



AGENDA

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

May 13, 2016

Arkansas Department of Education

ADE Auditorium - Special Committee on Academic Distress

12:00 PM

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Reports

Report-1 Chair's Report

Presenter: Vicki Saviers, Chair

Consent Agenda

C-1 Minutes - February 12, 2016

Presenter: Deborah Coffman

Action Agenda

A-1 Consideration of Progress of Central High School - Helena-West Helena School District

The Sub-Committee will consider progress related to the Helena-West Helena School District's efforts to support a school in academic distress. The progress of student achievement at the school will be highlighted. For committee consideration, the Helena-West Helena School District Superintendent will provide a general update of the progress.

Presenter: Elbert Harvey and Dr. Richard Wilde

A-2 Consideration of Progress of Pine Bluff High School, Belair Middle School and Jack Robey Junior High - Pine Bluff School District

The Sub-Committee will consider progress related to the Pine Bluff School District's efforts to support schools in academic distress and priority status. The progress of student achievement at each school will be highlighted. For committee consideration, the Pine Bluff School District Superintendent will provide a general update of the progress.

Presenter: Elbert Harvey and Dr. Richard Wilde

Minutes
State Board of Education Special Committee on Academic Distress Meeting
Friday, February 12, 2016

The State Board of Education Special Committee on Academic Distress met Friday, February 12, 2016, in the Arkansas Department of Education Auditorium. Chair Vicki Saviers called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

Present: Vicki Saviers, Chair; Diane Zook; Brett Williamson; Joe Black; Toyce Newton and Ouida Newton.

Absent: none

Reports

Report-1 Chair's Report

None

Consent Agenda

Mr. Black moved, seconded by Mr. Williamson, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

Item included in the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes - September 11, 2015

Action Agenda

A-1 Progress Report on Pine Bluff School District Schools Classified as Academic Distress and/or Priority

Pine Bluff Superintendent Mr. T.C. Wallace said the district was focused on utilizing state standards for staffing. He said this would help the district become more efficient. He said a systems change in human resources and budgeting was being implemented. He said the district was receiving technical assistance for budgeting from the ADE.

Pine Bluff School Board President Mr. Henry Dabner said the board was meeting twice each month. He said the community was involved in the meetings. He said the Arkansas School Boards Association would provide board training during upcoming meetings. He said the district was considering a reduction in force. He said the board contracted with a superintendent search team. He said the district was looking for a superintendent that would be strong in finance, school

improvement and Arkansas law.

Chief School Reform Officer Ms. Alesia Smith said the district was continuing the learning with the University of Virginia at Arlington (UVA). She said the team was trained as trainers on Response to Intervention, differentiation and core instruction. She said UVA has agreed to continue the work if the next superintendent was supportive.

Ms. Smith said the district was working to improve teacher recruitment and retention. She said Teach for America teachers have been beneficial but the two-year turnover has been a challenge for the district. She said the district was working with the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff but needed additional conversation to address the teacher pipeline.

Ms. Smith said the Keith Sanders Group (consultant) was working in two of the priority schools.

Ms. Smith said discipline was an issue. She said the district was working on a positive discipline system. She said they were also working on behavioral interventions.

School Improvement Director Dr. Richard Wilde said the vote was 5-2 on the superintendent search firm. He went on to clarify that the 2 dissenting votes were based on the desire to save money and not in opposition to having assistance. Dr. Wilde said the discussion between recruitment and reduction in force means that some positions may be eliminated while other positions may need to be filled. He said the district has hired school improvement specialists for the buildings. He said the district leadership team was monitoring staff evaluations. He said Pine Bluff was a district in transition and functioning at the management level, rather than from a visionary leadership model. He reminded everyone that Dr. Wallace is an interim and his primary role is keeping the district operating while the Pine Bluff School Board developed the superintendent search plan and conducted the search. Visionary leadership was not the charge given to Dr. Wallace.

Ms. Smith said it has been a challenge to get students to participate in after-school tutoring and Saturday school. She said the district was providing transportation and meals.

Ms. Smith said the district hired four school improvement specialists. She said the specialists are very qualified in school turnaround and a systems approach.

Ms. Smith said the district utilized The Learning Institute (TLI) and teacher-made assessments. She said the district was also considering the ACT Aspire interim assessments.

Mr. Dabner said he visited with Simmons Bank, the Mayor of Pine Bluff and UVA to consider how to best move the district forward. He said the business community was very supportive of the district. Mr. Dabner recognized Pine Bluff School Board Member Mr. Harold Jackson.

The subcommittee encouraged the district to utilize the services of the Department. The subcommittee will meet with the Pine Bluff School District in May for a progress report.

Reports

Report-1 School Improvement Technical Assistance Report

School Improvement Director Dr. Richard Wilde asked the subcommittee to consider if any changes in the reporting format were needed.

Dr. Wilde introduced the School Improvement Unit Specialists: Ms. Tiah Frazier, Ms. Mary Beth Lawrence, Ms. Lisa Knoedl, Ms. Janie Hickman, Ms. Judy Foot, Dr. Robert Toney, Ms. Sharesa White, and Ms. Sonya Johnson.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman.



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Johnny Key
Commissioner

April 11, 2016

State Board
of Education

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Diane Zook
Melbourne

Mr. John Hoy, Superintendent
Helena-West Helena School District
305 Valley Drive
Helena, AR 72342

Dear Superintendent Hoy,

The Arkansas State Board of Education (SBE) is committed to the academic success of all students in our state. To this end, the SBE has asked that their Special Sub-Committee review the progress of your school listed in Academic Distress. This review has been scheduled for May 13, 2016, immediately following the State Board regular meeting.

The SBE Special Committee would like to review the specific progress made in improving student outcomes as well as the actions of leadership to support the school. Please contact me for an approximate starting time. Please be prepared to discuss current year's progress for the following school:

Central High School

Prior to that meeting, the Sub-Committee would like to review documentation that supports the oral report you plan to present. Please send this information to Deborah Coffman at Deborah.coffman@arkansas.gov in PDF file format by end of day on April 22, 2016. The items generally requested include:

1. A list of activities/steps that have been completed/taken by the district to assist the "Academic Distress" school.
2. Agendas and minutes of all district leadership team meetings as required by the ESEA Flexibility Waiver for February, March and April 2016.
3. A list of external providers supporting school improvement and the method for evaluation of the effectiveness of these services within your school district.
4. A list of the key innovations the school is using to improve student outcomes and the method for evaluating these innovations.
5. Number of years the principal has been assigned to the specific school and actions that have been taken to increase the leader's effectiveness.

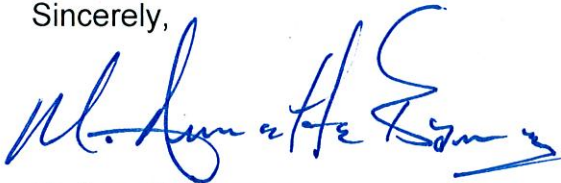
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6. What actions you intend to take if there is no progress as measured by the State Annual Assessment (ACT Aspire).
7. Any additional information you consider relevant to your progress.

We look forward to reviewing your information and discussing your successes and challenges.

Sincerely,



M. Annette Barnes
Assistant Commissioner
Public School Accountability
Arkansas Department of Education

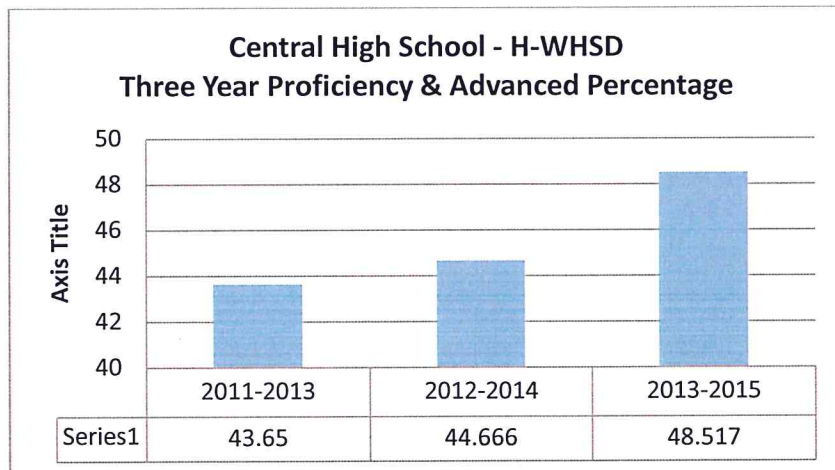
cc: Deborah Coffman
Elbert Harvey
Dr. Richard Wilde

Helena-West Helena School District Report on Academic Distress
for Central High School
May 13, 2016

1. Steps taken by the District to assist the Academic Distress School.
 - Beginning in 2014 and continuing the District implemented Monthly District wide Improvement Team Meetings.
 - Beginning in 2014 and continuing the District implemented monthly district wide Leadership Team Meetings.
 - The District changed external providers at the High School in 2014 per the principal's request.
 - The District reviewed and revised the District mission and goals to align with the beliefs of community stakeholders and District staff.
 - The District changed superintendents in the 2014-15 school year.
 - The District changed principals at Central High School in the 2015-16 school year.
 - The District hired a School Improvement Specialist during the 2015-16 school year.
2. Agendas and minutes of District Leadership Team meetings and District School Improvement Team meetings for February, March and April are attached. (Note: April ACSIP minutes have not been approved)
3. There are two external providers working in the District. The ultimate measure of the effectiveness of our external provider is increasing proficiency rates. The providers working with the District are as follows;
 - Fetterman's and Associates - Working exclusively at Central High School.
 - Elbow-2-Elbow - Working with the special education staff at all District schools.
4. A list of key innovations the school is using to improve student outcomes and the method of evaluating these innovations.
 - Extended Day programs - Extended day programs coordinators are to provide data containing pre and post-test data. Measures will be taken to determine the amount of gain that students make in the program over the course of the year. Post test scores from the extended day program will be correlated with student results from the state mandated assessment. We will be looking for strong growth in the programs as an indicator of success. We will be looking for a high, positive correlation between program test results and the state mandated assessment for an indicator that success in the extended day programs relate to success on the state mandated tests.
 - Barton Reading System - Success in this program will be determined by the percentage of the students enrolled in the program that reaches a satisfactory level of growth as determined by District staff.
 - Apex Learning for credit recovery - Success in this program will be determined by the percentage of the students enrolled in the program who receive credit during the course of the school year.
 - SuccessMaker labs - SuccessMaker lab coordinators are to provide data containing pre and post-test data. Measures will be taken to determine the amount of gain that students make in the program over the course of the year. Post test scores from the SuccessMaker program will be correlated with student results from the state mandated assessment. We will be

looking for strong growth in the program as an indicator of success in the program. We will be looking for a high positive correlation between SuccessMaker program test results and the state mandated assessment for an indication that success in the extended day program relates to success on the state mandated tests.

5. Mr. Earnest Simpson is in his initial year in the role of building principal, but also has prior experience as Assistant Principal and teacher at Central High School. He is familiar with the challenges and opportunities at the school. Additionally Mr. Simpson has had the support of our external provider and the superintendent when it comes to guidance and advice in the areas of leadership. The Leadership Team and District Improvement Team, initiated and supported by the superintendent, has been a regular forum for forward thinking and reflection for the entire administrative team. Mr. Simpson has also been allowed to attend and participate in professional organizations and activities designed to promote leadership and growth.
6. The Annual State Assessment will be used to set baseline data for curriculum development, professional development and program evaluation. Since this will be a new assessment for the District it will be difficult to establish "progress" from a practical point of view, however, programs may be revised or eliminated and curriculum will be revised regardless of progress (or the lack thereof).
7. Additional data for consideration.



Leadership Team Meeting
February 1, 2016
9:00 A.M.



AGENDA

The mission of the Helena-West Helena School District is to produce graduates who are fully prepared for life after school as productive, responsible and caring citizens.

- I. Approval of January Meeting Minutes
- II. District Website Updates – M. Henderson
- III. Testing Updates – A. Fielder
- IV. Letters of Intent – T. Knowlton
Black History Program Dates – T. Knowlton
- V. ESC Works Registration Deadline for Active Shooter Workshop – J. Anderson
- VI. Title I/NSLA – L. English
- VII. AdvancED – L. English
- VIII. Textbook Curriculum Concept – J. Hoy
- IX. ACT Aspire Required Infrastructure Trial – J. Hoy
- X. Afterschool Programs – J. Hoy
- XI. 2014-2015 School Year Assessment Results – J. Hoy
- XII. District Auction – W. Jackson
- XIII. TESS Leads – J. Hoy

Fetterman & Associates will meet directly after the Leadership Meeting

Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

January 5, 2016

Approval of December Minutes

After a review of the December minutes, a motion was made by Earnest Simpson and seconded by Angie Fielder to approve the minutes with no corrections.

Wellness Committee

Angie Fielder reported that Amy Cook is the chairperson of the Wellness Committee and the committee would be adding a student and a parent to the committee after the January meeting. A meeting has also been scheduled to consider have a school-based health clinic which would be housed on the high school campus. The committee will compile information and discuss at a later time.

Testing

Angie Fielder reported that January 29th is the deadline to upload files with correct student information. Counselors will pick a day to be off campus in order to meet the deadline.

Above and Beyond Award

Krista Fortenberry reported that forms and packets have been given to each campus for the Above and Beyond awards and are to be turned in from each campus by the end of the month. A profile was given to the team to consider having Manny Scott, one of the original Freedom Writers for one of the professional development days in August. A motion was made by Linda English and seconded by Becky Alexander to book Mr. Scott as soon as possible for August professional development.

Active Shooter

Joyce Anderson met with principals on their respective campuses to discuss having the active shooter drill. The law requires an annual active shooter drill. The date of February 12, 2016 has been set for each school to have the drill on their campus. The drill has to be done with students to ensure that they will know what to do when/if a situation occurs. Training for all campuses will be done on the same day.

Panic Button Alarm

Orlander Moore will set up a training date for training on the panic button alarm.

Inclement Weather

Superintendent Hoy asked team members to give their contact number to Ms. Cokes so that they can be contacted immediately in case of inclement weather for those who live outside of the city limits.

Breaks for Employees

Superintendent Hoy informed the team members that he will sign off on the affidavit that the district is in compliance with state mandates regarding breaks for employees.

Disclosure Form

Superintendent Hoy asked the principals to have every employee on their campus to fill out a disclosure form and return it back to central office by January 13, 2016.

Audit Findings

Superintendent Hoy reported that the district had only one audit finding in internal control during the recent audit and one management level finding. Overall, the district had a good audit.

AVID Meeting – February 8, 2016 @ 10:00 a.m.

