



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

**MINUTES  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
January 28, 2010**

The Board of Directors of the Little Rock School District held their regular board meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 28, 2010, in the Boardroom of the Administration Building, 810 West Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. President Charles Armstrong presided.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Jody Carreiro

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Linda Watson, Superintendent  
Beverly Griffin, Recorder of Minutes

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

Mr. Armstrong called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. Four members of the board were present at roll call; Ms. Fox arrived at 5:50 p.m., and Ms. Curry, arrived at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Carreiro was absent. The teacher representative, Evelyn Jones from Woodruff Early Childhood Center, and student representative, Seth Martin, from Parkview Magnet High School, were also present.

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

**A. Superintendent's Remarks**

At the agenda meeting on January 14, 2010, the superintendent presented certificates of recognition to representatives of the William J. Clinton Foundation for their recent efforts to gather warm winter coats for students in the Little Rock School District. More than 580 coats were donated by members of the community. The efforts were led by Stephanie Street and Lena Moore, of the William J. Clinton Foundation, Connie Fails, Clinton Museum Store manager, and Hall High School students.

During the agenda meeting, the superintendent announced that January was designated as National Mentoring Month by Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe. Volunteers who mentor LRSD students were recognized at a reception immediately prior to the agenda meeting. In addition, several community groups which are involved in mentoring LRSD students were presented with a Superintendent's Citation.

Representatives of the following groups were recognized:

- Step Ministries Encouragers Program
- No Excuses
- Women of Dunbar
- OK Mentoring Program
- Men of Dunbar
- Village Initiative
- Amigos
- Children International
- Big Brothers Big Sisters – Bigs in Schools
- Grow Program – Junior League of Little Rock
- No Boundaries
- L’Oreal
- McClellan Student Council
- St. Vincent Health

A group of students and teachers from Central High School were recognized for their involvement in the publication of ***Beyond Central, Toward Acceptance: A Collection of Oral Histories from the Students of Little Rock Central High.***

Dr. Watson explained that the project started five years ago as a civics class assignment. Students were required to interview someone about their experiences with discrimination or their personal experiences during the civil rights struggle. Out of that assignment a website was established ([www.lrchmemory.org](http://www.lrchmemory.org)) and the students chose interviews to be included in the book. Students involved included editors-in-chief, **Mackie O’Hara** and **Alex Richardson**; editing team members **Muhammed Abu-Rmaileh, Hamza Arshad, Sarah Evans, Clayton Gentry, Magdalene James, Sarah Kline, Aya Kondo, Josh Lintag, Sarah Lintag, Siteng Ma, Ghassan Mahkoul, James Nunnley, Chelsi Page, Sydney Sloan, Khaylin Williams, Tashayla Withers, Yi Wu** and **Aaron Yin**; and the reading team **Autumn Brown, Amanda Carreiro, Ascha Fairmon, Catherine Fox, Helio Liu, Kierra Porter, Bianca Reese, Nicole Sullivan, Helen Wilson** and **Bob Zhao**.

The faculty members who were involved in the production of project included **Mike Johnson, Adam Kirby, Cynthia Mahomes Nunnley, Keith Richardson** and **George West** from the Civics Department; **Rex Deloney, Jason McCann, Lynn Smith** and **Nancy Wilson** from the Art Department; **Kim Dade** and **Agnolia Gay** from the Drama Department; **Scott Hairston, Sharolyn Jones-Taylor** and **Sarah Schutte** from the English Department; and **April Rike** and **Kirby Shofner** who served as the Technology Team.

Dr. Watson announced that the Arkansas School Boards Association had set January 24 – 30, 2010 as Arkansas School Board Member Recognition Week. In appreciation for the services provided by the LRSD Board members, a copy of ***Beyond Central, Toward Acceptance: A Collection of Oral Histories from the Students of Little Rock Central High*** will be placed in each school library.

**John Allen Riggins**, a senior at Central High School, was recognized as being the driving force behind Central's proposal to obtain a sapling from the horse chestnut tree that stood outside Anne Frank's window and which she wrote about in ***The Diary of Anne Frank***. As the 150-year-old tree reached the end of its life, saplings were harvested and are now being planted around the world to carry on Anne Frank's message of tolerance. Eleven saplings will come to the United States, and Arkansas is the only state to receive two – one at Central High School and one at the Clinton Presidential Center.

Certificates of appreciation were presented to the student ex-officio for the month of January, **Seth Martin** from **Parkview High School**, and the teacher representative **Evelyn Jones** from **Woodruff Early Childhood Center**.

