

Earle School District
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Central Office Boardroom
January 23, 2016
5:00 PM

The Earle School District Board of Directors conducted its regular meeting on Saturday, January 23, 2016, at 5:00 PM. Board President, Mr. E. Cox called the meeting to order and established a quorum with the following members in attendance: Mr. E. Cox, Mrs. Sarah Johnson, Mrs. April Weatherspoon., and Mr. Arthur Berry. *(After the quorum was established, Mr. E. Cox asked if everyone had reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting and if there were any questions. There were no questions, additions or concerns. Board President, Mr. Cox, asked for a motion to accept the minutes. Mrs. Johnson motioned and Mrs. Weatherspoon seconded. The motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. E. Cox: “We will now have Mr. Hicks come and give us the financial report.”

Mr. Hicks: “For the month of December we ended with a legal balance of \$744,000, which is a \$40,000 increase over the month before, and hopefully we will continue to show an increase in the months to come.” *(Mr. E. Cox asked if there were any questions for Mr. Hicks. Mr. Nicks inquired about the cash flow).*

Mr. Hicks: “Cash flow is right about where it should be; we talked about the bills that were hanging out there, etc. That’s what I’m doing in the month of January, planning to have everything wiped out so we’ll know exactly where we are.”

Mr. E. Cox: “So that \$40,000 increase – we can look to get that every month which should put the ending balance somewhere between \$850,000 and a million dollars?”

Mr. Hicks: “Yes, somewhere around that figure.” *(Mr. Nicks mentioned that we have the debt service payment coming up as well).*

Mrs. Johnson: “So, are you saying that all the bills are paid up?” *(Mr. Hicks answered that he is currently in the process of doing that as well as backtracking and catching up on a few bills that were lost in the system; such as School Specialty, in the amount of four or five hundred dollars).*

Mrs. Weatherspoon: “Isn’t there an accounts payable system in your accounting software that will track and let you know exactly what you have out there? Is there a report that you can run, because all those things should go through that system, shouldn’t they?”

Mr. Hicks: “Absolutely, you’re correct. But right at this moment, we don’t have everything in our purchasing system working exactly as we want it to do; and what I’m doing now is getting that purchasing system in place so that we can run a report and know exactly what we have out there.”

Mrs. Weatherspoon: “Before, we were talking about a purchasing system that was already in place. Are modifications being made to that one?”

Mr. Hicks: “Yes, improvements are being made to that so we can have everything in the system and do exactly what you were talking about and know what we have outstanding.”

Mrs. Weatherspoon: “Do you do 1099’s at the end of the year for contracted services and things like that?” *(Brief discussion was held concerning services, the bidding process and purchase requisition procedures. Mr. Nicks gave explanations and examples of how the procedure works).*

Mr. Nicks: “We’ve cut a lot of expenditures.” “There were a lot of smaller items that were being purchased just basically on an ‘OK’ type of thing, and those are the things that we’re forcing through the system so we don’t have a three hundred dollar band bill out for six months or eight months because it didn’t come through the system, or have an appropriate purchase order attached to it. So, we’ve cleared that up considerably.”

Mr. E. Cox: “If there’s nothing else for Mr. Hicks, our next topics of discussion, Mr. Nicks will bring those.”

Mr. Nicks: “I just wanted to kind of bring you up to date. We’ve had a whole lot that’s happened since Christmas break. We’ve got a few things. The AdvancED report is due again next week. I talked to the guy on Thursday and it will be in next week. He gave me every indication that we would be accredited as far as the high school, the elementary and the district overall. He’s going to email me or text me.”

Mr. Nicks: “School Improvement – I bring this up because we’ve hired the School Improvement Specialist that the State required. She went to work on the fourth of January and I think she’s going to be very compatible with what we’ve got going on at the high school. She is specifically assigned to the high school. She does have the flexibility to work down in the fifth and sixth grades; to sort of align the curriculum in order to keep that transition smooth as they go to high school. That’s Regina Williams and she taught here before and we brought her back. She’s on board and her office is at the high school.” “She’s going to be here every day now; she’s full time. She is going to relieve Ms. Bohanon of some of the day-to-day school improvement matters that have pulled her away from that primary principal’s role out there. In school improvement, you spend a lot of time focusing on curricular activities and P.E. and the day-to-day operations kind of get left behind.” “With her out there, along with the facilitators, maybe she (*Ms. Bohanon*) can get back to more of the principal’s duties and we’ve got the go-between with the State as well.” “So, if you get the opportunity, get out there and kind of walk through and see how it’s going. Just wanted to bring you all up to date on where we are with that.”

Mr. Nicks: “The high school has submitted their second 45-day plan. They have to submit a plan every forty-five days. We do that through Indistar, so we’re up and current on that and staying focused.”

Mr. Nicks: “We need to go ahead and issue Intent Forms for next year (2016-2017). You can make a motion on that or say, ‘go ahead’ or whatever, but it’s that time of year. I want to get started a little bit early because the next thing we’ll talk about is part of that. We’ll go ahead and issue Intent Forms for classified and certified staff. We want to get those out as early as possible; maybe the first of February and get them back in before the first of March. They are non-binding, mind you. They’re just a snapshot of who you’ve got possibly leaving and who’s coming back. They’re non-binding; the contract is the only thing that’s binding. And I do want to get those out and start looking at where we are. So if we need a motion, we can do that.”
(Mrs. Johnson motioned and Mrs. Weatherspoon seconded. The motion carried unanimously to move forward with issuing Intent Forms).

