

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
**January 27, 2020 - 6:30 PM**  
**Grambling Community Center (City Hall)**

**A. Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by Dr. Copeland at 6:35 pm.

**B. Prayer**

**C. Pledge of Allegiance**

**D. Approval of the Agenda** - Mr. Downs made a motion to adopt the agenda. This was seconded by Mr. Tatum and the agenda was adopted without opposition.

**E. Adoption of Previous Minutes** - Mr. Tatum moved to adopt the October minutes. This was seconded by Mr. Moegle and the previous minutes were adopted without opposition. A motion was made by Mr. Downs to adopt the December minutes. This was seconded by Mr. Wiley and adopted without opposition from the Board.

**F. Roll Call**

**Present Members**

Dr. Birdex Copeland

Don Tatum

Hollis Downs

Forrest Moegle

Clara Lewis

Robert Wiley

Eddie Robinson III

**Absent Members**

Rhonda Pruitt

Brenda McIntyre

**G. Lincoln Prep "Showcase"** - Ms. Colvin introduced Lincoln Prep's English Language Arts and Social Studies teacher. He is also Military personnel and serves as the sponsor of The Speech and Debate team. 2 members of the Speech and Debate team were introduced and gave information regarding different debate topics and debate forms that are used during competitions. The students demonstrated a recent debate topic, nuclear weapons, and different ways that it could be presented. They stated that Speech and Debate gives the opportunity to express how you feel about a topic while giving facts academically. The Speech and Debate members attend competitions where they will be judged by the community based on the information they present. Both of the debaters presented in the showcase won 2 rounds at their last competition and will be inducted into the Speech and Debate Honor Society. They will attend the Ben Franklin competition in New Orleans this weekend. The Speech and Debate team consists of 10-15 members, although all members do not participate in each competition. A member of the 4H club and S.A.I.L. Program was also introduced. As a member of the S.A.I.L. Program, he meets with other local high school members weekly to engage in various leadership activities. He recently presented Ms. Colvin with the opportunity for himself and other members to attend a Leadership Institute at Disney World. This was then presented to LOSFA and was approved, covering all cost except for plane tickets, which was paid for by the students' families. During the trip, they learned about being

a Zoological Scientist. They also learned many important skills, such as management techniques and presentation skills. 2 of the Showcased students are enrolled in Early College Academy and have finished their first semester with above a B average. Ms. Colvin stated that Lincoln Prep competed in a Robotics tournament at Delhi recently. Lincoln Prep will be hosting their own Robotics tournament this weekend at the Assembly Center, starting at 7:30 AM.

