

**Minutes of Regular Meeting of the El Dorado School Board
September 9, 2019**

The directors of the board met on the above date at 6:02 p.m. in the Board Room, School Administration Building, 200 West Oak Street, with Renee Skinner presiding. Other directors present were Vicky Dobson, Keith Smith, Susan Turbeville, Todd Whatley and Shaneil Yarbrough. Director Wayne Gibson was absent. Also attending was Supt. Jim Tucker, Rhonda Simmons, Melissa Powell, Bonnie Haynie, Katie Sandifer, Shelley Pruitt, and Lou Ann Voris.

Mrs. Skinner asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting held August 12. On a motion by Susan Turbeville, seconded by Todd Whatley, and carried on a 6-0 vote, the minutes were approved at 6:03 p.m.

The board reviewed the monthly bills with Shelley Pruitt. After some discussion and on a motion by Vicky Dobson, seconded by Susan Turbeville, and carried on a 6-0 vote, the bills were approved for payment. A list of bills paid and a monthly financial statement are on file in the business office. 6:04 p.m.

Melissa Powell explained to the board that a resolution is necessary to be in compliance with Act 1120 in accordance with Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-13-635. She noted school districts in the state are to approve and sign a resolution that lists a salary increase of 5% or more for a school district employee performing substantially the same job functions as the employee performed before receiving the salary increase.

*Resolution of the El Dorado School District
Board of Directors*

WHEREAS, The El Dorado School District Board of Directors met in regular, open, and properly-called meeting on September 9, 2019 at the School Administration Office;

WHEREAS, members were present, a quorum was declared by the chair;

WHEREAS, The El Dorado School Board has pursuant to Act 1120 of 2013 to be codified at Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-13-635, determined that the employees listed on the attached spreadsheet for the El Dorado School District are eligible and have been approved to receive an increase in salary of 5% or more from their current contract amount listed on the attached spreadsheet for the 2017-2018 school year in consideration of the reason stated on the spreadsheet.

NOW THEREFORE, upon due consideration and deliberation, and having reviewed the reason(s) listed, it is hereby declared to be the intent of the El Dorado School District Board of Directors to authorize the approval and adoption of the salary increase of the employees listed on the attached spreadsheet for the 2018-2019 school year.

After a time of discussion and on a motion by Susan Turbeville, seconded by Vicky Dobson, and carried on a 6-0 vote at 6:08 p.m., it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the resolution in compliance with Act 1120 in accordance A.C.A. §6-13-635. A copy of the spreadsheet and resolution will be on file in the personnel office at the administration office.

Shaneil Yarbrough introduced the Student of the Month, Isabel Clark from Washington Middle School. She is a sixth grader and the daughter of Carmen and Trey Clark. According to her teachers, Isabel is a very sweet student and kind to others. She is so eager to help others when she sees that help is needed. Isabel is a super-hard worker and powers through difficult assignments until she succeeds.

According to her principal, Mrs. Jody Vines, "Isabel is a model student. She does great work, tries her best and always takes a positive approach to everything that she does." The staff at Washington Middle School is excited that Isabel Clark has been named Student of the Month. Mrs. Yarbrough presented her with a certificate from the board.

Student of the Month from Barton Jr. High School is Becca Hooks. Mrs. Yarbrough said she is the daughter of Lisa and Tony Hooks and an eighth grader at Barton. The teacher nominating Becca said, "She is a hard worker with a great attitude who helps whenever and wherever - with a smile on her face." Becca has served as a library assistant and an office worker. She is a member of the award winning archery team, too. Her principal, Mr. Mark Smith said, "I wish we had a school full of students like Becca. She always has a smile to share and a willingness to help. She was a big help in the library last year and could probably run the office if needed this year." Congratulations to Student of the Month, Becca Hooks! Mrs. Yarbrough presented her with a certificate from the board. 6:10 p.m.

Classified Employee of the Month from Washington Middle School is Sonya Hicks. Sonya began her career in the district in November 2001. She has three years at Northwest and fifteen years at Washington as attendance clerk.

Co-workers said Sonya always greets our students with a smile and does her best to get to know the staff and connect with them on a personal level. According to her principal, Jody Vines, "Sonya is a joy to have in our office. She does whatever it takes to do her job well. She goes above and beyond without complaint and is always professional. We all love Sonya's intercom announcements and students will always remember her, "It's Friday - Whoop, Whoop!" announcements and her weekly "Go Cats!" Washington staff and students are so pleased that Sonya Hicks was selected Classified Employee of the Month, "Go Sonya - Whoop, Whoop!" Mrs. Yarbrough presented her with a certificate from the board.

