

## RECORDS AND PROCEEDINGS

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Pulaski County Special School District was held at 925 East Dixon Road on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of January 2009. The following business was transacted:

### Opening 1/13/09

Board President **Mildred Tatum** called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: **Mrs. Shana Chaplin, Mr. Tim Clark, Mrs. Mildred Tatum, Mr. Bill Vasquez, Ms. Gwen Williams, Mr. Charlie Wood, and James R. Sharpe, Superintendent**

Absent: **Mr. Danny Gililand**

**Cody Hooks**, a senior at Mills University Studies High School, served as the student board member.

**Mills University Studies High School ROTC** posted colors.

**Mills Gospel Ensemble** performed the National Anthem.

A moment of silence was observed for quiet reflection.

### Special Recognition 1/13/09

Good Apple Award

**Beulah M. Coston**, Administrative Assistant to the Director of Transportation, was presented the Good Apple Award.

Proclamation  
National School Counseling Week

A Proclamation was presented recognizing February 2-6 as **National School Counseling Week**.

**Jackie Smith**, Principal at Arnold Drive, was recognized by Dr. Debbie Davis, Director of Arkansas Leadership Academy, and presented an award for receiving the achievement of Master Principal. Dr. Davis congratulated Mrs. Smith and thanked the Board, Mr. Sharpe and the District for their support, and stated that PCSSD was the only district in the state that had received two Master Principal Awards.

**Arnold Drive Elementary** and **Dupree Elementary** were congratulated on receiving the Distinguished Title I School Award.

### Public Comments 1/13/09

Concerns  
Regarding PACT

**Richard Emmel**, a science teacher at Robinson Middle School, presented concerns regarding trying to end his membership with PACT. He requested the Board to be as reasonable in this situation as the Board has been in their negotiations with PACT, and to assist him in any other way they see fit so that his money will be returned and he is allowed to leave PACT this year.

Mills Gospel Choir

**Mills Gospel Choir**, directed by **Henry Anderson**, Assistant Principal at Mills University Studies High School, performed for the Board. Mr. Anderson made a request to the Board to help finance new robes for the choir. He presented the accomplishments of the choir and commended them on their upcoming competition at the 2009 Black National Caucus Gospel Choir competition in March.

PACT

**Marty Nix**, President of PACT, wished everyone a happy new year and complimented the Mills Gospel Choir and Mills University Studies High School ROTC. She expressed condolences for the family of Martha Settle Putney, who became one of the first black women to serve in the Women's Army Corps during World War II and who went on to write pioneering works of history on black Americans in the military. Ms. Putney died December 11<sup>th</sup> and was the aunt of Sandra Roy, PACT Executive Director. Ms. Nix invited those interested in public education to attend the rally at the Capitol on January 24. She informed the Board and thanked Mr. Clark, Mr. Wood, Ms. Williams, Mr. Vasquez and Ms. Coley for implementing the arbitrator's decision #07-10-13, and stated that the teachers received payment on January 8<sup>th</sup>. She confirmed that the Sylvan Hills Middle School teachers received their compensation on December 19<sup>th</sup> from their arbitration. Ms. Nix stated that she had a meeting scheduled with Dr. Ruthven to discuss education issues concerning EdLine/GradeQuick, classroom walk-throughs, and health services in the District. She addressed several concerns regarding discipline and asked the Board to take a proactive stand to make sure everyone was on the same page regarding discipline. She asked the Board to direct the Superintendent to make sure his administration follows the statement in Plan 2000, Section F, number 6 which states: PCSSD shall adhere to the policies set forth in the Handbook for Student Conduct and Discipline to provide that students are disciplined in a fair and equitable manner. Ms. Nix commented on the individual who had questioned PACT earlier, and stated that the piece of paper he referred to was a contract or an agreement.

PASS

**Emery Chesterfield**, President of PASS, addressed the Board and the Superintendent and wished everyone a happy new year. He stated he had nothing to present at this time.

ODM, Joshua  
and Knight  
Intervenors,

No representative from ODM or Joshua and Knight Intervenors expressed a desire to address the Board.

