

Little Rock School District

Community Advisory Board Minutes

April 25, 2019

Attendance: Melanie Fox, Anthony Hampton, Michael Mason, LaShannon Spencer and Jeff Wood were present.

- I. Welcome
 - a. Meeting was called to order at 5:34.
- II. Celebrations
 - a. Celebrations were shared by Supt. Poore. Celebrations included the Ralph Vines Speech contest, One Rock Athletic Awards at AR Children's Hospital, the LRSD Excel Showcase, the 9th Grade Civic Engagement Project Presentations, and the Toothpaste Millionaire One District One Book Campaign. He mentioned upcoming events Forty Under Forty, Teacher of the Year, and the culminating One District One Book event.
- III. LRSD Exit Criteria
 - a. Dr. Mike Hernandez, State Superintendent of the AR Department of Education, presented a slide presentation about the ADEs' exit criteria for LRSD. He said that the exit criteria were created to help the district exit Level 5 Intensive Support under ESSA. Dr. Hernandez shared a timeline that led to the next ESSA Report Cards in October 2019. He also reviewed an Exit Criteria document which listed specific characteristics and quantitative standards the District and the District's schools are required to meet.
 - b. Dr. Hernandez opened the floor to questions from the Board. Mr. Hampton asked how the exit criteria plans help high poverty schools. Dr. Hernandez pointed out the current exit criteria is not an "all or nothing" plan like the previous one. Since this plan measures growth, it takes into account other factors including previous academic history. Mrs. Fox asked about how the new exit criteria plan simplifies the process. She also asked when will the school's results be presented at the state level. He said that the Board can choose how often they would like to update the State Board on the District's progress. Mr. Wood asked how and when the District will know the qualitative items are being met. He said that the next quarterly update is coming up. He said the Board can decide how (how often) the qualitative criteria will be presented. Mr. Poore added that many previous presentations to the CAB have been in line with meeting the criteria. Mr. Hampton added his desire to see the District back in local control that he hopes that the State will see that the District's progress is a process. At Mr. Wood's request, Mr. Hernandez could give an overarching view of the end result of not meeting the criteria. Mr. Hernandez read the law related to
- IV. MAP Data 2018-2019
 - a. Dr. Danyell Cummings, Testing Director, shared highlights of MAP data for Winter to Spring assessments. Mr. Poore commented on how useful MAP data is assisting struggling students and helps teaches tailor instruction to students' particular needs. He also describe the adaptability of the test. Dr. Cummings answered questions from Mrs.

Fox about results and technical problems with the test at Pulaski Heights. There was discussion about results for the next test will affect the exit criteria. Mr. Woods warned the District not to “oversell hope” and be more transparent in their reports to the public.

V. Literacy Update

- a. Dr. Veronica Perkins, Chief Academic Officer, presented a slide presentation about the progress the Curriculum department has made toward improving literacy in grades K-12. Highlights of her presentation were the literacy textbook adoptions, the hiring of a K-12 Literacy Director, curriculum creation, teacher literacy training on the new literacy textbooks, writing and RISE, District-level and ADE monitoring and support of literacy instruction, summer school efforts (RISE lab opportunities and tracking student progress, City of Little Rock’s summer literacy program). The District’s summer programs will be at Bale, MLK and Otter Creek; 1,050 students have signed up to attend. Dr. Perkins and Dr. Ericka McCarroll answered individual questions from the board related to the data to be gathered from the summer programs, the textbook adoptions, the process of hiring the new literacy director, the organization of the literacy specialist staff, curriculum maps, literacy focus walks. There were also questions about how well teachers will be prepared to use the new literacy instructional materials after initial training. There was more discussion about the District’s role in the city’s summer program.
- b. **Melanie Fox moved to approve the District’s literacy textbook adoption and purchase of core literacy material: Wit & Wisdom and Phonics instructional materials: Wilson Foundations and Words for use beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. Michael Mason seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- c. Chandle Carpenter, the LRSD Dyslexia Specialist, presented a slide presentation about the district’s dyslexia plan including six priorities related to dyslexia interventions. Mrs. Carpenter answered questions from the board about testing modifications for individual students, dyslexia instruction components for summer school, placement for students with outside diagnoses and grade level assessments. Mr. Poore elaborated on the work that Mrs. Carpenter has already done to meet the state requirements. There was discussion from the board about additional personnel to meet the need of the District.
- d. Mr. Poore proposed hosting a Dyslexia Summit in the future. He said that he will work with board members, staff and community members to plan.

