

**BLYTHEVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Blytheville, Arkansas**  
**Regular School Board Meeting**  
**Monday, July 24, 2017**  
**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 July 24, 2017 with the following members present:

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

The following members was absent:

- (1) Henrietta Watt

Others present: Marshall Hughes, Casey DeFord, Daphnie Fair, Scott Ferrel, Jr., Alex Garcia, Adron Poole, Sherry Prunty and Jacquene Benson.

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|------------------------------|---|
| 1. CALL TO ORDER             | President Ritchey called the regular meeting for the month of July 2017 to order at 6:04 p.m. |
| 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM | A quorum was established with seven members present.  |
| 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE      | The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.   |
| 4. ACTION ITEMS AND REPORTS  |   |

- A. June 26, 2017, Meeting
- B. June Financial Report
- C. Renaissance Quote \$48,149.42
- D. Resolution Authorizing Issuance and Delivery
- E. Revisions/Policies 1.2, 6.4, & 7.5

Upon the recommendation of Superintendent Atwill, a motion was made by Tobey Johnson and seconded by Tommy Bennett to accept items as listed in A., B., C. & E.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 6:17 p.m.

A motion was made by Tommy Bennett and seconded by Barbara Wells to Adopt the Resolution Authorizing the Issuance and Delivery of the \$10,000,000 Blytheville School District No. 5 of Mississippi County, Arkansas, Construction Bonds, Series A dated August 1, 2017 and other documents pertaining thereto as prepared by the Friday, Eldredge & Clark Law Firm.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 6:18 p.m.

## 5. INFORMATION ITEMS AND REPORTS

### A. Superintendent's Report

1. I met with State Representative Charlotte Douglas, Charlotte from Alma who had visited with State Representative Monte Hodges about bring ten to fifteen student representatives from both schools to work on civil discourse. Mr. Hodges was out of state and could not attend the meeting. They want to give tools to our children (grades 9-12) to take back to their peers, to get past some of these stigmas.

This project will be funded by Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation. Kids can take ownership by taking leadership.

Our children received good sportsmanship award and our children already show ownership. They know how to collaborate with people may not like them. My goal is to grow our children and the adults that serve them.

2. Arkansas Leadership Academy will give a report on the three schools we have working with them at the August 28<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.
3. We have not received state preliminary funding. We just received final payment for 2016-2017 school year.
4. We are getting federal estimates in and they are down \$204 \$1.67 to 1.56 million which is a 12% decrease.

### B. Instructional Report

Sally Cooke, Director of Curriculum

1. Professional Development has been going on all summer, but we start back with a full week next Monday. August 7-9 are the dates of the back to school PD in all buildings and our district team will be going to each building rather than having one large district meeting.
2. Open Houses start with BMS GREAT Day in the morning and afternoon on Thursday, August 10<sup>th</sup>. BPS Open House will be that night, August 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:30. BHS has First Things First in the

morning and afternoon on Monday, August 14th. BES has Open House on Thursday, August 17th at 5:30. There is also an athletic meet and greet on August 14th at the gym. All events are on the district webpage calendar.

3. Our district received great training and support from Arkansas Leadership Academy two weeks ago. BPS, BES, a new team from BMS, and a district team made up of Sally Cooke, Casey DeFord, Allison Turner, and Jean Cole all attended. We will have representatives here to speak to you about that work at the August board meeting. The 5 leadership performance strands used by ALA are guiding our work with ADE as well. Our district theme was "We Will Never Give Up Doing Good" showing our commitment to our town and our students.

4. Teacher Hires:

Teacher turnover is still an issue for us, but we are doing better than in previous years. In 2015-16 we hired 47 new teachers-8 african american. In 2016-17 we hired 43 new teachers - 9 african american. This year we will have hired 35 new teachers if all are approved tonight- 12 african american. All positions will be filled after our meeting tonight except for Primary Music and we have no applicants at this time.

