

**BLYTHEVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Blytheville, Arkansas**  
**Regular School Board Meeting**  
**Monday, September 26, 2016**  
**6:00 p.m.**

The Blytheville Board of Education met in a special meeting at the Blytheville School District Administration Building at 405 West Park Street at 6:00 p.m. on September 26, 2016, with the following members present:

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|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (1) Tommy Bennett, President | (2) Tracey Ritchey, Vice-President |
| (3) Barbara Wells, Secretary | (4) Erin Carrington                |
| (5) Desmond Hammett          | (6) Tobey Johnson                  |
| (7) Henrietta Watt           |                                    |

The following members were absent:

- (1) Billy Fair

Others present: Paul Jenkins, Eilleen Garris, Geneva Harris, Kris Williams, Larry Clark, Corey Chunn, Ben Fisher, Connie Simpson, Dylan Buckner, Ann P. Coleman, Becky Ramey, Donald Davis, Adron Poole, Dorothy Anderson, Chuck Ryan, Jennifer Modge, Blane Alexander, Jerry Vaughn, Joe Franks, Blaine Alexander, Jennifer Mederious, Michelle Sims, Ken Dumond, Lori Hixson, Pearlie Goings, Demetius Goings, Jacob Ritchey, Nina Watson, Amy Harmon, Sandy Gillespie, Cody Andrews, Stephen Adrews, Savannah Davis, Pierce Moseley, Zaria Allen and Brandon Harper.

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|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. CALL TO ORDER                 | President Tommy Bennett called the regular meeting for the month of September 2016 to order at 6:03 p.m.              |
| 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM     | A quorum was established with six members present. Erin Carrington arrived at 6:04 p.m. making seven members present. |
| 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE          | The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.   |
| 4. REAPPOINTMENT OF BOARD MEMBER |   |

Upon a motion made by Tommy Bennett and seconded by Tobey Johnson, Desmond Hammett was reappointed as a Board Member.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 6:05 p.m.

Mr. Hammett was sworn in by Mississippi County Clerk at 6:06 p.m.

## 5. SCHOOL PRIDE

### A. BHS Band, Mr. Dummond

We have 91 students in 8<sup>th</sup> period band; three of these students are beginners. Our first contest will be at 3 p.m. this Saturday at Jonesboro High School. There will be eight bands in competition. Competitions will be held October 8<sup>th</sup> in West Memphis, October 15<sup>th</sup> in Pocahontas, and October 25<sup>th</sup> at Lakeside High School. Everyone is invited to join our Chickasaw Marching Band Facebook page. Band students Savannah Davis, Pierce Mosley and Zaria Allen told the Board that everything was positive in band this year and at the week-long Band Retreat at ASU-Beebe.

### B. Football, Ben Fisher

Last week's game was closer than the score. Positive things have resulted from three of the first four games, extremely close games. Ten years ago we have just quit; this year was a huge change. Coach Fisher recognized junior right tackle, Larry Clark, who is getting many offers to play football and Corey Chunn, starting linebacker, who has the highest average on the football team. Chunn has 3.7 average and Clark 3.0 average. I am extremely proud of them.

Board Member Desmond Hammett asked the players what did playing for the Blytheville Chickasaws mean to them. Corey Chunn told the Board that it means a lot to me. If it weren't for football, I would probably be in trouble, jail or dead. It has made me a better person and I love the support from family and even people in this room.

Larry Clark stated that Coach Fisher had made him a better person.

Fisher said that the game attendance has been great this year.

Mr. Bobby Ashley, Principal of BHS New Tech said that Dumond and Fisher were putting in a lot of work with this heat index. These kids are demanding better and are taking ownership in their school. I am proud to be principal to these kids and 300 more. Kudos to all!

## 6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

### A. President

Tobey Johnson nominated Tracey Ritchey for President. Ms. Ritchey was elected President by acclamation at 6:21 p.m. At this time, the meeting was turned over to President Ritchey.

### B. Vice President

Barbara Wells nominated Erin Carrington for Vice-President and Tommy Bennett nominated Billy Fair for Vice-President.

Vote was 5:2 in favor of Mrs. Carrington for Vice-President at 6:24 p.m.

### C. Secretary

Erin Carrington nominated Barbara Wells for Secretary and Tommy Bennett nominated Tobey Johnson.

