

GEORGE-LITTLE ROCK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

The George-Little Rock Board of Education met for work session on Wednesday, October 27, 2021 in the superintendent office in the GLR administration building in George. Board President Kristi Landis called the meeting to order after the special meeting at 5:41 pm. Board members present were Kristi Landis, Andrew Sprock, and Austin Lloyd. Wade Netten and Jason Fugitt were unable to attend. Also in attendance were Superintendent Tom Luxford, Board Secretary/School Business Official Cathy Bonestroo, Principal Karie Aeikens, and guest Valecia West.

President Landis thanked Bonestroo, Luxford, and other staff assisting for their work in preparing the packet and shared the work session is a different format from regular board meeting with no action taken and noting public needs to refrain from questions and comments. Landis shared the purpose of the meeting is for visionary look for long-term planning and conversations for opportunities for the district.

Luxford shared sub-committee structure requesting if anyone wants changes to their committees. Discussion was held with Lloyd noting previous conversations were about financial services committee tasks possibly aligning with capital projects committee sharing need to avoid family ties on personnel committee and possible separation again if needed with moving some tasks out of financial committee.

Superintendent Luxford presented GLR mission and vision statements along with GLR beliefs requesting input for any changes with none recommended by the board. Vision and strategic plan were discussed beginning with culture and climate. Open enrollment was discussed and culture perspective within and outside the district. Successes and achievements need to be communicated noting academic progress, athletics, and marching band improvements from past. Opportunities we are giving students are improved and need to be shared for awareness. Culture of success and climate of positively engaging students noting there is always room for growth and the need to market and brand the district. Daily culture and climate were reported as largely pretty good with people willing to help and wearing a lot of different hats, but issues with communication were noted. Acting on and addressing issues noting how and when talking to people and communicating to public at large will grow culture and climate daily. Positive direction, stagnant, or going backwards was questioned with it noting seeing all at times. Discussion was held regarding accountability for duties and responsibilities noting it plays a big role in culture and climate. It was noted that when people are not being held accountable it's a killer for an organization and for other staff. Due diligence for addressing issues noting staff and students need to be accountable to also see and report issues especially if bullying or mistreatment is seen to improve the district. District needs to track issues and see how they relate to open enrollment issues and if there are any consistent factors. Students and staff culture and climate and building trust was discussed noting if staff are not buying in on what we are doing, it transfers to students. Staff role modeling was also discussed for students. Students are multi-activity participants and faculty work well with supporting all activities and working around other activities.

Public relations, marketing, and branding were discussed with aesthetics of campuses improved. Home of the Mustangs signage coming into towns was discussed and community partnerships for promoting the district. Foot traffic and getting people in the schools to see what we have was also discussed to utilize facilities for more community events. Additional areas for improvement were discussed including the track, the space around the track, having bleachers out by the track for football games, branding, website, and social media presence. Digital branding and marketing need to be priority and updated at least weekly. Marketing firms were discussed. Luxford and Landis will follow-up with local marketing

people for better guidance. Student involvement with staff supervision, guidance, and review was again discussed for social media, marketing, press releases, and keeping the website current noting ideas of journalism and business class but also recognizing different audiences between papers and digital marketing.

Public at large, parents, and internal communications were discussed relating to culture, climate, and public relations. Internal communication can be improved by slowing down pace and over communicating which impacts culture. Misunderstandings and clearly communicate before, during, and after processes will resolve issues. Leadership needs to understand how employees work best and know their personnel. Staff need to read the communications. Announcements and weekly communication to include summaries of what's happening to all staff along with the cheering communication from superintendent were discussed. Discussion was held for a possible district parent and community quarterly newsletter distributed through Friday folders, papers, JMC (noting awareness of sending too many), and website about successes and changes from the district noting also good way to communicate legislative issues and potential impact to the district and possible few minute videos, radio news, and superintendent blogs. Coffees with superintendents held within the buildings was also discussed.

Professional development (PD) is good where we are with weekly meetings, common language for standards and technology, and collaboration. Realignment helps with focus by age-level streamlining to meet needs. PLC's planned by TLC team with principals gathering info from teacher feedback for in tune with needs and steps flow from elementary to middle school. Awareness needs to be of not becoming routine and stagnant to keep more interesting and keep staff buy-in. Education changes daily so always something new, relevant, and interesting are needed. If not collaborating but instead working in silos we will become stagnant. Living mission statement was noted as PD is biggest way to promote.

Consensus of effective education at GLR noting quality but want to go beyond and look at classes being offered and challenge to meet the students' needs and desires as well as standards. Personal learning plan needed for all students with career path for students for vision of classes. Get students to next step including trades and industry to give the students tools for the future for any career path. Find student niche and foundation needs to be in place at elementary and middle school level for specializing at high school level. Strategic plan was discussed for addressing comprehensive status noting earliest time for being off the list is after 2022-2023 school year with the one year COVID extension. Department of Education compliments GLR on the improvements with administration confident that when testing is offered, district will do well. It was noted that with past legislative concerns comprehensive schools were targeted without knowing the whole story and possible future legislative concerns.