Meeting adjourned

**ACSIP/Closing the Achievement Gap
District School Improvement Team Meeting
February 16, 2016
9:00 A.M.**



***MISSION:** The Helena-West Helena School District, in partnership with the community, will prepare our students academically by providing them with appropriate curriculum and effective instruction in a safe, nurturing, learning environment.*

Agenda

- Review and approval of January Minutes
- AVID – Mr. Simpson
- Gear Up – Mr. Simpson
- AdvancEd – L. English/J. Anderson

ACSIP/Closing the Achievement Gap

District School Improvement Team Minutes

February 16, 2016

Review of January 2016 Minutes

After a review of the January 2016 minutes, a motion was made by Joyce Anderson and seconded by Sandra Bagley to approve the minutes with no corrections.

AVID

Earnest Simpson was asked to give a report on AVID as it relates mostly to the students at Central High School. Mr. Simpson stated that the goal of AVID is to close the achievement gap by preparing students for post secondary opportunities. AVID has not been successful at the high school because of teacher retention, lack of interest by students and the tutorial component not being fully implemented. AVID was targeted for 1st generation college students.

The question was asked, "What gaps do we need to measure achievement? Jaylen Phillips who is a senior stated that AVID has helped him in establishing better testing scores by taking AP classes every year.

Supt. Hoy asked based on the number of students enrolled in AP/Pre-AP courses, is AVID something that the district is willing to fund? AVID used to be a grant-funded program.

Linda English stated that most AVID students maintain a C average but AVID cannot exist without a site coordinator and it is not a paid position. It would be strictly voluntary. Mr. Simpson recommended that the program should be suspended if there is no qualified person to oversee it.

Jaylen Phillips stated that being in AVID has allowed him to go on college visits, learn how to write resumes, essays and recommendations.

Supt. Hoy stated that we need to compete with KIPP and asked Leigh Lewis if the district could find funding as a stipend. Leigh said that she would look into it.

Angie Fielder stated that we should get more students interested in the program.

Andrew Bagley asked what is the budget for training for AVID. Can it be paid for by NSLA monies? Linda English stated that AVID is strictly voluntary by teachers and leadership. Supt. Hoy recommended that the high school keep AVID for one more year, invite AIMS in and see if we can get the numbers up and possibly give a stipend. Keeping AVID at any level means that someone will be responsible for reports and gathering information. Elementary staff will

be included to attend AVID training this summer. A motion was made by Sandra Bagley and seconded by Linda English to keep AVID for another year.

Gear UP Program Status

The Gear-Up program donated a computer lab to the high school. Supt. Hoy asked if we no longer participate in Gear Up, will they take the computers out of the lab. Students are identified for the program by volunteering. Supt. Hoy asked if we could look at the Math and Science scores. We need perceptual data. Mr. Simpson will get the last 3 years of data and Becky Alexander will get more data on Gear Up for student participation beginning at 5th grade. A motion was made by Earnest Simpson and seconded by Linda English to keep Gear Up for the 2016-2017 school year.

AdvancEd

Linda English reported that the 2 member AdvancEd team will be coming to the district on March 17, 2016. A list of people who will serve as stakeholders will be needed. Walkthroughs will be done on each campus. The district will be asked to produce evidence/rationale when asked.

Items to be added to the Strategic Plan are:

ALE

K-12 Academies

Buildings

Transportation Fleet

Meeting adjourned.

Leadership Team Meeting
March 7, 2016
9:00 A.M.



AGENDA

The mission of the Helena-West Helena School District is to produce graduates who are fully prepared for life after school as productive, responsible and caring citizens.

- I. Approval of February Meeting Minutes
- II. Dyslexia Screenings – K. Fortenberry
- III. Fast For Word Program – K. Fortenberry
- IV. Name Tags – K. Fortenberry
- V. AVID – L. English
- VI. AdvancED – L. English
- VII. Indistar Indicators – L. English
- VIII. Instructional Practices – L. English
- IX. HR Updates – Powerpoint – T. Knowlton
 - a. HQT
 - b. APPEL Program 2016-2017
 - c. Licensed/Non-Licensed Points List
 - d. Staffing
 - e. Expired License
- X. General Observations – J. Hoy
- XI. Adjournment

Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

February 1, 2016

Approval of January Minutes

After a review of the February minutes, a motion was made by Angie Fielder and seconded by Joyce Anderson to approve the February with the following amendments: Angie Fielder reported that Amy Cook is the chairperson of the Wellness Committee.

District Website Updates

Marches Henderson, Tech. Coordinator informed the Leadership Team that the new website has been launched. Ms. Henderson asked each principal to designate one person who could send out two tweets per week about something positive that is happening on their campus. Ms. Henderson will train whoever is selected for each campus to ensure that they are doing it correctly. Ms. Henderson gave the team a general walk through of how to navigate the new website.

Testing Updates/ACT Aspire Required Infrastructure Trial

Angie Fielder reported that during the infrastructure trials, Mr. Moore and the counselors will be on hand to practice troubleshooting. Counselors would be out for at least one hour on each of these days. The deadline was met for uploading all of the required information for adding and removing students. ACT is the first test that will be taken. All 11th graders will be tested on March 1st. The testing will be done over two days and we will have until March 15th to do any make ups. Central has 60 new computers that will also be used for testing. Testing of all the infrastructure devices must be done by March 18th.

Black History Programs/Advisory Board Letter/Letter/Afterschool Program Letter

Tammy Knowlton announced the dates for the Black History Programs on each campus and the various activities that each campus has scheduled.

A letter to parents from the Advisory Board is being distributed to the high school students only. Letters will go out to parents in the mail on February 2nd.

Letters of Intent for the 2016-2017 school year will go out on Feb. 2nd to be returned by February 16th.

A letter/application for parents who have children in the afterschool program is being sent to parents to get permission for their child to be transported to the Boys and Girls Club in the event that no one is home when the children are being dropped off when the afterschool program has ended. Parents will have to fill out the application agreeing to have their child transported to the Boys and Girls Club and will have to be picked up before 7:00 p.m. There is no additional charge for this service.

ESC Works Registration Deadline for Active Shooter Workshop

Joyce Anderson informed the team that everyone from each campus need to go online to ESC Works through the Great Rivers Cooperative and register for the Active Shooter workshop by Feb. 10th. The Active Shooter workshop is Feb. 12th on each school campus. The Central Office staff will train at J.F. Wahl. The annual drill will take place on Feb. 23rd.

Title I/NSLA/AdvancED

Linda English passed out NSLA information for each school containing codes, functions and avail monies to spend. April 15, 2016 is the ending date for all 2015-2016 expenditures. Folders with agendas were passed out for the 2 day AdvancED visit beginning March 17th. Mrs. English asked that each principal be familiar with the progress assessment so that the principals could go into the portals, assign tasks and come up with artifacts to support what has been done since the last visit.

Textbooks

Supt. Hoy reported that the district had budgeted \$180,000 for textbooks for this school year and we have now exceeded \$200,000. What happened to the textbooks that we had, if we had them, and if we didn't have them, why are we ordering so many books this year? What happens when students lose the books? All of the principals stated that they hold the student records until the book(s) are paid for and the monies are deposited back in that school's fund.

Textbook Curriculum Concept

Supt. Hoy talked to the principals about how they might let the textbooks drive the curriculum for the teachers. He asked the principals to talk to their staff to see what questions they might have if we went in that direction. Curriculum, assessment, and teaching all need to line up together according to Kenny Pennington from AdvancEd. Alexander and Hamilton stated that most of their teachers are on board with allowing the textbook to drive the curriculum. Simpson stated that his teachers also liked the idea and that it would be sufficient for them. Supt. Hoy stated that he has not seen any good information that he could glean from TLI this year that could help us.

Afterschool Programs

Supt. Hoy asked the Leadership Team if they thought the afterschool programs are working and if they are, how do we know that they are working? There is no data that has been compiled to show that afterschool programs are working. There is no accountability to show that they work. If we don't assess the program, we won't know if the programs actually work.

2014-2015 School Year Assessment Results

Supt. Hoy shared the assessment results from the previous year test scores with the other schools in the area, and while none of the scores were at the state level, our district was not the worst and was only a short distance from being the best of test scores among all the schools that were listed.

District Auction

Willie Jackson shared that the district auction will take place on Saturday, Feb. 6, 2016 at the old Eliza Miller Cafeteria and the old bus shed on Biscoe.

TESS Leads

Supt. Hoy asked all administrators to schedule a 1 hour meeting with Ms. Cokes to discuss goals and evaluations for staff.

Meeting adjourned

**ACSIP/Closing the Achievement Gap
District School Improvement Team Meeting
March 28, 2016
9:00 A.M.**



MISSION: The mission of the Helena-West Helena School District is to produce graduates who are fully prepared for life after school as productive, responsible and caring citizens.

Agenda

- Review and approval of February Minutes
- AdvancED
- Summer School
- Evaluation of Programs
- Professional Development – J. Anderson
- Employee Recognition – T. Knowlton

ACSIP/Closing the Achievement Gap

District School Improvement Team Minutes

March 28, 2016

Review of February 2016 Minutes

After a review of the February minutes, a motion was made by Krista Fortenberry and seconded by Joyce Anderson to accept the minutes as presented.

AdvancED

Linda English gave the leadership team an overview of the recent AdvancED visit and evaluation. She reported that the overall communication in the district was significantly improved this year. The district should continue to monitor and evaluate programs to ensure that they are being effective and serving the needs of the students. We need to study our surveys to see how we have progress and how we can continue to improve. The environment at Central High School was much better this year.

Evaluation of Programs

Supt. Hoy reported that we have to push to see if plans are working. We must evaluate programs to determine what kind of professional development is needed. Most of the afterschool programs will end by the end of April. 21st Century will end by the end of May. Title I programs will end by the end of May. Each principal is required to send Supt. Hoy a spreadsheet for each program on their campus detailed with student names and data progress to see if the programs are working. Principals should also conduct parent surveys.

Lynn Chadwick reported that every time she has gone out in the community and asked for assistance, she is met with resistance from employees. There are community members who are willing to be involved but are discouraged when met with resistance from the schools. We have to begin to accentuate the positives in each program and be able to tell community stakeholders about the good things in each program.

AVID

Becky Alexander asked if the supervisor at the high school could come to the elementary school to encourage the younger students about AVID so that when they go to the high school the interest would still be there and make the transition into AVID a lot easier. It could be a great EAST project. There has been great state support for EAST. Some of the EAST students went to J.F. Wahl and read to the students.

Afterschool Programs

Instead of 4 days a week, do three days and allow one day for proper planning to ensure that it is working. Lynn Chadwick suggested that we could give students opportunities that they don't normally get. We could find people who are not employed all day to come in and do an

afterschool program. Stagger teacher start times so that they are not burned out at the end of the day and still have to do afterschool activities.

Another suggestion is to have the Delta Cultural Center integrated in the schools. They have a wealth of history information to share with students. High school students can also integrate this information into their history classes.

K-6 Academies

Supt. Hoy asked for an update on the K-6 academies at the next meeting with implementation dates.

Summer School

The dates for summer school are June 6th – July 1st from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. We will do 5 hours instead of a full day. Mr. Simpson stated that we may need the full day for credit recovery. Supt. Hoy stated that we would only allow students who have put in the hours to finish credit recovery in the second semester.

Professional Development

Joyce Anderson asked the team to let her know what professional development would benefit their teachers for 2016-2017. Supt. Hoy suggested that an evaluation of staff could help determine PD needs on each campus. Dr. Goodwin gave documentation on domains in relation to teaching skills on all campuses. Amanda Fears asked what would be the best way to implement the PD after the training.

Teachers would benefit more from hands-on workshops. Supt. Hoy suggested that they should use instructional coaches instead of content coaches. Joyce Anderson stated that she would look at training for the coaches. Her suggestion was to mold and demonstrate for staff. Jewel Hamilton stated that they need good coaches for PD who will do hands-on training with follow-up. Sandra Bagley suggested that the PD should be recorded if possible. Lynn Chadwick stated that it would depend on if the company would allow it.

Supt. Hoy suggested the following: everyone should think about a skill for each area along with questions and answer techniques, and student engagement activities for teachers. Lynn Chadwick suggested that they model "I do, you do." Dr. Bassa asked if the PD is aligned with walkthrough evaluations. Dr. Bassa also asked if the walkthroughs indicate that student engagement is an issue. Sandra Bagley and Lynn Chadwick stated that the focus should be on student engagement. Mr. Simpson stated that PD needs to be a site based school level initiative for the 2016-2017 school year. Dr. Bassa stated that rigor and relevance is still the target. Lynn Chadwick suggested that principals should get teachers to have one or two parents and have one hour sessions to discuss what they want for their students. The next week they should talk about what the barriers are and the week after that, offer solutions to the barriers. Are there programs/activities that the school can offer to assist the students?

Employee Recognition

Tammy Knowlton, HR/PR, along with parent facilitators is organizing a end of the year Employee Recognition program which will also highlight teacher recognition as well as retirees for the 2015-2016 school year. The date and location for the event will be announced later. Sandra Bagley asked if the district would consider having a billboard for students going to college and how much they received in scholarship offerings. She also stated that it would be nice to have a group photo on a billboard of the senior class each year.

A motion was made by Supt. Hoy and seconded by Sandra Bagley to adjourn the meeting.

Leadership Team Meeting
April 4, 2016
9:00 A.M.



AGENDA

The mission of the Helena-West Helena School District is to produce graduates who are fully prepared for life after school as productive, responsible and caring citizens.

- I. AVID – L. English
- II. NSLA/Title I – L. English
- III. Title I Extended Day Staff Survey – L. English
- IV. Consultant Survey of Deliverables – L. English
- V. Requisition Spending – L. Lewis
- VI. Deposits – L. Lewis
- VII. Facilities Update – J. Hoy
- VIII. Staffing Update – J. Hoy
- IX. Marketing Questions – J. Hoy
- X. Autism Awareness Month – K. Fortenberry
- XI. State Testing – A. Fielder

Fetterman & Associates will meet directly after the Leadership Meeting

Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

April 4, 2016

Approval of March Minutes

After a review of the minutes for March 7, 2016, a motion was made by Joyce Anderson and seconded by Linda English to approve with noted corrections.

AVID

Linda English reported that the AVID 2016 Summer Institute is fast approaching. Elementary principals who are interested in sending a staff member should get their information to her as soon as possible so that travel and hotel arrangements can be made. Mr. Simpson stated that he may send 4-5 people. AVID will not begin in the elementary level until 2017-2018.

Joyce Anderson and Tammy Knowlton will collaborate to set up a calendar for conferences.

NSLA/Title I

Leigh Lewis, Linda English and Jeff Martello will set up times to work with principals regarding NSLA to get monies spent before deadline. Supt. Hoy stated that the district needs data and ideas for Title I Extended Day Staff Survey to assess how the program can be made better for students.