BPS:

9 total new hires  
6 with waiver  
2 with standard no experience  
1 with standard 2 years experience

BES:

7 total new hires  
3 with waiver  
3 reciprocity from other states  
1 standard with experience

BMS:

10 total new hires  
1 with waiver  
7 with standard  
2 ATC non-traditional with no experience

BHS:

9 total new hires  
4 with waiver  
2 non-traditional (1 ATC/1 APPEL)  
3 standard with experience

5. Pass out Charts showing a bar graph and actual scores for ACT Aspire grades 3-10.  
We are as always very concerned about our test scores, but are also noting the growth that has occurred in some of the

categories. It is helpful also to make a comparison of our scores to districts that are more like us, and although we are not satisfied with our scores we do fair better than districts with similar demographics and issues such as declining enrollment and teacher turnover. There are several factors that contribute to the lower scores overall and although everyone is working diligently to provide support and encouragement, we are not where we had hoped to be.

Our ACT Aspire Interim assessments showed a different picture from the final scores on the actual assessment so they were very misleading and many districts have expressed that as a concern to ADE. Teacher Retention is an overarching problem that is a barrier to student growth and we are putting many resources into that area. When we lose 20-25% of our teachers every year, those we are able to hire are either 1st year teachers or those still completing licensure, first year teachers in a non-traditional program, or those hired with a waiver who do not have a background in education at all.

6. We find ourselves in the constant cycle of finding the most qualified applicants available, training them on basic classroom management procedures, how to understand and engage students of poverty, how to use instructional strategies, and how to use data rather than getting to spend time building their capacity with deeper content, instructional and leadership skills. They often leave us when the training has been completed to work in other districts with higher salaries, less poverty in the student population, or more amenities in the surrounding community. Our goal is to be at a point where we transform teaching and learning with teachers and leaders who stay long enough to provide authentic support to our students and community and in turn that should help us improve scores.
7. One more area that we have to be mindful of and although Mrs. Cole is not present she would share our concern with is the overidentification of students in special ed. The state prefers that 9.5% of our students or less or they say we are overidentified. 13% of our students are receiving special education services. Clarification: Overidentified does not mean we have students in sped who should not be, it just means that we have more than the average.

#### C. Operations Report

Randy Jumper, Director of Facilities

1. All has been going great; we ran into a snag with the two inch rain, but we dodged some rain.

2. The field has been graded. It is flat with a six inch crest. It is amazing to see what it was and what it is now. The field had been at a slope all of these years. Two feet was added to the north end and 3 feet to the south end. It is now perfectly level. Irrigation has been dug. We used sump pumps to get the water out. In two weeks concrete will be put in. We do not need any rain on the field at this time. Our field will be like Arkansas State University, dark green, light green with Chickasaw head in the middle. We want to be consistent with what we are using. We need to decided on lettering colors and font. As soon as it is concreted, the District will pressure wash the stadium. Pads will cover retaining wall and drains will not be visible.

## 6. STUDENT TRANSFER REQUESTS

Upon the recommendation of Superintendent Atwill, a motion was made by Barbara Wells and seconded by Desmond Hammett to accept student transfer request.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 8:24 p.m.

Upon the recommendation of Superintendent Atwill, a motion was made by Tobey Johnson and seconded by Erin Carrington to accept student transfer request.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 8:25 p.m.

## 6. PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. Appointment of Certified Employees

Johnny Appleby	Teacher	BPS
Breanne Franklin	Teacher	BMS
Alejandro Garcia	Teacher	BHS-New Tech
Erika Guy	Teacher	BES
Sarah Harden	Teacher	BMS
Allyson Lomax	Teacher	BMS
Cameron Sadler	Teacher	BHS-New Tech
Brett Sharable	Teacher	BMS
Sheena Williams	Teacher	BHS-New Tech

### B. Appointment of Classified Employees

Erica Anderson	Paraprofessional	BMS
Carolyn Smith	Paraprofessional	BHS-New Tech
Tiffany Townsend	Nurse	District
Sherell Warren	Paraprofessional	BHS-New Tech

C. Voluntary Resignation of Certified Employees

Zandra Johnson	Teacher	BMS
Ebony Martinez	Teacher	BMS

Upon the recommendation of Superintendent Atwill, a motion was made by Tommy Bennett and seconded by Tobey Johnson to accept appointments and resignations as listed in A., B., and C. above.

Motion passed by unanimous vote at 8:26 p.m.

7. ADJOURNMENT      The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

 Richard Atwill  
Ex-officio Financial Secretary