

**BLYTHEVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Blytheville, Arkansas**  
**Regular School Board Meeting**  
**Monday, August 26, 2019**  
**6:00 p.m.**

The Blytheville Board of Education met in a special meeting at the Blytheville School District Administration Building at 405 West Park Street at 6:00 p.m. on August 26, 2019, with the following members present:

- |                              |                                   |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (1) Tobey Johnson, President | (2) Barbara Wells, Vice President |
| (3) Erin Carrington          | (4) Billy Fair                    |
| (5) Desmond Hammett          | (6) Tracey Ritchey                |
| (7) Michelle Sims            |                                   |

The following member was absent:

- (1) Henrietta Watt, Secretary

Others present: Michelle Walling, Jennifer Johnson, Paul Jenkins, Kris Williams. Seth Rounsavall, Chanda Walker, Mary Jackson, Jennifer Blankenship, John Rose, Allison Turner, David Gullic, Janet Washington, Dennis Prude, Todd Welch, Bo Johnson, Melisa Logan, Vera James, Carolyn Barnes, Larrie Bell, and Teresa Miner.

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. CALL TO ORDER             | President Johnson called the regular meeting for the month of August 2019 to order at 6:02 p.m. |
| 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM | A quorum was established with seven members present.  |
| 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE      | The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.   |

#### 4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am going to establish a new addition to the board agenda. I hope this will become a tradition for all future presidents to follow. I will call the addition, President's Report. Nothing in the President's Report is up for discussion either from the board or the audience.

Since it is an Arkansas School Board Association policy that if two or more board members are together discussing anything remotely connected to the district, then the press must be notified. So if a board member has a problem with any remark that I may have, or if anyone in the audience has a problem with any remark I may have, they need to call Mr. Ashley and discuss it with him. He, in turn, will relay it to me.

I would ask the principals from each school to call Mr. Ashley if there is any announcement you would like me to make about upcoming events that may or may not be in the calendar.

#### Announcements

1. Thank you note to the Board from Mr. Ashley was read.
2. On behalf of the District and the Blytheville School Board, I would like to publicly thank Mr. Eric Blair of B and B Lawn Service for donating his time, labor and expertise at BES. If you are not sure what I am talking about, go by and look at the bushes; they are beautiful. They look awesome!

#### Remarks

I have a few rules that we as a board need to adhere to:

1. A rap of the gavel means all discussion ceases at that moment.
2. It is imperative that all board members acknowledge Mrs. Whatley's emails or phone calls. It is not fair to anybody, whether it be the rest of the board or the audience to ignore her requests. Please check your emails daily. I know you guys are busy but make time once a day to check your emails to see if you have received anything from her and please try to return her phone calls.
3. Since we have voted to adhere as much as possible to Robert's Rules of Order; board members now must be recognized by the President. What we will do if you want to

Speak you will raise your hand and I will acknowledge you. Everyone at this point will be addressed formally.

4. Our regular board meetings begin at 6:00 p.m. Please contact Mr. Ashley or me if you are going to be late. Again, it is very discourteous to the board and to the audience to hold up at meeting.

Administrators and Leadership Committee members are at the board meeting as a courtesy to the board in case there may be a question. No one is paying them extra to be here. No one from the audience may speak unless they have asked a week before the meeting to be on the agenda.

5. If a question is best answered by calling, seeing or texting Mr. Ashley, please do so. Sometimes when you ask questions during the meeting may put the administrator or Leadership Team at a disadvantage due to the need to look something up.
6. All cell phones are to be on silent. If you are expecting a call, please tell me before the meeting and excuse yourself from the meeting if it is imperative that you take the call. Failure to adhere to any rules causing a disturbance can and will result in security escorting the board member or a member of the audience from the meeting venue.
7. With any governing body, the position of Sergeant-of-Arms is an appointed position. I would like to appoint Mrs. Carrington our Sergeant –of-Arms for the remainder of the school year (to see that the Board sticks to Robert’s Rule of Order.) Mrs. Carrington accepted the position.

## 5. INFORMATION ITEMS AND REPORTS

### A. Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Ashley recognized and welcomed John Charles Rose (Blytheville Chamber) to the meeting.

Brandon Harper, Director of Operations/Security introduced Officer Seth Rounsvall from Blytheville Police Department as our new SRO. He is primarily stationed at middle school but will be assisting other campuses as needed.