PCSSD Equity/  
Pupil Services

**Dr. Brenda Bowles**, Assistant Superintendent for Equity and Pupil Services, presented a handout regarding the continuous improvement cycle for district wide school climate. She stated that continuous improvement would promote a caring, safe and orderly school climate. Dr. Bowles said this would explain to ODM and the District how discipline issues were being addressed.

**Minutes**  
1/13/09

**Ms. Williams** moved, seconded by **Mr. Wood**, approval of the minutes of the December 1, 2008 special school board meeting, and December 9, 2008 regular board meeting. **Ms. Chaplin** stated there were two grammatical errors. The motion carried with these corrections noted.

**Old Business**  
1/13/09

Suspension of the  
Rules – PASS  
Contract

**Ms. Williams** moved, seconded by **Mr. Clark**, to suspend the rules to discuss the PASS contract. The motion carried.

After a lengthy discussion with concerns that the Board had not had time to review the new contract, Ms. Coley was asked to provide copies of the new contract to the Board.

Revision of Board  
Policy JRA, JRA-R  
– Second Reading

**Mr. Wood** moved, seconded by **Ms. Williams**, approval of the revision of Board Policy JRA, JRA-R, Privacy of Student's Records/Directory Information. The motion carried.

Revision of  
Board Policy  
BEDB or BEDB-R  
– Second Reading

**Mr. Wood** moved, seconded by **Ms. Williams**, to approve the revision of Board Policy BEDB or BEDB-R, Agenda Preparation, Format and Dissemination. **Ms. Williams** requested a friendly amendment to change wording in the policy from *District administration* to *Superintendent/Acting Superintendent*. **Mrs. Chaplin** requested a friendly amendment to strike the word *though* in the next to last statement and in the last sentence strike the word *just*; change *and* to *an*; *period after vote*; and take out *where the public can learn the stance of every Board member*. **Mr. Wood** accepted the friendly amendments. The motion carried with noted changes.

Revision of  
Board Policy  
BDA or BDA-R  
– Second Reading

**Mr. Wood** moved, seconded by **Mr. Clark**, to approve the revision/modification of Board Policy BDA or BDA-R, Board Organizational Meeting. **Mr. Wood** asked for support for this revision and stated this was not a personal matter, but a tool that the District or any organization needs. **Ms. Williams** requested a friendly amendment to change *administration* to *Superintendent/Acting Superintendent*. **Mrs. Chaplin** requested a friendly amendment a change in the first paragraph to take out the *Of course*, and make the sentence read; *A quorum is necessary*; in the same paragraph, *Then* to be taken out and begin sentence with *IF*; and *to strike the last two sentences* of the revision. **Mr. Vasquez** requested a friendly amendment to change last sentence of the first paragraph from *position* to *position(s)*; that the sentence stating – A simple majority of those Board members be changed to – A simple majority of *the full* Board. **Mr. Wood** accepted the friendly amendments. The motion carried with noted changes.

Certified  
Supplemental  
Coaching  
Allocations for  
2008-2009

**Mr. Vasquez** moved, seconded by **Ms. Williams**, approval to provide supported coaches for the Senior High Soccer Program. This would employ up to twelve (12) Senior High Soccer Coaches (6 boys and 6 girls) to be filled if the number of team members warrants a full team including substitutes. The Senior High Soccer Coaches would be paid on Range 7 of the Supplemental Salary Schedule. After discussion from **Mrs. Chaplin** and **Mr. Wood** not in support of this motion, and comments from **Mr. Vasquez** and board student **Cody Hooks** for this motion, a roll call was requested.

Roll Call Vote

Yes: Clark, Vasquez, Williams

No: Chaplin, Tatum, Wood

Tie vote, the motion failed.