Mrs. Yarbrough said Classified Employee of the Month from Barton Jr. High School is Kim Conner. Kim has worked at Barton for five years. One co-worker said, "She is hands down the best officer partner. She is always so positive and outgoing. Kim Conner keeps our books lined out and everyone else, too. Our friendship and work relationship is one of a kind. I'm sure our administrators worry at times but we get our work done! She is always so supportive and encouraging. She makes me want to be better."

Her principal, Mark Smith said, "I am so glad that Mrs. Kim is part of the Barton family. She has taught me so much. I can count on her to bring laughter when laughter is needed, all while working hard to take care of all of us! We think that Mrs. Kim is a terrific mom, co-worker, and friend." Congratulations from students and staff for being chosen Classified Employee of the Month! Mrs. Yarbrough presented her with a certificate from the board. 6:13 p.m.

Teacher of the Month from Washington Middle School is Jennifer Odom. Ms. Odom received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish at Southern Arkansas University and her Masters at the University of Arkansas at Monticello. She is also working toward her library media specialist certification at Southern Arkansas University. She teaches fifth grade English and reading and has been with the district since August 2013.

Those that work with Ms. Odom stated she is dedicated, helpful and encouraging. She is dedicated not only to her students but also to our school. Ms. Odom works hard to make sure that her students are getting the best education possible. A co-worker said the following about her, "Ms. Odom is willing to stay late or do extra to help anybody at our school. She is always encouraging to everyone around her. Not only does Ms. Odom encourage her students to try harder each day but she also encourages her peers to try new things and she is there to support them." Another co-worker said, "Ms. Odom works hard to come up with lessons that will engage her students, as well as reach the students who are more difficult to reach. She shares a lot of valuable information with other teachers to help them be successful with their students in the classroom, as well as connecting with them. She does a lot of behind-the-scenes work and never asked to be

recognized. She truly just wants to do what is best for the students and for the school as a whole when it comes to academics and reaching students.”

According to her principal, Jody Vines, “Ms. Odom goes above and beyond to make sure students learn and are provided with the interventions they need, so that they can succeed. She has taken extra classes to be able to help with our English Language Learners. She is a very kind, quiet person who is always willing to try innovative approaches to teaching.” Washington Middle School staff is so proud that Jennifer Odom is being recognized as Teacher of the Month. Mrs. Yarbrough presented her with a certificate from the board.

Teacher of the Month from Barton Jr. High School is Earlene Burns. She attended Southern Arkansas University, where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Education degree in secondary English education and her Master’s degree in reading. Miss Burns has taught for 34 years, all at Barton Jr. High School.

One co-worker said, “Earlene Burns is so soft spoken around campus. In the classroom, her passion for teaching shows. She goes beyond the call of duty to make notebooks for each student. The notebooks help to address foundations that they might have missed in elementary school.” Her principal, Mark Smith said, “Miss Burns has a perpetual smile. She will brighten your day every day. She loves her students and she loves her co-workers. Barton is a better place because Miss Burns is here!” Congratulations Teacher of the Month, Earlene Burns. Mrs. Yarbrough presented her with a certificate from the board. 6:17 p.m.

Stephanie Lowrey visited with the board about the New Teacher Induction Program. She stated The New Teacher Center is a national non-profit organization. New Teacher Center and the district has been working to develop and implement this new program involving beginning teachers and their mentors. The New Teacher Center’s programs are designed to impact four core areas: students learning, educator effectiveness, leadership development, and optimal learning environments. She said the program will help the district to develop, implement, and sustain a Teacher Induction Program that will ultimately lead to increased student achievement and greater teacher retention in our district.

Mrs. Lowrey said research shows that the effectiveness of the teacher is the most important factor contributing to student achievement. To help beginning teachers become highly effective, the program pairs them with a mentor teacher. She explained that as the district started developing the program, one of the very first things the district did was develop a mentor teacher job description and mentor selection criteria. Before being selected as a mentor, interested teachers were interviewed and their respective principals completed the mentor selection criteria sheet on them. Once the mentor team was established, the training began. Mentors, school leaders and Mrs. Lowrey, as the program leader, will all receive intensive training through New Teacher Center throughout the next two years. This training shows how to use the research based best practices established by New Teacher Center to their fullest potential to increase beginning teacher effectiveness.

