

Minutes of Regular Meeting of the El Dorado School Board
January 14, 2019

The directors of the board met on the above date at 6:03 p.m. in the Board Room, School Administration Building, 200 West Oak Street, with Susan Turbeville presiding. Other directors present were Vicky Dobson, Wayne Gibson, Renee Skinner, Keith Smith, and Shaneil Yarbrough. Director Todd Whatley was absent and Director Yarbrough entered at 6:25 p.m. Also attending were Supt. Jim Tucker, Rhonda Simmons, Melissa Powell, Katie Sandifer, Bonnie Haynie, Shelley Pruitt and Lou Ann Voris.

Mr. Tucker said Governor Hutchison declared January as Arkansas School Board Member Recognition Month. He read the governor's proclamation and thanked the directors for their investment in the students and staff in the district. Mr. Tucker stated El Dorado is fortunate to have a good strong board that works well together and he often hears in meetings across the state compliments and recognition of our board members. He said the board's commitment is strictly voluntary – they give of their personal time for board meetings, discipline hearings, visiting schools and many hours of continuing education. He thanked them for their contribution to the students and staff. 6:07 p.m.

Mrs. Turbeville asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting held December 10. On a motion by Vicky Dobson, seconded by Keith Smith, and carried on a 5-0 vote at 6:08 p.m., the minutes were approved.

The board reviewed the monthly bills with Shelley Pruitt. After some discussion and on a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Vicky Dobson, and carried 5-0 vote at 6:09 p.m., the bills were approved for payment. A list of bills paid and monthly financial statement are on file in the business office.

Mrs. Pruitt explained it is time to renew the school leader's errors and omissions liability insurance policy that will run from February 1, 2018 through January 31, 2019.

<u>Company</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Policy Through</u>
A.S.B.A. – Bancorp South, Inc.	\$12,874.00	QBE Insurance Co.

She said the superintendent's recommendation is to go with Arkansas School Boards Association/Bancorp South, Inc. for a policy through QBE Insurance Company for \$12,874.00. After a time of discussion and on a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Renee Skinner and carried on a 5-0 vote at 6:12 p.m., it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the low bid of \$12,874.00 from A.S.B.A./Bancorp South with the policy from QBE Insurance Company for the School Leaders Errors and Omissions Liability Insurance policy. The policy will run from February 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020.

Mr. Gibson introduced the Student of the Month from Retta Brown Elementary School, Rosie Arguello. She is the daughter of Patricia and Roy Arguello and a kindergarten student in Timmy Williams classroom.

Mrs. Williams said that Rosie is a joy to have in class and always ready for each day with a bright smile. Rosie has a positive outlook and attitude towards school. She is kind and helpful to her classmates and is well liked by them. She is a self-motivated student who sets an example of excellent behavior.

Her principal, Mrs. Bethanie Hale said Rosie attended Retta Brown's pre-school last year. She noted they were excited when they discovered Rosie would be attending Retta Brown this year. She always works hard and does her best. She is a great helper and leader and lights up the classroom with her big smile. Everyone loves Rosie and we are excited to have her for four more years! Congratulations Rosie Arguello, Student of the Month! Mr. Gibson presented her with a certificate from the board. 6:14 p.m.

Classified Employee from Retta Brown is Trish Hicks. Mr. Gibson said that Mrs. Hicks is a paraprofessional and has twenty-seven years of experience in the district. Literacy facilitator, Kristen Thomas said that Mrs. Hicks is such a wonderful friend and co-worker. She goes above and beyond to help all students, will do anything she is asked

and does it with a smile. Mrs. Thomas said, “She is someone I truly look forward to seeing each day. The students love and respect her, as do I. We are fortunate to have Mrs. Hicks as part of our staff.”