PASS Contract

Ms. Coley distributed a copy of the new PASS contract to the Board. Mr. Chesterfield stated that he and Ms. Coley were in agreement regarding the contract. The Board took a short recess to review the contract. At 7:30 p.m. the board meeting reconvened. Mrs. Tatum stated that she had asked that Ms. Coley, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, and Mr. Chesterfield, PASS President, to present a signed copy to her. **Ms. Williams** moved, **Mr. Vasquez** seconded, approval of the ratification of the PASS contract. **Mrs. Chaplin** voted no. The motion carried.

Recall Election

**Mr. Wood** requested in accordance with the new board policy revision BDA-R passed earlier in the meeting, a recall election for the position of president. Mr. Wood presented Mr. Sharpe four signed petitions requesting a recall. Mrs. Tatum asked Mr. Sharpe if he had four signed statements from the board requesting this recall. Mr. Sharpe stated yes, and Mrs. Tatum asked for him to pass the petitions to her. **Mr. Wood** moved, seconded by **Mr. Clark**, approval for a recall election for the position of president. The motion carried. **Mrs. Chaplin** and **Mrs. Tatum** voted no.

**Mr. Wood** nominated **Mr. Clark** for the position of president. **Ms. Williams** seconded the motion and requested the nominations closed. The motion carried. **Mrs. Chaplin** and **Mrs. Tatum** voted no. Mrs. Tatum turned the meeting over to President Clark.

**Board Member**  
**Comments**

1/13/09

**Mrs. Chaplin** stated that she continued to be as frustrated as the students and parents of the District must be with the lack of discord adequately addressing the educational needs, which was an issue and concern of the Department of Education stated in their Scholastic Audits. She said she was frustrated that the Scholastic Audits have not been on the agenda and have not begun to address the serious concerns stated in the audits. She stated it was important to note there were recurring themes in the audits that clearly need to be addressed if the District is to move forward in advancing education for children. She said there was a continuance lack of collaboration for learning, especially among the building level staff; lack of basing decisions on data, especially instructional decisions for children; lack in professional development that disaggregates the data and uses it to better the education of the children; and lack of creative and meaningful instruction in the classroom and lack of training for the teachers to assist them in doing a better job. Mrs. Chaplin said that safety and discipline continue to be a recurring theme in all schools and the District continues not to address this. She said that the evaluation process appears to be meaningless, just a check off system with no real data being utilized to address performance of teachers, support staff, principals or administration. She said she felt compelled to relate these concerns and apologized to the parents and students in her zone for the lack of attention

to those items. She stated that she hoped the media would address these issues and look at the audits and as the District continues in negotiations, she hoped that working with PACT they could come to an agreement of how these could be addressed. She said these were serious issues in the District and there were also serious concerns regarding teaching and teachers in the classrooms.

**Ms. Williams** wished everyone a happy new year and stated that she agreed with Mrs. Chaplin on some of the issues, but did not feel there was a lack of concern with the education of our children. She said that in previous years the District had a tendency to put into place programs and not give one program an opportunity to show itself and achieve what was wanted. She stated that she had addressed the issue before that teachers need innovative ways to go outside of the box; to go outside the state to attend meetings and conferences to learn ways to teach our children. She invited everyone out on Friday night, January 16<sup>th</sup> to the Jammers Basketball Game at Harris Elementary. She personally invited Mr. Vasquez because the band from Jacksonville High School will be playing at half time. She said the students in the after school program (Clinton, Harris, and Oakbrooke) will be performing. Ms. Williams commented on what a good job the after school program was doing. She thanked the constituents and her zone for coming together and addressing issues, especially discipline. She asked the Board to meet with ODM in a workshop to address this problem. She stated that it was going to take the Board, the employees and the communities to work together to resolve this issue of discipline.

