

**Minutes of Regular Meeting of the El Dorado School Board  
September 14, 2009**

The directors of the board met on the above date at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room, School Administration Building, 200 West Oak Street, with Susan Turbeville presiding. Other directors present were Joey Bauman, Wayne Gibson, Larry Holder, Renee Skinner, and Will Vance. Director Vicky Dobson was absent. Also attending was Supt. Bob Watson, Rhonda Simmons, Bonnie Haynie, Shirley Billingly, Tim Zylks, Don Thompson, and Lou Ann Voris.

Mr. Holder asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting held August 11. On a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Joey Bauman, 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 Joey Bauman, seconded by Will Vance, 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.

The board approved three student transfers to the Parkers Chapel School District and one student transfer to Norphlet School District.

Don Thompson presented the annual district budget. He explained the district is projecting to receive local and state revenue in the amount of \$31,051,527. The budget shows total revenue of \$412,900 in the new teacher salary and new operating fund; an ending cash balance of \$2,856,799 in the teacher salary and general operating fund; debt service fund payments of \$1,996,664; and El Dorado High School building fund with an ending cash balance of \$23,742,514. He said the district is expected to spend all the money in the regular building fund - \$1,142,391 and in the athletic fund - \$21,631. Mr. Thompson said the budget shows Title 1 Stimulus funds of \$1,152,345 and Stabilization Stimulus funds of \$2,033,920. The total amount of IDEA Special Education Stimulus funds the district will receive will be included in the budget when the exact amount is determined, Mr. Thompson said

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the annual district budget as presented.

Mrs. Turbeville introduced Mary Webb at the Student of the Month. Mary is the daughter of Alison and John Clark and John Webb and a student at Northwest Elementary School. Her teacher and principal said that Mary is an excellent student who works extremely hard in class. Mary is a gifted and talented student who is creative in both her work and ideas. She is thoughtful and always kind to others. In fact, Mary seems to find ways to be helpful to other students. Mrs. Turbeville presented Mary with a certificate from the board.

Mrs. Turbeville said that Lou Ingram from Northwest Elementary is the Teacher of the Month. Mrs. Ingram received her Bachelor of Arts degree in elementary education from the University of Arkansas at Monticello and has twenty-four graduate hours. This is her thirty-third year of teaching with twenty-five of those in the El Dorado district – all at Northwest Elementary.

Those nominating Mrs. Ingram said writing, English, reading, and spelling are the subjects in which she is able to reach every student at his or her level. She relates well to the children and is a positive, encouraging role model for her peers. Mrs. Ingram was recently honored as the 2009 Arkansas Newspaper in Education Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Turbeville presented Mrs. Ingram with a certificate from the board.

Larry Taylor with Baldwin & Shell gave the board an update on progress at the new high school. Mr. Taylor said slabs have been poured for the auditorium in Area 1 and some corridors and other areas such as Area 3 and 5 are ready for slabs, but heavy rainfall for the past several days has slowed work at the site. He said, "We're in good shape right now, but the weather is hurting us." He showed the board on project drawings where the

storm drains and underground utilities, sewer lines, manholes, water and power lines have gone in. He said the 61.9 acres is now gated. They are there seven days a week so that sub contractors can work a full crew. He again said that time-wise we are in good shape and they are looking at a completion date of June 30, 2011. Blake Dunn stated everything is going smoothly, he is pleased in the quality of work and the way the project is going, and the board can be proud they are getting what they are paying for. Mr. Watson stated he had asked the board for permission to explore geothermal power to heat and cool the ninety classrooms in the new facility. However, engineers recently reported an estimate of \$1.7 million and Mr. Watson said the district will not be able to afford the geothermal power for the high school project.

Mr. Watson stated that Claude Solley with the El Dorado High School Class of 1959 recently approached him stating the class would like to work with the current E.H.S. seniors as an activity and bury a time capsule at the new high school site to be opened in fifty years. After a time of discussion and 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 the E.H.S. Class of 1959 to work with the current senior class to bury a time capsule on the new high school site. The time capsule is to be opened in fifty years.

Mr. Watson stated he was recommending Ruthie Gibson as the district surrogate parent representative for 2009 - 2010 school term. Mrs. Gibson said that she is now working with a great group of eight surrogate parents – four males and four females. They cannot receive money for the job, it is strictly a volunteer job, and she noted they are good volunteers. 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 Ruthie Gibson as the district's surrogate parent representative for the 2009-10 school year.

Ruthie Gibson presented the Special Education State Equalization budget, Title VI-B budget, Medicaid budget and the Catastrophic budget for 2009 - 2010. She noted that federal funds for special education are used to pay for teacher salaries, speech pathologists and assistants, resource room teachers, special education teacher travel, occupational and physical therapists, paraprofessional aids, nurses, educational examiners, curriculum supervisor, counselors, bus drivers, buses and psychological services. Mrs. Gibson told the board members that over \$2 million has been allocated for the Special Education State Equalization budget and \$1,165,335 has been budgeted for the Title VI-B program, which serves 393 students. The Medicaid budget shows \$44,517 cash on hand and the Catastrophic budget has \$70,346 to serve three students who require specialized transportation, speech, physical and occupational therapies. 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 the Special Education's State Equalization, Title VI-B, Medicaid, and Catastrophic budgets for 2009-2010 as presented.