## **B. Partners in Education**

Prior to the board's agenda meeting on January 14, 2010, members of the Volunteers in Public Schools Board hosted a reception for the district's volunteer mentors in celebration of National Mentoring Month. Myrtle Withers, the mentoring program coordinator, announced the winners of a student contest in which students wrote a letter to share how much their mentors meant to them.

A few of the "thank your mentor" contest winners read their letters. Antoine Curry from Mann Middle School, won first place at the middle school level; Shavvonna Alexander, also from Mann, won second place; Nathan Collins, from Booker Magnet won first place at the elementary level, and Darian Walker from Brady Elementary won second place. Jessica Watts, counselor from Brady Elementary, read Darian's letter to his mentor.

Debbie Milam presented one new partnership for the board's review:

**Bank of the Ozarks** represented by *Jennifer Woolman*, in partnership with **Brady Elementary School**, represented by *Principal Ada Keown*

Dr. Mitchell made a motion to approve the partnership; Mr. Kurrus seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **C. Remarks from Citizens**

No citizens signed up to address the board.

## **D. Little Rock PTA Council**

No comments.

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

**Cathy Koehler** was unable to be present, but sent greetings.

### III. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

#### A. Remarks from Board Members

**Dr. Mitchell** expressed appreciation to all of the mentors who were present at the agenda meeting, and she encouraged other volunteer mentors to serve in our schools. Also, Dr. Mitchell expressed appreciation to teachers and others who are exerting special efforts to prepare students for Benchmark and end of course exams. She encouraged students to do their best to prepare and to do their best on the tests.

**Mr. Kurrus** reported that he had been attending high school basketball games, noting that the LRSD had three of the top 10 teams in the state. He encouraged the audience to go to a high school basketball game, and he thanked the high school coaches who are genuinely dedicated to their students both on and off the court.

Mr. Kurrus also reported that he had spoken at the last PTA Council meeting, providing a strategic planning update. He stated that this was an “incredible time to be involved in public education,” noting how many important educational issues are currently in the news.

**Dr. Daugherty** expressed condolences to two families who recently lost loved ones. One was a former neighbor, and the other was a former state representative, Sharon Dobbins.

**Mr. Armstrong** asked parents and community members to become involved in public education, and he thanked the mentors who were present tonight.

#### B. Legal Update

Mr. Eddings provided a brief report to the board regarding settlement of an outstanding lawsuit. A trial date has been set for April, and he will return a recommendation for the board's consideration in February.

Mr. Heller arrived at 6:20 p.m. and reported briefly. He was just returning from federal court where the North Little Rock School District's request for unitary status was being heard by Judge Miller.

Mr. Heller reported that he had filed motions with the court asking that no inter-district issues be allowed in these proceedings in order to prevent state desegregation settlement issues from being considered as part of the unitary status hearings. The Pulaski County Special School District had filed a motion to prevent the LRSD from participating in their hearings; however, the judge denied that motion, allowing the LRSD to participate. The PCSSD unitary status hearing is set to begin on February 22.

Mr. Heller also reported that the ADE board had voted to remove conditions previously placed on the LR Urban Collegiate Public Charter School. The LRSD had requested that the charter applicants be required to follow the conditions in their charter application, which were to serve lower performing and lower socio economic students. Mr. Heller read from the minutes of the state board meeting, which acknowledged that the charter review process had been deficient. The minutes specified the difficulty of providing an education to lower performing lower socio economic population.

Under the terms of Arkansas charter school laws, annual reports are to be filed with the ADE. As of now, only one charter school, the KIPP School in Helena, had filed a report. The ADE acknowledged that it is their responsibility to ensure that the reports are done, and that charter schools are appropriately monitored. They admitted that they have done a poor job of policing that aspect of the charter operations.

Mr. Heller reported that he had begun a discussion with Scott Richardson, requesting that the LRSD have an opportunity to discuss decisions regarding approval of charters prior to their unconditional approval. He noted that the parties were close in coming to an agreement on settlement of funding issues, but that no agreement had been reached on the state's continuing to grant unconditional approval of charter schools.

Dr. Daugherty made comments regarding the reversal of the state's decision to hold the LR UC PC School to the specifications written in their charter application. He noted that the LRSD is being held to an impossible standard when the highest performing students are allowed to leave for charter schools.

Mr. Kurrus stated that the LRSD had anticipated these very issues with this and previous charter applications. He expressed hope that some progress might be expected if the ADE follows through with requirements for charter to schools to monitor and report to determine if the schools are meeting their goals and reaching the students. He questioned why the state would approve a charter school "right on top" of an LRSD school which is now operating under state-directed school improvement efforts.