Vote was 4:3 in favor of Mrs. Wells for Secretary at 6:25 p.m.

## 7. PRIMARY BOARD DISBURSING OFFICER

Upon a motion by Tommy Bennett and a second by Tobey Johnson the Board approved a resolution to appoint Tracey Ritchey to serve as Primary Board Disbursing Officer of the District pursuant to Act 671 of 2003.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 6:27 p.m.

## 8. ASBA Delegate

Motion was made by Tommy Bennett and seconded by Tobey Johnson that President Tracey Ritchey serve as ASBA Delegate.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 6:28 p.m.

## INFORMATION ITEMS AND REPORTS

### A. Superintendent's Report

#### 1. Villagers

Adron Poole introduced Nina Mitchell to speak on behalf of the Villagers. The community group came in this year to be a liaison with our school family. Ms. Mitchell gave the Board an update to a survey given to parents and community at Williams Park Back to School Bash, all school open houses, and First Things First. There were 403 parent surveys - 398 hard copies and 5 on Survey Monkey. The survey questions were: 1) How much are you involved in your child's education? 2) What are your expectations of the Blytheville Public School System? 3) If you could change any aspect of the Blytheville Public School System, what would it be, why? 4) How can we as Concerned Citizens (Villagers) help?

2. Arkansas Leadership Academy, an update was given by Joe Franks, Blaine Alexander, Jerry Vaughn and Jennifer Mederious who have already helped build leadership capacity in our district. When Blytheville Middle School and Blytheville High School went into academic distress, we took this as a district problem.

Arkansas Leadership Academy began working with District on July 1<sup>st</sup>. We help more schools out of academic distress by using the latest research. We develop needs assessment and customized strategic plans. These plans guide our staff as they work alongside members of the organization to build leadership capacity for sustained improvement.

We report our school improvement plan to the State Department every fall.

There is an approach of how we are able to make changes in the school culture. We will compare now to May. There will be lots of surveys. We want to provide concrete evidence. We give a clear vision of where we want to go.

Arkansas Leadership Academy is impressed with students involved with Blytheville Middle School and Blytheville High School Student Voice.

Arkansas Leadership Academy is about school improvement. We want to close the gap. We focus on where you want to go and build plans.

Blytheville Elementary School is working hard on feedback loop; people support what they create. We are not leading or pushing; we are working beside you. Develop common language with stakeholders.

Working hard on pre and post student assessments. Focus of schools is teacher practice and student achievement to help the students walk out of here the best they can be.

Eileen Garris, Blytheville Primary Assistant Principal told of her experience at Leadership Academy and building leadership skills at what is called the mountain. We haven't had support from an outside source until now. Mr. Franks helped us set core values, beliefs, and helped with observations with teachers in classroom to build our teachers.

Mr. Franks explained that the majority of leadership academy is held at the mountain. The academy is based at University of Arkansas who obtained property through the Rockefeller Foundation at Petit Jean Mountain.

We have a three year contract with the school. We also offer opportunities to work with school board members.

3. Superintendent Atwill announced that BHS-New Tech Drama Club will present a play, "Track" this Wednesday at 6 p.m. Blue Ribbon Commission and Black Caucus will meet at Arkansas Northeastern College at 9 a.m. Thursday and Mr. Atwill will have talk about school safety and the Rave Panic Button. At 1 p.m. there will be a mock drill at BHS New-Tech. Rave will watch first-hand what happens during drills and inspect classrooms. October 17<sup>th</sup> is New Board Member Institute in Little Rock. After the October 24<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, Mr. Marshal Hughes with Beardsley Finance will present a 2 hour training. November 7<sup>th</sup> is the Regional Meeting in Wynne, Arkansas School Board Annual Conference will be held December 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>. The National School Board Association Conference will be held March 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Registration opens on October 19<sup>th</sup>.
4. Legal ending balances have decreased over the last seven years with the decrease in students.

