



# SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS MINUTES

MEETING: Regular Board Meeting	DATE: September 9, 2025	TIME: 7:00 p.m.	LOCATION: John W. English Administrative Center
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ashanti Bland, President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yvette Ware- DeVauil, Vice President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leslie L. Smith-Thomas, Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Talisha Belk, Treasurer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amani Johnson, Trustee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jillian Holloway, Trustee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nicole Denson, Trustee	
ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jennifer Green, Ed.D. Superintendent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lanissa Freeman, Deputy Superintendent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Jackson, Chief of Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> , Chief of Talent Mtg
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marc Ingram, Chief Financial Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rebecca Luddington, Manager of Pupil Accounting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sommer Caldwell- Carruthers, Executive Director of Instruction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joseph Corace, Chief Operations Officer
<input type="checkbox"/> April Rogers, Exe. Dir., State and Federal Programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Angela Smith, Exec. Director of ISSN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minutes: Carolyn Foster, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and the Board of Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paula Lightsey, Executive Director of Academic Advisement and Social Emotional Learning
			Student Board Representatives: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paris Whitman, SA&T <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chidi Nnaji, UK12

## 1. Opening of Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Board President Bland at 7:02 p.m. Board President Bland read the opening statement and Trustee roll call was taken. All Trustees were present. M1 Studios is handling our technical support.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

## 2. Board Matters

- Welcome Back to School Year 2025-2026!
- Welcome to our new Student Board Representatives!
- Vice President Ware-DeVauil attended a Governance Relation Committee (GRC) meeting on September 3, 2025, in Lansing, MI. She indicated that the State still does not have a budget.
- Delegates Assembly: Vice President Ware-DeVauil indicated that Southfield Public Schools (SPS) are allowed to have three delegates (Trustees) to represent them during these meetings. Vice President Ware-DeVauil mentioned that Trustee Holloway and Trustee Denson both expressed interest in being a delegate. This will be addressed later the agenda.
- Treasurer Belk mentioned that Count Day is on Wednesday, October 1, 2025. She wanted to hear about any marketing efforts surrounding Count Day. Treasurer Belk also spoke about our website and getting it updated. Treasurer Belk spoke to getting an update from Plante Moran as it relates to our Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).
- Trustee Johnson reported out on the last Sustainability Meeting they had. KLC led by Dr. George was selected as the district's first official recycling pilot site. Dr. George has prior recycling experience and is enthusiastic about student engagement. The goal is to launch within 30 days.
- Eco Rewards, a recycling vendor is being piloted at Thompson K-8 and Eisenhower Elementary and previously used at Levey Middle. The vendor pays the school for certain recyclable materials. The committee agreed this model is promising and should be expanded, if results are favorable.
- DTE issued a \$14,000 rebate for recent LED lighting upgrades at Vandenberg and the District office. Efficiency improvements at Adler Elementary have resulted in an estimated 35% utility cost reduction.

- SPS was awarded grants for electric school buses and is installing 10 dual port charging stations to accommodate the 20 buses. We are on track to receive our first 10 electric school buses in November 2025 and the other 10 are expected during the summer of 2026. The cost gaps from the grant are being covered by a \$300,000 cost share negotiated with First Student.
- Sustainable Design Standards Policy Review: the committee conducted a final read through of the “Sustainable Design Standards for New Construction and Major Renovations” policy. No changes were recommended; the committee affirmed that the district is already meeting many of the outlined standards.
- Since 2021, Trustee Johnson has been diligently working to obtain electric buses for the district. Kudos to him for doing the work. Thank you to him, the Sustainability Committee and Joe Corace, COO.

### 3. Report of the Student Board Representatives

#### a. Paris Whitman: Southfield High School for the Arts & Technology (SA&T)

Good evening, my name is Paris, and I am excited to be here!

In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, I would like to begin by recognizing the importance of celebrating the diverse cultures and communities that strengthen our Warrior Family.