Her principal, Mrs. Bethanie Hale stated: Trish Hicks is my hero! She is an amazing woman who has dedicated her life to make a difference in the lives of each and every student at Retta Brown. Our students have the utmost respect for her and even when working with the most challenging student, she remains calm and level-headed. Mrs. Hicks runs our Tutoring Time Out; is in charge of all lunch duty; provides RTI (Response To Intervention) to multiple groups of students throughout the day; covers the office whenever the secretary takes her breaks; organizes and manages the food backpack program; does morning tutoring each day and so much more! If I were to list everything she does, we would be here all night! Mrs. Hicks is loved and respected by everyone at Retta Brown and we are so thankful to have her on our team! Congratulations Trish Hicks, Classified Employee of the Month. Mr. Gibson presented her with a certificate from the board. 6:16 p.m.

Mr. Gibson said Teacher of the Month from Retta Brown is Timmie Williams. Mrs. Williams received her bachelor’s degree from the University of Arkansas at Monticello in pre-K through 4th grade education. He added this is her fourth year of teaching in our district.

Literacy facilitator, Kristen Thomas said Mrs. Williams is a phenomenal kindergarten teacher. She works so hard to ensure all her students are meeting her high expectations. Mrs. Williams is always eager to help another colleague and do what needs to be done to ensure the job is done. You will always see Mrs. Williams with a smile on her face and I enjoy working with her each day.

Her principal, Mrs. Bethanie Hale said: Timmy is an amazing teacher! If you were ever to wonder what makes a good kindergarten teacher...well, Timmy is it! She is loving and patient with her students all while setting high expectations and pushing her students to excel. I am amazed every time I walk into her classroom at what she has kindergarteners doing. Timmy has that perfect balance of being a nurturing presence in her classroom and being able to provide enough freedom for students to explore in their learning, even when it presents itself as challenging. Students feel safe and secure in their classroom and they all function as a family unit. Mrs. Williams is always willing to do more. She sees something that needs to be done and she just does it without even being asked. She is a great team player and I am so thankful to have her at Retta Brown! Congratulations Timmy Williams, Teacher of the Month! Mr. Gibson presented her with a certificate from the board. 6:18 p.m.

Bethanie Hale presented a principal’s report of Retta Brown Elementary School. Mrs. Hale gave the board a walk-through of the school through her power point presentation. Simmons Bank helps the Promise director, Sylvia Thompson share with the kindergarten student about the El Dorado Promise. The next series of slides showed examples of how R.T.I. (Response to Intervention) begins the first full week of school. She had a photo of the staff holding plaques of Retta Brown’s recognition for being awarded certification for being an A+ school. She said, each Wednesday night, members of Cross Life Church come to Retta Brown to fill the school’s food pantry and twice a week food is sent home with students in need, Mrs. Hale said. She added that Rhea Lana, a consignment clothing event, donated canned food to the school’s pantry. She explained about 9/11 readers, Book Buddies, and Literacy Council members coming to the school to read to and help students with reading. The school has a Retta Store and Simmons Bank gave the school a \$500.00 grant to help with the store. Veteran’s Day is also celebrated at the school. Veterans attend and also read to the students in the library.

Mrs. Hale said each Wednesday is College Wednesday with students wearing t-shirts, sweatshirts or polos with college insignias. The importance of a college education is stressed and students are given information throughout the year about how the Promise will help them attend college one day. Mrs. Hale said once a month, Sherry Van Dyke treats them with soft drinks from the Sonic. She said, “This keeps teachers happy!” She explained about the mentors for ten students and showed a picture of three police officers currently serving as mentors. She said discipline issues have gone down dramatically since the inception of this program. The CHAMPS and Accelerated Reader trophies are awarded on reading points and are fun and challenging programs. Mrs. Hale said the

staff is most grateful to the Office Depot, Walmart and Williams Orthodontics for supplies they have contributed to the school.

Retta Brown is fortunate to have the artist in education and local firemen come to the school to work with students. Cross Life Church contributes \$50.00 gift certificates to parents and Retta Bucks to students to encourage perfect attendance. She said they are finding that students and their parents are encouraging each other in order to possibly win those prizes. For the first nine weeks, Mrs. Hale had a good behavior / principal's trip and had seventy students out of one hundred fifty that were awarded a trip to attend a play. She secured retired national football league player, Shameil Gary to speak with Retta Brown students. He didn't just show up to speak with them but started the day greeting each student, attended recess with them and then gave a motivational speech that had each captivated. On the 50th day of school, they had a Sock Hop. Cross Life Church again donated time and many needed items to make this possible, she said. Students also got to dress up on Book Character Day.