5. There were 168 applications concerning 164 students. We had 100 Opportunity School Choice applications and 68 regular School Choice applications. Of the 164 total students, only 95 ever attended Blytheville Schools. Of those 95 students, 62 students attended Blytheville Schools during the 2015-2016 school year. Of the 62 students that attended school last year and filed school choice applications to attend Armorel or Gosnell for the 2016-2017 school year, 7 have returned to Blytheville as of 9/20/16. Net loss of students due to school choice from the 2015-2016 school year to September 20, 2016 is 55 students.
6. Mrs. Cooke and I spoke to BMS concerning the 1003A School Improvement Grants. BMS received \$75,260. BMS is starting an after school tutor program. Part of the money will be used for transportation and snacks. Also, we are working on summer school to help retain the knowledge that could be lost over the summer. Should be in full force by 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.
7. Last spring, the School Board started talking about turfing our football field; mileage for new gym did not pass. I think it is something we need to look into. Mr. Hughes, Beardsley Finance says 3.3 mills will generate 10 million and 4 mills will generate 12 million. We have to seek approval from the State Department.
8. Our monies (\$1.32) are down by a million.
9. Our budget has a 1.5% raise for our teachers which would be year after year, as compared to a bonus which is a one-time hit.
10. Back to bond issue. Is it legal construction to ask for both bonds – construction and maintenance at one election. We are looking at numbers; there will be \$5,000 to \$50,000 for architectural fees. With 4 mills, 3.3 going toward gym and field and .7 towards salaries which would get us to the same as other local districts. Part of our improvement plan is to retain quality teachers. We replaced 41 teachers this year. We need to overcome our deficit and have a little extra by not replacing people who leave the district.

#### B. Instructional Reports

Jean Cole, Director of Director of Support Services

1. Mrs. Cole went over the 2016-2017 Title VI-B Budget  
Special Education will be under monitoring from State Department for discipline October 3 through November. We are ready.

2. Leadership Team and RTI Team is gathering data and will meet the third Wednesday of each month. There will be representatives from Healing in the Hood, Villagers, DHS, School Based Mental Health and principals and we will be inviting others according to agenda.
3. We are going to revamp our PBIS practices. Last year, we had 25 fewer out of school suspensions.

Sally Cooke, Director of Curriculum

1. Mrs. Cooke passed out handout for the 2016-2017 Blytheville Public Schools Minority and Teacher and Administrator Recruitment Plan. Based on data collected from the Arkansas Department of Education, the Blytheville School District has experienced a slight decrease in minority teachers from 20% to 19% this year. The data shows the district hired nine black teachers, thirty-four white teachers, and zero Asian or Native American teachers. Two new white administrators were hired. Our total teacher turnover remained steady over the last four years. The student body is 81% black, 15% white, and 4% other. 80% of our paraprofessionals are also black, which helps with the minority balance in the schools. We have short term goals; there is a teacher shortage across the United States. We are working with Arkansas Teacher Corp and Teach for America to turn people into teachers. You have to have a four year bachelor degree. Long term goal is to continue to track, working through National Teacher Project to help recruit and retain our teachers.
2. Second handout was the Arkansas Leadership Academy Organizational Development – Needs Assessment. With this information we can develop a plan. Look at the evidence, then you will see next steps of what need to be. We train all principals from all buildings together where they can all receive the same information. We will bring action plan to next meeting.
3. Third handout was the Blytheville School District Academic Distress Plan of Support. The professional development plan of activities that will support the principal in becoming an accomplished turnaround principal (identify specific trainings, reading, mentors and timelines for activities to occur and the expected outcome for each component of the activities). This plan shall include observation calibration training for Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS) along with the training in the use of the BloomBoard Insight Reports. Further, district and school leaders will

work with the ADE Educator Effectiveness Unit to align existing walk-through practices to be recorded as informal observations with the TESS (BloomBoard) process.

We have to report to the state how we use the funds and how it will help our schools. We have to make sure it is legal. We have great communication; we know what is going on in all of our buildings.

We want to recruit and retain effective teachers at the school, and how the district will support the building in recruiting qualified teachers when openings occur. This would include how teachers are incentivized to remain at the school as well as the monitoring of teachers for their "feelings or perceptions" of support on a quarterly basis (ADE developed instrument or ADE approved instrument). Extra pay would help; we have lots of opportunities to work for extra pay. Out of the 43 teachers hired, 24 were brand new. All four principals and the school improvement specialist/curriculum director who is the project direct for mentors and novice teachers in the district had the opportunity to attend several trainings from The National Teacher Project (TNTP) regarding retention.

