

**Minutes of Regular Meeting of the El Dorado School Board  
March 5, 2012**

The directors of the board met on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room, School Administration Building, 200 West Oak Street, with Renee Skinner presiding. Other directors present were Wayne Gibson, Larry Holder, Susan Turbeville, Will Vance, and Todd Whatley. Director Vicky Dobson was absent. Also attending was Supt. Bob Watson, Rhonda Simmons, Bonnie Haynie, Tim Zylks, Angie Drummond, and Lou Ann Voris.

Mrs. Skinner asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meetings held February 13 and February 20. On a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Susan Turbeville, and carried on a 6-0 vote, the minutes were approved.

The board reviewed the monthly bills. After some discussion and on a motion by Will Vance, seconded by Larry Holder, and carried on a 6-0 vote, the bills were approved for payment. A list of bills paid and monthly financial statement are on file in the business office.

Student of the Month from West Woods ELL Center is Muad Alrafai. Mrs. Skinner stated Muad is the son of Nabil Alrafai and a student of Mrs. Patti Paulus and Mrs. Dee Post. Mrs. Paulus stated that Muad entered her class using very little English but had a determined spirit to learn and absorb the language and culture. She noted that he has had much success which she contributes mainly to his attitude. He is very cooperative and has demonstrated kindness toward others in many situations.

Mrs. Post said that Muad has become a respected leader among his peers at West Woods. Both students and teachers respect his focus on his education and his determination to succeed. He teaches us as well, about his home country, Yemen, and his home language Arabic. Mrs. Paulus and Mrs. Post stated staff and students are excited to celebrate with Muad in his success and nomination of Student of the Month. Mrs. Skinner presented Muad with a certificate from the board.

Mrs. Skinner introduced Teacher of the Month from West Woods ELL Center, Laura Smith. Miss Smith received her Bachelor's degree in elementary education and Master's degree in special education from Southern Arkansas University and has twelve additional graduate hours. Miss Smith has five years of teaching experience with two of those in our district teaching the second, third, and fourth grades in the English Language Learners program.

Mrs. Post states that Miss Smith has shown remarkable growth as a teacher at West Woods. She has become more confident of her knowledge and abilities. She has a good rapport with her students who love her creative and focused assignments. She collaborates well with her colleagues, often working with all students, K - 4 grades. She is also the technology guru at West Woods. Miss Smith helps run the computer lab for the ELL students and often troubleshoots for us, Mrs. Post said. She develops incredible Smart Board lessons that are envied by all! Mrs. Skinner presented Miss Smith with a certificate from the board.

Mrs. Skinner stated that Hannah Burroff is president of the EHS Student Council and will be observing the next couple of meetings and answer any questions board members might have. Hannah talked with the board about the high school sports activities she is involved in, what students are saying about the new high school and how appreciative they all are of the facility, and comments she heard from visitors at the recent state basketball tournament held in the arena. Board members asked questions and then expressed their appreciation of Hannah's attendance and interest in the board meetings.

The board approved a Petition for Transfer Request for a student to transfer to another district.

Deb Crawford, executive director of PRIDE Youth Programs, visited with the board about the SHARE Joint Use Policy and Joint Use Agreement. Mrs. Crawford stated this

is a project designed to increase student physical activity, a proposed collaborative effort between the SHARE Foundation and the school district. It will be held at the former high school gymnasium and cheer room, with board approval. The Joint Use Agreement for the performance teams of PRIDE Youth Programs – to promote healthy lifestyles and drug-free and alcohol-free lives – and the Competition Cheer program of HealthWorks Fitness Center are a part of the SHARE Foundation, Mrs. Crawford said. In the agreement, the district will provide access to the former high school gym and cheer room, designate the superintendent to confer with the executive director of PRIDE programs, and provide maintenance, utilities, needed repairs and custodial services for the designated areas. SHARE will provide adult staff of PRIDE and HealthWorks to supervise students, designate the executive director of PRIDE to confer with the superintendent, and instruct the supervising staff to inspect the facilities and report needed repairs to the superintendent.

Mrs. Crawford and Karen Magee, with Coordinated School Health, told board members they are in the process of applying for an \$11,000.00 grant to develop the program and pay utilities and custodial costs. Mr. Watson stated this is an opportunity for us to use the old high school, keep it clean, and keep it up. We think this is an excellent partnership, he said. After a time of discussion and on a motion by Larry Holder to suspend the rules and vote, seconded by Will Vance, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the SHARE Joint Use Policy as presented.