Mr. Kurrus also discussed the potential for the new charter school to be a racially identifiable, one-race, one gender, segregated school. He questioned why the State would get involved in the creation of another one-race institution.

### **C. Report: Quiz Bowl**

Mr. Frank Bateman, Director of the Arkansas Black History Quiz Bowl, provided information on the upcoming Quiz Bowl. The competition will be held on Saturday, February 20, 2010 at the Mosaic Templar Museum on Broadway in Little Rock. He announced that a study guide was available at their website, [www.arblackhistoryquiz.com](http://www.arblackhistoryquiz.com). Mr. Bateman noted that the winning team from 2009 was a ninth grade team from LRSD. Regional competitions will be held across the state, with a final championship competition on February 27, 2010.

Mr. Bateman encouraged board members to attend and to encourage students in the LRSD to participate.

### **D. PRE Quarterly Update**

The quarterly report from Planning, Research and Evaluation was provided as part of the board's agenda. Karen DeJarnette was present to respond to questions from the board.

### **E. Update: Student Tutorial Assistance and SES Report**

Dr. Watson reported that information on the SES and tutoring programs were provided as part of the board's agenda. In addition, Sadie Mitchell and Junious Babbs reviewed the reports provided and responded to questions.

Dr. Mitchell reported that at the elementary level, individualized tutoring plans are implemented at each school based on individual student needs. City Year students serve as tutors in some district schools, and various computerized programs are used to reinforce skills. Teresa Richardson, principal of McDermott Elementary School, reported that her staff and tutors focus on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students to prepare them for testing.

Tyrone Harris, principal of M. L. King Elementary and Karen Carter, principal of Meadowcliff Elementary, responded to questions from the board regarding their efforts to encourage parental participation in the after school tutoring programs. They reported that letters go to parents to encourage student attendance and activities including parents are provided. It was acknowledged that some students can't participate because they don't have transportation. Some SES providers offer services that can be done at home, and additional interventions are implemented for these students during the day.

Mr. Harris reported that the individual AIP's are used to identify the students who require after school support. The school staff makes an effort to serve students during the school day whenever possible by utilizing volunteers and mentors to work with students who aren't able to participate in the after school program. An example was the Encouragers Program whereby an interventionist works with the classroom teachers to make sure the students' needs are met.

Mr. Babbs reviewed the information provided on the secondary level summary report which was included in the board's agenda. He responded to questions, including information on the requirement for an SIP at the high school level for student athletes.

Board members requested information on the number of students participating in SES programs at each school. They requested statistics on the number who are eligible for services and how many are actually taking advantage of the tutoring available. There was also a request for information regarding the continuity between elementary to middle level tutoring services.

## **F. Communication with Parents and Community about Acts 2243 / 1307**

Dennis Glasgow reported to the board by providing a written report in the agenda and by responding to questions during the meeting. He reported that the district had taken all required and appropriate steps to inform students and parents about the rules governing End-of-Course Assessments and Remediation required by Act 2243 of 2005 and Act 1307 of 2009.

He stressed the importance of Act 1307 which changed the requirement to apply only to Algebra I and English II end of course exams starting in the 2013-14 school year. For end-of-course exams in biology and geometry, students who are not proficient must participate in an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) in order to get course credit. This is the same requirement that has been in place since 2005.

Due to the severity of the consequences for not passing the Algebra I EOC exam beginning with the students who take the test this spring, the district has taken many steps to notify parents and students about Act 1307 and Act 2243.

### **G. Report: Grade Inflation**

Arkansas statutes require the Office of Public School Academic Accountability to report the number of students in each school in which more than twenty percent (20%) of the students received a letter grade of "B" or above but did not pass the End-of-Course assessment on the first attempt. For the 2008-09 school year a total of 58 high schools were identified. Little Rock schools identified in the report were Fair, Hall and McClellan.

Mr. Glasgow provided information for the board's agenda which specified the grade inflation data for the five LRSD high schools. Non-proficient students who received an appropriate grade (C or below) were not part of the calculation.

### **H. Update: ELL Program**

Karen Broadnax provided an overview of the ESL / ELL (English as a Second Language / English Language Learners) services provided in the LRSD. She reported that the majority of non-English speaking students in the LRSD speak Spanish. Chicot Elementary has the highest number of non-English speaking students, with Wakefield, Terry and Baseline following. At the secondary level, Hall High has the highest number of ELL students with Cloverdale, Henderson and Mabelvale following.

Dr. Broadnax responded to questions from the board and provided information regarding before and after school tutoring and summer programs available for these students. The goals of the program include ensuring that students acquire English language proficiency in the areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking, and gain cultural literacy to fully participate in the school, community, and greater community.