For September, here are the past and current highlights for SA&T.

- During the summer, autumn sports tryouts brought excitement and energy as students filled the fields, courts, and sidelines to earn their spots. We are proud of the dedication each athlete showed to represent our Warrior pride. Here is how the season is going so far:
  - With the season underway, the Warriors football team has noticeably strong energy from both the team and sidelines. Shout out to our cheerleaders. Thank you to our football coaches, team managers, and team moms for continuing to support them this season.
  - The boys' tennis team is working hard to improve with each practice and match played. The players are continuously sharpening their skills for a strong season.
  - The girls' golf team played their second match on September 4<sup>th</sup>, and they continue to improve with every round. Their commitment to precision and focus shines through every practice and match played.
  - The boys' soccer team has been playing with passion and power. They are working hard to dominate their upcoming matches.
  - The girls' volleyball team has been putting in the hours and using teamwork on the court. While they haven't had their first game yet, excitement is growing throughout the school for their debut this season.
  - Our cross-country runners have been giving it their all during their races. They continue to represent Warrior pride one mile at a time and show their endurance, grit, and determination for the game.
  - The girls swimming and diving team has made a splash this season. Using teamwork and lots of commitment, they've showcased their talent in the pool and steady improvement with each dive.
  - The Marching Warriors are showing why they're one of the pride points at A&T! They've delivered outstanding performances at football games, and their field show was a huge hit. On top of that, they wowed the crowd while performing in the Detroit Labor Day Parade and represented our school in front of thousands of people.
- Now, I'll begin with the leadership and activities highlights:
  - First, our September 4<sup>th</sup> Senior Sunrise was a memorable event; music was played, pictures were taken, and memories were made. It brought together about one-third of the senior class. GEAR UP, a college readiness organization which has been helping our seniors prepare for college success since they were middle schoolers, joined in to support. The seniors enjoyed a beautiful, yet cloudy, morning which marked the beginning of the start of their final year of high school.
  - The first of many blood drives for the school year was hosted on September 5<sup>th</sup> and was a success. Many students stepped up to make a difference in the community and help save a life.

- Senior Packages, which are also referred to as Senior Dues, have been released. There are 3 tiers for these packages. The first package is the Basic Package which includes a cap & gown and the diploma cover for \$80. The second package is the Full Package which includes the same items as the first package and all the senior merchandise, like the senior shirt, yard sign, senior blanket, and more for \$180. The final package is the Early Bird Package which includes the same items as the last two packages but includes one prom ticket and a VIP Prom Parking Pass, if purchased early enough, and goes for \$280. Packages 2 & 3 can be purchased until October 31st, with the first package still being purchasable after that date. All packages can be purchased on GoFan.
- Let me now tell you about the academic highlights:
- Grade-level meetings took place on September 3rd. Freshman met 1st hour, Sophomores was during 2nd, Juniors was during 3rd, and Seniors during 5th. Each group was updated on important dates to guide them through the semester. On the same day, the parent meeting for senior parents occurred at 5 PM. During which the PTSA and A&T Staff updated parents on the things they need to look out for this year.
- The MAP testing window is open from September 2nd-September 19th. So far, students are showing focus and resilience to track their growth in reading and math. On that same note, PSAT testing will take place in October.
- Picture Day took place on September 8th. Students came dressed to impress for their yearbook and ID photos.
- The Southfield Public Schools Open House will welcome families and give them a chance to connect with teachers, explore classrooms and extracurricular activities, and feel the Warrior Pride we all know and love firsthand. The date for that is September 16, 2025.
- I've had the chance to reflect on the lasting impact I want to leave behind while witnessing all the promising opportunities at Southfield A&T. My goal is to encourage a sense of school spirit that uplifts students and strengthens our community. I hope that the culture we create this year will continue to inspire future classes even after I graduate.
- Two groups I especially aim to impact on are:
  1. Our underclassmen: I want to ensure they feel welcomed, involved, and proud of our school.
  2. Our seniors: I want to help make their final year memorable and meaningful.
 By focusing on these groups and uniting all students through school spirit, I believe we can build stronger bonds, increase participation, and create memories that will last a lifetime.
- In support of my mission, I will also work to strengthen school spirit by promoting more social events, traditions, and activities that bring us closer together as one Warrior Family. I am determined to make our school a place where every student feels included, connected, and proud to be a Warrior. In addition, I am committed to creating open and supportive relationships with my peers to make sure everyone feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and concerns with me. This will allow me to truly listen, understand, and act on what matters most to our school community. I will dedicate myself to supporting every student to the very best of my ability.  
Thank you all for listening, and welcome back to a new school year filled with energy, spirit, and opportunity.
- There was a school assembly during fifth period featuring BMX and their "No Violence/No Hate" Tour. There were a lot of bikers that attended the event. They showed what 30,000 hours of work looks like. They flipped over Principal Reese on a platform. The BMX bikers showed the staff and students physics and science at their best.