Mr. Nicks: “Teacher recruitment and retention is one reason we’ve been getting a late start in trying to replace those folks who leave and trying to keep people who are here. I think we’ve got some money in FSLA that we possibly can use for sign-on bonuses; not anything significant - \$500 or a thousand maybe, to get a person who may not come here otherwise to commit to a two or three year stint here. And in talking to the attorney, we can put in their contract that, if they should leave before that two or three-year period is up – whichever we decide, they have to repay that money to the District.” “And the reason I want to do something like that is that we get good teachers here for a couple of years and they’re gone.” “With that in mind, I want to try to attract people coming out of ASU, UAPB, and ULAR to come to Earle and, although I can’t compete with West Memphis and Marion, overall, if I get them on board and on contract and they commit to two or three years, that kind of helps us. So, I’ll bring that plan back to you next month for finalization. I just wanted you to know I’m looking at some type of sign-on bonus.” “I talked to the principals, curriculum folks, and school improvement people about going to job fairs. All the colleges have them, the Department of Education has them; we’re going to attend all those. We are going to do some things, give out some memorabilia, etc.” “So we’ll have the plan ready by next board meeting to look at and see what we’re trying to do.” “I do want to put it into policy the next school year, so that’s why I wanted to bring it to you early in March so maybe we can get it approved and have something to offer when we go to these job fairs.”

Mr. E. Cox: “I’ve got a quick question. You’ve done an excellent job with the selection of teachers in the past, even from TFA. If it’s any way, if it’s legal for us, I’d rather for you to make those selections. *(Somewhat lengthy discussion was held regarding recent hiring procedures and subsequent disappointing outcomes. Board members voiced concerns and also their confidence in the Superintendent’s objectivity and ability to assess teacher qualifications during the application/hiring process. At their request, Mr. Nicks offered to participate in the interviewing and screening of candidates; and will ultimately make the final recommendations of viable candidates considered for employment at ESD).*

Mr. Nicks: “The only other thing is that it’s contract time, as you are familiar. You all can meet in Executive Session if you wish. I’m currently contracted with you through the end of 2018 and all I ask for is an extension through 2019. So, that’s up to you all whether you need an Executive Session or not. All it does is extend the current contract another year.” “I’ll step out and let you all discuss it.”

Mr. E. Cox: “Unless they do” (Board members declined an Executive Session to vote on the Superintendent’s contract. Mrs. Weatherspoon motioned to extend the Superintendent’s contract through the end of 2019. Mr. Berry seconded and the motion carried unanimously to extend the contract as requested).

Mr. Nicks: “I certainly appreciate it. Hopefully, we can get out of here in a couple of years, but if not, we’ll be around a little longer.” (Board members briefly discussed the District’s plans to renovate facilities; particularly installation of canopies at the elementary campus. Mr. Nicks addressed those concerns, the challenges that our District faces with regard to revenue for these projects, and the long-term plans for those improvements and, potentially, a new elementary school. The discussion included the feasibility of a future millage increase to help facilitate plant renovations and/or the construction of new facilities. A plan to assess these possibilities will be developed in the near future. There was no further business and the Board President called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Berry motioned and Mr. C. Cox seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:46 PM.)



Board President



Board Secretary



Date

Earle School District
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Central Office Boardroom
February 23, 2016
5:00 PM

The Earle School District Board of Directors conducted its regular meeting on Tuesday, February 23, 2016, at 5:00 PM. Mr. E. Cox called the meeting to order and established a quorum with the following members present: Mr. E. Cox, Mrs. Sarah Johnson, and Mrs. April Weatherspoon. *(Mr. E. Cox asked if everyone had reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting, and if there were any questions or additions. There were no questions, additions or concerns. Board President, Mr. Cox, asked for a motion to accept the minutes. Mrs. Weatherspoon motioned and Mrs. Johnson seconded. The motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. E. Cox: “We will now have the financial report from Mr. Hicks.”

Mr. Hicks: “For the month of January, we had a legal balance of \$811,000. We are still headed in the right direction. The money for the ABC program was a day late, so we’ll have that to show up next month.”

Mrs. Johnson: “So is everyone paid up?”

Mr. Hicks: “Yes, everyone is paid up.”

Mr. Nicks: “And we’re still shooting for the \$900,000 to a million dollar range – we might make it.”

(Mr. E. Cox asked if there were any questions for Mr. Hicks regarding the financial report. There were no questions).

Mr. E. Cox: “The remaining topics will be brought by Mr. Nicks.”

Mr. Nicks: “Included in your packets is the final report from AdvancED. I know you probably haven’t had a chance to look at it, but due to some technical problems we’ve had, it’s knocked our scores down. Take some time to read through it when you have a chance. We’re a poor district in a poor area, so we have to take this report with a grain of salt.” “if you have specific questions, call me about them.”

Mr. Nicks: “School Improvement – we’ve met more in recent weeks since I’ve been here. We’re also staying on top of our curriculum meetings. We’re getting a lot accomplished. Our new School Improvement Specialist has become quite a force to be reckoned with. Everyone has to be accountable. We should be much further along with our progress by next year. We’ve had to attend some teacher job fairs in an effort to try and find teachers that we’re losing. Just looking at the projected turnover, we may be losing three teachers, in addition to the nurse.” “But overall, our School Improvement Specialist has really got us focused. We were given seven indicators and we’ve already completed four. The high school has eighteen and has

completed fifteen of those. It's keeping us all focused. At some point, we're going to have the principals and School Improvement Specialist to come to the board meeting."

Mr. Nicks: "Elementary construction plans are not as far along as we'd hoped or wanted it to be. We're looking to build a 15,000 sq. ft. facility on this campus. We'll have to get rid of the old elementary building if we don't use it. *(At this point, Mr. Berry joined the meeting in progress)*. We're waiting for the architect to get the drawings done then we'll determine how much we'll have to ask for. Nabholz Construction has been our construction company of choice. The final thing is that we've hire an architect even though it's not been voted on. He works under a standard architect's fee. We need a motion to hire." *(Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Johnson seconded. The motion carried)*.

