

SOPER BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
Monday, September 20, 2021  
7:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Angelia Dancer. Bruce Roebuck opened the meeting with prayer.

*Members present: Robert Spaulding, Arlis Young, Bruce Roebuck, Angella Dancer. Gaylen Branton was absent. A quorum was present.*

*Administration present: Parker Harless, Tina Jeffreys.*

It was determined that the agenda for this meeting was posted in due time.

As only three members had been present for the August 24 meeting and only two of those members were present at the September meeting, the board agreed to wait until the next meeting to approve/disapprove those minutes so that the vote would be properly represented.

Visitors Lindsey Penner and Angie Martin were welcomed. Ms Penner asked if there might be a possibility of developing a pre-K or four-year-old kindergarten. Tina Jeffreys responded that this is a dream of hers, as well as of several teachers, but the funding is not yet available for this. She also said that she hopes to be able to consider a pre-K summer program.

All agreed that the Little Dixie pre-K program is effective, but it's a different focus from what a school program would be. Still, all present agreed that the efforts of the Little Dixie program are much appreciated.

In Dr Van Worth's absence, Principals Parker Harless and Tina Jeffreys presented the administrator's reports in his stead.

Mr Harless reported that the architect would be coming on the following Wednesday to determine the best and safest way to support the new roof construction. As flat roofs are structured to support heavy snow and ice, the hope is that the current structure will support the new roof; consulting with the architect is a precaution.

The three major projects previously presented—pitched roof and awning, HVAC, and yellow bus—have been approved. Details are in the works to complete these projects.

Mr Harless then shared plans for changing the 3<sup>rd</sup> meal program. This program has been active for the past two years, and while it will continue, the administration has been looking into a different offering for the students, something that will reduce waste and make the distribution of the afternoon meal more time-efficient while still meeting nutritional requirements.

While researching a Lunchable-type product, Mr. Harless was able to sample and inquire to details concerning one such product. He was able to report that the food was balanced and tasted good, also that it is perfectly portable and has the required educational component in the packaging. This option is about 10 cents cheaper per meal for the district to purchase and is less likely to produce as much food waste.

The plan was to start distribution to the students on October 8. Initially, he hoped to give each student two packages so that they could take one home and the parents could see. Mr Harless and Ms Jeffreys have been discussing allowing distribution of these food packs within the classrooms to reduce cafeteria work load.

Mr Harless also addressed the recent TikTok challenges for destroying school property. He said that there had indeed been some disciplinary issues and that correction had been needed. He stressed that he believes kids should be respectful, meaning that students need to respect their school, school property, authority, and each other. Those participating in this warped sense of fun were displaying respect for none, not even themselves.

Mr Harless also clarified that the administration team works together to make decisions so that clarity is gained from perspective and no punishments are given based on personal emotion. He also believes that last year's unusual circumstances, which had the students out most of the time, has been a big contributor to the restlessness. The plan is to move forward with as much normalcy as possible.

Mr Harless was able to report that new teacher Mrs Franks is doing well and is open-mindedly learning from her peer teachers and Mr Harless. She is observing and asking questions and has a good rapport with the students. Mr Harless had plans to visit and confer with her again in the upcoming week and is feeling very optimistic for her success.

Mrs Tina Jeffreys reported the same optimism for Mr Franks. She said that he comes to school fired up and happy and that he loves the kids and they are loving him. He asks for advice and information and listens to that advice and instruction. His attitude is exemplary. With 21 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade students, all of these qualities are essential. Reports coming back through the school board indicate that the parents who were initially concerned have come to like him and are well pleased with his performance at this point.

Mrs Jeffreys said that having a male teacher on the elementary school staff seems to be a very positive addition, especially one who has the ability to communicate with the students in such a positive manner.

In other elementary school business, Mrs Jeffreys reported a slow start to Kindergarten assessments, in part because of technical issues, but they were almost finished.

A few students were still out on quarantine, but Mrs Jeffreys was able to report that the numbers were fewer than before; everyone is just trying to be safe in every possible way.

Mrs Martin spoke up to compliment the administration and staff in the efforts they are making to keep illness at bay, and she asked if they had considered going back to taking temperatures at the door, not just for Covid but for any possible illness. Mrs Jeffreys said that they are taking temperatures at the first sight of any issues and that anyone with an elevated temperature is immediately isolated, but that it wasn't out of the question to do so. Fortunately, most teachers and staff are still able to be in school and still are well. Everyone is trying to be very cautious.

A motion was made by Bruce Roebuck and seconded by Arlis Young to approve the general fund encumbrances 142-170 and 70059-70064 and checks. Arlis Young—Aye, Bruce Roebuck—Aye, Angella Dancer—Aye, Robert Spaulding—Aye.

Mr Harless reported that the new bus driver, Terry Anderson, had passed his licensure and seems to be very conscientious and safe.

Robert Spaulding moved to approve using the ACT for state testing. Mrs Jeffreys explained the this is the choice of the administration because our regional colleges mostly prefer ACT over SAT. Either would be acceptable by State standards. Arlis Young seconded the motion. Bruce Roebuck—Aye, Angella Dancer—Aye, Arlis Young—Aye, Robert Spaulding—Aye.

Arlis Young moved to approve the Estimate of Needs, and Bruce Roebuck seconded the motion. Robert Spaulding—Aye, Bruce Roebuck—Aye, Angella Dancer—Aye, Arlis Young—Aye.

The contract with the statewide career technical schools was presented for Board approval. As Mrs Jeffreys explained, Soper does use the services of Kiamichi Tech, but a contract is needed in order to continue doing so. With this contract, Soper is able to use Kiamichi as an extension of the high school. Angella Dancer moved to approve the contract. Bruce Roebuck seconded the motion. Bruce Roebuck—Aye, Angella Dancer—Aye, Arlis Young—Aye, Robert Spaulding—Aye.

The administration then advised the Board of the annual dropout and student college remediation board report. The latest report is from 2020, which shows one 11<sup>th</sup>-grade male student as dropped out. Mrs Jeffreys found that the student in question had left Soper to move to a school district in Utah, thus leaving Soper's district altogether. The administration appealed this dropout claim, but the State had no record of the student enrolling in the Utah school, and so the appeal was refused. No action was needed on this report.

The alternative education plan and funding for the 2021-2022 school year was presented to the Board. Soper's contract is with Hugo Schools instead of Choctaw Nation because of the closer proximity of Soper to Hugo. The contract affords Soper five spots to use in the Hugo system. This can also be used as credit recovery if a student is behind. It is also used as disciplinary actions for students who are not functioning or are causing issues and upsetting the peaceful environment within the school.

This allows Soper to keep the student as a part of the Soper School District, depending on the individual situation. Soper pays for five spots, and currently

none are being used. One spot was recently offered to a student, but the parent chose to use EPIC instead. Robert Spaulding made the motion to approve the contract. Arlis Young seconded the motion. Angella Dancer—Aye, Bruce Roebuck—Aye, Arlis Young—Aye, Robert Spaulding—Aye.

There were no purchase requests nor any new business to discuss.

A motion was made to adjourn by Arlis Young, and it was seconded by Bruce Roebuck. Bruce Roebuck—Aye, Robert Spaulding—Aye, Angella Dancer—Aye, Arlis Young—Aye.

Bruce Roebuck  
Angella Dancer  
Arlis Young