**b. Chidi Nnaji: University K-12 Academy (UK12)**

- Chidi's had a presentation that coincided with his board report this evening.  
Good evening, my name is Chidi Nnaji, and I am glad to have the opportunity to be your board representative for University K12 Academy this school year. I want to share with you highlights from UK12, or as we call it the U. We believe that we are nurturing tomorrow's leaders today.

- So, what does it mean to be a leader at the U? It means charging into things like we did on August 13th. The day in which we held Jumpstart, an event in which students can get the necessary things to start their school year off successfully. Students were able to participate in fun activities like choosing their house and decorating lockers. They also got school supplies, picked up schedules, and learned what would best fit their future careers. Jumpstart Day was a success as the UK12 staff served our elementary parents and students. There were over 500 parents present who were engaged in our exciting event.
- The thing about the U is that we never fail to put our print on the world. We even do it now at school. At the start of the school year, our scholars were greeted by parents, sorority, and fraternity members clapping them into the new school year.
- On August 29th, the Class of 2026 saw the beautiful sun rise together. A true start of the school year for any senior. As mentioned previously, we at the U have a house system in place. This is a system that was started at Ron Clark Academy in Atlanta that will be used to shape student's character and school culture. Each house represents core values like kindness, courage, success, uplifting, wisdom, dreaming, and unity, all of which paint the portrait of a U student. Last Friday, we held our first house party, where students learned more about each house and house chants.
- I would now like to spotlight some students at the U who have shown the Charger spirit. Caitlyn, an 8th grader and member of the Girls' Golf Team, scored her first hole-in-one. Kwalin, a senior, owns a lawn mowing business where he makes \$840 a month. Journey balances both school and being a professional model.
- Some upcoming events at the U include:
  - Professional Development for Teachers is on September 17th, no school for students
  - Meet the Teacher on September 18th
  - Chargers' teeth will shine bright on September 26th
  - The FAFSA opens on October 1st, so make sure those old horses fill them out
  - Cap and gown photos will be on November 6th
- This concludes my report for University K12 Academy. Can I get a big UUU?
- President Bland mentioned that as we kick off our athletic year, we would like to remind our parents and students that even when you are at "away games" you are still representing SPS.