1. New Gym Construction in Progress Financial Report
2. Raymond “Bo” Johnson, Baldwin and Shell Jobsite Superintendent gave a

construction update: finishing up masonry work, finishing up blockwork and brickwork and start clean up on that this week. Still hanging sheetrock; sheetrock finishers will be there this week and will start painting sheetrock next week or following week. Permanent power, transformer is hot and should have main distribution panel in by middle of next week. Start lighting up inside. Outside concrete such as sidewalk and pads for mechanical equipment will start this week. Starting to install windows in front of building. Metal wall panels should be finished with three weeks. Ceiling grids, will start framing the ceiling next week. Basketball side goals up and operating and gym lights are installed and ready for the power to come on where they can be turned on. Should start setting heat/air units next week or the following week. That is what is going on for the next couple of weeks.

Todd Welch, Architect, reported that he came down to check site to do site evaluation; will be here at least once a week to check out work. He is working behind the scenes. Everything is going smoothly; Bo is doing a good job.

#### Principal's Report

Mike Wallace, BMS Principal

Mr. Wallace recognized one of his key staff members, Ms. Mary Jackson. It is opportune that Ms. Jackson is here tonight; she is the chairperson of our PBIS program on the middle school campus. She is going to play a central role in this quick story I am going to tell you tonight. I am very, very pleased at the state of our discipline at the middle school. We have been in a session for a couple of weeks. The first two weeks in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade there were no detentions, no ISS, or OSS. 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade were almost as well behaved, very proud of them too. We may have had two or three days ISS for those two grades but that was it. No suspensions at all.

In eleven years as middle school principal, this is the best start we have had. I want to take this time to thank people like Ms. Jackson, my Assistant Principal Louise Davis, her Behavior Interventionist Jeanna Pugh. I think we may have hit on something that may be working. What are we doing differently this year? We are really working on effective classroom management with our teachers right off the bat this year. We have teachers who are working on procedures every day in the classroom to make sure that the students know this is the procedure and it really helps with classroom management. Teachers like Ebony Wells- Brown, one of my new ones; I am very pleased with her. Kim Lewallen, Paula Lipscomb, Beth McGrain, and Sarah Harden; these are the teachers that are working every day to have the ideal classroom environment where the students can learn. Let me say

just a few things about our PBIS Team. We are really encouraging teacher leadership. We are very fortunate to get Mary Jackson to work with our PBIS team. They bringing new ideas to table on how to encourage and motivate our children. Last but certainly not least, we have one of the best behavior interventionist, Jeanna Pugh. She is teaching our students conflict resolution skills. I have never seen someone do it with the success rate she has; she is doing it very well. I am very pleased at what I am seeing at the Middle School. We have been blessed to start this year as such and are looking forward to continuing good things.

### 3. Student Enrollment

As of today, student enrollment is 1,844. At the end of third quarter, back in the spring we had 2008 students. That is what our funding is based on; it is based on the 2008 students. If it stays at 1,844 that will be a loss of 165 at the end of the year. If that stays true, that will be a loss of \$1.1 million. Knowing that is what we will work with; we will have to. What would be great is if half of those students could or would come back. It is possible. Right now, at the start of the year, we are down 128 students since the last day of school last year. Today was the 10<sup>th</sup> day count and if a student has not shown up, they were dropped.

Where do they go? Kipp, School Choice or they moved away. K-3 is where we took a big hit. We have absorbed from this time last year 20.5 positions (\$900,000) that we have absorbed since beginning of school last year. We are trying to address what is coming down the pipe. I hope we are going to level off soon. We are thinking this will be the year it will.

### 4. Upcoming Board Training

ASBA Fall Leadership September 20, 2019

ASBA Region 7 Meeting October 15, 2019

### 5. Work Sessions

Would like to visit with Board about possible work sessions. Possibly getting ASBA to come in or if not them, that we have organized work session on several topics like budget items, it is time for us to communicate with each other where we are going. I know it is difficult for a lot of you because of your schedule but I do want to put an emphasis on how important it is. I will be communicating a little more with you on that, setting one up and sending an agenda with items we need discuss and work on as a unit.

## 6. Unfounded Report

I sent you an email about the unfounded report/rumor that there was going to be a school shooting on August 28 in Kentucky and in Arkansas on the 29th. That thing went viral in Arkansas. Everyone school sent about the same information out to let parents know. From what we understand, this information was never intended to be reported out but when a school got hold of it, they reported it out and it started a chain reaction where it went out to everyone. We met with our Chief today and contacted FBI yesterday. They are investigating the source. To due diligence, I wanted everyone to know. We will be very cautious moving forward. We will have things in place; our buildings will be secure. Email was sent out today that was sent to teachers.

