

# **BLYTHEVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

## **Regular School Board Meeting**

### **Administration Building**

**Monday, May 18, 2020**

The Blytheville Board of Education met at the Blytheville School District Administration Building at 405 West Park Street at 6:00 p.m. on May 18, 2020 via ZOOM with the following members present:

- |                                |                                   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (1) Erin Carrington, President | (2) Barbara Wells, Vice President |
| (3) Michelle Sims, Secretary   | (4) Billy Fair                    |
| (5) Tobey Johnson              | (6) Desmond Hammett               |
| (7) Tracey Ritchey             |                                   |

The following member was not present:

- (1) Henrietta Watt

Others present: Tommy Bennett

VIA ZOOM: Brandon Harper, Jennifer Blankenship, Mike Wallace, Brandon Harper, Sally Cooke, Jana Wilson, Danielle Dodd, Chanda Walker, Jean Cole, Kris Williams and Jonet Washington

1. CALL TO ORDER                      President Erin Carrington called the regular meeting for the month of May 18, 2020 to order at 6:11 p.m.
2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM                      A quorum was established with seven members present via ZOOM.
3. INFORMATION ITEMS AND REPORTS
  - A. Superintendent's Report
    1. New Gym Construction in Progress Financial Report

2. Danielle Dodd, Baldwin & Shell updated the Board on her meeting with Rick Terry, Tom Celicia, and Todd Welch at gym today. We are looking for the best product and one that will stand up the longest for the floor where you cannot see marks. Entry will be fixed and banisters will match gray like others.

Track update: All is going great. Mr. Ashley signed change order to get GEO started. We do not have an exact start date. Hopefully, they will start at the end of the month or the beginning of next month. We stand behind the quality of work and even though it is outsourced to GEO, we will still have a superintendent on site.

3. CARES Act

On March 27, 2020, President Trump signed the CARES Act, which is a \$2 trillions package of assistance measures. Of that \$2 trillion, 30.75 was allocated for an Education Stabilization Fund. Of the 30.75 billion, 13.2 billions was allotted for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund.

For the purpose of providing local educational agencies with emergency funds to address the impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have on elementary and secondary schools across the nation.

Arkansas applied for ESSER funds on May 12th and was approved on May 14th and was granted \$128,758,638.00. Blytheville Public Schools was awarded \$1,178,018.87. Funds were based on the same method that our Title 1 funds are computed and that is poverty level, census, data, etc.

In the application, school districts will have to indicate how they will utilise ESSER funds in one of the four areas: 1) food security, 2) direct student support/continuous learning opportunities, 3) technology and 4) systemic procedures.

We want to make sure our students have blended learning and make sure they have devices and capabilities for connection.

Moving forward, we need to make sure we are on the same playing field. Teachers will learn new ways to teach and do their lesson plans.

We are going to need hand sanitizer dispensers, foggers, disinfectants, and thermometers to take temperature on the forehead.

## B. Principal's Report

Michelle Walling, Director Chickasaw Academy

I have been working with our team, and what we would like to do is make it a policy that students put cellphones in pouch when they enter the classroom. They will put their phones in a case and they will keep it.

At this time, a short video was presented with staff from Chickasaw Academy in support of using the Yonder Pouch.

We have problems with students thinking they have the right to make calls at any time.

We started using the pouches with Freshman Academy and it does work. It helps with incidents.

If you ask any District, the biggest issue is cellphones. We need to revise the cell phone policy to help teachers do their jobs.

We have audio and cameras in the classroom

The pouches are \$30 each and if we buy district-wide, we may get a discount.

Erin Carrington stated that she would like to table this decision until we have more information.

A motion was made by Barbara Wells and seconded by Billy Fair to table the decision until we have more information presented.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 8:11 p.m.