With the Blytheville School District Curriculum Alignment Process, each school in the district has autonomy in curriculum planning and design with the assistance of the district instructional team and specialist from Crowley's Ridge Co-op/ Pacing guides and units are constructed with teachers involved in the backwards design process by McTighe and Wiggins in Understanding by Design. Two overarching questions drive the development plans: 1) What do students need to be able to do and 2) How will we get them to do it. Using the Arkansas Standards, Common Core State Standards documents, and samples from districts that have had success, the teachers are given time to review, revise, and align the curriculum documents annually. More intensive time for planning and alignment is provided for teams during the summer months, on Saturdays and by providing a half day of release time paired with extra time to provide chunks of time to work.

The Parent & Community Engagement gives the description of the supports to be provided to engage parents and community in the turnaround efforts. Specifically identify the activities offered, a timeline and how the school will maintain and analyze data related to parent participations. The analysis should contrast parents of proficient students to parents of non-proficient students



with the intent of providing additional services and support to the parents of non-proficient students.

Positive Learning Environment gives the description of the support to be provided in creating a positive learning environment and positive school climate. It is encouraged that the district support the school in adopting a Positive Behavior Intervention System as well as other culture improvement strategies. Everyone wants to feel safe, have a voice, and know they are cared for.

This support plan was developed by the District Leadership Team, BHS Leadership Team, BMS Leadership Team, BED Leadership Team and the BPS Leadership team.

At this time, the Board took a short break.

Board Member Henrietta Watt left the meeting at 8:28 p.m. and the Board Meeting resumed at 8:31.

Mrs. Cooke continued with her last report being the Priority Improvement Plan for BHS and BMS and targeted schools BPS and BES. We have started the year based on needs assessment, where they are going next, and why. We know we are below state average. There was no changes in status, new test, no comparisons. There is a lot of data and we have to work methodically through this process.

#### C. Operations Report

Randy Jumper, Director of Facilities

1. I want to brag on Brandon Harper on 911 app with legislators coming to the school. We are ready. We are proud they picked us. Everything had to be in place last year by September 1<sup>st</sup>. We had everything done on schedule and Blytheville was picked as a model. The lockdown drill will be at 1:00 p.m. Thursday, be there at 12:45 p.m. if you want in.

### 10. ACTION ITEMS

- A. August 22, 2016 Regular Meeting
- B. August Financial Report
- C. Act 1120 of 2013 – 5% Salary Rule
- D. Budget for 2016-2017
- E. Title VI-B Budget 2016-2017
- F. ACSIP Statement of Assurance

- G. Arkansas Public School Unemployment Compensation Account Notice for Account Participation
- H. Air Evac
- I. Amplify Education - mClass Dibels assessments BPS - \$11,925.00
- J. Dept of Corrections - 231 stacking chairs for BHS/BMS - \$14,943.62
- K. Transfer \$1,500,000 to Building Fund 3000
- L. Driver Education Standards of Assurance

Upon the recommendation of President Ritchey, a motion was made by Tobey Johnson and seconded by Erin Carrington to accept items as listed in A. – L.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 9:03 p.m.

## 11. PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. Appointment of Certified Employee

Megan Davis	Counselor	BES
Casey DeFord	School Improvement Specialist	

### B. Resignation of Certified Employees

Pamela DeCaprio	Counselor	BES
Arvilla Early	Teacher	BMS

### C. Resignation of Classified Employee (December 31, 2016)

Janice Wilkins	IDEA Secretary	Admin
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### D. Appointment of Classified Employee

Tiffany Byrd	Food Service	BHS-New Tech
Syreeta Dawkins	Paraprofessional	BPS
Connie Miller	RN	
Gloria Williams	Paraprofessional	BPS

### E. Resignation of Classified Employees

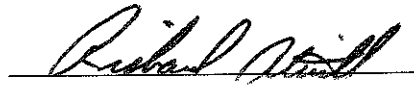
Donna Brown	Paraprofessional	BMS
Joyce Green	Food Service	BHS-New Tech
Tabitha Sawyer	Paraprofessional	BPS

Upon the recommendation of Superintendent Atwill, a motion was made by Tommy Bennett and seconded by Barbara Wells to accept items as listed in A.-E.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 9:12 p.m.

Superintendent Atwill handed out financial training information.  
Beardsley Finance is scheduled for a two hour training session after the  
October meeting.

11. Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard Atwill", is written over a horizontal line.

Richard Atwill  
Ex-officio Financial Secretary