

# **MINUTES BOARD MEETING**

**April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

## **REGULAR MEETING**

At 6:00 p.m. Mr. Hartsfield convened the regular meeting of the district Board of Education. Board members present were, Ms. White, Ms. Compton, Ms. Whitaker, Mr. Milner, Mr. Moore and Mr. Frazier. School administrative personnel present were Mr. Webb, Mr. Hayden, and Ms. Spain. IC Murrell from the PB Commercial and Luke Matheson from Delta Plex were in attendance. The Pledge of Allegiance was said and Mr. Frazier said prayer.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Minutes. The minutes of the last meeting were unanimously approved 7-0 on a motion by Mr. Milner and a second by Ms. Compton.

Financial Statement. The financial statement for the month of March was presented, reporting \$1,242,043.36 in revenue and expenditures of \$1,367,911.53 in the non-activity funds, leaving an ending balance of \$10,431,090.62. Mr. Wilson stated the extra money spent was probably due to the Elementary schools spending their \$500.00 supply money. On a motion by Ms. Whitaker and a second by Mr. Milner the board voted 7-0 to approve the financial report for the month of March.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Wildcat Warrior. Ms. Spain recognized the following student for outstanding WCSD Wildcat Activities. Jyria Williams, MaKayla Earl, MaKaya Earl, Haywood King, Destiny Hines, and Chelsea Grigby all are in the top 25% of his/her JROTC and academic class. They all demonstrate the qualities of dependability, good character, adherence to military discipline, leadership, and excellence in the JROTC program studies and activities. Several of these students have placed in competitions.

Recognize. Ms. Spain recognized the following employees of the month who have shown significant contributions beyond the usual expectations of their employment: Major Small and Janet Johnson. They were co-teaching for all of their building peers. They taught other teachers who to write and use learning targets.

Ready for Learning Committee. Ms. Spain gave a brief update on the status of completion of Science of Reading in the WCSD. The staff worked to complete SOR by March 2023 for reporting to DESE. Any teachers and administrators who have not completed SOR by this date will be provided support to complete the SOR by April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Educators in AR are required to either be Aware or Proficient in the SOR by the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year.

## PPC REPORT & CPPC

Gregory White from the CPPC gave a report. He stated the CPPC wanted to present a classified salary schedule change, but was told to wait until the May board meeting. Frankie Hemphill from the PPC gave a report. The three concerns are: 1. being paid twice a month and the first check being issued in August, 2. The salary schedule discourages years of experience and advanced education, 3. They wanted a delay in vote until May so they have time to review the new personnel policies. Mr. Wilson stated that Norman Hill, the financial advisor said it costs more if a district pays twice a month and the district becomes the financial manager for the employees. He stated he does not feel the district should be the manager and with the LEARNS Act, we cannot take on the extra cost. Mr. Milner made a motion with a second by Mr. Moore, to not pay twice a month. Ms. White asked for clarification if they wanted to delay or deny. Mr. Wilson stated with the LEARNS Act and not having the funding, the district cannot increase our cost. Ms. Compton stated she wanted to delay the vote because the payroll clerk has been compensated for this, but she does not think the board should vote on it now. Mr. Wilson stated he is looking at the best interest of the district. Mr. Frazier appreciates Ms. Hemphill bringing this before the board. He said he would be for it if the Superintendent was, but he supports the Superintendents' recommendation. He stated his wife is a teacher and has always been paid once a month. Ms. Compton stated not all people are married and have two incomes. Ms. Whitaker asked to table it to see what the LEARNS Act does and how much it would cost the district. Mr. Wilson stated they could look at it next spring. Mr. Milner amended his motion to table paying twice a month with a second by Mr. Moore. The board voted 5-2 with Ms. Compton and Ms. White being opposed.

## NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

Polices. Mr. Wilson recommended the attached policies for the board to adopt. Mr. Wilson had Ms. Spain present the policies. Ms. Spain explained the highlights of the law for the LEARNS Act. She stated that the district was advised by Cody Kees and Lucas Harder to follow ASBA model policy and adopt these policies at the April board meeting. WCSD will have to update before July 1<sup>st</sup> after ASBA goes through all policies to make sure it follows the LEARNS Act and new legislation. Mr. Wilson stated that he will have a training for the board to go through the policies and will invite Frankie Hemphill. On a motion by Ms. Compton to adopt the policies, but have a chance to amend them and a second by Mr. Frazier, the board voted 7-0 to adopt the ASBA model policies.

