by PowerPoint of the Target Teach professional development services provided to LRSD schools. It was noted that funding for Target Teach comes through Title I. Linda Young was present to assist in the presentation and to respond to questions from the board.

Ms. Fox spoke in opposition to the administration's recommendation to approve the Target Teach proposal. Mr. Kurrus agreed and questioned whether LRSD employees could provide the same professional development as that provided by Target Teach.

Ms. Curry suggested tabling action on the proposal until more information is received for review. Mr. Carreiro stated his preference to complete the three-year cycle as originally approved by the board without allocation of additional funds.

Dr. Daugherty moved to approve the Target Teach proposal extension as recommended by the administration. Dr. Mitchell seconded the motion and it **failed 3-3-1** with Dr. Daugherty, Dr. Mitchell and Ms. Curry voting to approve, Ms. Fox, Mr. Carreiro and Mr. Kurrus voting no, and Mr. Armstrong abstaining.

## **VIII. SCHOOL SERVICES**

### **A. Cloverdale Charter School Application**

Mr. Babbs introduced Dr. James Jennings who provided an overview of the application for a conversion charter program at Cloverdale Middle School. He expressed confidence that the program would offer a beneficial change in school climate and culture, conduct and achievement goals, parental involvement, and instructional leadership. He specified pre-and-post testing as a means of attaining a more accurate assessment of student achievement on a regular basis and accelerated literacy instruction as high priorities for reinforcement of student instruction.

Dr. Jennings reported that the aerospace course curriculum would provide fundamental science instruction in addition to career planning in the aerospace field. Parents would be asked to sign a contract to encourage more parental support. Monthly progress reports would be provided. In response to questions from the board, reconstitution of the staff would be considered during the planning.

The administration requested approval to submit an application to the Arkansas Department of Education to develop an Aerospace/Technology Conversion Charter School at Cloverdale Magnet Middle School for the 2010 school year.

Dr. Daugherty made a motion to approve the request for approval to submit the charter application to the ADE. Ms. Curry seconded the motion and it **carried 4-3** with Ms. Fox, Mr. Kurrus and Mr. Carreiro voting no.

## **IX. STUDENT SERVICES**

### **A. Don R. Roberts Elementary 2010-11 Proposed Attendance Zones**

The Board asked for the development of criteria for drawing attendance zones for the new Don Roberts Elementary School taking into consideration the following factors:

- 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

A proposal for attendance zoning for the Roberts Elementary School was presented for review prior to the meeting. Mr. Kurrus moved to approve the attendance zone proposal as presented. Mr. Carreiro seconded the motion and it **carried 6-0-1** with Dr. Daugherty abstaining.

*Mr. Kurrus left the meeting at 10:10 p.m.*

## **X. HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **A. Personnel Changes**

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

## **XI. FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **A. ARRA Fund and Budget Coordinator Position**

The administration requested board approval to hire a new employee to assist with the oversight of the ARRA funds, identify additional ARRA funding sources, and submit required documentation to ADE. This staff person will also assist the Chief Financial Officer with other projects in regards to the district's fiscal management. It is expected that the position would be funded with ARRA funds, and would be limited to the time period the district receives ARRA funding. Dr. Mitchell moved to approve the recommendation. Mr. Carreiro seconded the motion, and it **carried 6-0**.

## **B. Monthly Financial Statements**

The monthly financial statements were provided as part of the board's agenda.

## **XII. CLOSING REMARKS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

## **XII. HEARINGS**

### **A. Student Expulsion Recommendation**

The board was provided with information regarding the administration's recommendation to expel <student's name> from Hall High School. <Student> was a 16 year old 10<sup>th</sup> grader who was found to be in possession of a handgun and marijuana on the school campus. The student was incarcerated at the time of this hearing.

Dr. Daugherty moved to approve the administration's recommendation. Ms. Fox seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business before the board, Ms. Fox moved to adjourn at 10:15 p.m. Dr. Mitchell seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

APPROVED: 11-19-09

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