Mrs. Hale said the Retta Store sales are booming and loved the fact that Simmons Bank teaches the students how to write checks and balance a checkbook. After Thanksgiving the students have a chance to eat lunch with the principal and she has already had lunch with almost every student. This the third year for the annual Thanksgiving meal at the E.H.S. Commons for parents and students and each year more are attending. Cross Life Church, Douglas Chapel and College Avenue Church of Christ provide the food and patrons to help with the meal. The top third and fourth grade students were chosen to ring bells, with the principal, for the Salvation Army at Christmas. On the 80th day of school the students and staff dressed in 1980's attire. This year's fourth graders annual trip was an Exploring El Dorado trip. The fun-filled day included touring the town with stops at the Arts Center, Simmons Bank, Boys and Girls Club, the Arboretum, El Dorado High School and Barton Library. She noted that staff at each location took time out of their day to make the trip educational and fun for the students. Many students said there were places they had never seen in their hometown. At Christmas the school had a Jingle Bell Hayride for the students and members of West Side Baptist Church provided Christmas gifts to be sent home with each student. Cross Life Church provided means for the students to see Mary Poppins and helped with Christmas parties. This is the third year for Camp Fire Girls to be on campus and Girl Scouts will start a membership drive soon. Mrs. Hale summarized her presentation with the school's educational growth so far in grades kindergarten through fourth grade. She also showed a slide of the school's new sensory room and how it has been helpful for students and noted that it is really working! She said it has been a marvelous semester at Retta Brown. 6:40 p.m.

El Dorado High School Student Council representative, Ben Parker reported to the board on activities at the school. He said the Mr. E.H.S. contest is upcoming and they had their first practice last week. He noted that it is always a fun time and a good fundraiser for the Arkansas Children's Hospital. Board members asked Ben, who is a senior, about his plans for the future. He plans to attend the University of Alabama and major in public relations. When asked if his experience at E.H.S. has prepared him for college. He said yes, the rigorous classes and the teachers he feels have prepared him. When asked if there is anything he would change about the high school, he said nothing other than maybe the election of the representatives for the homecoming and sweetheart courts. After some discussion, the board thanked him for his report. 6:45 p.m.

Rhonda Simmons visited with the board about the E-rate contracts. She said the wiring at Yocum is the continued wiring upgrade for the elementary and primary schools. The contract is for \$145,298.61 and the district will only pay approximately \$84,803.95 of that contract. She added the district is continuing with Conterra for the WAN (wide area network) except at a much lower price and have added the El Dorado Education Complex to the WAN. She said this meant that Conterra had to wire for one more location. This was put out for bid and Conterra lowered their price. The contract will be for \$165,744.00 a year. She stated the district will get internet free from the state starting August 1, 2019. The funding commitment will be \$132,595.20 and the district will pay \$33,148.80 for the year. After a time of discussion and on a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Vicky Dobson and carried on a 6-0 vote at 6:46 p.m., it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the wiring contract for Yocum Elementary and Primary School and the contract with Conterra for WAN as presented by Rhonda Simmons.

The board approved petition for transfer requests for two students to transfer to Parkers Chapel School District from El Dorado, for one student to transfer to Junction City district from El Dorado, one to transfer from Junction City to El Dorado district, and two students to transfer from El Dorado to Parkers Chapel School District. 6:47 p.m.

The meeting adjourned to an executive session to discuss personnel matters, then reconvened to an open meeting. On a motion by Shaneil Yarbrough, seconded by Vicky Dobson, and carried on a 6-0 vote 7:58 p.m., it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the superintendent's recommendations concerning the acceptance of resignations and the employment of new personnel.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.