Update. Mr. Wilson gave a brief update on construction and facilities. He stated that construction has been a nightmare from day one due to inflation and other laws that are in effect. The cost went up and the district thought the millage was going to be enough, so the district had to do 2<sup>nd</sup> lien bonds and we expect to receive extra money from the state. The construction cost went from costing \$23 million to \$39 million. The architect is currently drawing plans up and Mr. Webb described how the teachers will have a voice to visit with the architect to give input. Mr. Wilson stated he wants to stop the drop and increase enrollment. The new school will help the economy and provide a safe learning environment for the students. He stated after the plans are drawn, we can get a max guaranteed cost. A bill went through to delay the safe rooms and the Governor wouldn't

sign it. The Fire Marshall said if the new building is within 1,000 feet, then we have to build a safe room big enough for all students. Mr. Wilson brought up the reconfigurations of schools in order to start the construction process timeline. The reconfigurations plans have to be in by June 1<sup>st</sup> and the process for approval from DESE takes 4-6 weeks. Mr. Wilson had Mr. Hayden presented the reconfigurations. Edgewood would be K-2<sup>nd</sup>. There are plenty of classrooms to handle 3 grades. We will need to move furniture and technology equipment, but there would not be very many modifications needed. Coleman would be 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades. There are plenty of classrooms and there will be 2 grades in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade building. We would need to move furniture and clean out classrooms that are currently being used for storage. Mr. Wilson stated we are not done making renovations to Coleman and are waiting on the rain to stop to install the playground equipment. L. L. Owen would be Pre-K, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade. We will need to put up barriers for Pre-K to keep the students separate. The sinks are too low and those would need to be fixed. It is close proximity to the High School for extra activities. The High School would be 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>. There is plenty of room to house 4 grades. We would need to do minor modifications and more furniture. Ms. Compton asked about Pre-K to see if it is feasible to have Pre-K at Edgewood. Mr. Wilson stated the state does not pay for Pre-K and the Coop handles it. The newest part of L.L. Owen is for Pre-K. Mr. Hayden stated it is located in a separate hallway away from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. On a motion by Mr. Milner and a second by Mr. Frazier, the board voted 7-0 on Mr. Wilson's recommendation for the reconfiguration of grades/schools.

Certified Salary Schedule. Mr. Wilson recommended the attached proposed certified salary schedule for the 2023-2024 school year for the board to approve. Mr. Wilson had Ms. Walker present the proposed certified salary schedule. Ms. Walker stated the LEARNS Act has a lot of regulations in it, it was passed at a fast rate and districts are required to start before all the procedures and rules have been set. The main things with the certified salary schedules is that districts had to be sure anyone who made \$48,000 or less move up to \$50,000 and anyone over \$48,000 were given a \$2,000 increase. The LEARNS Act does not recognize steps increases for years of experience and it does not recognize different education levels. It does not pay for any additional stipends, extended contracts, or personnel paid from Federal Funds. Mr. Wilson and I consulted with Norman Hill, a financial consultant to make sure we were following the law. The salary schedules we are presenting for approval includes steps and advanced education due to the district having personnel all over the schedule and we had to keep them at their 2022-2023 contracts and give them the appropriate raises. For the extended contracts, we have taken anyone including Administrators already over \$50,000 that should get the \$2,000 increase and prorated the raise according to their contracted days. The speech pathologist salary schedule follows the LEARNS Act too. These salary schedules are meant to only be used for this year. The district needs more time to find out all of the rules, to see the level of funding the district will receive, and then plan to recommend new salary schedules to the PPC and board for the 2024-2025 school year. Mr. Wilson stated the richer districts get richer and our district is not getting as much money. Our district is following the law. On a motion by Mr. Milner and a second by Ms. Whitaker, the board voted 7-0 to accept the new certified salary schedule.

Summer School. Ms. Spain gave a brief update concerning summer school and presented the summer school plan for grades 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>. On a motion by Ms. Compton and a second by Ms. Whitaker, the board voted 7-0 to approve the summer school plan.

## BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

WCSD will hold a Top Twenty Banquet on Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm on the UAPB campus. JROTC will hold an Award Banquet on Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 in the WCHS auxiliary gym. Mr. Wilson stated he called Relyance Bank to help with graduation, banquets, and the end of year staff luncheon. Relyance donated \$9,000 to help with these things and we appreciate them. Mr. Frazier recognized the following students: Khamarri Cooper did a letter of intent to play at Connors State College in Oklahoma. Nakeel Laurene and Daniel Nelson will play football at West Hill College in California. The Phillips twins are juniors at WCHS and won the leadership award in the Rotary Program. Thanks to Mr. Whimper, Mr. Webb, and Mr. Wilson for supporting this program. Mr. Frazier recognized Paula Bailey, the nutrition director on the new pizza program. The cafeteria are serving 100 more meals per day since this program was added. Mr. Frazier stated that Coach Moody said the new equipment in the weight room was awesome.

## PERSONNEL

Mr. Wilson received a letter of retirement from Williestine Bates and Rose Sullivent. He received resignations from Stephanie Hayslip, Michelle Jeffers, and Annette Neely. On a motion by Mr. Milner and a second by Mr. Frazier, the board voted 7-0 to approve the retirements and resignations.

Mr. Wilson recommended the board rehire all certified staff. On a motion by Mr. Moore and a second by Ms. Whitaker, the board voted 7-0 to rehire all certified staff for the 2023-2024 school year.

## ADJOURNMENT.

Respectfully submitted by, Mr. Wilson and Norma Walker.

Alan Frazier,  
Board Secretary