#### 4. Report of the Superintendent

- Dr. Green asked if she could go a little out of order to go to the 1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner of the City of Southfield Wildlife Commission Logo Contest – Pilar Caston.
- a. **Partner of the Month – Sandy Robinson: GDI Team Member at Stevenson Elementary**
- b. **Employee of the Month – Melanie Land: Staff Member at Stevenson Elementary**
- c. **1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner of the City of Southfield Wildlife Commission Logo Contest – Pilar Caston**
  - SPS acknowledged Pilar winning this award by providing her with a certificate and an art kit.
  - Dr. Green moved back up to the Partner of the Month.
- d. **Legislative Update**
  - Like Vice President Ware-DeVaull indicated that we are facing some challenges in Lansing, as it relates to the passing of an education budget.
  - Dr. Green indicated that she would be in Lansing with other superintendents working with the legislative team and providing information to get a budget passed.
  - If we do not get a budget passed by September 30<sup>th</sup>, the State will shut down. The schools will not shut down. We will have to figure out how to get that done if that happens.
  - Dr. Green stated that she has an email set and ready to go to families with more clarifying details.
- e. **Staffing Updates**
  - Dr. Green indicated that we are one big family. Any time we have an impact that impacts any of our family members, it is uncomfortable. It is not always what we do but how we do it. She apologized

for the nature in which some of the information was communicated and the timing of it. We were hoping to avoid it completely thus waiting until the August time frame to communicate the information. We were grateful that we were able to keep everyone whole and bring them back. Thank you to the team that made it a reality.

- Dr. Green went over the Staffing Update presentation.

**f. Move Management**

- **Birney K-8** will leave their Evergreen location in January. They will be in two separate campuses during the spring semester. The K-5 scholars will be at Vandenberg, and the 6-8 scholars will be at Southfield Regional campus on Evergreen. We have been working diligently with the team to make sure we have all the communication out to our families. We are scheduling several meetings with the families. Principal Baldwin is taking the lead on communicating with her scholars' families. We do not have an answer tonight for families that have scholars at both locations, and they may have arrival and dismissal concerns.
- This gives us the opportunity to come up with FAQs.
- Champions had some licensure site visits this week and we will have an answer for whether they are prepared to provide services at Vandenberg.
- Birney K-8 will be moving out to the respective campuses over the winter break in December. They will return to their Evergreen location during the summer of 2026.
- Communication will go out to the staff of what it looks like to pack up their classroom.
- There is a big ask for staff to throw out any unwanted and unneeded items before they pack up to move to their temporary location.
- **Levey Middle** is currently housed at Eisenhower. They will return home in the summer of 2026.
- **UK12 Academy** will be moving to three respective locations in the summer of 2026. K-5 scholars will go to Vandenberg, 6-8 scholars will go to Eisenhower, high school scholars will go to O-House at SA&T.
- The **Mcintyre Elementary** scholars are moving to Birney when Birney returns to their building during the summer of 2026.
- We will have multiple forums and inundate our families with as much information as possible.
- Transportation will be a factor during the move to the different campuses. We will work on it to the best of our ability.
- Scholars are entitled to 1189.5 hours of instructional time. It impacts that time when scholars arrive late and they are picked up early.
- Count Day is October 1, 2025. We are deducted a portion of their allowance when they arrive late and are picked up early.
- We will consider having our special scholars/smaller babies from Birney K-8 to move over to Bussey during the renovations at their school.
- Secretary Smith-Thomas would like for the board to consider voting on the storage subscription for staff that want to house their items during the move. As a district, we must be fiscally responsible when paying for items to be stored.
- We will get information from the Move Management team on storage costs.

**g. Back to School Report Out**

- Dr. Green states that this was the absolute best back-to-school she has experienced here at SPS. Thank you to the building leadership team and department for the work they put in to ensure a successful first day of school. Thank you to all the Divine Nine partners, the media outlets, and our Trustees that came out to support our scholars.
- We moved to the Curriculum Night power point.
- **Transportation**
  - SPS is First Student's largest customer.
  - Some drivers tenured their resignations at the start of the school year.