Consultant Survey of Deliverables

A Consultant Survey of Deliverables is also needed to ensure that expected services are being done. Look at contract to see if they are meeting contract obligations. SPED teachers will complete the survey to see if the district will continue with the contract.

Requisition Spending

April 15, 2016 is the cut-off date for all requisitions in the district. Make sure that all technology has Mr. Moore's approval.

Deposits

There is a cut-off time for daily deposits. All monies received should be deposited the same day. All monies collected should be brought to central office by 2:00 p.m. daily. Please make sure that sponsors are writing receipts for any monies collected.

Facilities Update

Willie Jackson and Flora Abernathy will do a walkthrough of buildings twice a week to see what needs to be done. Principals will be given a list to check off as work is completed. Please have paper picked up before grass is cut. Inform staff that park on the grass before cutting so that they can move vehicles.

Staffing Update

Personal Growth Plans (PGP)/Summative evaluations should be done on each certified staff member by May 1, 2016. Non-licensed evaluations need to be completed by the end of May. If you are having a problem with someone on your staff, please make an appointment to talk with Mr. Hoy.

Building principals may need to reassign/transfer some staff instead of RIF. The district would like to fill any vacant position by May 1st. Certified staff will have 10 days after the last student day to sign and return contract. The district will not release anyone from their contract unless we can find a suitable replacement. Now that the district has waivers, it would be better to put a person with a degree in a classroom instead of a non-licensed/substitute. A person with a degree will now be considered a regular teacher.

Marketing Questions

The district has been mandated to participate in School Choice. We need ideas to let potential parents/students know what's good about our district.

Autism Awareness Month

Krista Fortenberry announced that 131 t-shirts were sold for Autism Awareness Month. The shirts will be worn every Friday in the month of April.

State Testing

Angie Fielder reported that the district will be doing state testing in April. SPED teachers will be testing students on Iowa Basic Skills in grades 1-2 beginning April 5th. Orlander Moore and Marches Henderson are especially appreciated for making sure that all computers are up and operational for testing. Counselors are also appreciated for all hard work preparing for testing and a special thanks to principals for rearranging schedules to make testing happen. We are looking forward to great testing conditions this year.

Meeting Adjourned

**ACSIP/Closing the Achievement Gap
District School Improvement Team Meeting
April 18, 2016
9:00 A.M.**



MISSION: The mission of the Helena-West Helena School District is to produce graduates who are fully prepared for life after school as productive, responsible and caring citizens.

Agenda

- Review and approval of March Minutes
- Academies Updates – L. English
- 2016 1 to1 Technology Devices Initiative for K-12 – L. English
- School Performance Report Card – L. English
- APNA Survey Results – L. English
- Professional Development Updates – J. Anderson

ACSIP/Closing the Achievement Gap

District School Improvement Team Minutes

April 18, 2016

Approval of March Minutes

After a review of the March minutes, a motion was made by Krista Fortenberry and seconded by Sandra Bagley to accept the minutes as presented.

Academies Updates

Becky Alexander reported that EME is finalizing the application process and the primary focus on the EME campus will be on technology in the afterschool program, Google classrooms, designing a logo for class, a curriculum based project and self motivation.

There will be a maximum of 25 students per grade level. Anyone can apply during open enrollment. If the program is too advanced, the student will have the option to be placed back in the regular curriculum.

Lynn Chadwick asked what is the goal of the academies. Alexander stated that the goal is to have all classes as academy classes. Chadwick asked what about teachers getting rigor training? Alexander stated that teachers are ready to use research based strategies but they have to be open to the training along with consistent feedback.

Jewel Hamilton reported that enrollment for Wahl Primary will be 15 students per grade level. It is much more appealing to parents with the option of more field trips and stepping outside of the normal classroom culture. Enrollment is open to all students. Wahl will be sending notes home the first week in May.

Lynn Chadwick asked if the classes will differ from regular curriculum. Hamilton stated that the expectation will be above and beyond normal class work and possibly extended days. Chadwick also asked what criteria are being used to select the best teachers. Hamilton stated that she will base her selection of teachers on their evaluations and attitude.

Sandra Bagley suggested that the students could wear a different color uniform shirt to distinguish the academy students from the regular students.

2016 – 1 to 1 Devices

Linda English reported that she would like to see the K-12 1 to 1 device with the textbooks already loaded. There will be a presentation from Pearson soon. Mr. Moore will look into the possibility of having the 1 to 1 device with Google in the classroom. Michael Graham with the Truman School District is very knowledgeable about the 1 to 1 devices.

Mr. Simpson reported that in grades 7-9, approximately 150 students agreed to have the tablets. A lot of parents don't want the responsibility of the student having the tablet. Some tablets were confiscated because of inappropriate content. The biggest obstacle is teachers allowing the students to use the tablet in the classroom. It is not a problem with the seniors because they are more responsible. Mr. Simpson will have training with Mr. Graham July 18-20, 2016.

Mr. Moore stated that he would prefer Chrome books over the I-Pads. Fortenberry stated that not all parents have internet access at home. Fears stated that we have to find a way to get away from parents fear of responsibility for their children having the tablets.

A motion was made by Sandra Bagley and seconded by Amanda Fears to move forward with the 1 to 1 initiative. The motion was unanimously approved.

School Performance Report Card

The School Performance Report Card is available for viewing on the ADE website. The district can use the information in grant applications.

APNA Survey Results

Linda English passed out an overview of the APNA Survey Results which gives an overview of negative activities in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12. Alexander stated that the district has attempted to get a partnership with the police department but nothing is being done.

Chadwick stated that the information needs to be studied by teachers and presented to parents so they can become more aware. We need to figure out how to counteract what is being done. This report says a lot about our communities. Our children need religious resources regarding guidance and hope. We need to bring these issues to the forefront and try to make things better.

Professional Development Updates

Joyce Anderson reported that professional development will take place August 8-12. Student engagement will be the focus this year. Teachers who do not get training in June will receive training in August. It will be an on-going process.

A motion was made by Becky Alexander and seconded by Jewel Hamilton to adjourn the meeting.



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Johnny Key
Commissioner

April 11, 2016

State Board
of Education

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Dr. T.C. Wallace, Interim-Superintendent
Pine Bluff School District
512 South Pine
Pine Bluff, AR 71601

Dear Superintendent Wallace,

The Arkansas State Board of Education is committed to the academic success of all students in our state. As you are aware, Pine Bluff School District has been identified for quarterly progress reviews due to multiple schools identified in Academic Distress in conjunction with questions related to district leadership practices interfering with, or failing to support, the school improvement process. The next review with the Sub-Committee of the State Board of Education is scheduled for Friday, May 13, 2016. The Sub-Committee meeting will begin immediately following the adjournment of the regular session of the State Board. Please contact me for an approximate starting time.

As a reminder, the Special Sub-Committee would like to hear a progress report related to the district's efforts to support schools in academic distress as well as actual progress with leading indicators of student achievement. Please be prepared to discuss current year's progress for the following school(s):

Pine Bluff High School and Belair Middle School (Academic Distress)

Jack Robey Junior High (Priority School)

Prior to that meeting, the Sub-Committee would like to review documentation that supports the oral report you plan to present. Please send this information to Deborah Coffman at Deborah.coffman@arkansas.gov in PDF file format by end of day on April 22, 2016. The items generally requested include:

1. A list of activities/steps that have been completed/taken to assist the "needs improvement" schools.
2. Agendas and minutes of all School Board meetings for February, March and April 2016.
3. A list of external providers supporting school improvement and the evaluation of the effectiveness of these services within your school district.

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4. A list of the actions specific schools are taking to meet the ADE's recommendations.
5. The document that outlines next steps for supporting school(s) in meeting ADE's recommendations.
6. Number of years each principal has been assigned to the specific school and the actions that have been taken to increase the leader's effectiveness.
7. What actions the Board intends to take if there is no progress as measured by the State Annual Assessment (ACT Aspire).
8. Any additional information you consider relevant to your progress.

We look forward to reviewing your information and discussing your successes and challenges.

Sincerely,



M. Annette Barnes
Assistant Commissioner
Public School Accountability
Arkansas Department of Education

cc: Deborah Coffman
Elbert Harvey
Dr. Richard Wilde

(From left) Marquis Jackson, Tristan Jackson, overall winner for middle school/junior high division, Christopher Heard Jr., overall elementary school winner, Christopher Heard Sr.

Ethan Tate/Special to the Commercial

Knowledge Bowl

Elementary school students dominate knowledge bowl

By Shedelle Davis • Special to the Commercial

The Pine Bluff School District Title I Parent & Family Resource Center hosted its annual

Knowledge Bowl on Thursday. Students in grades four through eight from Pine Bluff school district's elementary, middle and junior high schools teamed with their parents to compete by answering questions about famous firsts in Arkansas and United States history. W.T. Cheney Elementary School placed first and second in the preliminary competitions, which put its students toe

toe in the final competition for overall winner in the elementary division.

Preliminary competitions were conducted at the participating schools and those winners competed at the knowledge bowl. There were two rounds for the elementary competition and one round for middle school/junior high school division. The winners include, overall winner for the elementary division, Tristan Jackson, representing W.T. Cheney South, son of Marquis Jackson; overall winner for the middle

school/junior high division, Christopher Heard, representing Jack Robey Junior High School, son of Christopher Heard Sr.; second round preliminary winner for the elementary division, Naomi Jimenez, representing W.T. Cheney, daughter of Teki Winston and granddaughter of Eugene Hunt.

All of the participants received medallions for their participation, and the winners at the school site competitions were awarded trophies and medallions. The overall

Please see KNOWLEDGE on 2C

Jack Robey Junior High School honors students at assembly

SPECIAL TO THE COMMERCIAL

Jack Robey Junior High School in Pine Bluff School District recognized students during the first semester honors and awards assembly recently.

Kaitlyn Peterson, an 8th grade honor student at Jack Robey, spoke to her 7th and 8th grade peers at the event.

"Always keep yourselves motivated, no matter what may be going on in your environment," Peterson said.

Peterson urged her classmates to keep each other motivated. She challenged them to always set goals, plan to further their education after graduation and to go on to college.

Recently, Peterson attended a Pine Bluff School Board meeting and asked if she could speak to her classmates.

"She's an excellent student and very serious about her work," Jack Robey Counselor Bernie Roberts said.

Peterson commended Principal Donald Booth, Assistant Principal Teresa Moka, Roberts, as well as teachers and staff for

All A's — 7th Grade
Kayla Brown, Carvis Campbell, Charlese Colen, Lela Francisco, Semiya Hampton, Kalifa Hulse, Indoneisa Jackson, Cameron Johnson, Nia Sims, Darion Strain, Erin Westmoreland.

All A's — 8th Grade
Omri David, Brian Evans, Kristen Herd, Allison Jackson, Joshua Jimenez-Hunt, Alexia Milton, Aaliyah Moreno, Makiyah Mustful, Ahmad Pace, Keenan Peet, Kaitlyn Peterson, Makayla Reed, Qi Jia (Kevin) Sun, David Woolfolk

Honor Roll — 7th Grade
Phillip Austin, Kiana Blake, Corterius Broadus, Levester Brooks, Kiara Coleman, Ceara Collins, Maya Cole, Alyssa Darton, De'vante Davis, Trinity Dulaney, Bryson Everett, Deven Finch, Chardae Green, Tatyana Griffin, Trenton Harris, Natlie Ingram, Faith Jackson, Dekeira Kente, Jamaria Lewis, Reco Manning, Desmointre Martin, Yanisin McFarley, Niala Moore, Carl Redus, Aerial Reid, Atonia Rhodes, Takiya Riv-

Adrain Whitty, Zho-riah Williams, Daija Winters, Alexandria Woods, Miracle Woolfolk, Kennedy Wooten

Honor Roll — 8th Grade

Jalen Bagwell, Jacoby Bates, Daylan Batts, Eugene Boykins, Lamardre Brazell, Jonathan Burgess, Zachary Burkes, Breuna Eldridge, Tyrah Elerby, Sydney Fooster, Nakayah Graves, Ashley Hamilton, Shawn Howell, Brandal Ingram, Tyrique Jackson, Damonte Johnson, Ethan Johnson, Ashanti Lemons, Randy Little, Alexis McDonald, Demare'a McDonald, Kailiyah Mitchell, Kaise Muldrow, Zia Patrick, Chelsea Potter-Johnson, Kenneth Purnell, Tilton Rhodes, Keonna Rice, Keturah Roberts, Atladeric Seaborn, Zariah Shavers, Makayla Som-bright, Brandon Spratt, Mariah Strawder, Grace Swygert, Brianna Taylor, Elisha Taylor, Brandon Thomas, Braylin Thompkins, Bobby Turner, Makia Warrrior, Kimaryn West, Ethan White, Heaven White, Jaylon White, Makayla Whitty, Rolanda Willis



From left, counselor Bernie Roberts, student Kaitlyn Peterson, and assistant principal Teresa Moka attend the Jack Robey Junior High School Honors and Awards assembly where Peterson was a featured speaker.

Special to The Commercial

Carroll, Carria Col-lins, Keshawn Davis, Ke'Auvion Dean, Ariel Dorn, Kywan Edwards, Chyna Allen, Za'kira Allen, Chyllon Ashley, Morgan Boothe, Kaniyah Briggs, David Carroll, Carria Collins, Keshawn Davis, Ke'Auvion Arianna Robertson, Makayla Sombright, Adrian Thompson, Dallas Washington Merit Achievers — 8th Grade
Artiea Allen, Aiayana Arnold, Sydni Booth, Amiya Brown, Leodis Carroll, Carnisha Cav-

Taiveon Harris, Christopher Heard, Erionna Johnson, Ricketo Jordan, Bryanna Kente, Justin Knight, Ja'mya Knighten, Areis Lewis, Ariel Lowe, Daviona Malone, Kentrell Murry, Eural Papa, Miragule Peyton, Kelly Prince, Rabeya Rajoni,

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Feb 27, 2016 - PRBANNER



Special to The Commercial/Shedelle Davis
Dr. Fitzgerald Hill, president of Arkansas Baptist College, gives Pine Bluff High School students an acronym for S.E.R.V.E. — sacrifice, energize, respond, vision and empower — at the school's annual Black History program Friday.

College president encourages students to honor black history daily

By Shedelle Davis
SPECIAL TO THE COMMERCIAL

Dr. Fitzgerald Hill, president of Arkansas Baptist College, encouraged Pine Bluff High School students to honor black history every day Friday during the school's annual Black History Month observance. "This is just a special recognition month for black history because black history happens every day," Hill said. He then gave an acronym

for S.E.R.V.E.

"On Monday you are going to sacrifice; on Tuesday you are going to energize; on Wednesday you are going to respond; on Thursday you are going to get a vision bigger than you; and on Friday you are going to empower those that you touch," Hill said. He said that it is because of others' sacrifices that he has had the opportunities he has had, that someone had to step up to the plate to allow him those opportunities.