## C. Instructional Report

Sally Cooke, Director of Curriculum

Positive things New Tech has brought to BHS:

BHS had a need years ago when we decided to apply for a charter and also become a New Tech School. We needed something to engage our students in learning and empower the students to have agency and responsibility for their learning, and to understand how to use technology to enable them to be successful in the world. New Tech provided these things. We also needed to become a Charter because we needed the waivers to make these positive changes in the schedule.

Mrs. Blankenship has been collaborating with her teachers to get input on what has worked well and what challenges we had with New Tech and that is why I wanted to give this information to you in this meeting instead of last meeting.

We have all we need at this point to move forward besides the ECHO software.

### Culture

- The NTN model helped us to establish a culture of “Trust, Respect, and Responsibility,” and to create a portrait of our Ideal Graduate, which our current mission, vision, and belief system are aligned to and as a faculty, we have revisited and revised this profile every few years since joining the New Tech Network.

### Setting High Student Expectations

- The NTN model also gave us tools to be able to teach and assess (through rubrics used by the entire faculty) These are the soft skills our industry people had requested that we make sure students had before graduating.
  - Written communication (all teachers across all contents use the same rubric,
  - Oral communication
  - Collaboration (soft skill that they need to be able to be successful in the college or career of their choice after high school)
  - Agency (Work ethic, responsibility, growth mindset, seeking challenges, building confidence, seeking and using feedback, and taking ownership of their own learning)
  - Thinking & Knowledge (with an emphasis on Critical Thinking, as well as the core content knowledge embedded within our standards)

### Professional Development

- NTN Coaches offered support and relevant resources for school leaders
  - When planning on-site visits, NTN Coaches have met with the principals and/or New Tech Director to ascertain what our particular school needs. They always obtained a copy of our annual plans (ACSIP or Strategic Plans) and

ensured that the work we were doing with New Tech aligned with our goals and any directives from our state or our district.

- They have visited classrooms with the school leaders in order to help us “get on the balcony” to see both what we’re doing well and areas to focus on for continued improvement.

- They offered (and we accepted) training for leaders because the NTN model is intended to be a gradual decrease in coaching support as they train others to take over the work. This is following the model of building capacity in teachers throughout the building so there is shared responsibility for student/teacher learning

- Ms. Sneed has been through the Coaching Development Program, which is a 2-year program with ongoing support in instructional coaching in the NTN model. (I have relied heavily on this training this past year, with no onsite support from New Tech, in order to attempt to build the capacity of even more teachers in facilitation of adult learning.)

- Scott Ferrell, Kristy Brasfield, Seane Clifton, Angela Parsons, and Robin Sneed have all been through the NTN Certified Teacher and NTN Train-the-Train tracks. (So BHS has 5 New Tech Certified Teachers and Certified Trainers, as well as many other capable teachers, who can train fellow teachers in the PBL model.)

- The NTN Coaches helped us to build our teacher-leader model and offered training and support during their coaching visits to help build their capacity to lead their teams.

- NTN Literacy Specialists have come to our campus to work with our English and Social Studies teachers

- NTN Math Specialists have worked with math teachers

- Last year, NTN coaches facilitated a whole-staff professional development over “Culturally Responsive Teaching,” which has sparked an ongoing conversation among our staff around inequity in education and closing the achievement gap.

Why are we ready to move to the next step of deeper learning on essential standards with the PLC without NT.

- You may have noticed that in all the great things listed above that NT brought, technology was not a focus. Technology in the classrooms is just a part of education in general and not something that was brought to BHS only for NT. Students use a combination of paper/pencil and technology just as all of us do and need to know how to use both well as part of daily life.
- We have teacher leaders who have gone through the trainer program who can continue to support the high expectations for adult and student learning
- BHS uses protocols to manage and facilitate a professional learning environment in which all voices could be heard and things could actually get done.
  - “Looking-at-Student-Work” protocols, so that teams of teachers could provide each other feedback on instruction and next-steps on how to meet the needs of students based on their work (typically written assignments).
  - “Critical Friends Protocol,” which allows teachers to present project ideas to peers in order to receive feedback in a structured way.
  - Use of phrases such as “I think”, “I wonder.”
  - Data driven inquiry
- The Act 1240 Waivers that we now have allow us to do everything that we got access to with the Charter. Years ago becoming a Charter was the only way to do that.
- The focus in our state has moved to encourage the use of the PLC model to drive everything in districts. This fits as a perfect next step for BHS with the foundation that has been given with NT around culture and expectations for our students. (Similar to the foundation that the other buildings received from Arkansas Leadership Academy.)