Rhonda Simmons, Bonnie Haynie, and Bob Watson presented the Annual Report to the Public. Mrs. Simmons said Benchmark-ACTAAP and End-of-Course Testing for 2009 showed increases in all subgroups and the combined student population in math and increases in almost all groups in literacy. She said the district identifies and targets subgroup needs in literacy to close the achievement gap; implements best practice strategies using Quinpoint, and works to improve comprehensive literacy and mathematical proficiency through technology integration. She explained that Quinpoint, a program of JBHM Education group, focuses on student success and is a global positioning system for reaching district goals set up by No Child Left Behind. Through this program, students get extra help to avoid falling behind and teachers engage students based on their learning styles. Another program, "Struggling Learners" is being held at El Dorado High School, Retta Brown and Yocum Elementary Schools. Mrs. Simmons said an intervention specialist visits the schools and talks with students and teachers to determine how students can improve. Another part of the district's Arkansas Comprehensive School

Improvement Plan is to reduce the kindergarten teacher-student ratio to not more than seventeen students per classroom. Instructional assistants are also in place to intervene with at-risk students in those classes.

Mrs. Simmons explained about Accelerated Academies, which Mr. Watson described as the district's answer to charter schools. She said in first and third grades at Northwest and Retta Brown Schools those students who attend a longer school day – 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. – were 90% proficient on exams. This year, two more classes are being added as Accelerated Academies. She also talked about technology upgrades that are ongoing at schools within the district and this year, the district will begin implementing "AutoSkill," which will use software that will take a student to whatever grade level they need to progress in reading. She said the staff is excited about this. The program helps at-risk students build proficiency in the foundation skills of reading and math. She also reported that the district was cited for not having 100% highly qualified teachers. She said there are three at El Dorado High School and one at Washington Middle School who are all working to become accredited.

Mrs. Simmons showed where students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade increased their math scores from 71.3% this year; and in the subgroups in the same grade levels, the economically disadvantaged group scores stayed about the same from 64.9% to 64.8%. In the African American subgroup, scores improved from 60.4% in math to 63.8% and in the Caucasian subgroup scores increased from 83.7% to 92.1%. Math scores in grades six through eight increased from 71.4% in math to 73.5% for a combined score. El Dorado High School algebra 1 and geometry combined scores increased from 56.5% to 66.9%. Combined scores and subgroup math scores all increased from the previous year. In the kindergarten through fifth grade in literacy the combined scores were at 59.9% in 2008 and 63.4% in 2009. At the high school level scores were 52% in 2008 and 52.9% in 2009. An enrollment report showed the district is down by sixteen students, from student numbers on September 14, 2008, possibly due to closings of local businesses. The total enrollment on September 14, 2008 was 4,649 and on Monday, September 14, 2009 the district enrollment figures show a total of 4,633 students.

Bonnie Haynie said the district has "held our own" over the past five years of ACT scores. Scores for 2009 in English were 19.2 compared to 20.6 at the state level and 20.6 nationally; 19.7 in math, compared to 20.1 in state and 21 in the nation; 20.1 in reading, compared to 21 in the state, and 21.4 nationally; 19.7 in science, compared to 20.2 in the state and 20.9 nationally and composite of 19.8 locally, 20.6 statewide and 21.1 nationally. Mrs. Haynie noted that African American students taking ACT tests in 2009 scored above state and national averages. Advanced Placement test scores also increased in 2009 from the previous year and there were fifteen students in the state that scored a five (the highest score a student can make on an AP test) on the AP Physics exam. Four of those students were El Dorado High School students, she said. In 2009, everything went up in AP classes – the number of students taking AP courses, the number of students taking AP tests, and the scores of AP test takers.

Mrs. Haynie also discussed professional development, including district initiatives such as Quinpoint and Struggling Learners, academic vocabulary, Singapore math, and laying the foundation to encourage more students to enroll in pre-AP classes. She announced that the first Arkansas Advanced Initiative for Math and Science Student Awards ceremony will be held at 10:45 a.m. on September 28 in the El Dorado High School gym. AP students will receive cash awards for their qualifying math, science and English AP exam scores from the National Science and Math Initiative.

Mr. Watson said the district is showing improvements in test scores, working with problems, and partnering with the community. In regard to professional development he said that Mrs. Haynie has a strong staff to work with and appreciates those efforts. He then presented information about facility projects in concluding the annual report to the public. He said at Washington Middle School, four classrooms were enlarged to provide co-teaching areas. Walls were torn out and new ceilings and lights were added. Some areas at Washington were repainted and floors and heating and cooling units were replaced. New cabinets were added, hallways and some classrooms and offices were also repainted. At Barton Junior High, several outdated bathrooms were renovated, along

with two classrooms in the gym. Canopies were placed on the newest buildings at the school.

At the current El Dorado High School campus, some roof work to prevent leakage was completed and some restrooms and classrooms were repainted. At Northwest Elementary, a portable building was set up and doors were repainted. Renovations were also made at West Woods included painting exterior blocks and doors and replacing two exterior doors. The Carver Building had new electrical service installed to the building and a new HVAC unit was installed in the conference room. Mr. Watson said that renovations were made to accommodate an ACT area at the T.A.C. House. He said the facilities he spoke about are student friendly and painting and lighting improvements have made a big difference for students and staff.

Mrs. Turbeville reminded the board of the annual school election to be held September 1 at the Union County Court House from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

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 Renee Skinner, and carried on a 6-0 vote, 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.