"As I drive down 630 in Little Rock and I get off on Dr. Martin Luther King Drive every morning, I think about a person who sacrificed for me to have all the opportunities I've had in my life," Hill said. "To be assistant head football coach for the Razorbacks, to be the first African-American head football coach at San Jose State, to do a lot of King and Rosa Parks were the two civil rights figures most mentioned throughout

Hill's speech. He explained how them wanting to make a difference impacted his life. "Dr. King in Birmingham, Alabama — they had a big-ger vision when they decided 'we ain't gonna ride in the back of the bus no more,'" Hill said. "What was that? That was sacrifice in itself. That was energy to say 'you know what? We can't ride the bus, but we gonna walk.' That took energy. That means 'we gonna have to walk to work.'" Please see HISTORY on 2A

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SATURDAY, February 13, 2016

135th Year, No. 257

16 Pages

75¢

'First in Southeast Arkansas'

PINE BLUFF COMMERCIAL

Fundraising goal met to buy PBHS football team championship rings

By David Hutter
OF THE COMMERCIAL STAFF

Donors have given at least \$20,500 to buy 100 rings for the 6A state title-winning Pine Bluff High School football team, which meets the goal of a fundraising campaign. The Pine Bluff Church Outreach Com-

mittee and the city of Pine Bluff organized a fundraising effort to provide money to buy the rings. It came two months after the Pine Bluff High School Zebras football team defeated Greenwood 28-21 on Dec. 5 at War Memorial Stadium in Little Rock. The victory marked the Zebras'

second-straight 6A state championship and capped a perfect season at 13-0.

Pine Bluff High School Coach Bobby Bolding said Friday he was thankful to each person who gave money. Bolding said he appreciates the outpouring of support for a second straight year.

"People in the town wanted to help," Bolding said. "It was just amazing. I am just as grateful for a \$5 donation as I am for a \$500 donation. We have received donations from alumni, businesses, churches, banks and the mayor's office. It was a community-wide effort."

Pine Bluff High School graduates live across the nation, Bolding said. Upon learning of the fundraising effort, they responded generously, he said.

The Rev. Jesse Turner, pastor of Elm Grove Missionary Baptist Church and co-chairman of the Church Outreach Committee, thanked donors. He wanted to make sure the community knows the fundraising goal has been met.

"Citizens stepped up and made contributions," Turner said. "It was a real team effort. We are excited for student-athletes and excited to have played a role

Please see RINGS on 3A

PBHS students selected, perform in All-State orchestra

Members of the recently selected 2016 All-State Chamber Orchestra and the All-State Orchestra include Carter Buckner, bassist, and Evan Buckner, violist, from the Pine Bluff High School. Auditions were held Feb. 6 at Henderson State University at Arkadelphia. The students rehearsed for three days and performed two concerts. The Chamber Orchestra, directed by Gene Moon, performed Thursday, Feb. 18, and the All-State Orchestra performed Saturday, Feb. 20, under the direction of Steven Byess at the Hot Springs Convention Center. The PBHS Orchestra is directed by Christie Bonds and Bobby Brown.

Pine Bluff High School students and members of the All-State Chamber Orchestra are Carter Buckner, bassist, and Evan Buckner, violist.



Special to The Commercial

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



Special to The Commercial
 34th Avenue Elementary School in Pine Bluff School District recently announced its Students of the Month for February. They are from left to right, first row: D'Anthony Murray, James Matthew, Jaden Coleman, Kalliah Parks, Natalya Burton, Zontarious Charles, Malakhi Culcager, Demario Douglas; second row: Destiny Johnson, D'Niyah Price, Makyah Williams, Keamla Irby, Analysa Wade, Akasia Kerr, Ryan Jones, Jamal Clay, Jonathan Taylor, Kendralyn Patterson and Braydan Terry. Not pictured are: Aniya Sims and Mya Swygart.

March 9, 2016
Pla Commercial
ROTARY CLUB



Members of the Rotary Club of Pine Bluff recently visited W.T. Cheney Elementary School, making a donation of dictionaries to the third grade. Rotary Club members spoke with students about the importance of using dictionaries at school and home. They also shared skills on how to find words when working on assignments.

Special to The Commercial

March 9, 16
Pine Bluff Commercial

Pine Bluff High School mock trial team competes in Little Rock

SPECIAL TO THE COMMERCIAL

Seven Pine Bluff High School students participated in the Arkansas Bar Association's Mock Trial competition.

After nearly a year of preparation, the team prosecuted and defended the case of the State of Arkansas vs. Dakota Sunflower. The team is sponsored by What's Next Pine Bluff as a way for the students to develop leadership skills and prepare them for the future. Team coach and Pine Bluff High School geometry teacher Alexander Noguera said, "the team performed wonderfully and made me proud to be their coach. The level of work and effort they put in should be commended as they faced off against some tough teams."

Junior Brooklyn Today said that the mock trial "was an excellent opportunity to get hands-on experience and insight into what being a lawyer is like."

Junior Raymond Wallace said that it was a fun experience to learn the case and see what practicing law looks like up close.

Senior Devonta Browder is graduating this year and plans to enlist in the military. However, he still plans to mentor teammates who come after him. Junior Sadagious Owens said that "it was a blessing to understand the rules and roles of the court, so if someone in the future needs my help, I can assist."

The other team members are David McCullough, Jalen Bass and Jael McCullough.

Details: www.whatsnextpinebluff.org

Feb 5, 2016 - P. B. Commercial

RECOGNIZING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT



Special to The Commercial/Sheidelle Davis
Pine Bluff High School sophomore Kim Rhona Jacinto, left, smiles Thursday after receiving an award for perfect attendance from Pine Bluff High School guidance counselor Elfreda Boyd. Jacinto also received the principal's award for earning all A's. Pine Bluff High School students also received awards for honor roll for earning A's and B's; merit awards for earning A's, B's and C's; and citizenship.

Feb 5, 2014 - PB Comm

PB students to attend Destination Imagination

SPECIAL TO THE COMMERCIAL

Pine Bluff School District Gifted Programs has three Destination Imagination teams preparing for the Northern Regional Competition on Saturday, Feb. 27, at Greenbrier.

Destination Imagination is a nonprofit organization that aims to inspire and equip students to become the next generation of innovators and leaders. With creative problem-solving teams, students complete projects based on challenges in six categories.

Pine Bluff School District's Scoggins-May-Hall Destination Imagination participants traveled to Greenbrier on Jan. 23 for Creativity Day training. The training will get them in the mindset for competition, because they never know what the challenge is going to be, said Tanya Colen, coordinator of Gifted and

Talented Programs.

Pine Bluff district will take three teams to the regional competition:

- The middle school team competing in the improv category includes: Miracle Butler, David Carroll, Curtis Standoak, Charlston Colen, Braylon Hopkins, Jaimi Ingram, Charlese Colen and Braelyn Starks.

- The high school team competing in the improv category includes: Jared Ingram, David Woolfolk, Allen Smith, Ethan White and Justin Thommason.

- The high school team competing in the structural category includes: Charla Colen, Kenneth

Gatewood, Kia Kilpatrick, Jordan O'Guinn, Lydya Deshazier, Kentrel Johnson and TiRan Compton.

The structural team is working on making a musical instrument that must be made from all natural materials. After making the instrument, a skit has to be performed based on their creation and the instrument must be played.

Both improv teams must develop a four-minute skit and perform it in an imaginary confined space, integrating certain aspects into that skit.

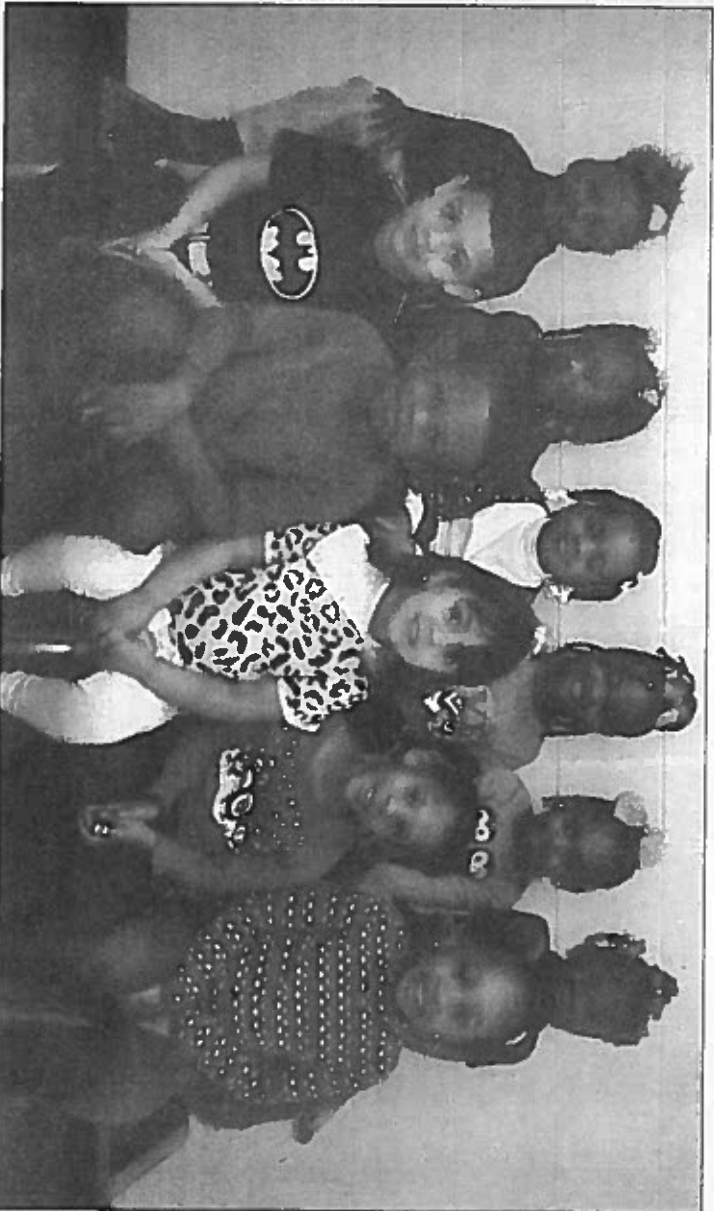
Two Gifted and Talented teachers, Shelinea Warren and Laura McNulty, are team man-

agers, along with a volunteer manager, Toni Jasper, daughter of the late Lugene Jasper, who is responsible for initiating the district's Destination Imagination team nearly 20 years ago.

The state Destination Imagination competition will be in March at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. One team per challenge winning state will attend the global competition in May in Knoxville, Tennessee.

"The high school team that I'm coaching now has been to globals twice," Colen said. "It's their sixth year competing, and they're itching to go back."

January honorees



Fortrest Park/Greenville Preschool named Students of the Month for January. They are, front row, from left, Keriel Reyes-Garcia, Chase Gaddy, Angelica Vargas, Destiny Nelson, Lakenzie Cooper, and back row, from left, Alayna Adams, Treasure, Cannon, Leyah Jackson, Cherish Crutchfield, Khloe Kendall and Eryne Scott.

Special to The Commercial

READ ACROSS AMERICA



Belair Middle School students celebrate Read Across America Day at the site in the Pine Bluff School District. From left, participants were Tiffany Copeland, 21st Century Community Learning Centers site coordinator, students, and far right, Jada Jones, sixth grade teacher at Belair.

Special to The Commercial

Finley's March orders steer Pine Bluff to title games

ERICK TAYLOR
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

The month of March has been good to Pine Bluff Coach Clarence Finley.

Finley has compiled a 37-21 record since making his return to high school coaching last season, but he's 7-0 in March. For him, that means his teams are playing their best basketball at the right time.

"We've turned a corner or two by the time we've gotten in March," he said. "We've played better, and we've showed better focus. For us, that's big because we want to be playing well by the time the state tournament starts."

Pine Bluff (20-8), winners of nine of its past 10 games, will try to keep Finley's unbeaten mark in March intact Saturday when it takes on Little Rock Parkview (26-3) for the Class 6A state championship at 11 a.m. in Bank of the Ozarks Arena in Hot Springs.

There was nearly a 13-year gap between state title game appearances for Finley before last season. Finley led Pine Bluff to the 6A crown last March by beating Jonesboro 46-43. Prior to that, the last time Finley reached a championship game as a coach was in 2002 when he guided Little Rock Central to a runner-up finish in what was then Class 5A. Coincidentally, it was Parkview that beat Central in the final and denied Finley his first state title.

The Patriots will again be opposite Finley, but the circumstances are different this time. Parkview has won 16 of its past 17 games and has two players committed to Division

"It was just a matter of us staying focused and being prepared to play every night in the tournament."

Pine Bluff Coach Clarence Finley

"And then they've got Garland and [Javon Franklin] who are animals on the offensive glass. So we know we're going to have our work cut out for us."

Finley likes the progress his team has made throughout the season and believes it has another gutsy performance in it, similar to the one it had during its 65-51 semifinal victory over El Dorado. But he also admitted that it's been hard to get a clear read on this year's team, which has made things difficult.

"You just never know sometimes with these guys," he said. "They've taken on the mentality of our two leaders, Caleb Parker and Marcus Thomas, and they're both laid-back guys. So some nights, the team will come out laid back and passive. Me, I'm an aggressive kind of guy, and it's hard to get them to come out that way sometimes."

"But when they're locked in from the start, focused and ready to play, we're a pretty good team. They know they can play with anybody, and

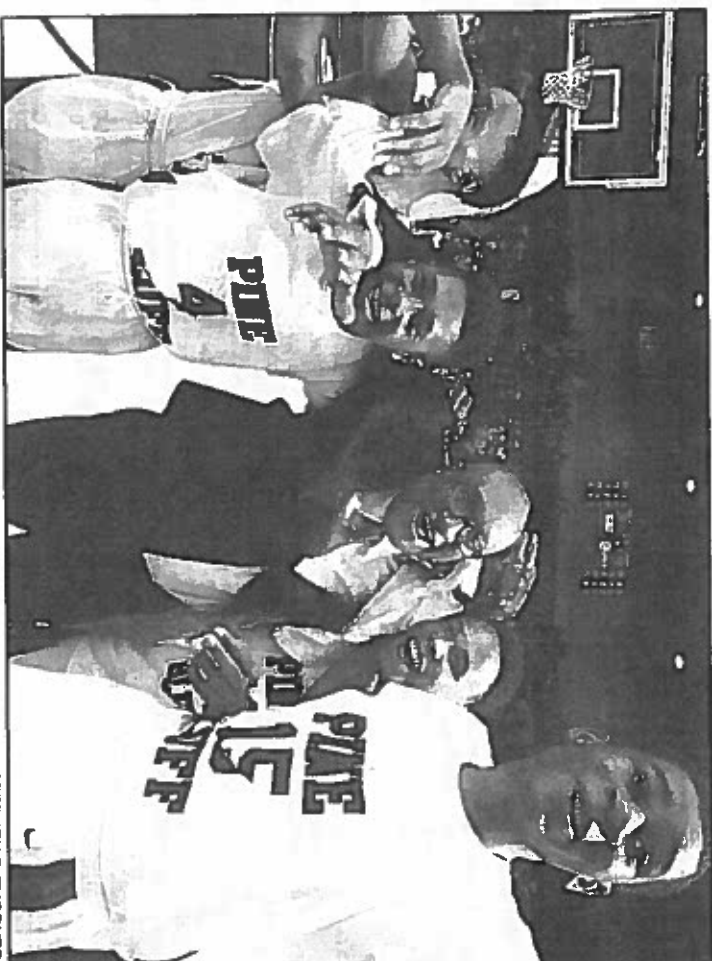
we did last year, but we just felt we were a better team overall. So when that bracket came out, we really felt we'd be in the final against either Jonesboro or Parkview."