**Mrs. Tatum** said to her fellow Board members that she had enjoyed serving them the last few months as president. She stated that she would still be in this seat in a different fashion, but the vendetta that Mr. Wood had because he was not re-elected president is obvious in the actions tonight. She said she was very upset, because when Mr. Wood went around asking everybody for support for his daughter to be valedictorian, that it was an ethic problem and should have been addressed, but that she did not address it at that time. She said that his daughter would not have been valedictorian if it had not been for the support of several people in this District, because he was president. She stated that since Mr. Clark had been on the Board, there had been something going on all of the time. Mrs. Tatum said that she and Mr. Clark were very much friends until she voted no to fire Mr. Sharpe and after that everything had turned. She said she knew tonight that something was going on because of the handwriting and notes being passed. She said it was no problem, that her constituents voted for her to be on the Board, not necessarily to hold a position. She stated her salary on the Board would not change; that a position paid the same as just being a seat on the Board. Mrs. Tatum said her comments to PACT and PASS and everybody will not deviate her at all; that she will serve this District continually as she has in the past. She said she could assure everyone that being a Board member is not something you just do; that you do it because you love children. She stated that she would not have

served for twenty-six years if she had not loved the children. Mrs. Tatum said that those here for their own personal vendetta were in the wrong place. She commented that the children needed our support and needed the Board to combine together to make this District successful. She stated that there had been very few problems with Board members, but now it was one Board member against the other. She said that she would never have dreamed that she and Ms. Williams would become enemies; that she would never have thought someone could talk her against a decision that was not in the best interest of the children. Mrs. Tatum stated that she supported all the children in all the schools of the District, not just in her zone, and that she will continue to do that. She said that she would continue to be all around the District and would support Mr. Clark; that she was a team player. She said that she would support Mr. Clark because she felt this was a decision Mr. Wood made when he was not re-elected and had been trying to do this and now it had happened. She stated that she would still be around, she was not going anywhere.

**Mr. Vasquez** congratulated Jackie Smith on her achievement of Master Principal and on behalf of Mr. Gililand, congratulated Arnold Drive Elementary and Dupree Elementary on receiving the Distinguished Title I School Award. He stated he could not agree with Mrs. Chaplin's comments more; that one thing that he had seen since he has been on the Board, was an absolute desire on behalf of the administration, staff, and a majority of the Board to stick to the status quo no matter what the cost. He said that the status quo of the last twenty-five years is what has gotten us here; a refusal to step up and make tough decisions and do the things that need to be done academically in our schools is what is keeping us here. He commented on the loss of students in the District and asked when the Charter School opened in August in Jacksonville, which school would be closed. He stated that the District would still be running both schools at a \$2 million loss, because they would not combine them. Mr. Vasquez stated that the Board could not say they desire to save money and then would not support children out there supporting their schools; for instance in the soccer coaches vote they would save \$35,000 but refused to save the District \$2 million per year. He said the Board and the District had to decide if we were here to educate the children or be here to maintain the status quo. Mr. Vasquez stated that a positive change needed to be made and people held accountable in this District to do it right and proactively in order to make a difference in the student lives. He commented on his concerns regarding the crimes, discipline, high rate of teen pregnancy and said these kids are not getting in trouble because they read well and make straight A's, but because we are failing in K-5 to teach them to read; we are failing in the middle schools to make sure they stay on the grade status and catch up; and failing in the high schools to make sure they think they have a bright future, because they are unable to read their chemistry books and books in their classes. He stated this was a twenty-five year old problem in the District and it did not matter how many tax dollars we received, if we

use the same old system on the same students, we will get the same results. He commented on the dropout rate being higher than the state average. Mr. Vasquez wished everyone a happy new year, and said he hoped things would be better in the future.

**Mr. Wood** told Mrs. Tatum that she gave him too much credit, that he had never been able to convince Mr. Vasquez or Ms. Williams to do anything. He stated the reason he wrote the amendment, was that too many times the Board wanted to vote on something and it was pulled. Mr. Wood said that when a Board member had an issue come up, that it should be voted on. He said that if the recall was about him, then Mr. Clark would not have been elected president. Mr. Wood stated that he had received several calls regarding Cato Elementary School's roof and stated that he knew that Mr. Sharpe and Mr. Warren were actively doing something about it. Mr. Wood said that he agrees with Ms. Nix regarding discipline issues, but that it is a tugging issue, with ODM pushing to lower the discipline rate of black males. He stated that he is not so much concerned about how many are being disciplined, but that every single student is being treated fairly. He said that the discipline rate at Sylvan Hills High School was high; that this looked like a bad place to attend school, but this was a positive issue for the parents of the students that attend there. He stated that Mr. Ebbs was in control of the school, and had done an excellent job in the discipline issue at Sylvan Hills High School.