Mr. Nicks: "It's the end of the basketball run. The Jr. girls are undefeated and the Sr. boys finished second in the tournament. The Sr. girls finished third in the conference and won the tournament. We're very pleased with our athletic department which has turned itself around. We'll be looking for a nurse; so we'll put some feelers out on that. There may be some areas in which we can cut out around \$100,000."

Mr. E. Cox: "I have a question. I know it's a long way down the road but about how many mils will it require?"

Mr. Nicks: "it's hard to say, knowing how much a mil generates. WE have to be careful because we'll have to furnish the building. We'll have to get with the bond company. Right now, I'd say around 6-8 mils. *(Further discussion ensued regarding the efforts that will be implemented to assess and seek the needed mils from voters. Mr. E. Cox suggested things he planned to do when approaching the community with the request. The discussion was centered around taxes, revenue and how voters/homeowners would be affected by the millage increase)*.

Mr. Nicks: "Maybe by the next board meeting we'll have some drawings and see where we can go. The biggest mistake we made is in not knocking all that down (indicating the old pre-school building and other dilapidated buildings on the elementary campus).

Mrs. Johnson: "Don't we have enough land at the high school?"

Mr. Nicks: "Well the only thing with that is, you would take away your neighborhood. We'd have to build a cafeteria and a gym and there would be other considerations." "I'll have some more details once we get our numbers." "We may have to go to Little Rock and meet with JoAnne Wooldridge. But we'll definitely find out more to bring back to you on that." "Unless you all have something, that's all I have for you." *(Board President, Mr. E. Cox, asked if there was any further business. There was none and he asked for a motion to dismiss. Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Weatherspoon seconded. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 5:26 PM)*.

Eric Cox
Board President

Arthur Berry
Board Secretary

2/25/2016
Date

Earle School District
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Central Office Boardroom
Tuesday, March 29, 2016
5:00 PM

The Earle School Board of Directors conducted their regular monthly meeting Tuesday, March 29, 2016. Members in attendance were: Mr. E. Cox, Mr. A. Berry, Mrs. S. Johnson and Mrs. A. Weatherspoon. *(Board members reviewed the previous month's minutes and there were no questions or concerns with regard to the minutes. Mr. E. Cox called for a motion to accept the minutes. Mrs. Johnson motioned and Mr. Berry seconded. The motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. E. Cox: "If there aren't any corrections, we're going to have Mr. Hicks come and give us the financial report."

Mr. Hicks: "We ended the month of February with a legal balance of a little over \$800,000, about \$809,000."

Mr. E. Cox: "Does anyone have any questions for Mr. Hicks regarding the financial report?" *(There were no questions for Mr. Hicks).*

Mr. E. Cox: "If not, the next topics for discussion will be brought by Mr. Nicks."

Mr. Nicks: "Well, as was mentioned to you, our submission of the 2014-15 audit is due tomorrow and we're ready to submit it. It's going before the legislative audit at some point and we'll have the findings. But looking at the preliminary stuff, it looks good; with some minor modifications, so we just want to let you know that it's complete and we'll submit it in the morning. Our auditors didn't see anything in there that would raise an eyebrow too terribly much – it's pretty much standard operating procedures so we'll just wait for them to notify us of their findings."

Mr. Nicks: "I'm going to ask the Board at this time to give us the right to consider a reduction in force for the 2016-17 school year. I'll need a motion for that because even though we are fairly stable, we're going to always look for ways to trim back on staffing that we don't need for the coming school year. So if you will, let's look at implementing a reduction in force." *(Mrs. Weatherspoon motioned and Mrs. Johnson seconded. The motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: "Along with that staffing for the 2016-17 school year, I'll need a motion to allow us to go ahead and offer contracts for any position that becomes vacant that we may interview between now and next board meeting. We want to be able to offer contracts to those people that we feel meet our needs for any position that becomes

available. So, I'll need a motion to have that in place and when we come back to the next board meeting, in addition to hiring, we'll know whether to go ahead and extend an initial contract for those positions.” *(Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Weatherspoon seconded and the motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “The elementary building project – I talked to the architect, engineers and construction manager today. They haven't got the numbers that we can operate with as far as getting a general idea of how many mills we're going to need from the district's standpoint and how much the overall project is going to cost. I've got the preliminary drawings and I'm hoping that by next week we'll get some numbers in so we'll know exactly what we're working with and we can get the bonding company involved and they can tell us how many mills we need to ask for to try to get this project off the ground.” “But I don't have those numbers; I had hoped to have them today. I called them today and they said that the worst thing you can do is make those projections way off. They're just not there yet, so I'll have that information for you next week. I'll call and have a conversation with you about it and we'll have more details at the next board meeting. Any questions on that?” *(A brief discussion ensued as to the campus modification goals. Mrs. Johnson inquired as to which two buildings would be destroyed. Mr. Nicks replied that it would involve the old fifth grade building next to the cafeteria and to leave the old high school building alone for now. Mr. Nicks further elaborated on the planned renovations and answered questions from board members).*

Mr. Nicks: “So that's what we're looking at and hopefully, it will come to fruition. Just wanted to bring you up to date on that building project, not that we'd forgotten it. It's just time-consuming to get it off the ground and get the actual numbers so you can know what we're up against and what you can tell your folks when asked about it.”

