

The Fordyce School Board met in regular session on Monday, January 10, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. in the Boardroom at Fordyce Middle School. The meeting was called to order by Deborah Mathews at 5:23 p.m.

Word of prayer was given by Silas Warner.

Those answering roll call were Silas Warner, Nick Cranford, Deborah Mathews, Susan Ridings (via phone), and Dr. Hubbell.

Expulsion Hearings

Three students were scheduled for expulsion hearings during the board meeting. Whitney Moore, district attorney was present for the expulsion hearings. Susan Ridings couldn't participate by phone during the expulsion hearings.

Deborah Mathews asked the parent of the first student if they wanted an open hearing or a closed hearing. The parent asked for an open hearing. Dr. Hubbell recommended to the board to expel the first student for the remainder of the year. Chase McCollum informed the board that the student was caught cheating on her science semester test on December 14, 2021. The student called her teacher, Audrey Culp, an ignorant ass, racist white woman during the test when the teacher confronted her about cheating. There was another incident where the student verbally abused another staff member by telling Nikki Rice, the librarian to shut up. Mrs. Culp confronted the student about cheating and asked her to leave the classroom and the altercation started. Coach Musgrove had to remove the student from the classroom. Mrs. Mathews asked the student or her family if they wanted to present their side. The student stated that she told the teacher she wasn't cheating she was talking to another student and that is why she got mad when the teacher confronted her. She said she did say the teacher was ignorant. Mr. McCollum stated that there were several discipline incidents during the first semester involving this student.

Silas Warner made a motion at 5:30 p.m. to go into executive session for the first student. Nick Cranford seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Nick Cranford made a motion at 5:40 to end the executive session for the first student. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Nick Cranford made a motion to expel the student for the remainder of the school year. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Mr. McCollum told the student and her parents that he would call them the next day to setup classes for the remainder of the semester for the student.

Deborah Mathews asked the second student if he wanted an open or closed hearing. He asked for a closed hearing at 5:43 p.m.

Nick Cranford made a motion to go into executive session at 5:48 p.m. to discuss the expulsion of the second student. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Nick Cranford made a motion to end the executive session at 5:50 p.m. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

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Nick Cranford made a motion to suspend the second student for the remainder of the school year. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Deborah Mathews told the student to contact Mr. McCollum to setup his classes for the remainder of the semester.

Dr. Hubbell informed the third student that his hearing would have to be rescheduled because he was related to one of the board members and there weren't enough members present for a quorum without that board member.

Attorney Whitney Moore informed the board to get the hearing with the third student rescheduled as soon as possible.

Regular Board Meeting

Susan Ridings joined the meeting via phone.

Minutes

Silas Warner made a motion to approve the board minutes from the December 13, 2021 regular meeting, December 16, 2021 and January 7, 2022 special meetings. Nick Cranford seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Financial Statements

The December financial statements were presented by Teresa Matkin for approval. Silas Warner made a motion to approve the financial statements. Nick Cranford seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

New Business

Dr. Hubbell told the board the high school is currently a little heavy on staff.

The over and beyond award was presented to Laura Orlando. Dr. Hubbell told the board that Ms. Orlando goes above and beyond for the high school literacy program.

Tabled the concurrent credit policy until February.

Nick Cranford made a motion for La'Niyah Andrews to transfer to the Bearden School District. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Covid Emergency Leave Update: Dr. Hubbell asked the board to approve 10 days Covid leave to all district employees. Nick Cranford made a motion for all district employees to have up to 10 days of Covid leave. Silas Warner seconded the motion.

Dr. Hubbell asked the board to renew the Legal Liability Insurance for the district with BXS Insurance. Silas Warner made a motion to renew the Legal Liability Insurance with BXS Insurance. Nick Cranford seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

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Dr. Hubbell asked the board to accept a bid from Bruce Walker for dugouts for softball. Dr. Hubbell said it had been preapproved to be paid for with ESSER III funds. Susan Ridings asked if it was for baseball and softball. Dr. Hubbell told her softball. Nick Cranford asked how many dugouts. Dr. Hubbell told him it was for two dugouts on one field at the Civic Center. Nick Cranford asked if this field would be shared with the community. It will be shared with the youth softball program but the FHS softball team would have the first choice to use it. Nick Cranford made a motion to approve the bid from Bruce Walker for the dugouts. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Dr. Hubbell presented a MOU between Virtual Arkansas and Fordyce High School. Nick Cranford made a motion to accept the MOU from Virtual Arkansas. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Dr. Hubbell presented a textbook order for concurrent credit. Nick Cranford made a motion to approve the purchase of textbooks for concurrent credit. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Principal's Report

Rhonda Lawson told the board she had 16 teachers out today. No learning occurred for 3rd, 4th, and 6th grade. There are 10 fully vaccinated staff at the elementary, 20 fully vaccinated students, and 15 partially vaccinated students. She said she got phone calls and texts all weekend. It's not fair to teachers or students with so many teachers being absent.