**H. Public Comments** - Although the meeting is open to the public, no public comments were made.

**I. Report of the Executive Director** - The enrollment count for October 1st was 477. The enrollment count for today is 473. Mr. Ford is projecting to end week at 479. 169 kids are currently on the waiting list. Enrollment begins in April with no restrictions and the Lottery will be the 1st week in May. Student testing for special accommodations is coming up. An annual conference is upcoming to discuss new facilities. Lincoln Prep obtained an extension at the recent BESSE meeting, renewing them for a 5th year. Elementary teachers completed another training for the arts integration program last week. The STEM Program partnered with a school in New Orleans to do STEM Presentations for grade school students. The boys' varsity basketball team is currently 3rd in the state while the girls' team is 10th. An email was received today stating that Lincoln Prep has been awarded the AP College Diversity Award for having 50% or more female students enrolled in AP computer classes. Mr. Ford gave results from the annual Charter School review completed by the state. The overall Academic score was a C. Although Lincoln Prep did not meet the expectations in the Financial area, they met expectations in the Overall category. Ms. Colvin explained how the ACT Index is calculated and stated that Lincoln Prep offers ACT Prep classes, the March to Success Program, after school tutoring, and ACT Academy to help the students prepare for the test. She stated that the year started with an average of 24F but is currently at a 43.8. Faculty is looking for strategic ways to improve the score to over a 50D. She states that more students in the past 2 years have presented with academic struggles than in prior years. Despite the lower overall score, students are making the scores needed to get into college, which is important because scholarship money is often based on ACT scores. Lincoln Prep leads the parish high schools in college acceptance and enrollment. Mr. Ford explained that the ACT Index is calculated each year on that particular group of students; student progress is not tracked. Although the ACT score is an F, the progress grade for K-8 and High School are 79.2 and 88.7 respectively, which are both Bs. The external audit for Financial performance shows no notice of concern. Lincoln Prep exceeds the parish in overall performance for economically disadvantage students and are the highest in Northeast Louisiana, earning the maximum points possible for Organizational Performance. The re-enrollment rate is normal. The out of school suspension score is a little above average, with 19.3/20 possible. Mr. Ford stated that they are doing more in school suspension and positive behavior reimbursement to reduce the number of out of school days. Ms. Lewis inquired about interventions in the school setting and was informed that students in in-school suspension are counseled by an LCSW for the first hour of the day to work towards behavioral modification. They spend the remainder of the day completing classwork before completing a reflection form, showing how they want to change their behavior. The administrative assistance states that there have been very few repeat offenders since this has been put into place. The school also has a partnership in place with GSU for mentoring students with chronic behavioral issues. Mr. Tatum expressed concern regarding teachers having lower tolerance for behavioral issues and unnecessary suspensions but was ensured that this is monitored and is not an overall concern. Mr. Ford stated that the Financial section of the review did not meet state standards for the General Fund

Balance. This is projected to be above the required standard by the end of the year. It was suggested that if there were no enrollment restrictions in past years, the General Fund Balance likely would have met standards sooner due to higher revenue. Board Members were provided with an excerpt from the court order received on January 8th. Lincoln Prep is currently working on the plans necessary to move off of Grambling campus for the next school year, which will release them from enrollment restrictions and remove racial preferences from their requirements. Mr. Tatum requested an explanation as to why the enrollment restrictions were enforced initially and was informed that, in the 1970s, Grambling State University was listed as a segregated school and was required to de-segregate, which included enforcing enrollment restrictions. Since Lincoln Prep has been operating on Grambling's campus, they were required to follow the same requirements. Communication has been in progress with a company regarding new facilities. A 5-year budget projection was provided. Everything being discussed could increase enrollment to 560 students, but would only require a faculty increase of 2. This could increase the budget to almost \$1 million. A Special Education Advisory Committee will be put into place which will consist of 50% parents, 25% teachers, and 25% other members, as required by the School Board Association. Lincoln Prep plans to induct 4 parents, 2 regular education teachers, a counselor, and 1 La. Tech professor that have applied. All other teachers and 1 parent not selected will be utilized as adjunct members. This will ensure that the statutory requirement is met and nobody is excluded, which will allow for replacement members if any members are unable to serve for any reason. The committee must meet 3 times per year and provide a report to the Executive Director at the end of the year. Mr. Ford stated he is still awaiting 2 Board Members to turn in their paperwork for the Ethics board this week, or they risk getting a notice of material breach. Mr. Ford stated that Board Members must complete annual ethics trainings. Mr. Ford requested that Mr. Robinson complete and turn in his paperwork before leaving the meeting to ensure that it is completed in time.

At this time, Dr. Copeland requested that the Board vacate Dr. Pruitt's chair and allow it to be vacant, as she has been unable to attend meetings in several months due to personal issues. A motion was made by Mr. Wiley and seconded by Mr. Downs. 1 Board Member voted no while all others voted yes, giving the majority vote needed. Dr. Copeland stated that Dr. Pruitt will be removed from the Board, per the Charter School By-Laws attendance requirement.