Mr. Nicks: “In response to the school improvement at the high school, there is something new that Department of Education has asked for by way of the United States Department of Education. It is that the school districts have a Memorandum of Understanding with the building. And what that simply tells the building and tells the Board is that we have a plan in place and that we're going to support the high school in their endeavors, and that we will provide them with the necessary equipment, staffing, and all those things to get the job done. That is what that memorandum of understanding is all about. The Board has to approve that MOU and we need to prepare it and get it approved. It seems kind of redundant, but that's what they require so that's what we need to do.” *(Mr. E. Cox called for a motion to approve the MOU for the high school. Mrs. Johnson motioned, Mr. Berry seconded, and the motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “Graduation plans haven't changed. As of right now, we'll be graduating on Saturday, May 14th. We wanted to remind you of that so if people come to you wanting to know why; I thought it went really well last year. At ten o'clock, we're going to do it and be out of there.” “The last day for seniors will be the sixth of May, which will be that Friday a week prior to graduation. “

Mr. Nicks: “The School Board Association trip will be next week, April 8th through the twelfth for anybody who's going. Marshall Hughes from Crews & Associates has invited all of us to a dinner that they're having on Sunday for everybody that wants to go. It would be nice if every one of us go. They're the ones who do our bonding and other financial business, so they just want to kind of say “thank you” for allowing them to do that.”

Mr. Nicks: “And the final thing that I have is that, you know our Sr. Girls and Sr. Boys basketball teams have both been crowned champions of Class 2A and of course, they expect to get those championship rings.” “We've started a donation drive to help with that, but the auditors will not allow us to pay for those rings with District funds. So we're asking all the local churches to contribute a significant amount. We're asking a certain amount but we can change that – whatever you give us, we'll appreciate. We're asking all the churches and businesses to help us offset those costs. We're looking at between \$10,000 and \$15,000 because of the number of students involved and their coaches. So we're solely responsible for getting this done and we're asking you all to help us in any way you can and talk it up in your churches.” “I will say this – we've been so kind to the churches in our community. We've opened our doors and allowed them to use our facilities for repasts and anniversaries and all those things, so I don't hesitate to ask that in return you try to help offset the cost of this project; so kind of keep those things in mind.”

Mr. Nicks: “Other than that, we're having a pretty good year. We're coming down to the close and there are some things going on. There are some people whom I've already been informed that they won't be recommended to come back. We're going to follow through on those. There are going to be some hearings set up; we're going to clear up some things. So just keep those things in the back of your minds because we're going to be moving forward.” “Is there anything else... any questions or concerns?” *(There were no questions or further concerns).*

Mr. Nicks: “If not, that's all I have.”

Mr. E. Cox: “Can we get a motion to adjourn?” *(Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Johnson seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 5:40 PM.*


Board President


Board Secretary

4-1-2016
Date

Earle School District
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Central Office Boardroom
Saturday, April 30, 2016
5:00 PM

The Earle School Board of Directors conducted their regular monthly meeting Saturday, April 30, 2016, with all members in present: Mr. E. Cox, Mr. C. Cox, A. Berry, Mrs. S. Johnson and Mrs. A. Weatherspoon. *(Board members reviewed the previous month's minutes and there were no questions or concerns with regard to the minutes. Mr. E. Cox called for a motion to accept the minutes. Mrs. Johnson motioned and Mr. C. Cox seconded. The motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. E. Cox: *(Due to Mr. Hicks' absence, the financial report was given by Mr. Nicks).*

Mr. E. Cox: "Does anyone have any questions for Mr. Nicks regarding the financial report?" *(There were no questions for Mr. Hicks).*

Mr. E. Cox: "If not, the next topics for discussion will be brought by Mr. Nicks."

Mr. Nicks: "Well, as was mentioned to you, our submission of the 2014-15 audit is due tomorrow and we're ready to submit it. It's going before the legislative audit at some point and we'll have the findings. But looking at the preliminary stuff, it looks good; with some minor modifications, so we just want to let you know that it's complete and we'll submit it in the morning. Our auditors didn't see anything in there that would raise an eyebrow too terribly much – it's pretty much standard operating procedures so we'll just wait for them to notify us of their findings."

Mr. Nicks: "I'm going to ask the Board at this time to give us the right to consider a reduction in force for the 2016-17 school year. I'll need a motion for that because even though we are fairly stable, we're going to always look for ways to trim back on staffing that we don't need for the coming school year. So if you will, let's look at implementing a reduction in force." *(Mrs. Weatherspoon motioned and Mrs. Johnson seconded. The motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: "Along with that staffing for the 2016-17 school year, I'll need a motion to allow us to go ahead and offer contracts for any position that becomes vacant that we may interview between now and next board meeting. We want to be able to offer contracts to those people that we feel meet our needs for any position that becomes available. So, I'll need a motion to have that in place and when we come back to the next board meeting, in addition to hiring, we'll know whether to go ahead and extend an initial contract for those positions." *(Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Weatherspoon seconded and the motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “The elementary building project – I talked to the architect, engineers and construction manager today. They haven't got the numbers that we can operate with as far as getting a general idea of how many mills we're going to need from the district's standpoint and how much the overall project is going to cost. I've got the preliminary drawings and I'm hoping that by next week we'll get some numbers in so we'll know exactly what we're working with and we can get the bonding company involved and they can tell us how many mills we need to ask for to try to get this project off the ground.” “But I don't have those numbers; I had hoped to have them today. I called them today and they said that the worst thing you can do is make those projections way off. They're just not there yet, so I'll have that information for you next week. I'll call and have a conversation with you about it and we'll have more details at the next board meeting. Any questions on that?” *(A brief discussion ensued as to the campus modification goals. Mrs. Johnson inquired as to which two buildings would be destroyed. Mr. Nicks replied that it would involve the old fifth grade building next to the cafeteria and to leave the old high school building alone for now. Mr. Nicks further elaborated on the planned renovations and answered questions from board members).*

Mr. Nicks: “So that's what we're looking at and hopefully, it will come to fruition. Just wanted to bring you up to date on that building project, not that we'd forgotten it. It's just time-consuming to get it off the ground and get the actual numbers so you can know what we're up against and what you can tell your folks when asked about it.”

