

**Minutes of Regular Meeting of the El Dorado School Board
January 13, 2009**

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 Susan Turbeville presiding. Other directors present were Joey Bauman, Vicky Dobson, Wayne Gibson, Larry Holder, Renee Skinner, and Will Vance. Also attending was Supt. Bob Watson, Rhonda Simmons, Shirley Billingly, Tim Zylks, Don Thompson, and Lou Ann Voris.

Mrs. Turbeville asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meetings held December 8 and 9. On a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Larry Holder, and carried on a 7-0 vote, the minutes were approved.

The board reviewed the monthly bills. After some discussion and on a motion by Joey Bauman, seconded by Will Vance, and carried on a 7-0 vote, the bills were approved for payment. A list of bills paid and monthly financial statement are on file in the business office.

Mrs. Turbeville introduced Seth Daniel as Student of the Month. She stated that Seth is the son of Nick and Casey Daniel and in Mrs. Well's kindergarten class at Union. He has an older sister, AnnaBeth and a younger sister, Parker. Seth said his favorite color is dark blue, favorite television show is Stargate Atlantis, and favorite food is pepperoni pizza! He told his teacher that his favorite things to do at school are to go to the computer lab and also play on the monkey bars.

Mrs. Overturf said that Seth is a wonderful student and always very mannerly. He is the first to volunteer to help whenever she needs help. Mrs. Wells said that Seth is a very outgoing young man. He cares about helping his fellow classmates, whatever the task might be. He enjoys making others laugh and knows when and how to do it. He is very enthralled in all learning activities. Seth is able to develop a rapport with anyone who crosses his path. Mrs. Wells added Seth is a student that will leave a lasting impression on your heart forever! Staff and students at Union are excited that Seth was chosen Student of the Month. Mrs. Turbeville presented Seth with a certificate from the board.

Mrs. Turbeville recognized Ta'Nyeah White as Student of the Month from Retta Brown Elementary School. Ta'Nyeah is the daughter of Sha White and is a third grader in Mrs. Eastland's classroom. Ta'Nyeah is a student who stands out among her peers. Not only is she a very good student, but she is also a leader. Her teacher says that Ta'Nyeah leads by example and encourages others to do their best. So many times Mrs. Eastland has heard Ta'Nyeah say, "Come on ya'll, we can do this." She has a good rapport with each of her classmates and constantly encourages them in and outside of the classroom.

Ta'Nyeah is a student on whom others depend. Ta'Nyeah volunteers to help other students in her classroom whenever they need extra help. Many times these students will not allow another student to help them because they only want Ta'Nyeah to work with them. She serves on the Yearbook Club and often volunteers her recess time, which is totally her choice, and stays after school to work on this student-produced yearbook. She also assists the principals with calling for buses in the afternoon. Staff and students are pleased and extremely proud that Ta'Nyeah was chosen Student of the Month and knows that she will continue to be a good example for her peers. Mrs. Turbeville presented Ta'Nyeah with a certificate from the board.

Teacher of the Month is Shayna Lamkin Lee. Mrs. Turbeville stated that Mrs. Lee received her Bachelor of Science in Family Consumer Sciences from Henderson State University and her Masters in Secondary Education from Southern Arkansas University. She teaches consumer science at El Dorado High School and this begins her seventh year of teaching – all in the El Dorado district.

Those nominating Mrs. Lee stated that she is a super professional teacher with a great smile! In fact, she is one of the hardest working professionals on campus. She teaches parenting, child development, and orientation to teaching which means she has three different preparations. Her classes are always full so she has 150 students each semester

and two of her three preparations change at semester...that means approximately three hundred students per year. With this workload, many teachers would complain, but not Mrs. Lee. She works tirelessly with a positive attitude. She teaches one of the newer classes at the high school and one that is a big necessity for our district so that we can “grow our own teachers.” She has her orientation to teaching class working with students at Retta Brown Elementary. Mrs. Lee supervises these high school students as they pursue teaching as a possible career goal, constantly encouraging them, and providing them with educational opportunities.

In addition to her regular teaching responsibilities, Mrs. Lee does extra duties – morning, lunch, and afternoon as well as others. Actually, she does anything anyone asks her to do! When E. H. S. teachers were asked to implement A+ Curriculum and Larry Bell Curriculum, Mrs. Lee responded immediately with effective and creative instructional strategies. Career technical education teachers were asked to implement Access, a computer-based literacy program and Mrs. Lee did so without hesitation. Shayna Lee’s determination, diligence, and dedication to education are evident for all to see. El Dorado High School staff and students are proud she was chosen Teacher of the Month. Mrs. Turbeville presented her with a certificate from the board.

Dr. Brenda Holder with Families and Children Together, Inc. (F.A.C.T.) updated the board on the three and four year old program with their agency. She stated the non-profit funded program, Head Start is more than a pre-school program, it also is there to help the entire family. They work almost exclusively with families who earn less than 100% of poverty level, and with children who are homeless, disabled, in foster care, or whose parents are incarcerated, deployed, or absent. They have had staff that have loaned their vehicles to parents, the program has helped seriously depressed families, or helped those in need to get to interviews. They help grandparents raising grandchildren, take children to specialists in Pine Bluff or Little Rock, and even helped a family without indoor plumbing save money to get used fixtures. The agency has also helped aids to get two year college degrees. She noted that one local Head Start teacher was chosen Head Start Teacher of the Year for the State of Arkansas.