Chase McCollum told the board about the ring ceremony at the arena for the Rocket Team. The rings were presented to the 2020 and 2021 Rocket teams by Coach Wilson.

The leadership team along with Mrs. Lawson will be going to Magnolia for the PLC process.

Parent/teacher conferences will be held February 10th.

Girls Basketball came in 2nd place during the Holiday Tournament held in Berryville. The boys haven't been able to practice.

Covid is impacting the high school. Covering classes has been a problem with all of the absences. Sixty percent of the students are vaccinated and 10 percent are partially vaccinated. Teachers need to have the Covid booster.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Hubbell told the board members that she appreciates all they do.

There were 20 teachers out districtwide today. She had criticism for allowing basketball to continue to play even though school was pivoted to AMI for the rest of the week. There were 165 students absent. The biggest problem is staff being absent. Pivoting to AMI will allow for a

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seven day stretch to get over Covid. There will still be 6 AMI days left for this school year. Hiring subs bleeds money so that is one of the reasons to pivot to AMI days.

Perkins inventory audit was great.

Regional tournament bid will be Thursday. Fordyce will bid to have it held at the FBT arena.

Dr. Hubbell received an email that the district has complied with the board rezoning.

Board Comments

Deborah Mathews asked about the use of masks. Rhonda Lawson said the elementary is going to continue wearing masks. Chase McCollum said the high school isn't going to wear masks because it turns into a discipline issue. He said his teachers are having to use instructional time to enforce masks. If you make a rule you have to use discipline. If you go mask up you will be sending students to detention, ISS, or OSS.

Deborah Mathews said the district should have had a mandate until this calms down.

Dr. Hubbell said the buses still have a mask mandate.

Dr. Hubbell also said people don't all agree on masks. High school students aren't going to wear the mask.

Chase McCollum said if we go back to the mask mandate there will have to be consequences.

Dr. Hubbell said if the students aren't told to do something at home they aren't going to do it at school.

Nick Cranford asked Mr. McCollum what he thinks about the masks. Mr. McCollum told him he thinks masks are effective but the district would have to use N95 masks because the paper masks aren't effective. You would have to wear two masks. Nick Cranford said he would like for the mask mandate to be dropped.

Rhonda Lawson said she wants the mandate to stay enforce at the elementary school. She explained to the students they wouldn't be sent home for quarantine if they wore their masks.

Chase McCollum said he will lose a lot of students if the high school enforces the mask mandate.

Susan Ridings said she understand what Chase and Rhonda are saying. Elementary has students that can't be vaccinated. The doctor told Ms. Ridings that she expects it to drop in the

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next couple of weeks to a month. Ms. Ridings agreed that the elementary students need to continue to wear masks. She suggested putting masks in all classrooms and model using them.

Dr. Hubbell agreed with Rhonda Lawson to keep the mandate at the elementary school but leave the high school like it is for now.

Deborah Mathews told the administrators they are doing a good job. She wants everyone to wear their masks. Hopefully things will be smoother after we are out for the AMI days.

Deborah Mathews asked why copies of certified and classified contracts aren't on the district website. Teresa Matkin explained the information is all on the website in a Cognos report for eFinance.

Certified

Dr. Hubbell asked the board to hire Sonya Launius as a part time interventionist at the elementary school. She will be paid with ESSER III funds. Nick Cranford made a motion to hire Mrs. Launius. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Dr. Hubbell asked the board to hire Jeffrey Howard as a full-time interventionist at the elementary school. He will also be paid with ESSER III funds. Nick Cranford made a motion to hire Mr. Howard. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Classified

Dr. Hubbell asked the board to accept the resignation of Misti Estrada a paraprofessional at the elementary school. Nick Cranford made a motion to accept Misti Estrada's resignation. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Susan Ridings left the meeting via phone at 6:54 p.m.

Executive Session

Nick Cranford made a motion at 6:54 p.m. to go into executive session. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Nick Cranford made a motion to adjourn from executive session at 7:05 p.m. Silas Warner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Adjournment

Silas Warner made the motion to adjourn at 7:06 p.m. Nick Cranford seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Date

President

Secretary