Personal health and well-being of students and staff were discussed noting social and emotional support and impact of COVID and closures still being felt. How to educate for motivation and part of counseling curriculum needs to be embedded into curriculum for all teachers with guidance counselor to build staff and students up. Discussions are being held with staff as to what issues students and staff are facing but costs are not looked into yet with possibility of using ESSER funds. Endorsement for social and emotional learning and need to shop around and use professional development and have actual guidance curriculum for elementary, middle school, and high school. Dive into it slowly and research to find something to train our staff and help them and students.

Financial planning discussion reviewed different funds and allowances within the different funds. LOST/SAVE fund and GLR relevance were discussed. Enrollment projections were discussed with the critical need for correct enrollment and weightings and forecasting enrollment and communicating for district future plans. Revenues and expenditures and spending authority impact were discussed along

with future enrollment projections as enrollment drives everything financially. Discussion was held about past staff movements to different grade levels with some choosing to leave the district noting reality of many districts is moving staff where needed. Gaining students needs to be celebrated with focus of sustaining and retaining families and adjusting staff as needed. Luxford shared need to look to future. Landis stressed discussions were not held about moving 6th grade and not sure where that info came from with board noting conversations were misinterpreted with 3rd floor windows and possible additional classrooms discussion with some growing classes.

Luxford shared need to utilize AEA more with implementing programs and strategies, district and student sustainability, student number accuracy and enrollment projections, discuss facility opportunities for 5th and 6th grade, softball field lights, baseball field updates, football field lights, track options, fencing, MS/HS windows and consistent colors, HVAC and air quality updates replacing the boilers and need to plan ahead for bid process and need for both elementary and MS/HS buildings.

HVAC vs boiler system was discussed to consider options of geothermal, solar, and other efficiency possibilities also noting potential of equipment breakdown insurance through management fund to save some general fund expenditures in the future. Discussion was if we can swing HVAC financially with Bonestroo noting we have the funds but need to be aware of other project spending and possibly putting some on hold and prioritize projects with a plan. Long-term facilities plan was discussed for big ticket items noting need to get back to a multi-year plan and being proactive vs reactive. Luxford shared about boiler issues at the high school with believed to be broken pipe and need for MS and HS building windows. Staff morale and student learning is important and affected by room temperatures with the current boiler system. Budget considerations request form gathers staff input for what they see as potential needs for the district in all areas every November to assist in projects, plans and budgeting. Efficiencies to reduce general fund in the future were stressed for future savings to assist with staff salaries and student expenses. Automatic lights especially in common areas is a good plan. It was noted that bathrooms are top item on list for district impressions.

Increased discussions and committee meetings with priorities focus are needed for what we want school to look like educationally and facility wise in next 3-5 years. Aeikens noted her list of improvements for the elementary including HVAC, concrete, main floor bathrooms, fire escape upgrade with Luxford noting west side is not required for use, gym walls, gym ceiling, tuck pointing, playground, fence, classroom ceilings, main hallway floor, garage door opener in shop room with Luxford sharing we tried but are unable to install due to lack of space above, fillers on south and west side, classroom doors and trim repainted as still some maroon and should be red or black, locker room floors, band room sound wall, and south doors with discussion of gym floor trip hazard options. Electrostatic painting done on lockers and looked at for doors in both buildings for consistent look. Discussion was held that HVAC is the top priority. Windows on front of high school another high priority. Discussion was held about possible bond issue noting timing concerns for community but a possible consideration after current bonds are paid to not affect taxpayers.

Funding plans were discussed for ESSA, ESSER, and LCRF funds all being part of the general fund. ESSA funds (elementary comprehensive school improvement funds) were discussed regarding possible online curriculum and online ARC. ESSER plans (COVID money) were discussed noting learning loss restricted amount and possible uses of additional curriculum, guidance, ELL, and efficiency items to reduce the general fund in the future such as automatic lights and hand dryers and possibly some salaries. It was stressed that the plan needs to be finalized and posted soon to submit for the funds to be received for current expenditures being paid. Awareness of continued subscription expenses without the future funding was noted. Preschool COVID funds were discussed for uses for possible curriculum, technology,

furniture updates, and upgrading the playground and need to spend this fiscal year. LCRF funds were discussed with looking at one bigger ticket or project item annually possibly around \$40,000 in addition to current expenses. Other matches use for possible projects including lab ideas, baseball, and softball projects were noted. Spending plan presented and agreed upon with LCRF has been followed with LCRF balance decreasing. How much of a balance is foundation good with was again questioned and how soon to get there noting impact to district spending authority and timing awareness. Possible library or CTE bigger projects were discussed for LCRF possibilities. Lunch program balance was again discussed for needing a plan with the extra federal funds from free student lunches. Heeren Trust was discussed with possibility of moving to an endowment and using the interest but leaving the principal. Discussion was held whether to run interest through foundation for scholarships. GLR investments were discussed with Luxford following up with banks for RFP for investment considerations.

Luxford shared another work session should be held in December.

Work session was adjourned at 8:15 pm with a motion from Sprock, seconded by Lloyd, and carried 3-0.