



BOARD highlights

A QUICK LOOK AT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS OF PUTNAM CITY SCHOOLS

March 13, 2018

Board Supports Increased Salaries, Education Funding

Before a room packed with teachers, students and parents and 500 more watching proceedings through streaming video, Putnam City’s board of education unanimously approved a resolution calling for the Oklahoma legislature and governor to find dedicated revenue sources to increase teacher salaries and adequately fund school district operations. In addition, the board resolution declared April 2 as an advocacy day during which all Putnam City schools will be closed to enable employees and families to express their concerns to legislators.

Before the vote was taken, Board President Becky Haliburton read a statement thanking teachers, students, parents and patrons for their emails. She also referred the state’s education funding situation as “desperate,” and implored all supporters of public education to reach out to legislators.

Full Text of Board President’s Statement

Before we get started, I just wanted to take a moment to say thank you to our amazing Putnam City family. Thank you to our parents and patrons who are here today to show support for our district, who have sent thought-provoking emails and made heartfelt phone calls. Thank you to our students who have called and sent articulate and sincere emails showing support for their teachers and thank you to our teachers who have communicated with the Board about their hopes, their fears and their concern for their students. I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their tireless work on behalf of the 19,000-plus students in our district and the teachers, staff and administrators that go above and beyond the call of duty each and every day.

The current funding situation in education is undeniably desperate. We implore everyone that values public education in the state of Oklahoma to reach out to our legislators in the coming days. Please thank our leaders who have been supportive of efforts to raise the revenue that it will take to adequately fund public education and to provide the much deserved teacher pay raise. Please continue to work with our elected representatives who have not been supportive of recent efforts to raise the necessary funds for core government services, education funding, state employee pay raises and long overdue teacher pay raises. We must continue the dialog. Continuing efforts to secure these dedicated revenue streams for education is the right thing to do for our teachers and most importantly, for the students we serve. Our students deserve highly qualified teachers, smaller class sizes, increased opportunities for services, classes and programming. Our teachers and staff are professionals who deserve the compensation befitting such.

Resolution Language

WHEREAS, the Putnam City Schools Board of Education supports public school teachers and the work that they do educating the children of our school district;

WHEREAS, the Putnam City Schools Board of Education understands that Oklahoma’s public school teachers are frustrated with the lack of pay and as a result the state is experiencing an extreme shortage of qualified teachers throughout Oklahoma;

WHEREAS, the low pay provided by the State of Oklahoma for public school teachers has led to students not being able to receive an education from highly qualified and certified teachers;

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma legislature is the governing body that dictates funding to public school districts;

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma Legislature has not adequately supported public education and should take action to find a dedicated source of revenue to be used to adequately fund public education;

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Meeting Date: Tuesday, March 13, 5 p.m.
Location: Administration Building
Roll Call: Four members of the board were present: Becky Haliburton, president; Gail LoPresto, vice president; Cindy Gibbs; and Jay Sherrill Also present were Dr. Fred Rhodes, superintendent; and Sandy Lemaster, board clerk.
Next Meeting: Monday, April 2, 5 p.m.

Putnam City Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, or disability.

Board President Statement (continued from page 1)

We appreciate those of our staff who completed the survey. It was important to us to consider your input in the crafting of the resolution that we will consider in just a moment. The resolution to be considered is in direct response to the results gathered in the survey, as well as the phone calls and emails that we have received. Dr. Rhodes has informed me that we are working to set up a question & answer to help answer questions you might have.

Please know that the Board, Dr. Rhodes and the administrative team will continue to work together to navigate the district through the next few weeks and months. This is a fluid time for education in the state and we will remain steadfast in our resolve to keep what is best for our students and staff forefront in all decisions.

Results of the Survey

On Monday at about 11:30 a.m., district administrators sent a survey to roughly 1,400 district teachers asking what action they planned to take if the legislature failed to address issues of teacher pay and education funding. Within 24 hours, 1,321 teachers answered. Below are the results of the survey.

- 734 teachers said they would participate in the walkout whether school is closed or not.
- 524 teachers said they would participate in the walkout only if the district is closed.
- 63 teachers said they would not participate in a walkout.

Resolution (continued from page 1)

WHEREAS the Putnam City Schools Board of Education recognizes the chronic underfunding of public school education and continued cuts for more than a decade; and

WHEREAS, the Putnam City Schools Board of Education supports a salary increase for public school teachers;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Putnam City Schools Board of Education hereby encourages the Oklahoma Legislature and the Governor to find a dedicated source of revenue that can be utilized to fund reoccurring salary increase for public school teachers in Oklahoma and to develop a viable plan to pay teachers the professional salaries that they deserve;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Putnam City Schools Board of Education hereby encourages the Oklahoma Legislature and the Governor to adequately fund operations for school districts;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Putnam City Schools Board of Education hereby declares April 2 as an ADVOCACY DAY during which all Putnam City schools shall be closed to allow teachers, students and the community to encourage the Oklahoma Legislature to find a dedicated source of revenue that can be utilized to fund a salary increase for public school teachers and to adequately fund school operations in Oklahoma.

Board Highlights is not a comprehensive review of every item that takes place at board of education meetings. Its purpose is merely to provide information about items that seem of most interest to district employees and patrons. Complete board meeting minutes may be found at <http://www.putnamcityschools.org/BoardofEducation/BoardMeetingMinutes/tabid/565/Default.aspx>