



Board Meeting 3/16/26

Zoom Meeting ID: 977 7313 9415

Zoom Passcode: 3400

Call to Order: Board Chair, Bishop Mark Tolbert

- Bishop Tolbert called to order the monthly Board Meeting at 7:13pm.

Roll Call

- Bishop Mark Tolbert
- Blaine Clark
- Aldon Jones
- Linda Edgely
- Derrick Parker
- Dr. Troy Nash

First Motion: Motion to approve February's minutes.

-Linda Edgely put forth the motion to approve February's minutes.

-Dr. Troy Nash seconded the motion.

-Motion approved.

Second Motion: Motion to approve monthly bills.

-Blaine Clark put forth the motion to approve monthly bills.

-Aldon Jones seconded the motion.

-Motion approved.

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Mitchell

- Last month I had the opportunity to represent our school at the Greater Kansas City LINC Association meeting. LINC is working to restructure how they support schools. Typically, LINC has each school's superintendent give a 5-minute report on their school, but this time what they did is have superintendents share what their school districts biggest challenges are this year. LINC is trying to restructure how they set up support for those challenges. All of the superintendents, that included myself, had similar concerns and that is around student attendance. Student attendance at Lee A. Tolbert is certainly not where we want it to be. I know Dr. Hayes can speak to that, but we are actually doing better than most. Every major superintendent spoke about school attendance just being down and trying to get kids to get to school. LINC, at our next meeting, will be talking about methods and ways that we can support school districts in increasing attendance. Some school districts have gone so far as to having district staff members go pick up kids, just trying to get every kid to come to school that's possible. So that's a challenge, right now, across our metropolitan area.
- Enrollment Report (As of 3/16/26)
 - PreK – 10
 - Kinder – 34
 - 1st – 37
 - 2nd – 56
 - 3rd – 38
 - 4th – 36
 - 5th – 37
 - 6th – 24
 - 7th – 38
 - 8th – 29
 - **Total – 339**

Questions about Superintendent's Report

- **Bishop Tolbert** – So you said we had a net decrease of 9 students?
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – That have moved on since our last board meeting, yes sir.
- **Bishop Tolbert** – So they just moved out of the area or changed schools for whatever reason?
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – Typically, at this point, anybody that we are losing is because they are moving, and they typically move school districts.
- **Blaine Clark** – If you had to estimate, what is the attendance percentage?
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – That's a great question. Most of the school districts that presented said that they are in the upper 80s. Our school is during commensurate or better than most, as it relates to the attendance crisis right now.

- **Bishop Tolbert** – Are we in the 90s? If they are in the 80s.
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – Dr. Hayes can speak to it, but I think we are in the upper 80s. I don't think we are in the 90s all the way.
 - **Dr. Hayes** – We started out the first semester consistently being in the 90s. After the beginning of the second semester, we have been hovering in the 80s, so we are working on getting back up into the 90s.

- **Blaine Clark** – You said we are in the 80s. Is that 81 or 89?
 - **Dr. Hayes** – Right around 85%. We have some grade levels at 100% consistently, some in the 90s, but we also have a couple other grades that are pulling the whole overall percentage down because of their grade levels running in the 70s.

- **Dr. Mitchell** – Would you say that is towards the middle school level? Because the other districts that presented, that's where they are starting to see their biggest challenges.
 - **Dr. Hayes** – Yes.

Principal's Report – Dr. Hayes

- I just wanted to give an update on the entrepreneurial program. We have a lot of good things going on right now. We have a small store up and running where the students are making different items. They are really selling out to parents and other students. They are counting the money, making the proceeds, the whole bit.
- The students have already gone through their first round of seeing who is going to be the final presenters for our Shark Tank. Several of us have been the judges so we can get to a smaller number of students who have created items to be in our final Shark Tank in April. The students are learning all about how to do their own advertisements, create their items, publish, the whole bit.
- We have several students who have won poetry awards. We had a group of people who came out and presented these awards. We didn't send anyone to the Nationals Spelling Bee this year, but we had several students who won poetry awards.
- For our reading initiatives, we had several staff who are on committees to come up with our reading plan for the state of Missouri. That is going really well. They have been to, as a group, a professional development down at Union Station. They are working on a committee, as a group, to come up with the overall school reading plan. Those plans are sent to DESE as individual ways for our students, who are way below the reading level, to bring their reading level up. This was something else that DESE has asked us for, in addition to our MSIP plan, to be uploaded and sent to them. I just wanted to report that we have about 5 teachers, our reading coach, myself, and our instructional coach who are working with the state on this plan.