## 7. Tentative 2017 Bond Refinance

Marshall Hughes, Beardsley Finance will be at the next board meeting or if we have a board meeting in between. We have an opportunity to refinance 2017 bond issue we have out. We will get a better interested rate and will be able to save \$320,000 and will not add to length of bond issue we already have; it will stay the same. Mr. Hughes will explain a little more when he comes. Our first year's savings will be about \$254,000 upfront. What that means for this year is that we would pay \$254,000 less than what we would regularly do on that bond. That's a savings we had planned to pay but we would not have to. That could be done by refinancing the bond. Several schools across the state are refinancing because of the lower rate. It is simple as this; we have an opportunity to save money just by refinancing. We already have a 30 year bond debt. It is not adding any years to it; it is just refinancing it. Our payment will be less and our upfront savings will be \$254,000 and over the next twenty seven years – twenty eight years we will save about \$70,000. The upfront money is what is nice about it. It's a good deal when you do not have to extend the debt out.

## 8. 2nd Lien Bond

Mr. Hughes will also be sharing information with you on 2<sup>nd</sup> lien bond that we are looking at doing. My recommendation, the track is about \$528,000 and of course we know that we want to do that. My recommendation to the board is to borrow a couple more hundred thousand dollars on that second lien bond and the payment we would be able to make will or I suggest that it comes from savings we are



going to make right here. We really need the track money but the reason I would really like to see if we could go \$200,000 more because (1) we are going to be able to afford it that and (2) there are a number of items across the district that need to be addressed and there are some items that could happen and I don't want to go into operating because it is already on slippery slope where are finances are and we know that we are trying to save as much money and if we could get a second lien bond, we could use this money for some pretty needed repairs. For example, finish up spraying the whole primary school ceiling at the primary school. We found over the last few years that the bricks around the multipurpose absorb water and it goes in the building. It has been causing problems with flooding in that building. We have several issues that need to be addressed and it could be some big dollars. We talked about paving around the elementary school, if not some kind of repair where it will not flood. We don't want kids and teachers walking around in water when it rains. There are number of things that need to be addressed, I just named a few. We are trying to prioritize what needs to be done. One thing that has to be addressed at the admin building is that we have serious condensation leaks all down the hall and in our office which causes ceiling to fall down. We fix it, it gets wet again and it falls back down. It may be an expensive fix; it may not. I will share the list with you it is prioritized.

## 9. Contract Disclosure Forms

Contract Disclosure Forms are due; please complete your form before you leave tonight.

### C. Instructional Report

Sally Cooke, Director of Curriculum

Novice Teachers 2019-20 are being provided support in a variety of ways.

- Principals, instructional facilitators, and I are in classrooms observing and coaching and are meeting with them to provide feedback.
- We have support from Pam Chipman who works for Crowley's Ridge Co-op as Teacher Support observing and providing feedback to all new teachers in math and literacy.
- Lunch sessions to check in on how they are doing.
- Relationship building with staff during collaboration and professional learning time.

- After school meetings monthly to provide training on teaching strategies, the Framework for Teaching, how to hold parent teacher conferences,
- Emails to share strategies and offer opportunities for support
- Praxis help and support in finding a Pathway to Licensure for those on Waivers

Current Update on teachers:

Primary has 4 novice teachers and 1 novice counselor, 1 GT (serves all campuses, based at primary)

Elementary has 11 teachers new to the district; 5 novice teachers and 6 with experience-also 1 novice counselor one 1 novice librarian.

Middle has 8 teachers new to the district; 7 novice teachers and 1 with experience.

High School has 7 teachers new to the district; 3 novice teachers and 4 with experience, and 2 who are returning to the district.

Total= 30 new teachers, 2 new counselors, 1 new librarian, 1 GT

Focus on Improving Teaching and Learning:

- Professional Learning Community district wide initiative:
    - Entering 2nd year of PLC grant at Primary; Sally is providing training to School Leadership and Teacher Leaders in three other buildings
    - 3 Big Ideas-
      - Focus on Learning
      - A Collaborative Culture with Collective Responsibility
      - A Results Orientation
    - 4 Critical Questions-
      - What knowledge skills, and dispositions should every student acquire?
      - How will we know when each student has acquired the essential knowledge and skills?
      - How will we respond when some students do not learn?
      - How will we extend the learning for those students who are already proficient?
- Tenaris after school program will start on Tuesday, September 3rd and there are over 200 students registered.

DESE- Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - One section of ADE now because ADE has preschool, K-12 education, all universities, colleges, and career ed under one roof. We are a part of DESE which is the K-12.



Jean Cole, Director of Support Services

1. Praying over budget. Special education, 504 budget, and Medicaid budget was cut but things are working out. Our children are being served educationally and emotionally.

We were talking about funding, we had one speech therapist that was paid through the District and two paid through Medicaid. Budgets cut but we had one speech therapist resign so I absorbed that position. That helped our budget a lot.

