

BEFORE THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

1. On April 9, 2012, during a regular meeting of the Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board), the State Board considered a petition made by the El Dorado School District (Petitioner) to close the following isolated school:

Union Elementary School

2. The petitioner was represented at the hearing by Superintendent Bob Watson. No party opposed the petition. The State Board conducted the hearing pursuant to the legal authority and jurisdiction vested in the State Board by Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-602 and the Arkansas Administrative Procedure Act (Ark. Code Ann. § 25-15-201 et seq.).

FINDINGS OF FACT

3. On March 5, 2012, by a vote of five (5) in favor and one (1) opposed, the El Dorado School District Board of Directors voted to close the Union Elementary School Campus.

4. On March 6, 2012, pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-602, the El Dorado School District petitioned the State Board to close the Union Elementary School Campus.

5. The Union Elementary School is located at 6049 Moro Bay Highway, El Dorado, Arkansas.

6. The Union Elementary School has a Local Education Agency (LEA) number of 7001-056.

7. The Union Elementary School is comprised of grades kindergarten through four (K-4).

8. The projected enrollment of the Union Elementary School for the 2012-2013 school year is forty-eight (48) students.

9. Based upon 2010-2011 school year figures, the cost of operating the Union Elementary School is three hundred and sixty-seven thousand dollars (\$367,000).

10. The El Dorado School District has classroom space in its other four elementary schools in which to place the students who currently attend the Union Elementary School.

11. The Union Elementary School maintains class sizes of approximately nine (9) students in kindergarten and from six (6) to nineteen (19) students in first through fourth grades. The average class size in other elementary schools in the El Dorado School District is substantially higher than that of Union Elementary School.

12. The El Dorado School District determined that it must cut its budget by approximately \$930,000 to meet future needs. The savings generated by the closure of the Union Elementary School will allow the El Dorado School District to have funds to build the infrastructure needed to support technology in all of its schools. This infrastructure will be needed to support state assessments beginning in the 2014-2015 school year.

13. The savings generated by the closure of the Union Elementary School will also allow the El Dorado School District to support its goal of implementing the New Tech curriculum at its high school during the 2012-2013 school year.

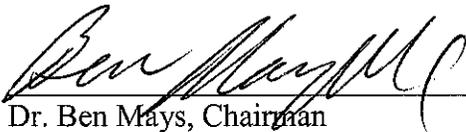
14. The closure of the Union Elementary School will not have any negative impact on desegregation efforts, nor will it violate any valid court order from a court of proper jurisdiction. Based upon the information provided by the petitioner, the closure of the Union Elementary School will have a positive effect on the El Dorado School District's desegregation efforts.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND ORDER

15. For the reasons set forth above, the closure of the Union Elementary School is in the best interest of the students in the El Dorado school district as a whole.

16. Accordingly, the petition of the El Dorado School District to close the Union Elementary School is GRANTED.

Signed this 14th day of May, 2012



Dr. Ben Mays, Chairman