- Regarding updates on the SpEd Department, I just wanted to say that we had a major report that was due. We have been able to get with DESE. It was sudden that our person left, but we have been able to get this report completed and uploaded to DESE, and we are back in compliance. We have worked with our SpEd teachers to put together which students are going to see who, which hours, and how we are going to divide up completing their IEPs. We are doing a lot of IEPs on Zoom. We have already been working on making sure that we don't lose a beat going out of compliance, even to the point of hiring another speech pathologist with the same company, but a different person. We worked quickly to make sure everything stayed steady because I know, in the past, that's one of the issues we had with staying in compliance.

Questions about Principal's Report

- **Bishop Tolbert** – What school did Ms. Grantham go to, do you know?
 - **Dr. Hayes** – I do not know because when she originally left she said she was taking a leave of absence, and then she said she wasn't coming back.
- **Bishop Tolbert** – What is the date of the Shark Tank in April? Is that already set?
 - **Dr. Hayes** – April 16th at 1:30pm

Treasury Report – Mr. Clark

- On page 3, that's the statement of cash position.
 - Total Assets - \$4.8 million
 - CD - \$3.2 million
 - Escrow Account - \$75,000
 - General Operating - \$1.3 million
 - Liquidity - \$4.6 million
 - Liabilities – \$308,000
 - Payroll (insurances and timing) - \$153,000
 - Other Payroll Items (retirement) - \$155,000
- On page 10:
 - February Net Income - \$80,796
 - YTD Net Income - \$440,200
 - February Profit Margin – 13%
 - YTD Profit Margin – 8.5%
- Blaine Clark put forth motion to approve the February reported financials as presented.

- Aldon Jones seconded the motion.
- Motion approved.

Informational Items

- **ICE recommendation from the State of Missouri**
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – That is an FYI for the board. DESE and the Superintendent’s Association have just put out a little cheat sheet so districts can be on alert just in case ICE comes to our district. We have not had ICE in our district yet, but we have had reports that they have been close. As close as NKC school districts. So that is just more of an FYI sheet on how to handle ICE if they come.

Items for Consideration/Approval

- **Request approval for Security Procedure**
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – Dr. Hayes and I met, and Dr. Hayes is requesting to allow our campus officers to wand the middle school age students because they are more apt to bring in things like vapes and various other items. When I say wand, I mean to allow them to open up their bag and look in the bag to make sure there is nothing illegal, and then send them on to class.
 - **Bishop Tolbert** – Usually vapes are plastic, so I don’t think a wand would pick up a vape. That is why I am trying to zero in on this, because instead of us approving something like a wand, you almost have to say “we are going to approve a search and seizure for middle school.” Because if you search it, and you find it, and you haven’t been approved to seize it then what?
 - **Dr. Hayes** – I can only tell you what we did at my last middle school before I came to this school. As the middle schoolers came in the door, they put the wand around their body and peeked in the bag. They did that every day for every student.
 - **Aldon Jones** – What Bishop is saying is, if we search, we have to also say we are seizing if we find an item that is not allowed on the property or premise. That we have the ability to take from the student without causing some type of lawsuit. So not just “searching”, but “searching and seizing”.
 - **Dr. Hayes** – If we find something, we call the parent.

Questions about approval for Security Procedure

- **Bishop Tolbert** – I thought that we approved that before, we just never instituted it.
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – We did last school year, but since it is a new school year I didn't know if we need to readdress that. But if it's been approved then, Dr. Hayes, I think that we can move forward.

- **Bishop Tolbert** – There is a difference in wandering, metal detectors, and search. So, you are not really talking about wandering, you are talking about you want them to open their purse or backpack. Would that be more a search Dr. Nash?
 - **Blaine Clark** – If we approved last year to do wandering, when we got to the new school year did we stop wandering? What happened with that? Or is this a different ask?
 - **Bishop Tolbert** – They never started it.
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – It's a different ask because last year was approved in case we had to go to that, and so we didn't really have to go to that. I think this year they are seeing an increase of students bring things to school that they shouldn't have.
 - **Dr. Hayes** – We have 1 more security guard this year so it is more feasible to be able to get through 350 students.