Mrs. Lowrey noted one aspect of the district’s Teacher Induction Program, that is outside of New Teacher Center’s program, is our community support initiative. While we do believe that helping to support beginning teachers in the classroom will improve teacher retention, we do not believe it is the only support that could make a difference. Often beginning teachers and teachers new to our district are new to our community, young, and far from family and friends. Therefore, we have begun to reach out to our community asking them to help meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of our new teachers. Helping new teachers build relationships with the wonderful people in our community will help them put down roots and find people to support them locally as they strive to support the students of our community. Mrs. Lowrey said she is very excited about the warm response she received from people in the community wanting to “adopt a teacher”. She is continuing to develop this initiative as well and is excited to see the difference it could make in our schools. She asked that anyone wishing to be a part of the initiative to reach out to her.

She noted following the first four weeks of school, that she could not be more pleased with the work the mentors have been doing with their beginning teachers. So far, forty-six mentors have focused on Mentor Practice Standard 3.1, which cultivates relational trust, caring, mutual respect, and honesty with the beginning teacher to build ownership, solve problems, and foster beginning teacher's agency, resilience, and commitment to the success of every student. Over the last three weeks she individually met with all but eight of the district mentors. She said they celebrated their success in building rapport with their beginning teachers and planned out their next steps. One thing she appreciates about the program is how individualized it is. Mentors have common tools and strategies to use with their new teachers, but it is up to the mentor to determine what tool and strategy will help improve the beginning teacher's practice the most. She also loves how this program develops the mentor teachers as well. It is equally about developing their craft as a mentor and school leader as it is about developing the teaching practices of the beginning teacher. She added that she is excited to watch and be a part of the development of both new teacher and the mentors. She thanked the board for their support of this new program and all they do to serve both new and veteran teachers alike. 6:26 p.m.

Mr. Tucker said School Improvement Plans were put into law to work toward, put into place, and to be reported to the board, parents and patrons in each school district of Arkansas. Board members have copies of each district school's plan and those plans are also on the website at: eldoradopublicschools.org - under State Required Information – Policy, Data & Informational Documents. He noted that principals may make additions throughout the year and as they do, it automatically updates on the district website. He added if board members have questions, the principals or a representative from their school are in attendance. After a time of discussion and on a motion by Todd Whatley, seconded by Shaneil Yarbrough and carried on a 6-0 vote at 6:28 p.m., it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the School Improvement Plans for each school in the district. The plans are posted on the district's website.

Bonnie Haynie and Rhonda Simmons their portion of the Annual Report to the Public. Mrs. Haynie showed power point slides of District Goals and visited with the board about Respond to Intervention (RTI), Professional Learning Community (PLC), and Essential Standards (ES). Mrs. Haynie said the district has seen good growth from schools that have implemented RTI with diligence. We want to develop a strong RTI program in all grades and subjects all the way through twelfth grade, she said. The district has two schools that did school wide training on RTI and we look to have more trained. We want to have an effective RTI program in place district wide.

She said a true Professional Learning Community focuses on four questions:

1. What are the students supposed to know (essential standards)?
2. How do we know they have learned the standard?
3. What do we do if they have not learned the standard?
4. What do we do if they have learned the standard?

We have three schools in the district that are going through extensive training on the PLC model and many administrators going to PLC Institutes. With the training and knowledge gained we plan to move the entire district towards having true PLC's and not just grade level meetings or subject level meetings. PLC's when done effectively have been proven to bring teachers together as a team and move student progress.

Mrs. Haynie said Essential Standards are the non-negotiable standards that students absolutely must learn to move forward. These standards are the ones that are discussed in PLC's and are the standards most teaching focuses around. The ES's are also what RTI is based on. It is our goal that we have all Essential Standards in place by the end of the school year but preferable much sooner. True PLC's and true RTI cannot take place without them, she said.

Rhonda Simmons said as far as accreditation status, the district is accredited. She moved on to score reports in: Renaissance K-2, ACT Aspire, ACT, and Advanced Placement.

Kindergarten through second grade students test three times during the year, which is required by the Arkansas Department of Education. They also have Star Early Literacy, Star Literacy and Star Math. She noted these tests are used to measure growth and used for intervention. She showed slides of ACT Aspire percentile for grades 3 – 10 in math, reading, English and science for each elementary schools, middle school, junior high and high school. Mrs. Haynie covered the slides shown for ACT scores and said the district has 70 AP scholars and two national scholars.