- All the drivers didn't return and/or show up for the first day and some couldn't pass their physical is why there was a shortage of drivers.
- We were able to get some help from neighboring districts.
- Staff members with CDLs help to drive the school buses. First Student has a short-term plan, and they are working towards a long-term solution.
- When First Student realizes that there is an issue, they need to communicate that information with the superintendent before it starts to spiral.
- We would be able to assist with the situation, by reaching out to our families to inform them of the tardiness of the buses, instead of us reacting to the situation.
- First Student is in negotiations, and they are working through that as well.
- **Curriculum Nights**
  - Dr. Green went over the dates for each building's Curriculum Night/Open House.
  - UK12 is hosting a Meet the Teacher Night on September 18, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. They are not having an Open House on October 23, 2025.
  - We moved back to Transportation.

## 5. Public Participation

- Participant #1: wants to have her student's class assignment changed at the Bussey Center.
- Not to address Public Participation, Dr. Green suggested that the parent look at the Head Start website because it is a federally funded program. Their guidelines are specific to what can and cannot be done. We can make modifications as it relates to placing students on the same scholastic level together.

## 6. Action Items

### a. Consent Agenda

#### Approval of Minutes

#### i. August 18, 2025, Special Board Meeting/Student Hearing

- Vice President Ware-DeVaul moved to open and approve Consent Agenda – Approval of Minutes and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Belk, Trustee Bland, Trustee Denson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Johnson, and Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Ware-DeVaul

Nays: Nil

Motion carried unanimously.

### b. MASB 2025 Delegate Assembly

- Vice President Ware-DeVaul moved to have Trustee Holloway, Trustee Denson and Trustee Ware-DeVaul as MASB 2025 Delegates and it was supported by Treasurer Belk.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Ware-DeVaul, Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Denson, Trustee Bland, Trustee Belk

Nays: Nil

Motion carried unanimously.

### c. Report 64-06 Personnel Action Report

- Vice President Ware-DeVaul moved to open and approve Report 64-06 Personnel Action Report and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Belk, Trustee Bland, Trustee Denson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Johnson, and Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Ware-DeVaul

Nays: Nil

Motion carried unanimously.

- Moving forward, President Bland would like the Student Board Reps to have a student board rep packet so they can follow along.

## 7. Information Items

### a. Report 64-07 Environmental Consultant Services: Bond Funds

- This update from Plante Moran Realpoint (PMR) pertains to their assignment to assist and advise Southfield Public Schools (SPS) in the selection and procurement process for amending the Environmental Consultant Services contract. The amendment will include asbestos project coordination at both Levey Middle and Thompson K-8 as part of the 2022 Bond Program. Compensation for these services is a fixed fee of \$98,500.00.

### b. Report 64-08 French Associates, Inc – Amendment No 5: Investigation and Design Services for Existing Storm Sewer Systems at Birney K-8, Levey Middle School, and Thompson K-8 International Academy: Bond Funds

- This update from Plante Moran Realpoint (PMR) relates to the assignment to assist and advise SPS in its selection and procurement to amend the AE basic services to include investigation and design services for existing storm sewer systems at Birney K-8, Levey Middle, and Thompson K-8 for the 2022 Bond Program – Bulk Renovations. The amendment adds asbestos project coordination at Levey Middle and Thompson K-8. Compensation for these services is a fixed fee of \$88,500.00.

### c. Report 64-09 French Associates, Inc. - Amendment No. 6: Revisions for Temporary Cooling at Thompson K-8 and the Relocation of the VW eLab at Stevenson Elementary: Bond Funds

- This update from Plante Moran Realpoint (PMR) relates to the assignment to assist and advise SPS in its selection and procurement to amend the AE basic services to include additional design services at Thompson K-8 for power for temporary air conditioner and at Stevenson Elementary for relocating the VW eLabs for the 2022 Bond Program – Bulk Renovations. Compensation for these services is a fixed fee of \$12,200.00.

### d. Report 64-10 Environmental Maintenance Engineers, Inc. – Change Order #1: Additional Abatement Work

- Change Order No. 1 covers additional Stevenson abatement services, which includes removing and disposing of asbestos flooring material. Total Compensation for Additional Stevenson Abatement Services is a Lump Sum of \$19,780.00, which is based on the quotes provided by Environmental Maintenance Engineers, Inc.