- **Bishop Tolbert** – You want to do all students?
 - **Dr. Hayes** – We really don't need to do all students. I am more concerned about 6th, 7th, and 8th graders.
 - **Blaine Clark** – I think we have to be careful. Either you do all students or no students, otherwise you get in to profiling, and I don't know how you delineate that.
 - **Bishop Tolbert** – I think if you do all middle schoolers, because we do have 2 different schools.
 - **Derrick Parker** – Yeah, I think I would agree with that. You have to make the class broad enough on who you are going to target, so if it's all middle schoolers then that's probably fine. How do you know who is who coming through the door?
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – I think our school is small enough to where you can pretty much tell what kids belong where. Being here all year you can pretty much tell who the middle school kids are.

- **Derrick Parker** – Has there been any circumstances, with vapes and such, that prompted the need for the search, rather than the wandering.
 - **Dr. Hayes** – The wand would go around the student, and then just stuck down in their bag. It would help to decipher if they have any vapes or weapons.

Patricia Hayes working with DESE to make sure we are up-to-date on our SpEd reporting, which is major, and is tied directly to funding. They both have been working diligently to fill in the duties that Ms. Grantham left behind. We are seeking approval from the board to allow Dr. Hayes and Ms. Hughes to be compensated. Ms. Hughes will not be the Director of SpEd, but kind of leading the charge as a SpEd Director, but because she does not know all of the nuances of SpEd reporting, our Principal, Dr. Hayes, does know that, and is working with the state to ensure that our school stays in compliance. I would like to point out that Ms. Grantham, as she left us last month, left about \$35,000 on the table that we don't have to pay her. We are seeking a small fraction of that to go to Ms. Jacqueline Hughes and Dr. Patricia Hayes, so in the long run we would probably still be saving \$25,000-\$30,000. We are seeking \$4000 for each of them, together that would be \$8000, which still saves us considerably.

- **Blaine Clark** – I agree that some type of compensation is needed. I think we should structure it that they would track the time they put in supporting that role, and then we would put an hourly amount to those hours that they support the role. I just don't want to do a flat dollar amount. If you take Ms. Grantham's salary, \$72,000, that's about \$35/hr. I would say whoever is supporting the role, Dr. Hayes and Ms. Hughes, they track time they put in on a timesheet, and Dr. Mitchell approves it, and then we cut a stipend of \$35/hr for what they support; not to exceed \$8000 in total.
- **Aldon Jones** – I get, since she is doing an extra duty, giving her (Ms. Hughes) the income to be able to do that. I feel like, as the Principal, that is just a part of the job. Whatever the need is you kind of have to fill in at that moment.
 - **Dr. Hayes** – I agree. I would do it anyway. I mean, we can't let it fall. Either way, I am still going to do it.
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – I think, Mr. Jones, the reason why we requested compensation, and we talked about this in our district office meeting, was because with the SpEd, a lot of principals are not educated on how to do SpEd. Typically, most principals don't work on SpEd because they have a SpEd Director for their district that handles all the SpEd reporting. That is why we put that in and I wanted to let the team and the board know that Dr. Hayes did not request this.
- **Blaine Clark** – If Dr. Hayes is already doing 50-60 hours a week, I don't want her doing 66-67 hours a week to take all this additional work that we decided not to back fill.

Questions about approval for SpEd stipend

- **Aldon Jones** – Are we not replacing the SpEd Director at all? Are we just going to leave that vacant for the remaining of this school year?
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – Yes, the reason for that is, being this late in the school year we are not likely to find a SpEd Director with those credentials.

- **Aldon Jones** – Ms. Hughes, who is already working with SpEd, is basically interim director?
 - **Dr. Hayes** – No she is not an interim director, Ms. Hughes is a SpEd teacher. We don't have anybody that has the credentials, background, or knowledge to take that position. It would most likely take us longer than we have school year left to find one at this point. I sat a long time with DESE and with Ms. Hughes. We discussed staying together a couple of hours after school, two days a week, and probably put in some time on Saturday to go through and figure out the records and reports that we need to send in. The financial side, where the part B is, I already know how to do that. Ms. Hughes sees SpEd students throughout the course of the day, and so, there is not that time there. I am running the whole building during the course of the day. We picked out, as Mr. Clark has stated, a couple of hours a couple of days a week, and then some time on Saturdays to get the rest of the work done.

- **Aldon Jones** – Are we already getting compensated for Saturday School?
 - **Dr. Hayes** – We are. We are getting compensated for Saturday School. We are at Saturday School for only 2 hours, and not every Saturday. We are there from 9am-11am.

