



SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS MINUTES

MEETING: Special Board Meeting/Organizational Meeting	DATE: January 6, 2026	TIME: 6:00 p.m.	LOCATION: John W. English Administrative Center
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yvette Ware-DeVaul, President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amani Johnson, Vice President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leslie L. Smith-Thomas, Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Talisha Belk, Treasurer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jillian Holloway, Trustee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nicole Denson, Trustee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jenae' Anderson, Trustee	
ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jennifer Green, Ed.D. Superintendent	<input type="checkbox"/> Lanissa Freeman, Deputy Superintendent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Jackson, Chief of Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Devaughn Stephens, Chief of Talent Mtg
<input type="checkbox"/> April Rogers, Exe. Dir., State and Federal Programs	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> Sommer Caldwell-Carruthers, Executive Director of Instruction
			Student Board Representatives: <input type="checkbox"/> Paris Whitman, SA&T <input type="checkbox"/> Chidi Nnaji, UK12

1. Opening of Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Board President Ware-DeVaul at 6:00 p.m. Board President Ware-DeVaul read the opening statement and Trustee roll call was taken. All Trustees were present. Chief Jackson was in attendance for this meeting.

- Secretary Smith-Thomas wanted to add For the Good of the Order to the agenda before adjourning the board meeting. The Trustees agreed.

2. Election of Officers

- Secretary Smith-Thomas indicated that the voting of the cabinet positions would start with the first person to be nominated. If that Trustee has the most yes votes, the Board would move to the next cabinet position. If they did not have enough yes votes, then the Board would move to the next nominee and then take that vote until there were enough yes votes for the Trustee. There was discussion regarding the process of voting.

❖ Board President

- President Ware-DeVaul opened the floor up for the Board President nominations.
- Secretary Smith-Thomas nominated Treasurer Belk and Treasurer Belk accepted the nomination for President. Treasurer Belk stated her reason why she would like to be Board President. President Ware-DeVaul asked if there were any other nominations. Vice President Johnson nominated President Ware-DeVaul and President Ware-DeVaul accepted the nomination for the Board President position. President Ware-DeVaul stated her reason why she would like to be Board President. President Ware-DeVaul asked three times if there were any other nominations for the Board President position. There were no other nominations.

President Ware-DeVaul asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote for Treasurer Belk for Board President.

Ayes: Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Denson, Trustee Belk, Trustee Anderson
Nays: Trustee Ware-DeVaul, Trustee Johnson
Motion carried with 5 yes and 2 no votes.
The vote was for Trustee Belk for Board President.

- President Belk and Trustee Ware-DeVaul exchanged seats.

❖ **Board Vice President**

- President Belk opened the floor for the Board Vice President nominations.
- Trustee Holloway nominated Trustee Ware-DeVaul for Board Vice President and Trustee Ware-DeVaul accepted the nomination.
- President Belk asked three times if there were any other nominations.
- Vice President Johnson nominated himself for Board Vice President. Trustee Denson nominated Secretary Smith-Thomas for Board Vice President and Secretary Smith-Thomas accepted the nomination for Board Vice President.
- Trustee Ware-DeVaul provided her reason why she wanted to serve as the Board Vice President.
- Trustee Johnson provided his reason why he wanted to serve as the Board Vice President.
- Secretary Smith-Thomas provided her reason why she wanted to serve as the Board Vice President.

President Belk asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote for Trustee Ware-DeVaul for Board Vice President.

Ayes: Trustee Ware-DeVaul

Nays: Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Denson, Trustee Belk, Trustee Anderson

Motion failed with 1 yes and 6 no votes.

President Belk asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote for Trustee Johnson for Board Vice President.

Ayes: Trustee Johnson

Nays: Trustee Anderson, Trustee Belk, Trustee Denson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Ware-DeVaul

Motion failed with 1 yes and 6 no votes.

President Belk asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote for Trustee Smith-Thomas for Board Vice President.

Ayes: Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Denson, Trustee Belk, Trustee Anderson

Nays: Trustee Ware-DeVaul, Trustee Johnson

Motion carried with 5 yes and 2 no votes.

The vote was for Trustee Smith-Thomas for Board Vice President.

❖ **Board Secretary**

- President Belk opened the floor for the Board Secretary nominations.
- Vice President Smith-Thomas nominated Trustee Ware-DeVaul for Board Secretary and Trustee Ware-DeVaul accepted the nomination.
- President Belk asked three times if there were any other nominations and there were none.
- Trustee Ware-DeVaul won the nomination for Board Secretary.

❖ **Board Treasurer**

- President Belk opened the floor for the Board Treasurer nominations.
- Trustee Johnson nominated Trustee Denson for Board Treasurer and Trustee Denson accepted the nomination.
- Trustee Holloway nominated Trustee Johnson for Board Treasurer and Trustee Johnson declined the nomination.
- President Belk asked three times if there were any other nominations and there were none.
- Trustee Denson won the nomination for Board Treasurer.

3. Public Participation

- There was no public participation.

4. For the Good of the Order

- Vice President Smith-Thomas would like for Dr. Green to bring one or two policies regarding our educators to the Board Retreat so that they can review.
- Vice President Smith-Thomas would like to have meal accommodations for virtual classes such as the Winter Institute where the classes are all day.
- Vice President Smith-Thomas would like to get back to the Honor Board status with MASB.
- President Belk indicated she is scheduled to take the Board Presidents Workshop Part 1 & 2 during the Winter Institute session. For the record, President Belk states that she has resigned from three different boards to have time to do the work.
- Dr. Green is grateful to the whole team as it relates to the Birney K-8 move to the two different buildings. Thank you to Chief Jackson for leading that charge and the implementation of the metal detectors.
- President Belk thanked everyone for trusting her to lead the board.
- Dr. Green reminded the Trustees of the location of the Board Retreat and went over the agenda items/timeline. Dr. Green gave a brief overview of Ms. Mays background.

5. Adjournment

President Belk adjourned the Special Board Meeting/Study Session at 6:31 p.m.

Approved on: February 10, 2026

Yvette Ware-DeVaul, Board Secretary
Leslie L. Smith-Thomas, Board Secretary