### **I. Strategic Plan Communications Contract**

Dr. Watson reported that the contract had not been finalized as of the date of this meeting and that additional information would be provided when it becomes available. Dr. Watson and Tiffany Hoffman reported that the timeline for rolling out the strategic plan would not be delayed and that the scope of work developed by the Commission co-chairmen Mr. Bolden, Mr. Argue was being followed.

### **J. Alternatives Unlimited, Incorporated**

Carol Green provided information for the board's agenda and reported that the draft contract provided by J. Vincent Brown and Alternatives Unlimited, Inc., had been reviewed and discussed in detail among the district staff and legal advisors. Provisions within the Arkansas Department of Education alternative education funding limitations would prevent the LRSD from using those funds for the AU program. Ms. Green and Superintendent Watson did not recommend that the board approve this for implementation in the LRSD at this time.

### **K. Internal Auditors Report**

Mr. Becker's report was provided as part of the board's agenda. Mr. Becker reported that Bank of America would be donating \$2,000 to the Computers for Kids programs. These computers will be provided to parents of students in the four-year-old program at no cost to parents.

**L. Budget Update**

Mr. Bailey provided a brief overview of the current budget status. Ms. Fox requested an update on the stimulus funding expenditures to date, and Leroy Harris was present to provide a report. Mr. Harris was asked to be available at the February board meeting for a more detailed report.

Dr. Mitchell asked Mr. Bailey to provide a report to address some of the physical conditions of our buildings and what can be done to improve our buildings.

**IV. APPROVAL OF ROUTINE MATTERS**

**A. Donations of Property**

The board was asked to approve the receipt of recent donations to the district. The student ex officio, Seth Martin, read the list of donations. Ms. Fox made a motion to approve the donations; Dr. Mitchell seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

**DONATIONS**

<b>SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>DONOR</b>
Carver Magnet Elementary	Twelve I-pod sets, valued at \$2,512.00 and \$658.00 for audio books to be played on I-pods	Hawker Beechcraft
Terry Elementary	\$438.00 cash for student achievement programs and weekly prizes for Terrific Tigers	Rogers SDI Holdings, LLC dba Sonic Drive-In
	Support for 13 families during Christmas Angel Tree project	Little Rock Christian Academy
	Nine bicycles for needy students for Christmas	The Church at Rock Creek
	Complete meals for 25 adopted families at Christmas, valued at \$30.00 per family	Immanuel Baptist Church
	\$200.00 cash for student support at Christmas	Asbury United Methodist Church
	\$500 cash to provide clothing for 25 students	Asbury Cornerstone Men's Bible Study Class
	\$62.83 cash to be used as needed	Asbury United Methodist Sundry School Classes
Woodruff Early Childhood Center	\$600.00 cash to provide incentives and materials for faculty and staff	Dayspring Behavioral Health Services of AR

## **B. Minutes**

Minutes from the regular board meeting held on December 17, 2009 and from special meetings held on January 6 and January 14, 2010 were presented for the board's review and approval. Dr. Daugherty made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Ms. Curry seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **V. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

### **A. Elementary Art & Music Textbook Adoption**

The Elementary Art and Music Textbook Adoption Committee began the review and selection process as outlined in the LRSD Policy Manual in October 2009. This process was completed in November 2009 after a thorough process which included a book caravan and several meetings for review and discussion. The books were available for all elementary art and music teachers for their inspection prior to the recommendation. The committee worked to ensure that the series selected was most closely aligned to the Arkansas State Benchmarks and Frameworks.

Dr. Mitchell moved to approve the committee's recommendations. Mr. Kurrus seconded the motion and it **carried unanimously**.

## **VI. HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **A. Personnel Changes**

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

## **VII. FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **A. Monthly Financial Reports**

The monthly financial reports were provided for the boards review as part of their agenda. Mr. Bailey was present to respond to questions. No action was required.

### **B. Proposed Bond Refunding**

The administration recommended that the Board approve a Resolution authorizing Stephens Inc. to file an application with the State Board of Education to submit a competitive bid in connection with the public sale of bonds. Refunding of the District's outstanding bond issues is expected to produce debt service savings, which proceeds would be used to provide capital improvements.

Mr. Bailey reported that the potential savings could be as high as \$36.6 million. Mr. Kurrus moved to approve the resolution. Ms. Fox seconded the motion and it **carried 6-0**.

*Dr. Daugherty was absent from the meeting prior to the discussion and during the vote.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

APPROVED: 02-25-10

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