Then I have my nurses; I want to commend nurses at the schools. There is a thing called personal care and you get reimbursement from Medicaid, the state; it takes a lot of paperwork. These students in the medically fragile classrooms already have to be fed, they already have to be diaper changed, personal care, all these activities of daily living, self-help skills. If you train the nurses, train the paras, do all the paperwork and jump through hoops, we are reimbursed for things paraprofessionals are doing anyway. We have worked through the application and have turned it in and will be reimbursed for things we are already doing. This money will help build our budgets back up and we can serve our students more. We have students that are medically fragile and I did not have it in my budget to get the equipment that need. Paras go through CPR and first aid training – 40 hours, 6 modules, they have to go through. It's a lot of work. The nurses have to go out along with what they do now and they have to observe and document it. I love it because it shows that we are doing what we should for the medically fragile children. I am excited about this because when we start getting our reimbursements we can build our budget back up and pay our bills. Psychological evaluations and occupational therapy are paid out of Medicaid. Commend everyone who went through these 40 hours of training where we can get this. Ms. Dover said at the pace we are going, we could see reimbursements as early as October. We have great nurses and great paras.

## D. Operations Report

Brandon Harper, Director of Operations/Security

### Transportation:

- Ms. Carolyn Barnes reports that an ID tag system she helped develop for the campuses has assisted in streamlining the process of transporting students. It has helped increase efficiency and reduced confusion on sending students to their proper bus.
- Friday, August 23rd, 643 students were transported to school, and that afternoon 729 students were transported home without any issues.

### Maintenance:

- Assessing exterior lighting needs throughout the district as Fall approaches.
- Maintenance department worked on fencing located around the elementary and primary campuses
- Maintenance department is in the process of installing new playground equipment at primary campus

### ALE:

Construction for ALE expansion was completed by the Maintenance Department earlier this month.

### BMS:

Blytheville Police Department has provided a new SRO to us. His name is Officer Seth Rounsavall and he will be based primarily at the middle school.

### Food Services:

Mrs. Snyder reports that Food Services are up this year.

- Since beginning the 2019-2020 school year, breakfast sales have doubled since this time last year.

Mrs. Snyder helped give a presentation at the Child Nutrition Directors Conference in Conway last month along with the director from Little Rock School District. Mrs. Snyder did an excellent job presenting, and representing Blytheville

Public Schools.

Safety & Security:

- Installing additional cameras at ALE and Elementary campuses.
- District CSSO's successfully completed nationally accredited school security training in July.
- We've been asked to host training sponsored by the Arkansas Criminal Justice Institute October 17th at the Blytheville High School Auditorium. This training will assist SRO's, School Security, and School Faculty with assessing various threats to school campuses.

## 6. LEGAL TRANSFER

Upon the recommendation of Superintendent Ashley, a motion was made by Desmond Hammett and seconded by Tracey Ritchey to accept the student transfer request.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 7:31 p.m.

## 7. ACTION ITEMS

- A. July 22, 2019 Meeting
- B. July 23, 2019 Special Meeting not held; quorum not present
- C. August 5, 2019, Special Meeting
- D. July Financial Reports
- E. Statement of Assurances
- F. Renaissance Learning Annual Renewal Fee \$18,360.80
- G. Air Evac \$17,000.00

Upon the recommendation of Superintendent Ashley, a motion was made by Desmond Hammett and seconded by Michelle Sims to accept items as listed in A. - G. above.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 7:41 p.m.

## 8. PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. Resignation of Certified Employees

Cashmere Sharpe	Teacher	BES 9-12-19
Jacob Speirs	Teacher	BMS 8-22-19

### B. Appointment of Classified Employees

Marcia Cooper	Athletic Secretary	Admin
Morgan Parnell	Food Service	BHS-New Tech
Raven Pointer	Food Service	BHS-New Tech
Tamantha Rucker	Paraprofessional	BES
Regina Smith	Food Service	BES

### C. Resignation of Classified Employee

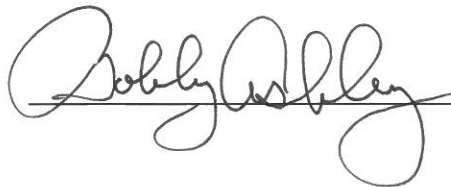
Misty Manrique	Athletic Secretary	Admin
Monica Robinson	Food Service	BMS
Marjorie Rogers	Paraprofessional	BES
Felicia Turner	Paraprofessional	BES
Gregory Turner	Paraprofessional	BMS

Upon recommendation of Superintendent Ashley, a motion was made by Billy Fair and seconded by Tracey Ritchey to accept appointments and resignations as listed in Items A. – C.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 7:43 p.m.

## 9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.



Bobby Ashley  
Ex-officio Financial Secretary