#### **L. Reports -**

- **Financial** - Revenues were projected to be at 50% and are at 48.1% due to MFP funding. Grant reimbursements for the 1st quarter have been received and 2nd quarter has been requested. The food service is at \$43,762 to date. The total last year was just over \$63k and is projected to exceed \$90k this year due to the reimbursement percentage increasing from 93% to 100%. The state process for determining the reimbursement percentage was explained in detail. The 100% rate will automatically be applied to any additional students enrolled. The dinner program and summer program can feed any child in a program in or near campus, even if they are not Lincoln Prep students. For example, the Delta reading program students were fed through food service, as well as children involved in the Boys and Girls Club being provided with meals. Expenses were projected at 50% and are at 47.6% currently. Salaries and benefits are at 43% and 45%, respectively. The student activity fund is locally generated from students paying fees, admission to ball games, concessions, etc. Mr. Downs inquired about the increase in cost regarding the cheer squad. Mr. Ford stated that the school greatly increased size of team this year. He

explained that any uniform item retained at school are paid for by the school, but uniforms kept by student are paid for by the parent. The squad increased from 12 to 26 and added Junio Varsity members, who needed smaller uniforms than what was ordered in the past, meaning that this should not be a recurring expense. Also, Junior High cheerleaders were sent to summer camp this year in an attempt to upgrade the program. The net operating revenue was negative at end of December, which will return to positive once basketball revenue starts coming in.

- **Alumni and Community Relations** - Lincoln Prep has been in communication with Athlos Academies regarding new facilities. Athlos invests in Charter School expansion and have built several schools in the country, including several in Texas and 1 in Jefferson Parish, La. Following a recent teleconference, they seem happy with what they have seen and have expressed excitement to potentially move forward and build a school in Grambling. Mr. Ford came up with a rough estimate of \$808,500 based on the cost of the Jefferson Parish school. In the past, Mr. Ford proposed a partnership for a new building to Lincoln Builders, who was the contractor for the Charter School in Jefferson Parish. Mr. Ford explained that Lincoln Prep is in the process of acquiring a 40-acre lot on Old Family Road in Grambling. This lot has had no title work done since 1981. The family hired an attorney who has been working with the attorney for Lincoln Prep to track down heirs to the land to obtain signatures on sales documents. The process to fully obtain the land is expected to be 2-3 months and the construction time for the new building is roughly 9 months. Mr. Ford explained that the school building itself will cover roughly 5-8 acres, leaving the rest for athletic facilities. Mr. Tatum expressed concern regarding the price per acre for the land, stating that an area near Louisiana Tech went for only \$4,000 per acre and the land in Grambling is approximately \$20,000 per acre. Mr. Ford stated that the land in Grambling is ideal because it is inside the city limits and has utilities and sewage, whereas the land near La. Tech did not. Mr. Ford stated that past discussions regarding turning an old hotel into a school facility, the cost to put just a sewage system in was roughly \$300,000. Mr. Ford also stated that the configuration being discussed for the school should allow room to have Pre-K 4 but more information is forthcoming. He also encouraged Board Members to tour other facilities built by Athlos if they are in the area.
- **Transportation** - No report at this time.
- **Education** - No report at this time.

#### M. Old Business -

- **MOU between Grambling High Foundation and Grambling State University** - Mr. Ford has had a meeting with Grambling State University regarding the discrepancy in utility billing and to discuss the new court order. They are looking at re-engaging on the MOU but are more concerned about rescoping for the future.
- **Legal Update re: U.S. Department of Justice** - See the Report of the Executive Director for information regarding the Court Order on enrollment and racial preferences.

#### New Business -

- **New Member** - The newest Board Member, Ms. Clara Lewis, was introduced. Ms. Lewis is a mother of 4 and a grandmother of 5. She is a retired educator from Grambling and serviced as an Academic Advisor and Assistant Professor while at GSU. She has since worked with 2

charter schools in the Shreveport area as a case manager and a career counselor. She now serves as a Mental Health Professional at Superior Counseling Services, LLC.

**N. Next Meeting Date** - The next meeting will be March 2, 2020 at 6:30 pm with committees meeting at 6:00 pm, if needed.

**O. Announcements** - Mr. Ford encouraged all Board Members to attend the upcoming Robotics tournament.

**P. Executive Session** - No session.

**Q. Adjournment** - Mr. Downs moved to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Mr. Wiley. With nothing further to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.