Mrs. Crawford and Mrs. Magee also visited with the board about establishing a school wellness center because the physical, mental, dental, hearing, and vision needs of some students are not being met. They noted that a group of about forty people – mostly medical professionals and school officials – recently met at the TAC House, where the need for the center and ways to establish the health facility were outlined and discussed by Mrs. Magee, Mrs. Crawford, and Mr. Watson. Mr. Watson said school districts are now focusing on the needs of the “whole child,” and said of the over 4,500 students enrolled in the district schools that about 62% are eligible to receive free and reduced price lunches. He said some parents do not have transportation to take their children to see doctors, dentists, and other medical professionals. To help meet the needs of students, several school districts in the state have established wellness centers on campuses. He explained that the district has an opportunity to receive \$540,000.00 in grant funds over the next five years to create a school based health center but in order to be awarded the money, medical, mental, and dental service components have to be established.

Mr. Watson stated most medical providers – partner with the school district in the effort to provide services for under-served students – will come to the school on certain days of the week to see children with medical issues. The grant would be used to help renovate an art room and other areas on the south side of the former high school for the center, to pay for a coordinator for the program, utilities, and other costs. The goal at the end of the five year grant is for the program to be self-sustaining. Mr. Watson noted, “You are all here as potential partners to better serve our students. The reason for this meeting is to see if there is an opportunity to put together a partnership for a wellness center.” Mrs. Magee explained, “We are not trying to take patients away from doctors, just trying to help students who do not have doctors.”

Mr. Watson explained that in the first year of the program, plans are to serve students at Retta Brown Elementary, a school where 92% of the 250 students are listed in the low socio-economic group. Mr. Watson stated we are seeing more students with toothaches, more that need glasses, and more with emotional issues. He said, “We are blessed as a community and we have been given responsibilities. We need to share those blessings.” On a motion by Larry Holder, seconded by Wayne Gibson, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves applying for a five-year, \$540,000.00 Arkansas Department of Health grant to begin a wellness center program in the El Dorado School District.

Angie Drummond and Mr. Watson visited with the board about how much money would be saved if the board would consider approval of refinancing the 2007 and 2008 bonds. Mrs. Drummond explained that on the 2007 bonds, original interest rates are 4% and 4.625% and possible refinancing rates could be from .0950% to 3.7%. On the 2008 bonds, original interest rates are 3.550% to 5.125% and new interest rates could be anywhere from 1.1% to 3.8%.

If refinancing occurs, total savings to the district through 2034 could be \$1,686,783.00 on the 2007 bonds and \$765,738.00 on the 2008 bonds, for over \$2.4 million in savings to the district. After some discussion and on a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Susan Turbeville, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the resolution, as presented, to refinance the 2007 and 2008 bonds.

On a motion by Susan Turbeville, seconded by Larry Holder, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves an application to the Arkansas Department of Education listing how much money the district hopes to save through refinancing of the 2007 and 2008 bonds.

On a motion by Will Vance, seconded by Todd Whatley, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves Stephens, Inc. as the district's financial advisor for the refinancing of the 2007 and 2008 bonds and filing of the application with the Arkansas Department of Education.

Jesica Edwards with the Personnel Policies Calendar Committee presented the 2012-2013 District Calendar. After a time of discussion there was a motion by Will Vance to suspend the rules and vote, seconded by Wayne Gibson, and carried on a 6-0 vote. On a motion by Will Vance, seconded by Wayne Gibson, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the 2012-2013 District Calendar.

Bonnie Haynie informed the board that on the evening of Thursday, March 8 the South Central Cooperative will offer to board members, one and one-half hours of professional development credit. The focus of the meeting is titled "Connecting Common Core and Community for the Whole Child." The meeting will include videos, discussions, talks about adult responsibility and educating the "whole child," and how to create active partnerships to enhance education.

Mr. Watson visited with the board about the four bullet points in the letter from the Arkansas Department of Education regarding the closing of Union Elementary School. After a time of discussion and on a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Susan Turbeville, and carried on a 5-1 vote, with Todd Whatley voting no, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the superintendent's recommendation to close Union Elementary School at the end of the 2011-2012 school year.

The meeting adjourned to an executive session to discuss personnel matters, then reconvened to an open meeting. On a motion by Susan Turbeville, seconded by Todd Whatley, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was

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

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