"It was just a matter of us staying focused and being prepared to play every night in the tournament."

Pine Bluff can become the first school to win football and basketball championships in the same calendar sports year in back-to-back seasons with a victory.

"We've been steady all year," Finley said. "In the first game against Parkview, we didn't knock down open shots and lost by five. In the second game, [Parkview] killed us with second and third shots, plus our transition defense was horrible."

"We've got to start off fast and keep them off the glass. The guys have been pretty focused all week, and hopefully they'll come out that way Saturday. I know Parkview will be."



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/STEPHEN B. THORNTON

Pine Bluff Coach Clarence Finley (center) celebrates with his team following last year's Class 6A championship victory over Jonesboro. To win the title again this year, Finley must defeat a familiar opponent in Little Rock Parkview.

TODAY'S HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES

All games at Bank of the Ozarks Arena, Hot Springs

2A boys

EAST POKNETT COUNTY
VS. EARLE

WHEN 3:30 p.m.

RECORDS East Pontnett County 20-10, Earle 32-4

PROBABLE STARTING LINEUPS

EAST POKNETT COUNTY WARRIORS			
PLAYER	HT.	CL.	
Xavier Reed	6-2	Jr.	
J'Shawn Brown	6-3	Jr.	
Cay Malone	6-1	Sr.	
Ose Barnes	6-1	Jr.	
Keyon Dorsey	6-4	Sr.	

2A girls

HECTOR VS. EARLE

WHEN 5:15 p.m.

RECORDS Hector 25-10, Earle 27-9

PROBABLE STARTING LINEUPS

HECTOR WILDCATS			
PLAYER	HT.	CL.	
Laken Stanek	5-11	Sr.	
Alyssa Hillisups	5-7	Sr.	
Darci Fountain	5-11	Jr.	
Cassie Haley	5-3	Jr.	
Paple Lee	5-8	So.	
HEAD COACH Walt Davis			
ASSISTANT COACHES Hunter Sims, Noah			

4A boys

BAPTIST PREP VS. MALVERN

WHEN 7 p.m.

RECORDS Baptist Prep 25-8, Malvern 31-2

PROBABLE STARTING LINEUPS

BAPTIST PREP EAGLES			
PLAYER	HT.	CL.	
Dylan Hogan	6-1	Jr.	
Cory McConigal	6-0	Sr.	
Chad McConigal	6-0	Sr.	
Connor Vanover	7-3	So.	
Brandon Vanover	7-0	Sr.	
HEAD COACH Brian Ross			
ASSISTANT COACHES Mark Thompson, Mar-			

6A girls

RUSSELLVILLE VS. JONESBORO

WHEN 8:45 p.m.

RECORDS Russellville 22-6, Jonesboro 19-12

PROBABLE STARTING LINEUPS

RUSSELLVILLE CYCLES			
PLAYER	HT.	CL.	
Alyssa Owens	5-7	Sr.	
Emily Posey	5-8	Sr.	
Abby Loofer	5-8	Jr.	
Babey Wilbers	5-9	Jr.	
Shameka Day	6-1	Sr.	
HEAD COACH Sherry White			
ASSISTANT COACHES Christina Wilbers, Chase			

Defense has helped Zebras
get to 6A championship game

By Ogilvy & Mather
SPECIAL TO THE COMMERCIAL

Winning has been

Winning has been contagious in Zebra country, and what a run it has been to get to a second straight 6A state championship game for the basketball program.

Last year, Pine Bluff was looked at as an underdog that made a fantastic run to win a state title, but now they've earned the respect that they deserve. After losing depth on the inside, there were questions on how the Zebras would play while replacing those bodies. Pine Bluff head coach Clarence Finley knew exactly how he would replace them, and he has built this team around its strengths and it has resulted in success.

After a season where the Zebras spent a lot of time attempting to find themselves as far as rotations and strong suits. They were able to get into a positive flow on offense and focused on blocking and

another title they'll have to continue to pressure the ball. The tone was set on the defensive end in the opening game against Mountain Home as it was tough for the Bombers to even advance the ball up the court. Their defense was the difference in the late minutes of a thriller in the quarterfinals against Russellville. Also, in the semifinals against El Dorado, without a great defensive effort on standout big man Daniel Gafford, a comeback might not have been possible.

"We've still have to stick with our defensive mind," Finley said. "A few high school and college coaches said that we defended very well and showed toughness. We contained the dribble, but I feel like we have to do a better job of blocking out. In Little Rock, Parkview destroyed us on the glass so we're really focused on offense and

trying to contain Garland will be our biggest test." A player that will need to step up and knock down timely shots and find ways to get to the free throw line for the Zebras is sophomore guard Caddarius Badgett. Badgett is young, but he played as a freshman and has enough starts under his belt to be a factor in this game. Most importantly, Caleb Parker will have to thrive in his point guard role. Later, Parker has played some of his best basketball and he'll have to continue that for the Zebras to have their best chance.

"In our last game at Parkview, they game planned against Caleb by guarding him with Garland," Finley said. "Caleb struggled in Little Rock, but he is going to have to run the show. Badgett is going to have to contain Garland, and on offense he must be focused and

March 11, 2016
P.B. Commercial

RING, RING



Members of the 2015 Pine Bluff Zebra state champion football team sign the helmets of the team's 22 graduating seniors prior to the start of their ring ceremony Monday night at the Pine Bluff Convention Center. Signing helmets are clockwise from left Aaron Edwards, Armani Walters, Keshawn Whaley, Malik Isiah, Issac Smith, Duncan Bailey, Elijah Harden, Matavious Thompson and Antonio Rice.

Zebra football celebrates back-to-back state titles

By Nicholas Sullivan
OF THE COMMERCIAL STAFF

It's indicative of Pine Bluff High School's recent athletic success that John Tate received his third state championship game against Parkview at 11 a.m. Saturday in Hot Springs. Tate and the other members of the 2015 Zebra football team received their championship rings during a banquet and ceremony at Pine Bluff Convention Center on Tuesday. Tate and the other members of the 2015 Zebra football team received their championship rings during a banquet and ceremony at Pine Bluff Convention Center on Tuesday.

One repeat complete; one repeat just days from possibly being realized. "It's what we're supposed to do," Zebra coach and PBHS athletics director Bobby Bold- ing said. "We're Pine Bluff. We have a rich tradition in all sports of competing at the highest level. That's not coach speak, that's just the way it is. While Tuesday night was the final celebration for the on- field accomplishments of one of the greatest teams in school history — a team that went 13-0 en route to its second consecutive state title.

"Thank goodness it is (the last one)," Bolding said. "We've had a lot of celebrations. We're really grateful for all of them, but it's time to get back to work and get busy on trying to have another great year next year." Despite being a time to reflect on football-related accomplishments, Tuesday's ceremony was also a showcase for the talents the players have

Please see ZEBRAS on 2

EXTRA SPECIAL

Feb 10, 2016
Pro Commercial

PB boys
need OT
to sweep
LR Hall

6A-SOUTH BOYS BASKETBALL
Pine Bluff 56
Little Rock Hall 48

By Nicholas Sullivan

OF THE COMMERCIAL STAFF

The difference between the numbers 22 and 23 is slight, even somewhat insignificant, except when it comes to an official scorebook.

When No. 23 Grant Jackson entered Tuesday night's overtime game for Little Rock Hall, he was looking to help his team overcome a 51-48 deficit to Pine Bluff. Instead, due to a mistake by his coaches, Jackson's entrance all but ended the Warriors' chance to steal a game on the Zebbras' home court.

Entered into the book as No. 22, Jackson entered the game led to a technical foul assessed against Hall. Caleb Parker made both free throws. An intentional foul was called on the inbound pass moments later, as things unraveled for the Warriors inside McFadden Gymnasium.

"Ultimately, I'm the head coach," Hall's Jon Coleman said. "His number wasn't in the book, and we got a tech. I thought it was in the Pine Bluff took advantage of its opportunities at the free throw line and put the game away to grab a 56-48 victory in 6A-South Conference play. Hall (11-12, 5-5) like-

ly felt cheated by the way things ended, but overtime, so I thought we were going to win it," Zebra coach Clarence Finley said. The team also missed a chance to take the lead in the final moments of regulation when Isaac Beal missed a shot as Thomas, who once again started off slow, scoring just one first-half point.

The Zebbras hit eight of nine freebies in OT, who added 12. The Warriors led 10-5 after the first quarter before falling behind 19-17 at halftime. Hall regained the lead, 30-28, entering the fourth quarter. Pine Bluff finishes up the week at 6 p.m. Friday at Lake Hamilton.

Hall was led by the added two free throws in overtime. The Zebbras hit eight of nine freebies in OT, who added 12. The Warriors led 10-5 after the first quarter before falling behind 19-17 at halftime. Hall regained the lead, 30-28, entering the fourth quarter. Pine Bluff finishes up the week at 6 p.m. Friday at Lake Hamilton.

Pine Bluff's Marcus Thomas shoots a layup against Little Rock Hall during Tuesday night's game.



Special to The Commercial/Joey Dempsey

NATIONAL SIGNING DAY

Seven PB
seniors
sign NLI

By Nicholas Sullivan
OF THE COMMERCIAL STAFF

Bobby Bolding's message was poignant to the seven Pine Bluff High School seniors signing national letters of intent on Wednesday. Don't waste this opportunity.

The Zebra head coach's speech to his group of kids gathered in the film room of the school's multipurpose building ran in stark contrast to the pomp and circumstance of the ceremony just minutes before.

In McFadden Gymnasium, the players

who helped lead the Zebbras to back-to-back 6A state titles had been introduced like rock stars. All that was missing was a fog machine

and light show. The seniors were announced in alphabetical order

one-by-one and walked in on a "green" carpet with cheerleaders lining each side, while over the sound system statistics and honors were

read. Entering first, fittingly, was David Tensley. The dynamic all-purpose player who

shined at wide receiver, and cared about me as much as I cared about them. They felt like a

family there, and you know momma knows best, and she kinda felt that was the place I

MORE IN FRIDAY'S EDITION
• See Friday's edition of The Commercial for more local signing day coverage

needed to be, too," Beasley, who will join

Willie Roaf as fellow Zebbras to join the Ruston-based school, said

he visited Louisiana Tech three times. "The Landers Award finalist

also toured Memphis just weeks ago with fellow senior John Tate, who ended up signing

Tate, who had verbally committed to Memphis shortly after his visit, clearly enjoyed

himself on Wednesday. Upon being announced to the crowd, the defensive lineman broke out

the dab, a celebratory move made popular by Carolina Panthers quarterback Cam Newton,

terback Cam Newton, move made popular by the dab, a celebratory

ships, continuing to play the sport they love. "Even though we're

going to be going to different colleges, we'll



Pine Bluff senior John Tate was one of seven Zebbras to sign national letters of intent on Wednesday. Special to The Commercial/Joey Dompaey

still have that brotherly bond together and that's going to take us farther together." Tate was the most highly recruited of the Zebbras, having racked up over 10 Division I offers before settling on the Tigers. He was a finalist for Farm Bureau's 7A/6A Defensive Player of the Year. Teammate Roman Reades was a finalist for the classifications' offensive award. He'll be heading to Division II Harding University. Reades had split his time during his sophomore and junior seasons between running back

Please see ZEBRAS on p. 9

Week 12, 8/14

WITHIN REACH

Finley,
Z's look
to defeat
familiar
foe today

By Ocie B. Brown
SPECIAL TO THE COMMERCIAL

Pine Bluff Zebra head coach Clarence Finley is very familiar with the Parkview Patriots, who his team will be squaring off against in the 6A state championship game at 11 a.m. Saturday in Hot Springs.

Finley is a graduate of Parkview, and he coached against them for years as the head coach at Little Rock Central. Since Finley arrived at Pine Bluff prior to last season, he has shaped the program in the mold of his liking, leading the Zebras to back-to-back championship games.

"Parkview is my alma mater," Finley said. "Coach Al (Flanigan) and I have been just like brothers for a long time now. We hate playing each other, because someone has to lose. When I was the head



Gassaway
walk-off

lifts Hogs
to victory

NCAA BASEBALL — 10 INN.
Arkansas 3
Western Illinois 2

By Eric W. Bolin
ARKANSAS NEWS BUREAU

FAYETTEVILLE — Cullen Gassaway is Mr. Clutch. Tucker Pennell is the King of the Extra-Base Hit.

Buy a lottery ticket if you picked those two designations for Arkansas baseball superlatives before the season. Pennell hit a two-run home run in the fifth inning and Gassaway knocked a walk-off single in the 10th to lift the Diamond Hogs over Western Illinois, 3-2, on Friday night at Baum Stadium in the first of a three-game series.

Gassaway has two walk-off RBIs in three games for Arkansas. He had a walk-off walk last weekend against Eastern Illinois. And in the midst of the coldest stretch of the early season, falling into a hole against the Leathernecks would have been a somber reminder of a year ago.

Instead, there was some celebration, even if it was only barely

Feb. 20, 2016 PB Commercial



Pine Bluff's Ladarus Skelton glides to the basket ahead of Sheridan's Luke Hill on Friday night.

Special to The Commercial/Joey Dempsey

Pine Bluff boys blow by Sheridan

By Ocie B. Brown
SPECIAL TO THE COMMERCIAL

After an upset loss to Lake Hamilton last Friday, the Pine Bluff Zebraws bounced back with a big win over the highly talented El Dorado Wildcats.

That win will go a long way in getting the Zebraws to where they want to be by the end of the regular season. After the Lake Hamilton game, Zebraws

head coach Clarence Finley wasn't a happy camper, and his team took heed to that. It will be hard for the Zebraws to finish as high as second in the 6A-South Conference standings, but they're pretty content with a third-place spot.

