

**Minutes for Board of Directors
Lincoln Prep
Regular Meeting
March 5, 2018 - 6:00 p.m.
Grambling City Hall**

A. Call to Order

B. Prayer

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Approval of the Agenda – Motion made by Pam Stewart to accept the agenda. Robert Wiley seconded the motion to approve the agenda. All were in favor; none opposed.

E. Adoption of Previous Minutes – Previous minutes were not presented.

F. Roll Call

- *Present Members*

- Katrina Boden
- Pam Stewart
- Don Tatum
- Rachael Johnson
- Robert Wiley
- Dr. Birdex Copeland
- Gordon Ford

- *Absent Members*

- Rhonda Pruitt
- Hollis Downs
- Eddie Robinson, III

G. Lincoln Prep “Showcase” – None Reported

H. Public Comments - Dr. Copeland announced the meeting was open to the public. No one from the community was present and no comments were made.

I. Report of the Executive Director –

- Mr. Ford stated that annual enrollment was 423 students on average with current enrollment at 418. The school is just under the allowed number of African American students. On the day of the deadline, we were at the 8% target of Caucasian students as stated in the court order. Since then, enrollment has fluctuated, putting us at roughly 7.8%. New students are not currently being accepted, but some will be enrolling soon due to special circumstances. Someone was hired by the University and is moving into town with her 3

children. One child is in a grade with no wait list, which guarantees acceptance; therefore the other 2 siblings will also be accepted. Mr. Ford elaborated on the application process as requested. The only information initially provided is where the applicant lives, the parent's name, and the applicant's race. At this time, we have the option to accept African American students but are required to accept Caucasian students. If the applicant is the sibling of a current student, they will be accepted. If the applicant does not meet any of these criteria, the application is put into the system for consideration. If the applicant is in a grade that does not have a waiting list, we move towards acceptance. Currently, 6th, 7th, and 10th grade have low numbers and applicants for these grades would be strongly considered. When asked if character plays a role in consideration for enrollment, Mr. Ford responded that a student who has been expelled from another Louisiana school does not qualify for acceptance unless approved by the Board of Directors. Mr. Ford was asked if it's in the best interest of the school to accept more students considering that the budget ended at 423. He stated that if it's a student that they think will add to the school, class, or grade level, it would be worth it. The budget right now will actually support a school of almost 500 students so a few more would not have a negative effect. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. We have a projected flat line budget of 420 kids. We had 415 kids the first semester and 425 the second, so it balanced out. After having 2 students leave, it will cost \$10,000 out of the budget if nothing else happens. Special Education also affects the budget. The gifted students get a 60% level one override and the disability special education students get a 150% level one override, so there would be additional funds coming in as a result. Ms. Boden asked about the process to getting a student in the gifted and talented program and was informed by Mr. Ford that the student may be referred by the parent or a teacher at which point they are evaluated by the Special Education Department. He will collaborate with the Special Education Department to find out if there is a way to increase the number of gifted students with the current enrollment.

- Another round of interim Leap 360 testing was completed to see where the students are academically and results will be provided soon.
- As requested by the DOJ, we provided them with the number of students and types of classes for dual enrollment. The numbers have increased from last year's report. Mr. Ford discussed the increase in enrollment for the high school which has been greatly affected by the amount of flexibility that Southern University in Shreveport has given in terms of courses. Another factor is that students with at least a 16 on the ACT are now able to do college remediation

courses in their junior year with Southern University, allowing them to take a full schedule of college courses in their senior year. The Board of Regents has recommended that all high schools complete college remediation before students graduate but we are one of the few schools doing this. This is partially because the school doesn't get any points for it. Once the remediation work is completed and the student can complete college work, enhanced points will be received. In the previous school year, most dual enrollment classes were taught by Lincoln Prep personnel. However, teachers are now required to possess a Master's Degree in the subject they're teaching, not just a Master's in Education, rendering most of our personnel ineligible.

- Baseball, Track and Field, and Softball have already started up but Varsity is a little delayed. Basketball season just ended and our district was the only one to have every team to win their first round game. 4 of those teams won the second round game and the girl's team made it to the semi-finals.
- Lincoln Prep is being awarded with the Extra Mile Award from United Way for increasing staff donations by more than 10%. Dr. Copeland and Mr. Ford will be there to receive the award. The campaign schedule for payroll deductions for United Way has changed from what was originally agreed on and will now run August-July, concurrent with the payroll schedule. This change should allow us to get the award next year as well, so long as teachers donate at the exact same level as they are currently. Mr. Ford explained in detail how United Way has helped the students with the Backpack program, among other things.
- Lincoln Prep participates in "Louisiana Year Up" which is a program that is designed encourage students as young as middle school to attend college. The students are brought onto campus to participate in different activities to prep them for college. Some of our students participated in the event last year in Shreveport and a group will be attending this year's event in Baton Rouge. Discussion ensued regarding someone's opinion that the program was not satisfactory. It was suggested that there was not enough communication between our staff, university staff, and the students and not enough people participated. Mr. Ford stated that the information was provided to the parents and no poll was conducted to find out why so many chose not to participate.
- The DOJ supplemental report was sent out. A brief teleconference will be held today or tomorrow to ask questions and discuss information in the report.
- Mr. Ford had a meeting with Primary Health Services Center in Monroe regarding setting up a mini clinic and providing a school nurse to us at no charge through their grant program. We will be sending a written proposal soon.

