

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

The directors of the board met on the above date at 6:01 p.m. in the Board Room, School Administration Building, 200 West Oak Street, with Renee Skinner presiding. Other directors present were Wayne Gibson, Keith Smith, Susan Turbeville and Shaneil Yarbrough. Directors Vicky Dobson and Todd Whatley were absent. Also attending was Superintendent Jim Tucker, Rhonda Simmons, Melissa Powell, Katie Sandifer, Bonnie Haynie, Shelley Pruitt, and Lou Ann Voris.

Mrs. Skinner asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting held November 11. On a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Susan Turbeville and carried on a 5-0 vote, the minutes were approved at 6:02 p.m.

The board reviewed the monthly bills. After some discussion and on a motion by Susan Turbeville, seconded by Keith Smith, and carried on a 5-0 vote, the bills were approved for payment. A list of bills paid and monthly financial statement are on file in the business office. 6:03 p.m.

Mrs. Pruitt also presented the proposed budget of expenditures for July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. After a time of discussion and on a motion by Shaneil Yarbrough, seconded by Susan Turbeville at 6:06 p.m., it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the proposed budget of expenditures for July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

Michael Cobb, C. P. A. presented the district's annual audit report to the board. Fellow auditor and business partner, Anne Suskie Pinyan was also in attendance. He noted his firm looks for compliance with state and federal rules and regulations and said there were no surprises. Each director was given the audit report as he covered line items which included the fact the district is 13 million in the black. Mr. Cobb discussed the General Operating Fund, the transfers into Building Fund and noted the district has positive numbers to transfer. As he covered projections for the next five years and disclosures, he noted how stable the district's finances are. He also stated that enrollment may present its challenges, along with future purchases but he found the district in a sound position and meets the tone at the top. After some discussion and on a motion by Susan Turbeville, seconded by Wayne Gibson and carried on a 5-0 vote, at 6:15 p.m., it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the district's annual audit report as presented by Michael Cobb, C.P.A.

Student of the Month from Retta Brown Elementary School is Zariah Miller. Mr. Gibson said Zariah is the daughter of Marie and Eddie Miller and a third grader in Veronica Curley and Felice Scott's classroom. Mrs. Curley said Zariah embodies the words of Student of the Month. She is a friend to everyone, a very hard worker and excels academically. She loves to learn and is a great helper. Mrs. Scott added Zariah is one of my most hard-working students of all time! To look at her, you wouldn't know how hard she was at work because her demeanor is always calm and chipper. She is a positive, happy, soft-spoken leader and sets an example of how much one can achieve with persistence and practice.

Retta Brown's literacy facilitator, LaTonya Green said that Zariah is an amazing student. She works hard and is very mannerly. Zariah excels in all areas of learning and does her best to help anyone that needs help. Her smile lights up the building. Mrs. Bethanie Hale said, "Zariah has been a Retta Brown student since kindergarten. She is a student that strives for excellence. Academically, she is at the top of all subject areas. According to Retta Brown's STAR data, she is on a fifth grade level in math and a sixth grade level in reading. We are extremely proud of the success Zariah has had over her four years at Retta Brown. She is one of the kindest people I know. She is a student who works hard to include and lift others up. Zariah is a true treasure and we are so proud of her for being such an amazing young lady!" Staff and students are proud that Zariah Miller was

chosen Student of the Month. Mr. Gibson presented her with a certificate from the board. 6:18 p.m.

Mr. Gibson introduced Missy Passmore, Classified Employee of the Month from Retta Brown. He said that Mrs. Passmore has been the secretary at Retta Brown for three years. Math facilitator, Lisa Hooks said: Missy Passmore is the rock that we all rely on. Her smile and loving spirit is seen as soon as you walk through her door. Students and parents are shown a welcoming face with encouragement and support. Mrs. Passmore is reliable to help with anything that is going on. She is always willing to take on the burden and stress for anything she can so that teachers and staff can work with students.