### e. Report 64-11 BP #40 Stevenson ES Site Renovations – Asphalt Replacement, Cement Stabilization and Concrete Curb Replacement: Bond Funds

- The change order proposal scopes include pricing of \$226,797.59 for the following:
  - Saw cut and remove large portions of the asphalt to a depth of 12 inches and replace them with properly supported new asphalt. This is due to discovered sections of the existing exterior asphalt were unstable and inadequately compacted. These conditions could lead to future pavement failures.
  - Cement stabilization of subgrade beneath the asphalt. Field testing revealed that the ground beneath the existing asphalt to be too weak to support expected loads. This resolution would ensure long-term durability of new asphalt paving.
  - New concrete and asphalt work, curb replacement is now necessary. While removing asphalt in the south access drive, over 160 linear feet of the existing concrete curb was found to be significantly worn and cracked. To align with the new concrete and asphalt work, curb replacement is now necessary.

**f. Report 64-12 SRAC and Vandenberg Building – Swing Space Preparations: Capital Funds**

- For Vandenberg, the scope includes interior painting throughout the building—covering classrooms, doors, frames, and columns, but excluding toilet rooms—complete ceiling tile replacement, and the installation of vinyl flooring in place of carpet in six classrooms, three small offices, and the media center. In addition, both buildings will require the installation of isolation valves in all toilet rooms and duct cleaning for all air-handling units. The total award amount for SRAC and Vandenberg – swing space preparation is \$293,970.21. The contingency amount for SRAC and Vandenberg – swing space preparation is 10% of project total value. Total contingency amount is \$29,397.02, bringing the construction total to \$323,367.23. These additional scope items were not part of the original SPS 2022 Bond Program budget, because of this change, the total construction budget managed by Barton Malow has increased. As a result, Barton Malow is requesting a fee adjustment of 2.0% based on the amount of the budget increase. The fee adjustment amount is \$6,467.34, bringing the value cost to \$329,834.58. This project will be funded by Capital Funds.
- Vice President Ware-DeVaul moved to open and approved Report 64-12 SRAC and Vandenberg Building – Swing Space Preparations and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Ware-DeVaul, Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Denson, Trustee Bland, Trustee Belk

Nays: Nil

Motion carried unanimously.

- TJ mentioned that as projects are being closed out and the unused contingency funds are rolled back into the bond funds.

**g. Report 64-13 September 2025 Dashboard: Bond Funds**

- Report 64-07 Environmental Consultant Services, Report 64-08 French Associates, Inc – Amendment No 5: Investigation and Design Services for Existing Storm Sewer Systems at Birney K-8, Levey Middle School, and Thompson K-8 International Academy, Report 64-09 French Associates, Inc. - Amendment No. 6: Revisions for Temporary Cooling at Thompson K-8 and the Relocation of the VW eLab at Stevenson Elementary, Report 64-10 Environmental Maintenance Engineers, Inc. – Change Order #1: Additional Abatement Work, and Report 64-13 September 2025 Dashboard were approved through Report 63-105 Construction Purchase up to \$2,000,000.00 with Weekly Updates at the June 10, 2025, Regular Board Meeting.

**h. Financial Report****i. Monthly Bill Disbursement**

- The State budget has not been finalized at this time.
- The timing of local tax revenue is uncertain.
- These factors could create a temporary cash flow challenge for the district.
- The administration is monitoring this closely and they are prepared to bring forth recommendations, if needed.
- There were lots of summer payments over the summer totaling \$1.52 million for Summer Discovery.
- Due to the success of this year's programs, we have been offered early application for the summer of 2026.

**8. For the Good of the Order**

- Vice President states that it was previously mentioned, but it is very important to get our students to school on time.



**Approved on: September 23, 2025**

**Leslie L. Smith-Thomas, Board Secretary**