- The Boys and Girls Club is looking to establish a unit on our campus to run the after school programs for us starting with grades K-5 and expanding later on. Their main concerns about food and transportation services have been resolved. We will provide a snack and a hot supper through our community funding program for our meal service and our students will already be on campus, so transportation is not an issue. GSU students have been screened and are available to work. The program will run from the time school ends to 5:30 pm. We currently have some students in the program in Ruston and a van takes them there after school. Ms. Boden asked if we are receiving the parent's permission for this transportation and was assured by Mr. Ford that it is included on the Transportation Form.

J. Committee Reports

- **Education and Personnel** – Ms. Boden commented that she spoke with the Executive Director and shooter training is being planned for the students and faculty following the school shootings recently. Mr. Ford does not yet have a date for the training but has completed inventory of the school and a major concern right now is that some of the doors do not lock. Faculty has been asked to not leave doors propped open for easy entry. Ms. Boden requested that the drill be completed by the next meeting and an email was sent to the Operations Manager. Also, a meeting was held with faculty after an incident of students skipping class and not being reported which resulted in the termination of one employee. Ms. Boden encouraged Mr. Ford to take minutes during any meeting in the school. Mr. Ford was asked if the School Resource Officer is always on site and responded that he is not a Resource Officer but simply provides some personnel security for us. The budget does not include full time security, so he is only part-time, normally in the afternoon. He also provides security for extracurricular activities but hiring full time security is being discussed. Grambling is not considered a high crime neighborhood, but there is elevated concern following the shootings across the country and could be deemed negligent for not taking precautions. An example was given of McDonald's being held liable after someone was shot in their facility which did not have security. Mr. Ford will obtain more details on the matter. Using Grambling PD was suggested after it was stated that Monroe City uses their police officers in that capacity. The Chief of Police is not cooperating with us after an alleged personal issue between himself and our security personnel. It was suggested that a meeting be set up for them to sit down with our Board and discuss the issue.
- **Finance / Financial Report** – Rachael Johnson has been named Treasurer of the Financial Committee. Meetings have been held to discuss the Fiscal Policies and

Procedures manual and the need to address changes in it as well as to provide documentation training. A follow up meeting is scheduled for March 16th to review accounting thresholds. The form currently being used by Fourth Sector is not a state approved format. After January's financial report was provided, there have been questions regarding the cost of business supplies being drastically different from the year to date actual and it will be investigated further. \$16,233 is documented for other expenditures in actual year to date with the majority being credit card balances. We are continuing to monitor progress on documentation. PayPal and activity accounts will be checked monthly and a new procedure for checking out credit cards will be implemented. There has been an increase in the expense for substitute teachers this year and this will be investigated. More information regarding billing for GSU is forthcoming. Questions were asked about the short term liabilities portion of the budget. The report was provided by Fourth Sector and the only information we have currently is that it is related to the activity accounts. Some of our activity accounts have been co-mingled and we are discussing whether we should close those and open new ones. Our original budget was based on 406 students and our current count is 415. This caused a variance in our forecasted revenue of \$5.11 million and budget of \$4.9 million. Also, Personnel expenses have increased with a noticeable increase in the substitute teacher expense. It is not clear what has caused this but we will follow up in the March 16th meeting. There is also an unfavorable variance of \$68,000 which we believe is partly related to athletic expenses. Football and basketball netted \$148 and \$3,025, respectively. Baseball is -\$220 but does not have income starting until February. Cheer and Dance are -\$12,177 which is partly related to the purchase of uniforms. Mr. Ford also stated that the teams went to camp in July which was \$4000. We are considering increasing the cost for some of these extracurricular activities. Originally, we wanted to keep the cost lower so more students would be able to participate. However, due to the low cost, some parents aren't fully invested and the students quit. Also, the parent is required to pay for items that are individual to each student such as shoes, tights, etc. Band is in the positive by \$14 and concession is in the positive by \$1,929. There is a deficit of \$6,296 that is potentially due other sports such as softball, track, etc. not originally being in the budget but added later on and do not produce much revenue. This could also be due to the cost of letterman jackets. Mr. Ford stated that the expense for the jackets was \$8000 and the school received \$2900 in payments. He stated that originally, the student chose the jacket in their size at a base cost of \$85 and chose patches and other additions which could easily run up to hundreds of