Mr. Nicks: “In response to the school improvement at the high school, there is something new that Department of Education has asked for by way of the United States Department of Education. It is that the school districts have a Memorandum of Understanding with the building. And what that simply tells the building and tells the Board is that we have a plan in place and that we're going to support the high school in their endeavors, and that we will provide them with the necessary equipment, staffing, and all those things to get the job done. That is what that memorandum of understanding is all about. The Board has to approve that MOU and we need to prepare it and get it approved. It seems kind of redundant, but that's what they require so that's what we need to do.” *(Mr. E. Cox called for a motion to approve the MOU for the high school. Mrs. Johnson motioned, Mr. Berry seconded, and the motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “Graduation plans haven't changed. As of right now, we'll be graduating on Saturday, May 14th. We wanted to remind you of that so if people come to you wanting to know why; I thought it went really well last year. At ten o'clock, we're going to do it and be out of there.” “The last day for seniors will be the sixth of May, which will be that Friday a week prior to graduation. “

Mr. Nicks: “The School Board Association trip will be next week, April 8th through the twelfth for anybody who's going. Marshall Hughes from Crews & Associates has invited all of us to a dinner that they're having on Sunday for everybody that wants to go. It would be nice if every one of us go. They're the ones who do our bonding and other

financial business, so they just want to kind of say “thank you” for allowing them to do that.”

Mr. Nicks: “And the final thing that I have is that, you know our Sr. Girls and Sr. Boys basketball teams have both been crowned champions of Class 2A and of course, they expect to get those championship rings.” “We've started a donation drive to help with that, but the auditors will not allow us to pay for those rings with District funds. So we're asking all the local churches to contribute a significant amount. We're asking a certain amount but we can change that – whatever you give us, we'll appreciate. We're asking all the churches and businesses to help us offset those costs. We're looking at between \$10,000 and \$15,000 because of the number of students involved and their coaches. So we're solely responsible for getting this done and we're asking you all to help us in any way you can and talk it up in your churches .” “I will say this – we've been so kind to the churches in our community. We've opened our doors and allowed them to use our facilities for repasts and anniversaries and all those things, so I don't hesitate to ask that in return you try to help offset the cost of this project; so kind of keep those things in mind.”

Mr. Nicks: “Other than that, we're having a pretty good year. We're coming down to the close and there are some things going on. There are some people whom I've already been informed that they won't be recommended to come back. We're going to follow through on those. There are going to be some hearings set up; we're going to clear up some things. So just keep those things in the back of your minds because we're going to be moving forward.” “Is there anything else... any questions or concerns?” *(There were no questions or further concerns).*

Mr. Nicks: “If not, that's all I have.”

Mr. E. Cox: “Can we get a motion to adjourn?” *(Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Johnson seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 5:40 PM.*


Board President


Board Secretary


Date

Earle School District
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Central Office Boardroom
Saturday, May 28, 2016
5:00 PM

The Earle School Board of Directors held their regular monthly meeting Saturday, May 28, 2016. Members present were: Mr. E. Cox, Mr. A. Berry, and Mrs. S. Johnson. *(Mrs. Weatherspoon joined the meeting in progress).*

Mr. E. Cox: “Has everyone had an opportunity to look at the minutes from the last meeting? If there are no issues or concerns, we'll have Mr. Hicks come and give us the financial report.”

Mr. Hicks: “We ended the month of April with a legal balance of \$490,000. That sounds bad, but we have to consider the timing of expenses. This month, we ought to bounce back. We should have \$350,000 less in expenditures and also \$100,000 more in revenue from taxes.”

Mr. E. Cox: “So, we should be back to right between \$800,000 - \$850,000?”

Mr. Hicks: “Yes.”

Mr. E. Cox: “Does anyone have any questions for Mr. Hicks?” *(There were no questions or further discussion of the financial report).*

Mr. E. Cox: “We will now have the remaining topics for discussion brought by the superintendent, Mr. Nicks.”

Mr. Nicks: “We need approval for our Special Ed. budget and an M.O.U. for our 2016-2017 school year. We're making some changes that you're aware of, but we have to submit by June 1st. So, we need the Board to approve the Special Ed. budget so that these changes can go into effect. *(Mr. E. Cox called for a motion to approve the Special Education budget. Mrs. Johnson motioned, Mr. Berry seconded and the motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “Every year we enter into an agreement with Mid-South Community College to teach certain classes. We send about 25 or 30 kids over each semester, so to continue that we have to do an M.O.U. *(Mrs. Johnson motioned and Mr. Berry seconded. The motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “The next thing is that we have a bond issue coming off next month, in July, and we need to fund special projects like the asphalt and things like that.”

We probably need to look at buying two new buses and a couple of other projects, so we need to look at getting that process complete we can get the buses purchased and the designs from the architect. I don't have the final cost of these items.” *(Mr. Nicks expounded on the planned projects for the District and answered questions from Board members. Mr. Nicks asked for approval to move forward with acquiring more information and implementing the plans. Mr. Cox called for a motion. Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Johnson seconded. The motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “The next item is the Co-op services. In the past, we have co-oped LEA services and speech pathologist services. We're having to cut back, cut some corners and save a little bit of money where we can. So, we're going enter an agreement with the Co-op to provide our services for Special Ed. for the 2016-17 school year. And if it doesn't work out, we'll know within a year or so; but, I think we need to give it a shot and see how it goes. I need a motion for that.” *(Mr. E. Cox called for a motion, Mrs. Johnson motioned and Mr. Berry seconded. The motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “ Transfers – at this point I don't have any specific transfers in mind, but I know that as I hire teachers over the summer, I'm going to need to move teachers around to get to where we need to be, so to save you time and having to bother you about asking about moving them, I just need a motion to be able to do so. That's all I need.” *(Mr. E. Cox called for a motion. Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Johnson seconded the motion to approve the transfer of staff as needed).*

Mr. Nicks: “Summer school will start at the elementary on June 23rd, and then at the high school, each for three consecutive weeks. Since we'll be feeding all summer long, we need to have students basically out here all summer long to some extent. Those dates may change depending on what Mr. Hicks tells me about finances. But if they should change, no problem. We can make adjustments where needed.”