**Mr. Clark** thanked Mr. Wood and the Board for nominating and electing him to serve as president and wanted it noted for the record that this was not something that he asked for. He said he felt honored and thanked everyone for their confidence in him and that he would do the best he possibly could. He said he hoped that this sent a clear message to the Board, that we will do the right thing no matter what it takes. He stated that he hoped as a Board that they could come together and move in the right direction and take this District to a place that it needs to go and has needed to go for a while. He said the District has an incredible group of teachers, administrators and faculty, that the District was very fortunate to have the resources, but needed to learn how to use them properly. Mr. Clark announced that as a Christmas present he received the news from his wife that they would be having a new baby, which would be their third child. He encouraged anyone to call him anytime he was needed.

Suspension of  
Rules - Choir  
Robes

**Mrs. Tatum** moved, seconded by **Ms. Williams**, to suspend the rules to allow Mills University Studies High School to use the activity fund to purchase the choir robes for the Mills Gospel Choir. The motion carried.

Request Funding  
For Mills Gospel  
Choir Robes

**Mrs. Tatum** moved, seconded by **Ms. Williams**, approval to use the activity funds from Mills University Studies High School in the amount of \$5,075 to purchase choir robes for the Mills Gospel Choir. The motion carried.

**Superintendent's  
Report**

1/13/09

**Mr. Sharpe** stated that the students from Crystal Hill and Clinton Elementaries were back in their buildings. He thanked everyone for their support and said he hoped he would not leave anyone out. Special thanks were given to the City of Sherwood and Mayor Hillman; Pastor Loy of the First Assembly of God Church; the teachers and administrators of Clinton Elementary; Bobby Cole, faculty and administrative staff at Maumelle Middle School; the City of Maumelle and Mayor Watson; and the teachers and administrators of Crystal Hill Elementary. He stated that the expertise as administrators of Jackye Parker and Karen Fikes was evident during this time and thanked them for the smooth transition. Mr. Sharpe thanked Eldon Bock, architect with Witsell, Evans, Rasco Architects/Planners; Ken Jones, structural engineer with Crafton Tull Sparks; and construction managers, Baldwin and Shell. Mr. Sharpe thanked everyone for their emails, calls, letters and words of encouragement during this difficult time when our students were being shifted around. He thanked the parents and communities for their cooperation and support and stated that the students were safe, and now the District could move on with the long term plan of a permanent replacement of the roofs.

**Consent Agenda**

1/13/09

**Ms. Williams** moved, seconded by **Mrs. Chaplin**, approval of the consent agenda with the exceptions of pages 34, 36, 37, 38, and 39 under personnel. She stated these were the renewal contracts of the administrators and at the bottom of the page of each renewal it stated an evaluation report for each employee must accompany the recommendation. Ms. Williams stated she would like to have the evaluations before the Board voted to renew these contracts. A lengthy discussion followed regarding the reviewing of the evaluations, with the decision that they would be reviewed by the Board in executive session at the next meeting. Mr. Sharpe requested that the 1<sup>st</sup> name at the top of the page on page #33 be pulled under personnel. Items #4, #5, and #6 under the consent agenda were not included in this motion. The motion carried with these exceptions. **Mrs. Tatum** voted no. She stated that she thought the evaluations should be pulled and reviewed in executive session, and a decision should be made at this meeting. Mr. Vasquez stated that the individual in personnel with his last name was not related to him. Mrs. Chaplin said there were several issues regarding expenses that she needed clarification. Mr. O'Briant and Dr. Bowles answered questions regarding the desegregation funds. Mrs. Chaplin requested Mr. O'Briant to provide a breakdown of these expenses at the next meeting. Ms. Williams asked for a breakdown of the expenses of Craig Douglass. Mr. Clark asked if before the next meeting a workshop could be held regarding the evaluations, job descriptions and organizational charts regarding