Dr. Holder explained they also have the Arkansas Better Chance (A.B.C.) program which was modeled after the Head Start program. This program is designed for families above the poverty level. The children in the program are also seen by mental health specialists and they have a dental health program. She said no services are duplicated. Both programs deal largely with very young parents or grandparents raising grandchildren. Currently there are six hundred eighty students in the Head Start program and two hundred twenty students in the ABC program. Dr. Holder said that Head Start’s mission is to work with the public school districts to do what they need them to do. They are willing to do their program to suit the school district’s needs, she said. Dr. Holder invited the board to drop by West Woods, Morning Star, Fairview, and Murril to visit the program at anytime.

Architect Blake Dunn presented an update on the new high school. Mr. Dunn stated final design plans for the new high school have been completed and were submitted to the Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation Division of the Arkansas Department of Education on January 9. Mr. Dunn told the board that construction of the over 300,000 square foot high school could begin as early as April. Mr. Watson said the construction management company, Baldwin & Shell of Little Rock, predicts it could take from twenty to twenty-four months to complete the high school, depending on the weather.

Mr. Dunn explained the district is trying to overlap steps in the construction process, such as site work and bids to take advantage of the market. It is a world of difference from six months ago, which is very beneficial to this project, he said. Abandoned wells have been filled on the site, relocating the gas pipeline is in the works and the Army Corps of Engineers has agreed to a wetlands interpretive area on the property. This will prevent the district from having to obtain a special permit and pay into a national mitigation bank. Mr. Dunn noted that when the school district first approached CenterPoint Energy about the large natural gas pipeline which is located almost in the center of the property, company officials estimated it would cost the district about \$430,000 to relocate the line. Later, that estimate was set at \$267,000 and the school district sent a check to the

company for that amount to pay for the relocation of the pipeline. However, when the project was bid, the company received four bids – with Loftin Construction Company of El Dorado being the low bidder at \$132,000 and was awarded the job. Mr. Watson said CenterPoint Energy will not send the district the difference in the estimate and actual cost of the project until it has been completed. Dunn said relocation of the pipeline began January 5 and 900 feet of the 1,650 pipeline relocation has been completed as of Tuesday. The pipeline is being relocated to the northeast corner of the property and will not be near any classrooms, Mr. Dunn explained.

Mr. Dunn said that on any 62-acre plot of land in this area, problems such as flood plain zones, pipelines, and abandoned oil wells would be prevalent. Officials with the Army Corps of Engineers have continued to work with the district to come up with a viable solution to save the district money and create a wetlands interpretive area on the school property that will not only preserve the area but also provide a learning environment for students, by tying into the school's academic curriculum. Mr. Dunn stated the Corps has been great to work with and has saved the district a lot of money. He explained that the wetlands area will be created to include three separate interpretive areas - an upstream grass wetlands area, a six-to-eight inch deep body of water to include cypress and willow trees and an uplands forest area, where trees will be identified and a walking trail will be established. He said that currently the area is usually only wet from December to March and that won't change when the interpretive area is established. The area will be easily and inexpensively maintained. Both of these projects, the relocation of the gas pipeline and the wetlands area, turned out better than expected, he said. Two road projects are expected to help alleviate traffic in the area and coincide with construction of the school. These are widening of Timberlane and rerouting an extension of Parnell Road. Road work will be completed when the school is completed. Mayor Mike Dumas said they will move as quickly as possible to complete the road work.

Mr. Dunn said the school's Design Committee has made good decisions that will keep the character of the school. He said the exterior of the building has not changed and will still be brick veneer. He showed computer images of the main corridor of the proposed facility, with vaulted ceilings, and skylights with a large open space and natural lighting. He noted that it will be very inviting and very conducive to learning. Laminated wood, a local product will be included in the design. The octunda will be 56 feet wide with polished concrete floors and the commons area will feature a sunken dining area. The proposed auditorium will seat 450 persons and will have a 50-foot wide stage with acoustical paneling, tiered seating and a control room.

Bids for the site work on the project are expected to be opened during a public meeting in El Dorado on February 17, contingent on state approval of the plans. Division approval is estimated to be received by February 22 and school officials are hopeful site work can begin and building bid documents can be issued on February 23. A pre-bid conference will be scheduled and invitations will be sent to companies throughout the state and in Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana. Mr. Dunn said the date to open bids for the project in El Dorado has been tentatively set for March 31 and he is hopeful construction can begin April 12. He presented a list of project team consultants that included experts in many fields from Little Rock, Ruston, Shreveport, Dallas, Austin, and Salt Lake City of about sixty people to pull this project together in three months.

Mr. Watson stated that January 23 has been designated as College Day within the district and also begins a week of celebrating the El Dorado Promise anniversary.

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 Vicky Dobson, and carried on a 7-0 vote, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the superintendent's recommendations concerning the acceptance of resignation and the employment of new personnel. The board hereby extends the employment contract of Bob Watson as superintendent with an annual salary of \$165,000 and benefits to remain the same.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.