Mr. Nicks: “The next thing is, we need to go ahead and hire a school nurse. We have three applications and of the three, the one that I think we should hire is Candice Cheers. She's ready to come on board and I recommend that we hire her. We'd like to bring her in a couple of days before school starts so that she can get situated.” *(Mr. E. Cox called for a motion to hire Ms. Cheers. Mr. Berry motioned, Mrs. Johnson seconded and the motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “I've got one teacher that I want to hire. She has a Culinary Arts degree and she'll be teaching the FACS course at the high school. We need to go ahead and get her hired and issue a contract; so I just need a motion to hire her. *(Mr. Cox called for a motion to hire Ms. Neal. Mrs. Weatherspoon motioned, Mrs. Johnson seconded and the motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “That's all I have except that we might need a short Executive Session.” *(Mrs. Johnson motioned, Mr. Berry seconded and the motion carried for the Executive Session).*

****EXECUTIVE SESSION****

Mr. E. Cox: "We are now out of Executive Session. Can we get a motion to adjourn?"
(Mrs. Weatherspoon motioned, Mr. Berry seconded and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:50 PM.)


Board President


Board Secretary

5/31/16
Date

Earle School District
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Central Office Boardroom
Tuesday, June 28 , 2016
5:00 PM

The Earle School Board of Directors held their regular monthly meeting Tuesday, June 28, 2016. Members present were: Mr. E. Cox, Mr. A. Berry, and Mrs. S. Johnson and Mrs. April Weatherspoon. *(Mr. Berry called the roll and a quorum was established).*

Mr. E. Cox: “We have a quorum. Has everyone had the opportunity to view the minutes from the last meeting to see if there are any additions or corrections that need to be made?” *(There were no corrections or additions to the previous month's minutes).*

Mr. E. Cox: “If there aren't any, can we get a motion to accept?” *(Mrs. Johnson motioned and Mrs. Weatherspoon seconded and the motion carried to accept the minutes).*

Mr. E. Cox: “Next, we will have the financial report from Mr. Hicks.”

Mr. Hicks: “We ended the month of May with a legal balance of just a little over six hundred thousand dollars.”

Mr. E. Cox: “So the projection is still the same that you were thinking that we would end with in June?”

Mr. Hicks: “Yes, we still have the same projection.”

Mr. E. Cox: “Does anybody have any questions for Mr. Hicks regarding the financial report?” *(There were no questions).*

Mr. E. Cox: “Our next topics of discussion will be brought by Mr. Nicks.”

Mr. Nicks: “We've got two or three things to run by you. We've got several resignations, particularly at the high school. We're going to lose Dr. Bean from Special Ed., of course, and Mattie Ivy, speech therapist, our elementary literacy coach, Mrs. Swift, our band director, Mr. Loughran. There's going to be quite a change. *(Mr. Nicks listed all employees who would not be returning due to resignations or non-renewals and also provided Board members with individual lists of these employees for their own reference and reviewed the list with them).*

Mr. Nicks: “We've got to have two special ed. teachers at the high school. I want to go ahead and get these resignations out of the way and these terminations out of the way so

we can move forward and try to fill these spots.” *(Mr. Nicks continued to enumerate the positions that will likely be vacated from the high school and the elementary school).*

“We’re looking at several positions to fill. I’m going to start giving you all a list so you can see what we’re up against. “So give me a motion to accept those resignations and terminations based on recommendation, and we can move forward; but that’s how grim the situation is.” *(Mr. E. Cox called for a motion to accept the resignations of all the employees who will not be returning and the terminations recommended by Mr. Nicks. Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Johnson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “We need to go ahead and get a motion to hire Odell Brown and these other two elementary teachers that we have.”

(Mr. E. Cox called for a motion to hire the new employees recommended by Mr. Nicks. Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Weatherspoon seconded. The motion carried unanimously).

Mr. Nicks: “We may have to look at some real incentives to get people to come to Earle in the fall.” “If you know someone, if you have family members trying to get into teaching who have their degrees or that we can get certified,

Mr. Nicks: “Personnel Policy – we need to approve this year’s policies. We have updated all that we can update as far as this policy is concerned. The only new updates are those by the State for the 2016-2017 school year; which include the teachers’ incentives and the school improvement plan. We need to approve those.”

Mrs. Weatherspoon: “Are there any changes?”

Mr. Nicks: “Of course there are changes – anytime the Legislature meets, there are changes. They might be minor changes. One thing we’re going to have to look at is the minimum starting salary for Masters Degree teachers. I’ve got to look at that to see if we’ve at least followed the minimum requirements for that; and we may be under it.” “We’re not going to do anything right now, but once we get through this audit, we’re going to look at that. If that has happened, we’re going to have to go back and correct it on the salary schedule for the 2016-17 school year; and make an adjustment on the contracts. So, keep that in mind.” “We think we’ve fallen under, we’re not sure. The starting salary for first year Masters teachers is \$35,000, and we may be under by a few hundred dollars below that. What that means is that we’ll have to bring that salary up or we’re in violation. That’s mandated.” “So let’s accept those policies, noting the fact that we’re going to look at the teacher salary schedule with a Masters+. It won’t just affect the first year teachers. It will affect those all the way down.” “So I’ll need a motion to accept those personnel policies.” *(Mr. E. Cox asked for a motion to accept the Personnel Policies for 2016-17. Mrs. Weatherspoon motioned and Mr. Berry seconded. The motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “The Student Handbook is about ready. We are making some significant changes. We hope to have it in place before school starts. We have to have it ready before we start our parent/teacher conferences at the beginning of the school year. We are completely re-doing it. We've got too much going on with that student handbook. For example, and you all can tell me what you think, we're suspending elementary students all the time. I don't think that unless they physically bring a weapon to school, they should be suspended.” *(A lengthy discussion ensued regarding unwarranted suspensions and their ramifications in which Mr. Nicks outlined his recommendations for adjustment to student policies).*