Before Pine Bluff could celebrate an unde-

6A-SOUTH BOYS BASKETBALL
Pine Bluff 68
Sheridan 32

This has been a season to forget for Sheridan, as they entered the game winless in conference play. However, the Zebraws couldn't afford to overlook the Jackets and have a major letdown.

As the regular season comes to an end, Finley is looking for his guys to be playing their best bas-

feated week, they had to take care of business against the Sheridan Yellowjackets.

The Zebraws have shot the ball well from the outside throughout the season, and Caleb Parker showcased that ability with the game's opening score coming from long range.

C.J. Smith followed

defeating Sheridan by a final score of 68-32.

Please see ZEBRAS on 2B

Jackets keep Fillies struggling on offense

6A-SOUTH GIRLS BASKETBALL
 Sheridan 38
 Pine Bluff 21

only lost by a single point to the conference leader Parkview. This was the first matchup of the season between Pine Bluff and Sheridan, due to a postponed first game (the teams will play again on Thursday), and the Jackets didn't have much trouble controlling the game. Pine Bluff only led early in the first quarter of the game, and after Sheridan

The Pine Bluff Fillies had a tough couple of games in their last two outings, and things wouldn't get much easier competition-wise on Friday. The Fillies welcomed in the Sheridan Yellowjackets, who came into the contest tied for fourth place in the 6A-South Conference standings. Last week the Jackets gained a big win over Little Rock Hall, and in their first game this week they



Pine Bluff's Ineka Clark shoots past Sheridan's Savannah Howard during Friday's game.
 Special to The Commercial/Joe Dempsey

Feb 20, 2014 PRCommercial

Zebras fall to Wolves, but still have chance at top-three seed

BY THE COMMERCIAL STAFF

PEARCY — Fresh off of an emotional overtime victory against Little Rock Hall, the Pine Bluff High Zebras had a letdown as they traveled to Lake Hamilton on Friday.

The Wolves were able to defeat the Zebras by the final score of 54-47. Both teams are now tied for third in the 6A-South Conference at the tiebreaker, thanks to a 10-point win in the first meeting.

"We definitely came out flat," Zebras head

Preps Roundup

coach Clarence Finley said. "I felt like we had horrible practices this week, and that's just how we played."

Even though the Wolves were able to hang on, they had to avoid a late rally by the Zebras in order to secure the victory. Pine Bluff was able to cut the deficit to only three points with 40 seconds to play in the fourth, but from that point they had to foul and the Wolves did a good job of icing the game at the

foul line.

"They got all the 50-50 balls, and we didn't contain them off of the dribble well at all," Finley said. "They're fighting for postseason play, and they just wanted it more than we did."

The last few games of the regular season loom big for the Zebras. On Tuesday, they have a chance to take the third spot in the 6A-South standings at best, and that's exactly where they want to be. Getting a second or third seed in the state tournament will keep Pine

Bluff off of the side of the bracket with Little Rock Parkview and Jonesboro.

The Bobcats enter the final week of the 8-4A Conference season in third place, but with games against the two teams tied for first place. Dumas (20-4, 10-2) heads to Dolarway (11-1 in conference) on Tuesday and hosts Monticello (11-1) on Friday.

Even a pair of losses would not knock the Bobcats out of the No. 3 seed for the 4A South Region tournament, which Dumas will host Feb. 24-27.

"This game against El Dorado on Tuesday is big for us, and we'll be expecting a great crowd to come out and help cheer us on to a much-needed win."

Dumas 59, Warren 49 — With a huge week on the horizon, Dumas stayed focus to hold off Warren, 59-49, on Thursday night.

Kyon Smith (17 points) and Darhondrick Smith (12) led the

Feb. 14, 2016 - Pine Bluff Commercial

Sunday, March 6, 2016

SPORTS

C

Zebras going back to title game

By Nicholas Sullivan
OF THE COMMERCIAL STAFF

RUSSELLVILLE — Marcus Thomas is at it again.

A year after helping carry Pine Bluff to a surprise 6A state championship, the senior is doing the heavy lifting again — only this time it's for a Zebra team that everybody is gunning for.

After helping Pine Bluff roll past Mountain Home in the first

6A BOYS STATE TOURNAMENT

Pine Bluff	65
El Dorado	51

round and barely get by tournament host Russellville in the quarterfinals, Thomas saved his best performance, so far, for Saturday's semifinal.

The reigning state tournament MVP totaled 30 points, including knocking down four three-pointers, to help the Zebras rally from double-digits,

then pull away from El Dorado, 65-51.

"He picked a great night to do it," Pine Bluff coach Clarence Finley said. "... It was just a matter of time. Hopefully, he's got one more in him."

That one more would be this year's state title game against Parkview. A time and date for the championship game has not been set.

For about a quarter it seemed Pine Bluff's bid for back-to-back

state titles would end in Cyclone Arena. The Wildcats, who split the regular-season meetings with the Zebras, held a 19-11 lead after one quarter. El Dorado (23-6) quickly pushed the advantage to 10 with junior Daniel Gafford's two free throws to start the second period.

"It didn't phase me," Finley said. "Because of the way (his players) shoot it."

Please see ZEBRAS on 2C

CINCHING THE WIN

Wildcats beat Pioneers, make return to final

5A GIRLS STATE TOURNAMENT
Watson Chapel 73
Batesville 55

By Nicholas Sullivan
OF THE COMMERCIAL STAFF

HOT SPRINGS — Peyton Martin had been steadily growing stronger during the 5A state tournament. On Saturday, the Watson Chapel junior showed just how good she is when she's feeling healthy.

After seeming to slightly re-injure her knee during the Wildcats' state tourney opener against Valley

Zebra drop overtime heart-breaker in 6A title game

By Nicholas Sullivan
OF THE COMMERCIAL STAFF

HOT SPRINGS — It was so close, Pine Bluff could practically taste it. A second straight 6A boys basketball state title, on the heels of consecutive football championships, was fully within grasp.

Then, suddenly, it wasn't.

Having led since the game's early moments, the Zebras saw what was at one time a 17-point lead evaporate. Parkview, the team Pine Bluff stunned in last year's quarterfinals, scored the final five points of regulation to

force overtime inside Bank of the Ozarks Arena.

With all the momentum, the Patriots, ranked No. 1 in the state of Arkansas and No. 30 in the nation, according to MaxPreps.com, survived a late attack to grab a 69-64 win over the Zebras.

"I challenged their manhood," Parkview coach Al Flanagan said of his message heading into overtime. "I can't really tell you what I told them. ... They responded."

Pine Bluff (20-9) had its chances, in regulation and in overtime, to pull off back-to-back

6A BOYS STATE TOURNAMENT
Parkview 69
Pine Bluff 64

state titles. The Zebras led 57-52 with 1:43 left on a Marcus Thomas three-pointer.

Parkview's Ryan Pippins answered with a triple of his own, and Thomas threw the ball out of bounds on the ensuing possession. A foul by Cadarius Baggett sent Khalil Garland to the free throw line with 74 seconds left, and the Memphians commit promptly sank both shots.

With 13 seconds left
Please see ZEBRAS on 2B



Special to The Commercial/Don Dempsey
Pine Bluff's Cadarius Baggett gets past Parkview's Khalil Garland for a shot attempt during Saturday's 6A state championship game.

March 13, 2014



Tuesday, February 2, 2016

Board work study session

Work study session

1. Call to Order

2. Welcome from Broadmoor Principal (Clintontine Fitz)

3. Superintendent Updates

A. Discussion of Administrators staffing within the buildings- Dr. Wallace gave a overview on the Administrators that are employed by the district and how they are overstaffed based on the students numbers that are in the building. Dr. Wallace informed the board that they were looking at reducing the staff next school year and they would determine this based on the projection numbers.

B. Update on Administrators Evaluations-Dr. Wallace report that every Administrator including Central Office is being evaluated and recommendation are being done in order to see who will return and who will not. But every employee in the district is being evaluated. Dr. Wallace acknowledged that it is some trouble areas starting with security but its everywhere and they plan to take care of that.

C. Bus Aide and Paraprofessional salary adjustment- Dr. Wallace reported to the board that the where in the process of comparing the salary of the Bus Aides and Paraprofessional with the surrounding areas. Informing the Board that the reason that we could not keep or people or not staying as Bus Aides or Paraprofessional in our district because of the pay that is 8.25 per hour. With other districts paying 12 dollars or more.

D. Budget Update-Dr. Wallace informed the board that we are on the watch list for our Budget in the district. Dr. Wilde talk to the board and others about being on the watch list and how the money was spent and how the budget looked last year, this year and looking into the end of the year. Compared last year and the previous years to this years budget.

E. Facility Usage Update- Dr. Wallace informed the board that we had a building that one of the leaser didnt keep the agreement on there side as far as paying the bills on there side so he ask them to enter the building until farther notice. Mr. Dabner recommended that when they lease the building for them to check and make sure that all the bills are being paid. Jackson recommended that we pay the bills and the leaser pays the district back in order to make sure that the agreement is up to part. Dr. Wallace informed the board that it had been multiple break ins and things that happen to destroy the property.

F. Classified School Employees with Paid Breaks/Duty Free Lunch and FLSA- Dr. Wallace gave a description of the new law that was put in order by the Department of Education Commissioner's Memos Classified School Employees with Paid Breaks/Duty Free Lunches and FLSA that requires each school district to provide no fewer than two (2) paid fifteen (15) minute break during each regular workday for each classified school employee who works more than twenty (20) hours per week. Mrs. Courtney spoke to say that they are working with Dr. Wallace in the situation but she stated that they work 8 and half hours, she talked to somebody at ADE and they told her it was a paid break. Dr. Wallace informed Mrs. Courtney that if the lunch break was interrupted that it would be paid.

G. Supt. Search- Update on the Supt Search the position was posted state wide, on the McPherson site, and on the Pine Bluff School District site

H. Security/Recommendations- Dr. Wallace did some research on the pay of the security for activties and the surrounding areas paid 75.00 dollars and he plans to make a recommendation to change the pay of the security.

I. February 12, 2016 State Board of Education- Dr. Wallace just reminded the Board of the meeting and ask any board member that could attend please come to attend on the update with the State Department.

4. Update on Priority Schools (McMurray)

A. Report- Mrs. McMurray reported that only two of our school was on the Academic Distress list. Mrs. McMurray told the board that with both schools they where not that far behind from the scores that they needed to beat the state but they feel like all the things that are going with the school that they school be good for next year. And they have to score good for 2 years to be removed. Jack Robey was pulled off the distress list because there scores didn't fall they basically leveled out.

5. Discussion of UVA contract (Smith)

A. Report- Ms. Smith reported that her and Dr. Wilde would talk about keep or renewing the contact with UVA but they haven't had the conversation on it yet. And she let the board know that UVA is doing good things and plan on working with them in next school year.

6. Adjournment

Your Child Matters



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Work Study Session
February 2, 2016
6:00 P. M.**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

President Henry Dabner called the Board of Education Work Study Session to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call

President, Henry Dabner asked Yolanda Scott-Racy, the superintendent's administrative assistant to proceed with roll call. Upon the completion of roll call, it was recorded that all were present.

**Members Presents-7
Members Absent-0**

3. Approval of Agenda

Phyllis Wilkins moved to approve the work study agenda as printed, seconded by Herman Horace.

4. Superintendents Updates

1. **Report-** Discussion of Administrators staffing within the buildings- Dr. Wallace gave an overview on the Administrators that are employed by the district and how they are overstaffed based on the students numbers that are in the building. Dr. Wallace informed the board that they were looking at reducing the staff next school year and they would determine this based on the projection numbers.
2. **Update on Administrators Evaluations-** Dr. Wallace report that every Administrator including Central Office is being evaluated and recommendation are being done in order to see who will return and who will not. But every employee in the district is being evaluated. Dr. Wallace acknowledged that it is some trouble areas starting with security but it's everywhere and they plan to take care of that.
3. **Bus Aide and Paraprofessional salary adjustment-** Dr. Wallace reported to the board that the where in the process of comparing the salary of the Bus Aides and Paraprofessional with the surrounding areas. Informing the Board that the reason that we could not keep or people or not staying as Bus Aides or Paraprofessional in our district because of the pay that is 8.25 per hour. With other districts paying 12 dollars or more.
4. **Budget Update-** Dr. Wallace informed the board that we are on the watch list for our Budget in the district. Dr. Wilde talks to the board and others about being on the watch list and how the money was spent and how the budget looked last year, this year and looking into the end of the year. Compared last year and the previous years to this year's budget.
5. **Facility Usage Update-** Dr. Wallace informed the board that we had a building that one of the leaser didn't keep the agreement on their side as far as paying the bills on their side so he ask them to enter the building until farther notice. Mr. Dabner recommended that when they lease the building for them to check and make sure that all the bills are being paid. Jackson recommended that we pay the bills and the leaser pays the district back in order to make sure that the agreement is up to part. Dr. Wallace informed the board that it had been multiple break ins and things that happen to destroy the property.

6. **Classified School Employees with Paid Breaks/Duty Free Lunch and FLSA-** Dr. Wallace gave a description of the new law that was put in order by the Department of Education Commissioner's Memos Classified School Employees with Paid Breaks/Duty Free Lunches and FLSA that requires each school district to provide no fewer than two (2) paid fifteen (15) minute break during each regular workday for each classified school employee who works more than twenty (20) hours per week. Mrs. Courtney spoke to say that they are working with Dr. Wallace in the situation but she stated that they work 8 and half hours, she talked to somebody at ADE and they told her it was a paid break. Dr. Wallace informed Mrs. Courtney that if the lunch breaks was interrupted that it would be paid.
7. **Supt. Search-** Update on the Supt Search the position was posted state wide, on the McPherson site, and on the Pine Bluff School District site.
8. **Security/Recommendations-** Dr. Wallace did some research on the pay of the security for activities and the surrounding areas paid 75.00 dollars and he plans to make a recommendation to change the pay of the security.
9. **February 12, 2016 State Board of Education-** Dr. Wallace just reminded the Board of the meeting and ask any board member that could attend please come to attend on the update with the State Department.

5. Update on Priority Schools (McMurray)

Report-Report- Mrs. McMurray reported that only two of our school was on the Academic Distress list. Mrs. McMurray told the board that with both schools they where not that far behind from the scores that they needed to beat the state but they feel like all the things that are going with the school that they school be good for next year. And they have to score good for 2 years to be removed. Jack Robey was pulled off the distress list because there scores didn't fall they basically leveled out

6. UVA Update

Report-Ms. Smith reported that she and Dr. Wilde would talk about keep or renewing the contact with UVA but they haven't had the conversation on it yet. And she let the board know that UVA is doing good things and plan on working with them in next school year.