We can provide updates to the board by the end of the summer on our plans for a learning management platform. There have been multiple updates that DESE has asked for so we are giving schools time to work in June.

- Data will be different since there are no end of year tests available.
- We must show how we are focusing on supporting all students who need intense intervention including special education especially in the case that school

is interrupted again.

- The focus will be on essential standards which we have been working on with the PLC process.
- There is a playbook that is being released to guide districts through all the new changes.

C. Operations Report

Brandon Harper, Director of Operations/Security Facilities

Child Nutrition: Averaging 1000 meals per day. As of Monday, April 20 started serving the following: Monday - meals for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday - meals for Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. Each meal includes breakfast and lunch items. Serving out of BHS, BMS, BPS. Renovation on vent-a-hood taking place at BES.

Transportation: Members have assisted the Child Nutrition Department with meal distribution. Some members have been deep cleaning buses as well as the Service Center.

Maintenance: Working on outstanding work orders throughout the district. Some members are performing routine preventative maintenance items (light bulb replacement, air filters for HVAC, etc.). SG360 members have been performing deep cleaning in certain areas of the campuses (bathrooms, floors, etc.). I've advised Ms. Edward to visit with campus principals in order to prepare for floor stripping/waxing.

New gymnasium: Very near completion. Waiting on a project to strip, and re-stain floors (downstair foyer, mezzanine areas, etc.).

Safety & Security: Assisted with distribution and security service for the Child Nutrition Department. Ordered 140 cloth masks for distribution to essential workers throughout the district. Have placed a second order for more cloth masks. We've placed an order for actual masks that filtrate virus, bacteria, mold, etc. However, the estimated ship date for these items is not scheduled until late May, or possibly early June. I'll keep you posted regarding these items.

#### 4. Action Items

- A. April 27, 2020, Meeting
- B. April Financial Report
- C. ADE Special Education Statement of Intent 2020-2021
- D. Policy Revisions

Upon the recommendation of Superintendent Ashley, a motion was made by Barbara Wells and seconded by Desmond Hammett to accept items A. – D. personnel recommendations as listed.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 8:21 p.m.

#### 5. Resignation of Board Member

At this time, a letter was read by Superintendent Ashley from Board Member Mrs. Henrietta Watt giving her resignation as Board Member:

It is with my heartfelt and deepest regret that I must turn in my resignation. I have had a wonderful adventure serving the Community and District these past 5 years and nothing has been more rewarding, with that I remain humble. Thank you for your time and patience.

President Carrington thanked Mrs. Henrietta Watt for her service.

We need to put someone in her seat (Zone 2) and suggest that we take resumes and ask for a letter of intent of why they want to be on the school board. Deadline was agreed upon for June 5th.

#### 6. Personnel Recommendations

##### A. Appointment of Certified Employees (2020-2021)

Bill Tyer	Coach (3 periods)	BHS New Tech
John Williams	Teacher	ALE/Chickasaw Academy

##### B. Resignations of Certified Employees (End of 2019-2020)

Mercedes Elliott	Teacher	BES
Luvidine Miles	GT Coordinator	District
Zack O'Brien	Teacher	BHS New Tech
Audrey Thomas	Teacher	BPS

Upon the recommendation of Superintendent Ashley, a motion was made by Billy Fair and seconded by Desmond Hammett to accept items A. and B. personnel recommendations as listed.



Motion passed by unanimous vote at 8:53 p.m.

7. ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

  
Bobby Ashley  
Ex-officio Financial Secretary