Mr. Nicks: “Those are the changes that I recommend – that fifth through eighth grades follow basically the same disciplinary pattern.” “So I'm going to have copies ready for you all next week. We've pretty much revised the whole thing. You can have a first grader coming home almost as much as he's been in school” *(referring to suspensions)*. “So, we're going to take care of all those discrepancies and what goes on with honor roll at high school, honor roll at elementary, all those things. We've pretty much revised the whole thing. So I just wanted to make you aware of those significant changes in the Student Handbook.” *(Board members raised issues such as students being charged to retrieve their phones after having them confiscated; cheerleaders going with the band, etc. Mr. Nicks addressed these concerns individually and stated that Board members would receive a copy of the revised Student Handbook for review).*

Mr. Nicks: “I will handle all the activities. I suggest that you take the time to go through it and see if I missed anything. It's taken a long time; we had some old antiquated stuff in there. That handbook should be simple so the parents can understand it. If it's written in lawyers' terms, only lawyers can understand it. Of course, the principals can still use their discretion but we're trying to streamline it.” “And that's the handbook. Are there any questions?” *(There were no further questions).*

Mr. Nicks: “School Improvement - “We've got everything submitted for the coming school year. Mrs. Williams and Mr. Hicks have worked hard to get the budget and everything in place, so we're set to start the new school year. The funding is going to be about the same.” “We're going to cut some things' we're not using ECS this year at all. “We're looking at probably outfitting the entire high school with chrome books, and then the following year for the elementary. I'm pleased with school improvement. Mrs. Williams has given us a positive boost and I'm excited about that.” *(Mrs. Johnson mentioned the proposed renovations for the elementary school. Mr. Nicks stated that he would address that shortly).*

Mr. Nicks: “Summer Projects – we talked about re-doing the parking and other projects. We talked about refinancing a bond, we'll put bonds out for bid on July 6th. We'll probably need a called meeting on the seventh. We're looking paving the parking lot, possibly with a circular drive. We're going to put locking mechanisms on all the doors – entry doors – at the elementary and high school; put cameras on all the buses, route or activity buses. We need to buy two new buses. We haven't bought buses in awhile.” “Along with that, instead of parking those buses on the parking lot out at the high school,

we're going to build a parking area out there between the vocation building and the high school. It will be a gravel parking lot, fenced in so they can pull those buses in at night." "That's going to cost us about \$800,000. We'll pay for it over the next ten years and move on. I don't need any action on that tonight. I think those are worthwhile projects, and it will make a big difference at the high school. Those cameras on the buses will really help determine where the problem is – whether it's the students or the drivers. And that will save us a lot of trouble." "I'm glad to be in a position to do some of these things. It's been a tough six-year struggle, but we're finally beginning to get some of these things started. So, those are just some of our projects, along with regular cleaning and maintenance." "I think you'll get your money's worth out of the summer projects that we have going on."

Mr. Nicks: "Now, you asked about the elementary renovations. We won't do anything until we get approval, along with demolition funding. We've gone through the first phase. *(Mr. Nicks elaborated on the progress made thus far toward getting the old elementary buildings demolished, and where to go from that point forward. Questions were answered by Mr. Nicks with regard to the plans, funding, etc. connected with planned renovations).*

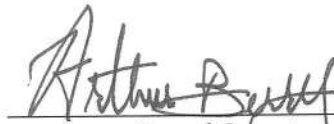
Mr. Nicks:

****EXECUTIVE SESSION****

Mr. E. Cox: "We are now out of Executive Session. Can we get a motion to adjourn?" *(Mrs. Weatherspoon motioned, Mr. Berry seconded and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:50 PM.)*



Board President



Board Secretary

7/5/16
Date

Earle School District
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Central Office Boardroom
Monday, July 18, 2016
5:00 PM

The Earle School Board of Directors conducted their regular monthly meeting Monday, July 18, 2016. Members present were: Mr. E. Cox, Mr. A. Berry, Mrs. S. Johnson, and Mrs. April Weatherspoon. *(Mr. E. Cox established a quorum).*

Mr. E. Cox: “Has everyone had the opportunity to review the minutes from the last meeting?” *(Board members indicated that they had read the previous minutes).*

Mr. E. Cox: “If there are no corrections or additions to the minutes, can we get a motion to accept?” *(Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Weatherspoon seconded, and the motion carried to accept the minutes).*

Mr. E. Cox: “We will have the financial report from Mr. Hicks.”

Mr. Hicks: “Right now we’re in the process of finalizing our year end reports. We should be ready to go by the next board meeting, but we should be somewhere around \$600,000 - \$700,000.”

Mr. E. Cox: “Are there any questions for Mr. Hicks?” *(There were no questions).*

Mr. E. Cox: “Our topics for discussion will be brought by Mr. Nicks.”

Mr. Nicks: “The budget resolution for 2016-17 has to be placed on the school election ballot by September 20th. It’s our projected budget for 2017-18. I just need you all to approve that. *(Mrs. Johnson motioned to approve the budget resolution. Mrs. Weatherspoon seconded and the motion carried unanimously).*

Mr. Nicks: “Of course you know that we have to have the 2016-17 budget in by September 30th, so we’ll try to get those numbers for you as well.” “Speaking of school elections, I don’t think we will have any contested positions, so we’ll roll on. Mrs. Sarah will return for the fourth term.” *(Board members briefly discussed terms held by respective members and their durations).*

Mr. Nicks: “The student handbook – you have your copies. We’ve made some major changes. I brought you a copy for you to take home and look through it. We can approve it conditionally; that way, if we come back with some aspect that we really need to change, we can change it. We can always add revisions before school starts.” “We’ll

look at it in the August meeting. So look at it, and if you will, just take time to read it; especially that Student Suspension and Discipline Policies part of it in case we have to revisit it. We took out all the sections about 'first offense,' 'second offense,' 'third offense,' and all that kind of stuff and made it 'infractions,' which can be at a different level." "You know, cursing is one thing but using vulgarities toward a teacher is another." "We gave that discretion to the principals to be able to make those calls without tying up a whole lot of our time with those issues." "Most of this is mandated material. I wanted to make this a five-page book, to be honest with you. But the law would not allow that. There are so many things that we have to look at. So we'll approve it *conditionally* and if it comes back that we need to revise it, we'll revise it." (*Mr. E. Cox called for a motion for a conditional approval of the Student Handbook. Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Weatherspoon seconded. The motion carried.*)

Mr. Nicks: "Ms. Forrest had these pamphlets and I appropriated them for you to have a copy."

Mr. Nicks: "We had talked about the asphalt and the school bond issue. According to our folks down in Little Rock, this would not be beneficial for us right now. They basically suggested that we might wait six months on that process and get a little bit better financing. It's not that we're not going to do it, but we're just going to wait until we're can get in a better financial situation. Just wanted to bring you up to date on that." "We've got the buses ordered; all of that is on hold until we actually know where we are on the bond issue and financial aspect of it. Are there any questions about that?" (*There were no questions from Board members.*)

Mr. Nicks: "The legislative audit – they're here, they've been here for almost three weeks now. Let me explain to you what that is: we've had private audits. Some of the legislators have decided that private auditors didn't do things the way that they should have been done. They didn't audit the entire year; they audited from July to April of this year. They should wrap up tomorrow. What that means is that we'll have to make some adjustments as to the way we do things because we've done them according to the way the private auditors have allowed us to do them." (*Mr. Nicks elaborated on the changes incurred by the new auditing process for the District and how future operations will be affected.*)

Mr. Nicks: "I just wanted to bring you up-to-date on that. And I'm sure that there will be a report that comes out somewhere, since this was not an official audit, that will list all the things that went on in the District that they feel like should be corrected; along with all the other schools that had things that needed to be corrected." "So when they tell us, I'll tell you all."

Mr. Nicks: “I stuck the school calendar back on the agenda just for you to look at and to remind you of something. Now, in the State of Arkansas, school starts on the nineteenth of August by State law except when it falls on a Friday or a Thursday, in which case they back it up to that Monday. I wanted to be sure that you see that we only backed it up to Wednesday. That will still give us time to get our days in before Christmas break. Some schools are starting on the fifteenth. By the time that August 1st rolls around that only gives you two weeks. Then you've got to get in a week of in-service. That was just moving us back too much. We approved this a couple of months ago. But I wanted to make sure that you understand because if West Memphis or Marion start on the fifteenth - I don't know if they will - but if they do, you all won't wonder what we're doing. That's the reason for this decision. We're trying to give the teachers a couple of days to work in their rooms before the kids come.” “Most of them need time to put up bulletin boards, classroom rules, organizing and all that kind of stuff. And we felt that starting school on Monday the 15th, just coming out of a full week of in-service, would push it too close to trying to get ready to open school. So that's why we put it back on the agenda; just to remind you of that. We're going to stick it out and still get out of school in pretty good time barring bad weather.”

Mrs. Johnson: “Why didn't they put the graduation date on it?”

Mr. Nicks: “I don't know why they didn't put it on there. It should have been added. But it's going to be the second Saturday in May. That's what we've determined. We'll graduate them as soon as we can.” “It will be on May 13th.” (*The Board discussed the advantages of having graduation ceremonies on Saturday morning as opposed to Friday night*). “We'll talk about it as it gets closer and if you all say we need to have it on Friday, we'll have it on Friday. I have no problem with it. It's tentative, but it's so much better.”

Mr. Nicks: “Summer school – we're wrapping up summer school at the high school. This is the last week. We have a little bit of credit recovery that will go on for another week. We're trying to help everybody get on grade level. And I mention that to you because we do quite a bit of summer school at the elementary, now we're at the high school. So we give them an opportunity to try and help them so at the end of the year, when we make those recommendations for retention, we can always go back to attend summer school and do everything that we're required to do to get you on the next level. And I assure you that when school starts in August, there will be some parent complaining about a kid that was retained but who got the letter recommending that he go to summer school and he didn't show up. So when they come to you, you'll have some questions to ask them, 'did you do this, did you do that?'

Mr. Nicks: “The final thing is the National School Board meeting in New Orleans. (*Mr. Nicks explained the procedure for handling travel expenses, attaching receipts for reimbursements, etc.*)

Mr. Nicks: "That's all I have unless you all have something you'd like to address." "I will need a quick Executive Session." (*Mr. E. Cox asked for a motion to go into Executive Session. Mr. Berry motioned and Mrs. Weatherspoon seconded. The motion carried.*)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. E. Cox: "We are now out of Executive Session. Can we have a motion to adjourn?" (*Mrs. Johnson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Berry seconded and the motion carried unanimously to conclude the meeting. The meeting ended at 5:33 PM.*)


Board President


Board Secretary


Date