personnel. Mr. Clark asked Mrs. Chaplin to meet with Mr. O'Briant to work on a format for the budget. Mrs. Chaplin agreed. Mr. Sharpe suggested possibly asking the Superintendent of Conway Public Schools to attend a workshop to explain Arkansas School Finance for the Board. Mr. Clark asked to wait until after Mrs. Chaplin met with Mr. O'Briant. Mrs. Chaplin thanked Mr. O'Briant and asked for the schools to provide a report of their activity funds for the April board meeting. Mr. Sharpe requested the elementary and secondary school directors to have their principals provide this information. Mr. Dale Scott, Director of Food Services, gave an in-depth report regarding the expenses in his department.

**Mr. Vasquez** moved, seconded by **Mr. Wood**, approval of #4, #5, and # 6 of the consent agenda. The motion carried.

Those items included in the consent agenda include:

- expulsions
- personnel
- the bills for payment
- award of bids
- financial report

**Mr. Sharpe** stated that during his Superintendent's Report he failed to thank Mr. Warren and his team for their many hours of work during the recent crisis with Crystal Hill and Clinton Elementaries. He complimented them on making this a smooth transition and stated he had received many compliments from the community regarding this issue. Mr. Clark commended Mr. Warren and his staff on a job well done.

### Hearings

1/13/09

Support Staff  
Closed  
Robert Graham

**Robert Graham**, a school bus driver for the District, requested a hearing to appeal Superintendent Sharpe's recommendation of termination with Pulaski County Special School District. At the request of Mr. Graham, the hearing was held during closed session. The reasons for this action being: conduct endangering the safety of others; failure to follow verbal or written directives; performance related deficiencies; and conduct unbecoming an employee. Henry Osterloh served as the Hearing Officer. Debbie Coley, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, presented Mr. Graham's case and the recommendation of the Superintendent to the Board. **Mrs. Tatum** moved, seconded by **Ms. Williams**, to uphold the Superintendent's recommendation. The motion carried.

In open session, **Mrs. Tatum** moved, seconded by **Ms. Williams**, to uphold the Superintendent's recommendation. The motion carried.

Student – Closed

A recommendation was presented for the expulsion of a 10<sup>th</sup> grade male student at Robinson High School. This student was charged with violation of Rule #50 of the Student Handbook; Ark Law Gun-Free Act of 1994 – No student shall be involved with any firearm. The Hearing Officer recommended the

expulsion of the student for the remainder of the current school year. Henry Osterloh served as the hearing officer at the board meeting.

At the request of the student, the Board conducted the hearing in closed session.

After all testimony and debate, **Mrs. Tatum** moved to allow the student to attend the PCSSD Learning Academy beginning January 20, 2009. The motion died for lack of second.

**Mr. Vasquez** moved, seconded by **Mrs. Chaplin**, to uphold the Hearing Officer's recommendation for the student to be expelled for the remainder of the 2008-2009 school year, and be allowed to enter PCSSD Learning Academy during the Fall semester of 2009. The motion carried.

Student – Closed

A recommendation was presented for the expulsion of a 11<sup>th</sup> grade male student and a 12<sup>th</sup> grade male student at Mills University Studies High School. Mr. Morris requested these hearings be combined. The students were charged with violation of Rule #45 of the Student Handbook. The Hearing Officer recommended expulsion of both students for the remainder of the school year. Henry Osterloh served as the hearing officer at the board meeting. Jimmy Morris, Jr., Morris & Associates, P.A. represented the students.

At the request of the students, the Board conducted the hearing in closed session.

**Ms. Williams** moved, seconded by **Mrs. Tatum**, for the students to be allowed to attend the PCSSD Learning Academy, effective immediately. The motion carried.

After the final hearing, all actions taken during the closed hearings were affirmed in open session.

### **Adjournment**

1/13/09

**Ms. Williams** moved, seconded by **Mrs. Chaplin**, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 a.m.

---

Board President

---

Board Secretary