Literacy Facilitator, LaTonya Green said: Mrs. Passmore is truly the backbone of Retta Brown. There is never a dull moment in the office and she does it all with a smile. Mrs. Passmore always knows exactly what to say to brighten your day. We are proud to have her as part of the Retta Brown family. Principal Bethanie Hale added: Missy Passmore is a super hero and she must have an extra set of arms hidden somewhere! It is amazing at the tasks she can accomplish at the same time. She is the first person people see when they come to Retta Brown and she sets a warm and welcoming tone for our school on a daily basis. Missy goes above and beyond in her job, always looking for ways to make my job and teacher's jobs easier. She has a true servant's heart. Her rapport with the students is phenomenal. She is always taking the extra time to build a relationship with each student in our building. Our students love her so much and sometimes try to make up reasons to come see her. She is loved by all in our building and without her Retta Brown would be lost! Congratulations Missy Passmore for being chosen Classified Employee of the Month! Mr. Gibson presented her with a certificate from the board. 6:21 p.m.

Teacher of the Month from Retta Brown Elementary School is Felice Scott. Mr. Gibson said Ms. Scott received her Bachelor of Arts degree in cultural anthropology from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. She has an additional twelve graduate hours from Delta State University's Teach for America program. She had four years teaching experience prior to coming to our district and has been with us for five years.

Math facilitator, Lisa Hooks said: Felice Scott has such high expectations for her students. She has conversations with each of them to ensure they are mastering the skills required. Her eagerness to achieve success is shown throughout her lessons. The students love doing math and science with her. Her experiments are such great learning tools that the students are enjoying them so much that they don't realize they are actually learning.

Principal Bethanie Hale said: Felice Scott has a real passion for math and science. She works daily to share that passion with her students. Felice has positive incentive systems built into her classroom that motivate students to push themselves and work hard. She partners with Mr. Mike Means to incorporate the arts into her teaching and she really wants to see students grow and mature in her classroom. Retta Brown staff and students are proud that Felice Scott was chosen Teacher of the Month. Mr. Gibson presented her with a certificate from the board. 6:23 p.m.

Bethanie Hale presented a principal's report from Retta Brown Elementary School. She said this year's school theme is from the Wizard of Oz – Following the Yellow Brick Road to Success! She showed an amazing photo where life-like characters and the castle from the Wizard of Oz are on the front doors and windows, greeting the students and visitors to the school. Mrs. Hale said regarding curriculum they have implemented students and staff working Bell to Bell in math and accelerated reader. In the Aspire program, all four subjects are covered and staff makes working with that fun. Mrs. Hale said each year that the district has done Read for the Record it has been a big hit and this year was no exception. Students love it! Dr. Odom, with Southern Arkansas University, brings a large group of the university's education students over to work with Retta Brown students on RTI – Response to Intervention. Another educational tool in literacy and communications involves writing and then asking appropriate interview questions of several well-known personalities. One was Senator Trent Garner when he visited the school and was interviewed by students. His presentation and time spent with the

students in the interview was awesome. Mrs. Hale said another was handled through Skype. Third and fourth graders interviewed Treylon Burkes, wide receiver for the Arkansas Razorback football team. Treylon is ranked number eleven of wide receivers in the nation and listed at 82nd in the ESPN's Top 300 in this year's recruiting class. Mrs. Hale said the students were very well mannered, beyond excited to interview both men, and did an exceptional job.

She also covered ways the staff implements the ASPIRE program and makes it fun for students. Fourth graders received a limo ride, courtesy of Young's, and treated to a trip to Larry's Pizza as a reward. She also showed pictures of a fourth grade activity and explained the school's CHAMPs initiative. The overall goal of the CHAMPs classroom management system is to develop an instructional structure in which students are responsible, motivated, and highly engaged in the specific task at hand. More particularly, the teacher's goal is to teach students directly how to be successful in specific class situations. She said this has been successful, as well as fun at Retta Brown.