dollars per jacket. The school ordered it and it was held at the school until the parent paid for it. If the parent did not pay, the student would receive a blank jacket and would have to get with the company to order the additions. Moving forward, the school will not front the cost of the jackets due to a high number of people not paying or picking them up. There is a history of this with senior items such as cap and gown, as well. It was discussed that some schools require the parents to contact the jacket company directly to order instead of going through the school. Discussion ensued about just anyone being able to buy a jacket and not knowing who actually earned it by participating in extracurricular activities and it was stated that another school prohibited a student from wearing one that she bought because she hadn't earned it but ultimately, the jacket is about school spirit. Mr. Ford stated that there was a special circumstance where a student earned the jacket but could not afford it due to her parents being involved in a tragic accident. The Athletic Director gave this child the jacket. The non-operating expense has an unfavorable variance of \$45,000 according to the annual forecast of \$197,000 versus \$151,000 being budgeted. The actual revenue versus the budget revenue is 61% of the annual forecast. Expenses for salaries and benefits are on target at 59% of the annual forecast. Other personnel expenses are at \$798,000, which is 65% of annual forecast. Curriculum has 35% of annual budget remaining. Athletic expenditures are forecasted to break even at the end of the fiscal year with the net surplus being \$72,000 as of January 31. More details are being acquired on the balance sheet which includes 3 activity accounts. This includes prepaid expenses and fixed assets. A motion was made to accept the financial report. It was accepted with no opposition by the Board.

- **Facilities and Transportation** – Ms. Boden has visited all campuses and is providing all members with a list of repairs that need to be made. Mr. Ford addressed issues earlier with doors not locking, leaks, and tiles needing replaced due to water damage. He stated that a roof contractor came out after the second floor flooded during a long period of rain and noticed visible leaks in the ceiling. He stated that there is a major area where poor repair had been made above the second floor but the contractor was able to correct that and divert water away. When asked how water damage is handled in the building, Mr. Ford stated that since the building has a metal roof with ceiling tiles, the water is mopped up, ceiling tiles and individual pieces of insulation are torn out and replaced. Mr. Ford notes that small amounts of mold can be found around some of the air vents in the building. This is because air flow into the building is not functioning correctly. One of the air handlers quit years ago and was not

corrected due to the estimated repair price of \$100,000. Ms. Boden commented that the issues at the Elementary school are a hindrance to recruitment and a safety and morale issue for students and faculty. She states that we need active plans on where the Elementary will be moving due to the condition of the current building. Mr. Ford agreed and added that the building is being used “as is” and the leak has been there for years. Discussion ensued as some members believe it is cheaper to repair the current building and some believe it would be cheaper to purchase another. A Board decision will be made at a later date. The building is insured to cover things such as broken pipes at the University’s expense. They have helped us repair in the past when the middle school flooded. When asked, Mr. Ford stated that the other building will not hold all of the Elementary grades plus what is currently there. We would need 4-6 portable buildings which is possible and is being researched but we are also looking at other locations. Also on the list provided by Ms. Boden are concerns about the intercom system. The system on the elementary campus does not work. Ms. Boden asked if there is a code system for the school in the event of an emergency and Mr. Ford stated that there is not. Ms. Boden stated that this needs to be included in the shooter training mentioned earlier.

- **Alumni and Community Relations** – No report but a suggestion was made to start notifying parents of meetings and clipping the meetings to the website for public view.

K. Old Business

- **Update on Evaluation Procedures and Plans for Evaluating Executive Director** – Ms. Boden provided members with copies of the evaluations in which six people participated. Ms. Pruitt was out for the month and it is believed that some members did not receive the emails containing the evaluation. Ms. Boden addressed items receiving a score below 3.5. One statement says “Executive Director has a personnel manual in place which is reviewed annually and is enforced.” and received a 3.3. Some may not be aware of it and at some point in review, “reviewed manual” needs to be added. Mr. Ford stated that it is reviewed on the first day by HR officials. The score was low on the statement about the Director enforcing GAP financial policies and procedures but was expected following the audit report. “Executive Director limits expenses in accordance with the budget unless or until presenting and receiving board approval to adjust the budget” also received a low score. This is possibly due to seeing extra money in one area and moving to another area. It was stated that this is permissible unless it is more than 10%, in which case, it must go before the board. “Executive Director ensures maintenance and monthly review of