7. Adjourn

With no further business, Henry Dabner moved the work study session be adjourned, seconded by Herman Horace. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Yolanda Scott-Racy
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

APPROVED:

Board President

Date: _____

ATTESTED:

Board Secretary

Date: _____



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
February, 16, 2016
6:00 P. M.**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes
 - a. January 5, 2016 Approval of Work Study Session Minutes
 - b. January 19, 2016 Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes
4. School Report (34th Elementary School)
5. Superintendent's Observations/Report
 - a. RIF Process Overview
 - b. State Board Update
 - c. Arkansas School Board Association Training- March
 - d. Staff Appreciation
 - e. National School Board Conference
6. Executive Session- if needed
 - a. Personnel Actions
 - b. New Employees
 - c. Retired
 - d. Resignations
 - e. Grievance Discussion on January 19, 2016
7. Security Recommendation
 - a. The administration recommends that the salary for athletics security activities be increased to \$75.00 for the 2016-2017 school year
8. Bus Aides and Paraprofessional Recommendation
 - a. The administration recommends that the attached salary schedule for bus aides and paraprofessionals be approved
9. Board Policy on Classified Breaks
10. Approval of donation of property

11. Financial Report

12. CPPC – Classified Personnel Policies Committee

13. PPC- Personal Policies Committee

14. PBEA- Pine Bluff Education Association

15. Adjournment



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Regular Monthly Meeting
February 16, 2016
6:00 P. M.**

AGENDA

Call to Order

Henry Dabner, Board President called the Board of Education regular monthly board meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Roll Call-Roll Call- Board President, Henry Dabner asked Yolanda Scott-Racy, the superintendent's administrative assistant to proceed with roll call at 6:00 p.m. Upon the completion of roll call it was recorded that all were present. **7-0**

Members Presents-7

Members Absent-0

2. Approval of Agenda

Phyllis Wilkins moved to approve the agenda as printed, seconded by Leon Jones.

Motion approved with a 7-0 vote

3. Approval of Minutes

•**January 5, 2016:** Leon Jones moved to approve the January 5, 2016 minutes as printed, seconded by Andrea Roaf-Little.

Motion approved with a 7-0 vote

•**January 19, 2016:** Leon Jones moved to approve the April 20, 2015 minutes as printed, seconded by Andrea Roaf-Little.

Motion approved with a 7-0 vote

4. School Report (34th Elementary)

Report-Mrs. Linder Anderson gave a report about all the different programs that they were using to help children do more reading, and what they were doing for rewarding of the children for their performance. They also showed a slide show of the drill team and pictures of the things that they had at their school like Muffins for Moms and Donuts for Dads and Gentleman's Luncheon. Mrs. Savage showed the results of the TLI scores and the different areas they student didn't do so well in and what they were doing to try to improve that skill so the students could better understand.



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Regular Monthly Meeting
February 16, 2016
6:00 P. M.**

AGENDA

5. Superintendent's Report

1. **RIF Process Overview-** Dr. Wallace told the board that they had a process with the RIF this year if it is needed it was noted that all the principals and administrations would have to report everybody on their campuses including administrators to determine how many they people that will be need next year going by the projection numbers.
2. **State Board Update-** Dr. Wallace informed the Board of the updates with the visit of the Board that they attended and he said that this was the best visit that they had prior to the others. Mr. Dabner made a statement that the Board was impressive with them having the 2 board meeting per month, joining school partnership, board members working good together, having UVA, and opening more things for the district. Ms. Smith felt like all the schools are working together and moving forward.
3. **Arkansas School Board Association Training- March-** Dr. Wallace let the board members know that is was some dates that were available for the training and they voted for the training to be March 29 @ 5:30 p.m.
4. **Staff Appreciation-** Mrs. Smith recognized teachers and support staff from different schools and presented them with a certificate and a gift card from Sonic. Dr. Wallace gave an award to the Administrator of the Month (Franklin).
5. **National School Board Conference-** President Dabner nominated to vote on the National Conference in Boston and Mrs. Wilkins agreed that it wouldn't be a good idea for the board to attend the conference because of the lack of funds that are available to the district. Mrs. Wilkins nominated to motion for the board not to go to the conference seconded by Andrea Roaf-Little. **7-0**

6. Executive Session/ Personnel Action

- A. New Employees
- B. Retired
- C. Resignations
- D. Salary Resolution 5%

President Henry Dabner announced at 6:44 p.m. that the Board would go into executive session of the purpose of considering employment appointment(s), discipline of students, and discipline and resignation of employees. President Dabner announced that the board had reconvened from executive session with no action taken at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Leon Jones motion the approval the Personnel action seconded by Herman Horace

5% increase was approved in the January 19 board meeting approved with 7-0



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Regular Monthly Meeting
February 16, 2016
6:00 P. M.**

AGENDA

7. Security Recommendation

The administration recommends that the salary for athletic security activities be increased to \$75.00 for the 2016-2017 school. Phyllis Wilkins motioned the approval of the recommendation of the salary of the security increase for \$75.00 for the 2016-2017 school years, seconded by Stephen Bronskill.

Motion approved with a 7-0

8. Bus Aides and Paraprofessional Recommendations

The administration recommends that the attached salary schedule for bus aides and paraprofessionals be approved. Dr. Wallace recommended the Bus Aides and Paraprofessional salary schedule be approved effective on the February 16, 2016 with the new schedule.

Motion approved with a 7-0

9. Board Policy and Classified Breaks

1. **Old Policy-** Each school district in the State shall provide no fewer than two (2) paid fifteen minutes breaks during each regular workday for each classified school employee.
2. **1st Reading-** Fulltime nonexempt classified employee who receives on (1) thirty (30) minute, uninterrupted, duty-free lunch period is not entitled to two (2) paid breaks during each regular workday (mandated by 6-17-2205). Dr. Wallace recommended that the board to the new policy with the no more (2) 15 minutes breaks, (1) 30 minute duty free lunch with ADE. Andrea Roaf-Little motioned the approval seconded by Harold Jackson

Motion approved with a 6-1

10. January Financial Report

Pam Winkler, Director of Finance presented the financial report for the month ending January 31, 2016.

11. CPPC ~Classified Personnel Policies Committee



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Regular Monthly Meeting
February 16, 2016
6:00 P. M.**

AGENDA

Report- Mrs. Courtney reported a proposal to the board for a 10% salary increase across the board for classified employees. Mrs. Courtney mentioned that the increase if well needed and feels like the classified employees would better serve the district with a step closer to the path of eradicating in the inequities already identified with the classified employee pay schedule. Mrs. Courtney also stated that hiring the Educational Management Solution Firm to do a Job Survey and pay recommendations would have been in place and there would be no need for this.

12. PPC~ Certified Personnel; Policies Committee

Report- It was report that they had a committee meeting scheduled for the following Thursday including Ms. Smith and Mrs. Russell on the agenda would be continuing looking at the RIF's policy and teacher data.

13. PBEA~ Pine Bluff Education Association

No Report

Adjournment:

With no further business, Leon Jones moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Phyllis Wilkins. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Yolanda Scott-Racy
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

APPROVED:

Board President **Date:** _____

ATTESTED:

Board Secretary **Date:** _____



PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
March 3, 2016
5:30 P.M.

AGENDA

Board Work Study Session

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. McPherson & Jacobs Updates
4. W.T. Cheney Elementary Presentation
5. Board Policy
6. Special Education Recommendations
7. Donated Property
8. Staffing Update (Administrative Overview)
9. First Ward Presentation
10. Adjournment



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Work Study Session
March 3, 2016
5:30 P. M.**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

President Henry Dabner called the Board of Education Work Study Session to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call- Board President Henry Dabner asked Yolanda Scott-Racy, the superintendent's administrative assistant to proceed with roll call at 5:30 p.m. Upon the completion of roll call it was recorded that all were present with the exemption of Harold Jackson who later joined the other members. 7-0

**Members Presents-7
Members Absent-0**

3. Approval of Agenda

Herman Horace motioned the approval of the agenda as printed seconded by Stephen Bronskill Horace.

4. Superintendents Search (McPherson & Jacobs)

1. **Report-** Mr. Williams gave an update on how the search for the superintendent was going and that they had received several applications but still not what they well look for. March 15 was the closing date for the applications; April 5 is when they will bring the application of the ones they think is most qualified for the position. They also gave a report on the focus groups and other groups that are on the search team. Mr. Williams explained the interview schedule and what the plans are for the finalist and the interview process. Mr. Williams also asked the board to look at some questions that he gave the board members to look at and pick the ones that they liked and the ones they didn't like. Then ask the board if they had any questions please feel free to contact them.

5. W.T. Cheney (Kim West)

1. **Report-** Mrs. West gave a welcome to her school and presented to the board about the testing on her campus and the things that needed some improvement with the building of the school and what needed to be done. Ex building has ceiling that are leaking, playground equipment still not put together that they received from Oak Park, empty room on her needs to be cleaned so that they could use as classroom or storage space on the campus. Dr.Wilde also reminded the board that the reason for going from school to school was to see what was needed and try to figure how to get some of the things done in the future.

6. Board Policy (2nd Reading)

1. **Report-** Dr. Wallace gave the 2nd board policy reading on the Classified two 15 minute breaks and informed the board that this was coming from ADE Commission telling the District that it was a new policy put in place. Mr. Courtney questioned on what the policy was and gave explain on what she felt was right with the law and how the hours of work determined

the lunch and break time. Mrs. Courtney informed the board that she was going to look into it more with the state and bring it to the board.

7. Special Education Recommendation

1. **Report-**Dr. Caesar gave an update on the Special Education report they started in November. She informed the board that they received a call from a parent telling the state that their child was not receiving services, they found that it was not a check and balance for that. Pine Bluff sent to trainer to training so they could come back and train all the teachers in the district on IEP training. They went to check all campus to work with the SE facilitators on the paperwork to make sure everything that the state would be look for was there.

8. Donated Property

1. **Report-** Dr. Wallace gave a report of the property that a Pine Bluff individual wanted to donate to the Pine Bluff School and decided that their property wouldn't be of use for the district.

9. Staffing Update (Administrative Overview)

1. **Report-**Dr. Wallace updated the board on the staffing updates and how they would keep the board updated with the process. Dr. Wilde gave an estimated numbers of the classrooms and teachers that would be needed depending on the students that are enrolled in the district, he also stated that maybe a HR Manager or business manager, and Special Education Director is needed when they took a look at it. He gave an oversight on what was needed as far as district as a whole with the staff and administrators when to make cuts to save money in order to still staff so that everything is covered for the 2016-2017 school year.

10. First Ward Presentation

1. **Report-** Mr. Elders gave a report on a proposal of him extending First Ward and moving to southeast so that he could enroll 50 more students to make his count come to 100. He also stated that he would estimate that he would need about four more teacher to be able to accommodate them. In this proposal he had some research to do because he had to find out how much it would take to operate this proposal and if we had funds as a district to support this operation. He informed the board that if this was done that it would have to be done for the deadline of March 31st, and he planned on trying to get the information together so they could bring it to the board before the deadline. Dr. Wallace stated that he didn't know about the proposal but they would have to look into it to see if it was suppose financially wise.

11. Adjourn

With no further business, Henry Dabner moved the work study session be adjourned, seconded by Herman Horace. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Yolanda Scott-Racy
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

APPROVED:

_____ **Date:** _____
Board President

ATTESTED:

_____ **Date:** _____
Board Secretary



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**

March 15, 2016

6:00 P. M.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes
 - a. January 5, 2016 Approval of Work Study Session Minutes
 - b. January 19, 2016 Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes
4. School Report (Broadmoor Elementary)
 - A. Report
 - B. Staff Recognition
5. Superintendent's Observations/Report
6. Recommendation for Executive Business Director
7. Executive Session- if needed
 - a. Personnel Actions
 - b. New Employees
 - c. Retired
 - d. Resignations
8. First Ward Proposal Discussion
9. Financial Report
10. CPPC – Classified Personnel Policies Committee
11. PPC- Personal Policies Committee
12. PBEA- Pine Bluff Education Association
13. Adjournment



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Regular Monthly Meeting
March 15, 2016
6:00 P. M.**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

Henry Dabner, Board President called the Board of Education regular monthly board meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call-Roll Call- Board President, Henry Dabner asked Yolanda Scott-Racy, the superintendent's administrative assistant to proceed with roll call at 6:02 p.m. Upon the completion of roll call it was recorded that all were present. **7-0**

Members Presents-7

Members Absent-0

3. Approval of Agenda

Henry Dabner motioned the approval of the agenda seconded by Leon Jones

Motion approved with a 7-0 vote

4. Approval of Minutes

•**February 16, 2016:** Herman Horace motioned to approve the board minutes for February 16, 2016 (Regular Board Meeting), seconded by Stephen Bronskill

Motion approved with a 7-0 vote

•February 2, 2016: Herman Horace motioned to approve the minutes as printed for February 2, 2016 (Work Study Session), seconded by Stephen Bronskill.

Motion approved with a 7-0 vote

5. School Report (Broadmoor Elementary)Clintontine Fitz

1. Report-Mrs. Fitz (Principal of Broadmoor) gave an overview of her school telling the board that she had an enrollment of 394 with Highly Qualified Teachers. The school is a focus school and the things that her staff is doing to try to improve the scores of the students. She also explained that 3rd and 4th grade has intervention everyday



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Regular Monthly Meeting
March 15, 2016
6:00 P. M.**

AGENDA

routine of the teachers, the literacy and math coaches pull small groups for intervention. They have monthly literacy and math focus night where they pass out a book to each student and parent for coming. She had her drill team perform directed by her Music teacher Elizabeth Taylor.

2. **Staff Appreciation**-Mrs. Smith recognized teachers and support staff from different schools and presented them with a certificate and a gift card from Sonic. Dr. Wallace gave an award to the Administrator of the Month (Peoples).

6. Superintendent's Report

1. Updates-Dr. Wallace gave an update on the staffing progress with the help of Mrs. McMurray and Smith. Dr. Wallace gave the update on the Administrators that they will be able to keep the same administrators that they have now and trying to inquire a way to get a Dean of Student for the high school alone with the middle school. Ms. Smith reported that they would have class sizes 1-25 instead of 1-28 and after they seen it was teachers that were retiring and they didn't seen a reason to have a RIF

7. Recommendation for Executive Director of Business

8. Executive Session/ Personnel Action

- A. New Employees
- B. Retired
- C. Resignations

President Henry Dabner announced at 7:05 p.m. that the Board would go into executive session of the purpose of considering employment appointment(s), discipline of students, and discipline and resignation of employees. President Dabner announced that the board had reconvened from executive session with no action taken at approximately 8:24 p.m.