Rhonda Simmons said this year's summer school for elementary was held at Hugh Goodwin Elementary School. Under the leadership of Jeannie Strother and Kathy Sixby, staff worked really hard with students that needed individualized instruction. Of the 134 students enrolled, 100 students were regular attenders. Mrs. Simmons said the six-week summer school was a great success that focused on foundational reading skills. Students rotated through four sessions daily and were taught by eight different highly qualified teachers. Out of the 100 tested, 70 showed growth and 25 of those actually reached grade-level reading expectations. For the first time, the district opened the Accelerated Reading Lab to elementary students. Students going into grades 1 – 4 could take as many AR tests as they desired. Students participating in summer learning programs at St. Johns, Boys and Girls Club and Take 5 brought vans full of students to the AR lab, said Mrs. Simmons. Karla Nelson with the Barton Library, which is located across the street from Hugh Goodwin, acknowledged that the district's summer reading initiative increased student visits at the city library. She noted that 5,652 children's books were checked out during the summer school period from Barton Library.

The 2019 Accelerated Reading results for summer school were 306 students took 1,150 AR tests and passed 1,046 tests taken. Members of the El Dorado High School football team, El Dorado Police Department, Barton Jr. High School cheerleaders, Union County Animal Protection Society, El Dorado's Literacy Council, and Reaves Robinson, Miss Natural State's Outstanding Teen greeted and encouraged these young students at different times throughout the six-week summer school. A 2019 graduate of El Dorado High School, one of Reaves Robinson's community involvements is, "Reading with Reaves – Reading is Important." Mrs. Simmons said the individuals or groups mentioned were an encouragement to staff as well as students as they went into the summer school program and read to, visited with, cheered on, and encouraged the young readers. Mrs. Simmons said the students grew socially and emotionally - plus there were no suspensions during summer school. She noted there was just one week between the end of summer school and the start of the school year, which current classroom teachers are very happy about since those students transitioned well into the school year. Also, another incentive was used throughout summer school with Walmart gift cards given. She said the ease of recruiting teachers for summer school went smoothly due to the way Mrs. Strother and Mrs. Sixby set up the program for students and staff.

Mrs. Haynie showed a total of 796 Advanced Placement tests taken this past school year by El Dorado High school students in the following: studio art 3-D design port; seminar; English language & composition; English literature & composition; human geography; psychology; U.S. government & politics; U. S. history; world history; calculus AB; calculus BC; computer science A; statistics; biology; chemistry; physics 1; physics 2; physics C - electricity & magnetism; physics C – mechanics; environmental science and Spanish language & culture. Mrs. Simmons summarized the report by saying the district's student enrollment on September 9, 2018 was 4,288 and on September 9, 2019 is 4,217. The district has 646 students (15.33%) in the gifted and talented program, 137 students (3.25%) that receive 504 services, 349 students (8.28%) in the special education program and 203 (4.82%) in the English language learners program. The district's language population is made up of English 3,867 (91.77%); Spanish 324 (7.69%); Chinese 8 (0.19%); Vietnamese 7 (0.17%); Albanian, Arabic, Hindi 2 each (0.14%) and Mandarin, Farsi 1 each (0.04%). Mrs. Simmons noted in the transportation department had 85 buses, 52 drivers, and 50 bus routes that transported over 2,300 students. Our food services division each school day served 2,200 breakfasts and 2,955 lunches this past year. The 38-day summer meals served by the district were breakfast 11,173 and lunch 14,477.

Mr. Tucker stated in the annual report to the public he is to report the director's continuing education hours. He said the board members have until December 31 to attain the required hours and most already have their hours in. Those that do not, will have all hours by the end of the year. He said A.S.B.A. provides a Fall Leadership Institute this month, Region 13 Meeting in October, the Annual Conference each December and online courses may also be taken in order to pick up the required continuing education hours for board members. 6:46 p.m.

The board approved Petition for Transfer Requests applications for one student to transfer from Strong-Huttig to El Dorado; two students to transfer from El Dorado to Junction City; one student from El Dorado to Parkers Chapel and one student from El Dorado to Smackover-Norphlet School District at 6:47 p.m.

Mrs. Skinner said the Arkansas School Boards Association's Fall Leadership Institute is upcoming and directors may choose to attend the Jonesboro institute on September 20 or the November 1 institute in Fayetteville. Also, the A.S.B.A. Region 13 meeting will be October 22, check-in begins at 5:30 and hosted by the Magnolia School District. Mrs. Skinner stated the A.S.B.A. Annual Conference will be December 11 - 13 at the State House Convention Center. 6:48 p.m.

The meeting adjourned to an executive session to discuss personnel matters, then reconvened to an open meeting. Director Shaneil Yarbrough left at 7:40 p.m. On a motion by Todd Whatley, seconded by Vicky Dobson, and carried on a 5-0 vote at 7:55 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.