VI. Budget

- a. Mr. Kelsey Bailey reviewed the District’s Summary Revenue Status Report from the AR Public School Computer Network (APSCN) which includes tax revenues. He then reviewed the Summary Expenditure Status Report.
- b. Mr. Poore and Mr. Bailey discussed the District’s past, current and future budget reduction initiatives. They talked in detail about reductions in specific categories of personnel. They also answered questions from the board relating to teacher to student ratio. There was discussion about the progress on increasing starting teacher salaries.

VII. Refinance Package

- a. Mr. Bailey introduced a refunding proposal. He recommended an Accelerated Savings plan. He explained that refunding the bonds won't increase the debt. It instead allows the District to save money on its debt service.
- b. Michael Mason moved to approve the bond refunding proposal. LaShannon Spencer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

VIII. Policies

- a. Second Readings
 - i. Mr. Eric Walker, LRSD Staff Attorney) addressed the board about making motions to approve second readings of Policy Section 6 (School, Home, and Community Relations) and Section 7 (Record Retention and Destruction)
 - ii. Mrs. Fox moved to accept revisions to Section 6. Mrs. Spencer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
 - iii. Mrs. Fox also moved to approve revisions for Section 7.15. Mrs. Spencer seconded the motion. It carried unanimously.**
- b. First Readings
 - i. Medical Marijuana (Sections 3.19A and 8.15A)
 - 1. Mr. Walker presented background information about the formation of the proposed policy and answered questions from the board.
 - 2. Mr. Wood encouraged the board to take more time to gather more information before making a decision.
 - ii. Magnet/Specialty Schools (Section 4.6)
 - 1. Dr. Frederick Fields, Sr. Director of Student Services, presented the background of magnet programs in the District.
 - 2. Ms. Courtney Salisford, Deputy Counsel from the AR Department of Education, shared the thought process behind creating the updated LRSD magnet and specialty school policy. She also discussed some of the options listed in the policy proposal.
 - 3. Dr. Randy Rutherford, principal of Parkview Magnet High School, explained that former procedures were directed by the District's Magnet Review Committee. Ms. Amy Cooper, principal of Forest Heights STEM Academy, explained the change in the language as it relates to testing terminology. She was asked her preference of the options presented in the policy draft. Ms. Cooper said she prefers Option 1. She also compared Option 1 and the past policy for FHSA admission criteria.
 - 4. Mr. Poore said that this policy may be discussed in multiple meetings.
 - 5. Mr. Rutherford shared his perspective on the admission criteria for Parkview. He also talked about the academic probation and exit procedures at Parkview.
 - iii. Public Use of School Buildings
 - 1. Mr. Walker acknowledged Mr. John Daniels's, Athletic Director, collaboration in construction this policy revision, and answered questions from the board.
 - iv. Sick Leave (Sections 3.7 and 8.5)

1. Mr. Walker gave an overview of the policy revisions. He mentioned that the LREA opposes the proposed revisions.
- c. First and Second Reading - Licensed Personnel (Section 3)
 - i. Mr. Poore asked the board to take action to do a first and second reading on revision for this policy tonight. Melanie Fox moved to suspend normal practice and Anthony Hampton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
 - ii. Melanie Fox moved to allow public comment on this item tonight. Anthony Hampton seconded. The motion carried unanimously.
 - iii. Mr. Walker explained that the need from this policy came from the need to remain in compliance with the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act waiver. Mr. Poore and Mr. Walker answered questions about the revisions.
 - iv. The board opened the floor to public comments. Teresa Gordon, president of the LREA, addressed the board about LREA's concerns about the proposed sick leave policy. She then answered questions from the board concerning Section 3.34. She said that the proposal is not necessarily in conflict with the policy but rather it is not inclusive of Professional Negotiated Agreement (PNA) language.
 - v. **Mr. Wood proposed an amendment to the revisions Section 3.34 and Section 8.31 to include language “, subject to the terms of any applicable professionally negotiated agreement.” Mr. Hampton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**
 - vi. **Mr. Mason moved to approve the revisions to policies with the recommended language. Ms. Spencer seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.**
- IX. Ford NGL Update
- a. Mr. Poore discussed the District's progress toward NGL programming. He shared some statistics related to Nashville's NGL program. He said that funding will come from Title IV funding.
- X. Community Comments
- a. Maybelline Miller shared concerns about her grandson's needs and how the District addresses students with financial needs.
 - b. Vickie Hatter shared praises to the District for its progress of improvement of the literacy curriculum. She also expressed her desire to parent and student input into the magnet program policy.
- XI. Board Comments
- a. Mr. Poore shared that the District earned positive marks on the Child Nutrition audit and Transportation audit.
 - b. **Mr. Hampton moved to adjourn and Mason seconded. The meeting adjourned at 10:10 pm.**