- **Bishop Tolbert** – How hard or how easy is it to track the hours that you and Ms. Hughes would have to put in?
 - **Dr. Hayes** – That's not hard at all.

- Blaine Clark put forth motion to support the SpEd reporting, as a result of the resignation of the SpEd Director, we put together a stipend of \$35/hr for both individuals that support that function, turning in timesheets to be approved by the Superintendent for disbursement, and for the stipend to not exceed \$4000 per individual and \$8000 total.
- Bishop Tolbert seconded the motion.
- Motion failed for lack of a majority.

- **Dr. Hayes** – Can you vote for just Ms. Hughes? Because, like I said, I am going to do whatever I need to do to make this be successful. I would like everyone to vote for her, because I can at least stay with her after school and she'll know she'll be compensated.
 - **Linda Edgely** – I think that we should go for both of them because it is something that needs to be done. This is something that is very very important, so I think we should go with what they asked for.

- Linda Edgely put forth motion that we give Dr. Hayes and Ms. Hughes what they asked for (\$4000 each).
- Motion failed for lack of a second.

- **Blaine Clark** – This is a function that we have to complete, so we have to figure out what the item is to complete the function.
 - **Bishop Tolbert** – Right, because it is part of the overall ASBR report, and if SpEd is messed up it messes up the whole school's report.
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – Yeah, we will be marked as out of compliance.

- **Aldon Jones** – Dr. Mitchell, did you come up with a backup plan? Because something was presented, doesn't mean we are always going to approve it.
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – As of now, Mr. Jones, no. We can come together and create a backup plan. As Bishop was saying, this is mandatory for our school to do through DESE. This is not one of those things we have an option for, so we can come up with a plan B.
 - **Bishop Tolbert** – Yeah but we don't have time to come up with a plan B, and not be so far behind that now it takes double the hours to catch up. We have had two different offers, one they track their time and we pay them hourly, or two, we go by what the request was. Both of those were voted down, so give me another plan.
 - **Dr. Mitchell** – On my end, I think the only other plan is I'm willing to assist Dr. Hayes. I know a little about SpEd reporting, but she is more the SpEd expert because that is more her field. I'm willing to pitch in and help so the work gets done. I would say that I agree with Dr. Hayes that at least Ms. Hughes should be compensated because there is nothing forcing her to do this because it is outside of her contract.

- **Bishop Tolbert** – Dr. Roper and our accountant, Mr. Wallace, use to have headaches every year with the Special Education Department. The last couple of years we have not

had that problem, so I'm telling you all that this is a major issue. We either have to do the hourly or we have to pay the folks to get it done. I refuse to move until we come to a decision tonight.

- Blaine Clark put forth motion to support the SpEd Director position that we are not backfilling this school year. The individual supporting that role, we support them on a \$35/hr stipend and they track their time weekly to be approved by the Superintendent for disbursement.
- Linda Edgely seconded the motion.
- Motion approved.

- **Request approval for SpEd Carpet**

- **Ms. Middlebrooks** – I have 2 quotes, one from Big Bob's Flooring and the other from On Time Construction.
 - Big Bob's Flooring – For the plush tiles, its \$4230.
 - On Time Construction – Option 1: For the plush tiles, its \$3828, and it's for the full room. Option 2: For one full room rug, its \$2342.
- **Ms. Middlebrooks** – What would work better, to me, is probably the tiles because if someone has an accident you can just remove/replace that one tile instead of having to pull up the whole rug.
- **Bishop Tolbert** – This is really all about safety. Making sure if a kid falls or something, they don't get a concussion.

Questions about approval for SpEd Carpet

- **Blaine Clark** – What does the teacher running the class prefer?
 - **Ms. Middlebrooks** – Either or.
 - **Dr. Hayes** – She just wants wall-to-wall carpet. As long as it covers the whole room, she doesn't care if its carpet tiles or a full room rug.
- **Bishop Tolbert** – If they put down the plush tiles, does it come up that easy?

- **Linda Edgely** – I have carpet tiles at my work. They can be removed, but also it is a different color sometimes. Even if you have extra carpet tiles on hand, it's going to have a different color than the carpet on the floor itself.

- Linda Edgely put forth motion to approve the carpet tiles.
- Aldon Jones seconded the motion.
- Motion approved.

Adjournment

- Aldon Jones put forth motion for adjournment.
- Blaine Clark seconded the motion.
- Motion approved.

Next Board Meeting: Monday April 20th at 7pm