Mrs. Hale said rewards often fuel the learning process at Retta Brown. One of those is Retta Bucks, money that students earn to spend at the Retta Store. Simmons Bank volunteers work with students on understanding savings, spending and managing their money and the students and the Retta Store made the KATV news this year. Another earned reward went to the first nine top Accelerated Readers with an overnight campout in the school's library. Perfect attendance is hard to come by but often the school rewards parents by having a drawing for a \$50 Walmart gift card when their name goes in the hat for getting their children to school and on time. Run the Field is an earned trip to the district's Memorial Stadium track. Another reward was for kindergarten, first and second grade in a field trip to the pumpkin patch and to the fire department. The 50th day of school is a big activity for all grades at the school. Also, one of the school's clubs expanded this year – Campfire groups now include boys and meet at the school once a month. Retta Brown's choir was included in this year's MusicFest. Mrs. Hale has a Principal's Behavior Reward each nine weeks with a Slime Party that is a hit and students work harder to be included in the next one.

She covered several areas where community patrons and businesses are contributing to the school in time, money and contributions. She noted how touched she is that most perform tasks or contribute without ever receiving one phone call from the school. Some of those include birthday celebrations. Lauren Harrison makes and brings cupcakes once a month for the students that have a birthday that month. The school's secretary, Missy Passmore secured donated boxes of treats from the Little Debbie office in northwest Arkansas. Delek and Office Depot made large contributions to the school food pantry. The school applied and received a grant from LanXess for a 3D printer. Walmart has donated school supplies three times this semester, she said. Retta Brown has a Kindness Challenge where students work on thinking of others. Barton Jr. High School cheerleaders came for the kick off, students made paper chains depicting ways to show kindness written on them and posted on the hallway bulletin board. Different ways to show kindness are incorporated throughout each week. Each Thursday is Pink Out to incorporate cancer awareness. Another activity is Retta Family time – adult volunteers have breakfast once a month with a student and have their picture made to show their "Retta Family." Mrs. Hale concluded with her favorite event is the school's annual Thanksgiving meal for students, parents, staff, and contributors to the school. This year was the fourth year for the meal, held at the El Dorado High School Commons and 200+ attended. She said each year churches have contributed the food, volunteers, and needed items to make this a success for the school. 6:38 p.m.

Rhonda Simmons visited with the board about several school's accomplishments that were recognized by the state. She said El Dorado High School and Barton Junior High School recently received state recognition for growth scores in math and added that Hugh Goodwin Elementary was informed they are in the top 5% in performance for schools across the state, she said. The principals received congratulatory remarks from the board to pass along to their staff. Mrs. Simmons presented principals Sherry Hill, Mark Smith and Jesica Collins with certificates. 6:41 p.m.

John Thompson, director of transportation and student services, brought a policy update to the board for consideration. He noted the state law will change January 1, 2020 regarding drug screening for federal motor carriers. He stated this affects the district's bus drivers. After a time of discussion and on a motion by Susan Turbeville, seconded by Wayne Gibson and carried a 5-0 vote at 6:42 p.m., it was

RESOLVED, That the board approves the policy update regarding the new law affecting drug screening for the district's bus drivers. The new law and district policy will be effective January 1, 2020.

Mrs. Skinner said earlier the directors earlier updates from each school on their School Improvement Plans. Principals or a representative from their school were in attendance if the directors had questions. Board members complemented the schools on their progress and added they appreciated the updates. Mr. Tucker said a lot of good things are going on in our schools and he appreciated the goals that schools are working toward. 6:45 p.m.

Mrs. Skinner reminded the board that the Arkansas School Boards Annual Conference will be December 11 – 13 at the Marriott Hotel and Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock.

The meeting adjourned to an executive session to discuss personnel matters, then reconvened to an open meeting. On a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Susan Turbeville, and carried on a 5-0 vote 7:25 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.