Leon Jones motioned the approval of the personnel action Andrea Roaf-Little motion the request for Dr. Wallace to handle personnel problems that was discussion in executive session, seconded by Leon Jones. 7-0

Leon Jones motioned the approval of the personnel action Andrea Roaf-Little motion the request for Dr. Wallace to handle personnel problems that was discussion in executive session, seconded by Leon Jones. 6-1

9. First Ward Proposal Discussion

Dr. Wallace informed the board that he and the Cabinet support the idea 100% but it still had some research to do on the proposal. Mr. Elders informed the board that they had a



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Regular Monthly Meeting
March 15, 2016
6:00 P. M.**

AGENDA

cabinet meeting and we had an agreement that first ward needs to be enlarged and good for kids but they didn't want to just jump in without knowing the financially and the burden that it might cause to the district. He informed the board that they formed a committee and they planned to do more research to get everything together, because it takes special teachers to work with the children that they have at First Ward, Mr. Elders wanted to go to some other schools that had the program to see how the program was working for different districts. They plan to look more into it and present at the Special Call meeting on the 29th.

Motion approved with a 7-0

10. February Financial Report

Pam Winkler, Director of Finance presented the financial report for the month ending February 29, 2016.

11. CPPC -Classified Personnel Policies Committee

Report- Mrs. Courtney reported to the board members that she submitted a proposal at the last board meeting that she hasn't heard anything about. Mrs. Courtney submitted an Opinion Objecting to Selective Raises for the Classified Employees for the selective increase to attract and/or retain employees needed for specific titles by the District. Mrs. Courtney also stated that in the Arkansas State Law states that the school board policy proposals must be presented to the CPPC at least ten working days prior to presentation to the board before final vote of approval is taken. Mrs. Courtney stated that they had seen many raises and the reason was given that wages were lower and retention.

12. PPC- Certified Personnel; Policies Committee

Report-PPC secretary reported that they looked at the absentees and plan to look at more absentees logs before the next board meeting.

13. PBEA- Pine Bluff Education Association

Report- PBEA Mrs. Grady reported that with all the changes that money could be found to provide a raise. She stated that in order to keep the great teachers and bring good teachers to the district that must increase the salaries. Mr. Jones stated that the board understood all the dedications with the teachers and staff and they would be looking for some money for a raise also in the future.

Adjournment:

With no further business, Herman Horace moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Leon Jones. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:50 p.m.



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Regular Monthly Meeting
March 15, 2016
6:00 P. M.**

AGENDA

Respectfully Submitted,
Yolanda Scott-Racy
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

APPROVED:

Board President **Date:** _____

ATTESTED:

Board Secretary **Date:** _____



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Special Call Board Meeting
March 29, 2016
5:30 P. M.**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Hearing/Student Expulsions
 - a. Student 5358
 - b. Student 4920 Hearing
4. First Ward Proposal
5. Supt. Search
6. Adjournment



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Special Call Board Meeting
March 29, 2016
5:30 P. M.**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

President Henry Dabner called the Board of Education special call board meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

President, Henry Dabner asked Yolanda Scott-Racy, the superintendent's administrative assistant to proceed with roll call. Upon the completion of roll call, it was recorded that all were present.

**Members Presents-7
Members Absent-0**

3. Approval of Agenda

Phyllis Wilkins motioned the approval of the minutes for the Special Call Meeting March 29, 2016, seconded by Herman Horace.

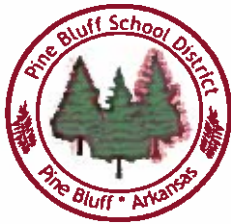
4. Hearing/Expulsions

1. Mrs. Hatley gave the recommendation for student 5358 to return on the second semester of the following school year. Phyllis Wilkins motioned the approval of the recommendation coming from Mrs. Hatley, seconded by Andrea Roaf-Little.
6-1
2. Mrs. Hatley recommended the student 4920 to be expelled until the end of the semester of 2016. Phyllis motioned for expulsion to be overturned and student return to school at First Ward, seconded by Leon Jones.
5-2
3. Board motioned to recall the motion to suspend the student 4920 to overturn the recommendation going for a semester of expulsions to returning back to school at First Ward immediately. Phyllis Wilkins motioned to overturn the recommendation, seconded by Leon Jones.
5-2

Motion approved by 6-1, 5-2, 5-2

5. First Ward Proposal

Mr. Elders informed the board that he had some concerns about the expanding the growth on thing he had concerns about was his teachers and with the program he needs special teachers and he wants to go to classroom to see how the teacher works with their students, because it takes an understanding teacher. He also stated that they



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Special Call Board Meeting
March 29, 2016
5:30 P. M.**

AGENDA

didn't have the projection numbers to start the program but they have a program in place with Jack Robey and Pine Bluff High. He spoke with an individual and they took him that they had to have 2 to 3 percent of students in a JRJH currently had 633 students times 3% is 19 students, PBHS has 1075 times 3% is 35 students idea number of 54 and they could go up to 5% but he would recommend it. Mr. Elders told the board that he would like to wait and do a like more searching and take the time out to go to some of the schools to see the teachers in their classrooms. Phyllis Wilkins tabled the motion seconded by Herman Horace.

Motion approved by 6-1

6. Superintendents Search

7. Adjournment:

With no further business, President Henry Dabner motioned the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Leon Jones. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Yolanda Scott- Racy
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

APPROVED:

Board President **Date:** _____

ATTESTED:

Board Secretary **Date:** _____

Pine Bluff School District Academic Distress

Belair Middle School

Recommendation 1:

District and school leadership, with guidance from the internal school improvement specialist assigned to the school, should plan and provide ongoing, job-embedded professional development to support teachers' effective implementation of research-based instructional strategies to meet the individual learning needs of all students

School District Support

Based on CWT and Focus walk Data, the following job embedded PD was provided

- Unpacking standards
- Increase Instructional time to 55 minutes
- Literacy Framework within a 55 minute classroom
- Math Framework within a 55 minute classroom
- Teaching literacy skills within the science and social studies content
- Hands on activities for mathematics
- Writing effective lesson plans and teacher plans
- Kagan Cooperative Learning
- Content based PD(trained based on what standards are being taught)
- PD to staff regarding the use of data to assign students to groups for instruction specific to their needs

Recommendation 3:

Grade-level teams should collaboratively develop pre- and post-unit assessments within instructional units. These units should include strategies that differentiate instruction so all student's educational needs are met.

School District Support

- PD on instructional strategies and unpacking standards by the Keith Sanders Group
- PD on data driven decisions by UVA
- "Data Dives" after each interim assessment
- PD for assistant principals and instructional coaches monthly on assessment, coaching, instructional strategies, data, lesson planning, teacher feedback, and best practices provided by the Arkansas River Co-op
- Weekly Professional Learning Communities by content facilitated by principal, assistant principal and instructional coaches
- Weekly Professional Learning Communities by interdisciplinary teams facilitated by a teacher leader

Recommendation 4:

School leadership should include time in the master schedule for grade-level teams to meet and regularly analyze various student achievement data sets (state-mandated, interim, and classroom assessments) for tracking student progress and promoting differentiated instruction. These ongoing data analyses enable teachers to determine students' individual learning needs and provide interventions in a timely manner throughout the school year.

School District Support

students' individual learning needs and provide interventions in a timely manner throughout the school year.

School District Support

- Weekly Professional Learning Communities for horizontal alignment
- Weekly monitoring of instructional strategies thru CWT and Focus Walks
- Provide data dives with school improvement specialist every 4-6 weeks based on TLI data
- Create bi weekly common assessments
- Create unit assessments by content
- Master schedule arranged to allow common planning time for math and literacy teams
- Support from the Chief School Reform Officer to create intervention, enrichment, afterschool and Saturday tutoring

Pine Bluff School District

Academic Distress Recommendations

Pine Bluff High School

Recommendation 1:

School leadership should facilitate the assessment of all students' reading levels with a standard reading assessment to accurately determine reading levels.

School District Support:

- Provided assessment materials from Renaissance Learning
- Provided training for all teachers on Renaissance Learning
- Provide up to date computers for assessments
- PD on X-Books by Scholastic for students reading below grade level
- Provides books of students' interest and grade level
- Chief School Reform Officer, School Improvement Specialist, and Literacy Coach reviewed data every four- six weeks and it was shared with the District's cabinet meetings

Recommendation 2:

School leadership should facilitate the development of a school-wide literacy initiative aligned to Arkansas frameworks and inclusive of research-based instructional strategies.

School District Support

- Chief School Reform Officer and Literacy Coach provided training for all Literacy teachers on Arkansas Framework
- Literacy and math Framework created based on the 52 minute classrooms
- PD from Scholastic on X-Books and ID'S for students reading below grade level
- CWT with Chief School Reform Officer weekly to provide feedback and materials needed
- Weekly Professional Learning Communities meetings
- Modeling by Literacy Coach and School Improvement Specialist

Recommendation 3:

School leadership, in collaboration with the internal school improvement specialist, should develop a plan to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the literacy initiative.

School District Support

- Provided fulltime school improvement specialist who attends weekly meetings
- Provided common meeting time to meet with literacy teachers
- Provided feedback and support based on the data for each class
- Monitored the plan biweekly to check effectiveness, as indicated by growth of the students

Recommendation 4:

District leadership should support technological resources so teachers can effectively integrate technology into classroom instruction, and students can access programs for enrichment and remediation.

enrichment and remediation.

School District Support

- The Cabinet has restructured the technology department to ensure that all schools have a technician to address and meet the technological needs of each campus.

Recommendation 5:

District leadership should develop a plan to ensure consistent availability of instructional technology.

School District Support

- The district will create a technology committee that will meet monthly to create and monitor the instructional needs of each school.

Recommendation 6:

Building leadership should identify materials and supplies that are needed for students and teachers and then plan methods for securing necessary materials and equipment.

School District Support

- The Chief School Reform Officer and the Schools Improvement Specialist meet weekly to ensure that all instructional materials and training needs are met

Recommendation 7:

School leadership should develop a process for regularly examining student data to set interim goals with instructional teams or all faculties as appropriate. The process could include the following: (1) spend more time working with teachers and improving student achievement through PLC participation and classroom observations (2) work with the leadership team to establish PLC expectations for teachers.

School District Support

- School Improvement Specialist attends weekly PLCS
- Master schedule will allow common planning time by content
- Meeting minutes and agendas will be established and maintained
- One faculty meeting a month will be a data dive and create school wide initiatives.

Pine Bluff School District Priority School

Jack Robey

School District Support

Based on CWT and Focus walk Data the following job embedded PD was provided

- Unpacking standards
- Increase Instructional time to 55 minutes
- Literacy Framework within a 55 minute classroom
- Math Framework within a 55 minute classroom
- Teaching literacy skills within the science and social studies content
- Hands on activities for mathematics
- Writing effective lesson plans and teacher plans
- Kagan Cooperative Learning
- Content based PD(trained based on what standards are being taught)

School District Support

- PD on instructional strategies and unpacking standards by the Keith Sanders Group
- PD on data driven decisions by UVA
- “Data Dives” after each interim assessment
- PD for assistant principals and instructional coaches monthly on assessment, coaching, instructional strategies, data, lesson planning, teacher feedback, and best practices provided by the Arkansas River Co-op
- Weekly Professional Learning Communities by content facilitated by principal, assistant principal, and instructional coaches

School District Support

- Weekly professional learning communities for horizontal alignment
- Weekly monitoring of instructional strategies thru CWT and Focus Walks
- Provide data dives with school improvement specialist every 4-6 weeks based on TLI data
- Create bi weekly common assessment assessments
- Create unit assessments by content
- Master Schedule modified to allow common planning time for math and literacy teams
- Support from the Chief School Reform Officer to create interventions, enrichment, afterschool, and Saturday tutoring



PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT

512 S. Pine St. P.O. Box 7678
Pine Bluff, AR 71601
Phone: 870.543.4206 - 870.543.4237
Fax: 870.850.2032

Pine Bluff School District has been working diligently to improve student achievement by focusing and going deeper on the following items.

1. A list of activities/ steps that have been completed/ taken to assist the needs of improvement schools.

- Hiring of School Improvement Specialist for each of the academic distress schools, priority and focus schools
- Monthly leadership meetings with Central office staff
- Board work study meeting held at each school starting with improvement schools (Principal gives an overview of school needs)
- Each month a school presents at the board meeting
- Teacher and support staff of the month is acknowledged by the superintendent and board Members
- Superintendent and team went to each school and met with entire staff to discuss needs and then complied them and had teams work on meeting the needs

2. Agenda and Minutes of School Board meeting are in the packet

3. A list of external providers supporting school improvement and the evaluation of the effectiveness of these services within your school district.

- University of Virginia Turn Around Program and the Keith Sanders group evaluations are in the process of being completed on each group.
- We had a site visit from UVA and they were very impressed with growth and provided areas for growth that we began to work on immediately. UVA reviews and collects data on four areas leadership, support and accountability, instructional infrastructure and talent management.
- Keith Sanders group provided professional development in the areas of unpacking standards, rigor and lesson planning. We have completed our contract with the Keith Sanders and our needs were met and we will not renew our contract with his group.

4. A list of actions specific schools are taking to meet the ADE's recommendation

- They are listed Academic Distress/ Priority School recommendations in your packet.

5. District next steps for supporting schools in meeting ADE's recommendations

- Conversations are in progress to extend the UVA contract for another year.
- In order to build capacity the Principals instructional coaches and assistant principals are in training with Arkansas Rivers Co-Op with Jim Knight model of coaching and culture and climate.
- All Special Education Teachers will be trained on writing IEP's by the Department of Education.
- Each school team is creating unit assessment and common assessments.
- District wide professional development team on differentiated instruction is being created.

6. Number of years each principal has been assigned to each school and the actions that

District wide professional development team on differentiated instruction is being created.

6. Number of years each principal has been assigned to each school and the actions that have been taken to increase the leader's effectiveness.

- Dr. Suzette Bloodman has been at Belair Middle School for three years.
- Donald Booth has been at Jack Robey Junior High for two years.
- Dr. Michael Nellums has been at Pine Bluff High School for four years.
- The principals have been in a yearlong program with the University of Virginia. The district has provided monthly professional development on effective leadership. The Chief School Reform Officer meets with principals weekly to review data, complete focus walks, classroom walk thru's and goal setting.

7. The Superintendent will review the data in June and make needed recommendation to the board concerning the leadership at each building. We are excited about the growth we have seen this year. Jack Robey, moved from an F to a C, Pine Bluff High School from an D to a C and Belair from an F to a D.

8. Professional development is being provided to all teachers according to walk through data, formal observations, drop in visits etc. Teachers are being trained on analyzing assessment data for next steps and RTI processes in each school. Technology department and office of professional development has teamed and launched a district wide technology plan focusing on ways to better support and train novice and veteran teachers on effective ways to use technology in the classroom.

Next Steps:

1. Roll out the curriculum to all teachers in August, principals, assistant principals, and instructional coaches in July. Professional development will be provided through the school year to ensure district wide congruence.
2. Train all teachers on the Teaching and Learning Cycle focusing on how to maximize all 9 high yield strategies.