inventory of assets” sparked a discussion about the GAP policy requirement for reviewing inventory. It was stated that the best policy is to do spot inventory monthly or quarterly but it is usually performed annually during audit. Ms. Boden suggested doing it twice per year or maybe at the beginning of each quarter, so we can have this policy in place in case of an audit. She was later informed that the policy states that the inventory is performed annually, to which she concurred and stated to perform the inventory in July. When asked, Mr. Ford stated that most of our physical assets are our computers, which are \$300-\$400 each. Lastly, the statement about the Executive Director ensuring at least one event per year that community members are invited to was discussed. Mr. Ford stated that we already have this in place with sporting events. Ms. Boden asked if this could be increased to 2 per year and schedule non-sport activities, also. A suggestion was made to hold an annual sports banquet. Mr. Ford stated that there has been a problem in the past with awards being created for students who did not show to collect which is why the honors and awards event was held during school last year and awards were passed out then.

- **MOU between Grambling High Foundation and Grambling State University –** Concerns were addressed regarding the condition of the school buildings. The day-to-day maintenance of the buildings is our responsibility. The Board of Regents stated in the past that university money should not be spent to support K-12 education, but instead should be spent on higher education funds. When asked if any repairs we make will offset the cost of rent, Mr. Ford stated that we do not pay rent. Instead, we pay a per child fee of \$365 which works back to the \$200,000 in the original budget. Discussion continued with members stating that if the MOU states that we will be provided with the basic shell for a building, it needs to be workable and functional and ours is not which is a problem. Mr. Ford stated that the university is not providing us with anything, as they are not allowed to. We are simply using it at our own risk and responsibility. We do not pay the university for the use of the building but for utilities used. Members are concerned about us not having insurance on the building and Mr. Ford assured everyone that the university has insurance on the building and if any damage to the structure should occur, they will help repair it. Ms. Boden pointed out that they never fixed the issue with the roof, which was an old problem. Mr. Ford responded that they will fix new issues moving forward but are not responsible to any issues that were present when the MOU was presented. Mr. Ford continued by saying that the building is inspected annually by the State and that he is getting a bid for the roof. It was requested that we get an estimated cost of making repairs but it was also commented that it does not make sense to spend

\$200k+ on repairs if we do not get anything out of it. Comments were made about possibly using the Criminal Justice building or the ROTC building. We will look into possibly leasing portable buildings to move the Elementary onto the main campus. A suggestion was made to present the university with a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement in which case they gift the building to us. This would benefit them by getting rid of a building that's in poor condition and that they do not need and it benefits us because we would have insurable interest and be able to make repairs.

L. New Business

- **Board Decision on Application to Louisiana A+ Schools** – Mr. Ford introduced the idea of Arts Integration in the school. He informed members that this was successfully implemented in Homer and used to raise test scores. Research shows that it improves absenteeism, test scores, and morale. In fact, the highest rated school in the state is a pilot school and our proposed partner school. Teachers will use arts as teaching method. NCLAC secured a grant funding to cover our start up costs which would leave little to no investment for us. Additionally, training for this summer out of Title Two funds is already in the budget. We are hoping to present this information to the parents at the next PTA meeting. Robert Wiley made a motion to approve the concept of the program with the condition that if any of the financial figures go over the current budget, the executive director will first report those numbers to the Board for approval. Katrina Boden seconded this motion. All were in favor; none opposed
- **Jonesboro State Bank Grant** – This is a standard grant in which they grant semi-annually between \$2500 and \$10,000 within their service area. In the past, they have not had enough groups to apply to give out as much money as they want. It was agreed upon with no opposition that the application will be submitted by the deadline date.
- **Charter School Capital** – The board will consider partnering with this agency that specializes in getting capital for buildings, facilities, and buses. There may be other agencies that could provide help by building a school and leasing it back to us. We could potentially find funds to do this. The main concern right now is getting past the 3 year initial renewal and it will be much easier after that. The Milsap Foundation has expressed interest in doing something like this and we are looking at options. We would like to secure land to put the primary building on; maybe K-2 or 3 and build from there. We need to get budget numbers for a couple of years to provide data. We want to stay in Grambling but be off of the University Campus. The board was informed that the old hotel originally presented was much too large of an investment to move forward with.

- M. Next Meeting Date** – The next meeting will be March 26, 2018. March will have 2 meetings, as we moved the February meeting to March.
- N. Announcements** – We will have some 7th and 8th graders participating in LA Gear Up this weekend. Also, we have a playoff game at 6:30. The Grambling men won their first regular season swept title since 88-89.
- O. Executive Session (Legal Update)** – No report.
- P. Adjournment** – With nothing further to discuss, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting.