

# Minutes of Committee Meeting

## The Board of Trustees Fort Smith Public Schools

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A Committee Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Fort Smith Public Schools was held Monday, May 8, 2017, beginning at 5:30 PM in the Service Center, Bldg B.

Mr. Bill Hanesworth made a motion, seconded by Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, to meet as a Committee of the Whole. Board members present were Dr. Deanie Mehl, Ms. Susan McFerran, Mr. Wade Gilkey, Ms. Talicia Richardson, Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, Mr. Bill Hanesworth, and Ms. Jeannie Cole. Administrators present were Dr. Doug Brubaker, Superintendent, Dr. Annette Henderson, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Support Services, Mr. Charles Warren, Chief Financial Officer, Ms. Zena Featherston Marshall, Director of Communication and Community Partnerships, Ms. Kathy Haaser, Director of Special Education, and Ms. Nadine Brooks, Secretary to the Superintendent.

### **I. Bond Refunding Series 2017**

Presenter: Bill Hanesworth

Mr. Hanesworth presented a bond refunding opportunity in the estimated amount of \$562,706.25 in debt service costs over the lifetime of the bond. He noted that \$407,406.25 of this saving would be recognized in FY2018. Mr. Hanesworth read the resolution aloud.

Mr. Hanesworth made a motion, seconded by Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, to recommend to the Board of Education on May 22, the authorization for Stephens, Inc. to refund the outstanding 2013 bonds in 2017, approving the resolution and required documentation as presented. The vote passed 7/0.

### **II. Special Education IDEA Assurances**

Presenter: Jeannie Cole

Ms. Jeannie Cole presented the 2017-2018 Special Education IDEA (Individuals With Disabilities Act) Statement of Intent and the accompanying Assurances and Agreements for both preschool aged children and school aged children for review and approval. She noted that these are presented yearly for submission.

Ms. Cole made a motion, seconded by Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin to recommend to the Board of Education on May 22 the authorization of the Preschool Statements of Intent and accompanying Special Education Assurances and Agreements for board

approval and submission to the Arkansas Department of Education as presented.  
The vote passed 7/0.

Ms. Cole made a motion, seconded by Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin to recommend to the Board of Education on May 22 the authorization of the K-12 Statements of Intent and accompanying Special Education Assurances and Agreements for board approval and submission to the Arkansas Department of Education as presented.  
The vote passed 7/0.

### **III. United Way - Parents as Teachers Grant**

Presenter: Jeannie Cole

Dr. Barry Owen and Dr.. Sarah Biggs presented the United Way Grant that needs board approval for allocating funding for the FSPS Parents As Teachers program as a community partner. The grant is for \$35,000 and will fund one employee.

Ms. Cole made a motion, seconded by Mr. Haneswoth, to approve the agreement with the United Way Agency for the purpose of funding for the Parents as Teachers Program. The vote passed 7/0.

### **IV. Student Handbook Policies 2017-2018**

Presenter: Susan McFerran

Ms. McFerran presented the following five policy changes for the 2017-2018 Student Handbook.

#### **Section I. Attendance Policies, New Letter C., McKinney-Vento, page 2**

##### C. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Program

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Program helps remove barriers to learning for students experiencing homelessness or placement in foster care. The term “homeless children and youth” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence. In an effort to identify and assist students experiencing homelessness, the district provides liaisons at both the building and district level. The liaisons are tasked with administering the regulations and procedures as outlined in the McKinney-Vento Act while complying with the provisions of the Fort Smith Public Schools Homeless Education Program. Enrollment requirement exceptions for homeless and foster care youth are listed above in “B. 1. Enrollment documentation”.

1. Transportation of Homeless and Foster Care Students – Under the “Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015” students awaiting foster care placement and students in actual foster care are eligible for the same transportation services as students designated as “homeless”. Such services will be comparable to those provided for non-homeless students.

Fort Smith Public Schools acknowledges that the responsibility for

transporting children to and from school belongs to the parent. However, due to the size of the district, the student population, and the locations of various programs and schools: it is the policy of the Fort Smith Public Schools to provide transportation exceptions if a student meets at least one of the following conditions:

- a. A student attending his/her home school lives outside a two-mile radius of his/her school.
- b. A student who cannot attend his/her home school due to overcrowding. He/She will be transferred and bussed from their home school to a school that has space available at his/her grade level.
- c. Special needs students, with a qualifying disability, may be picked up at home, at a neighborhood school, or at a bus stop near their home.
- d. School to school program transfers for some secondary classes that are provided at locations other than the home school.

## 2. FSPS Transportation Policy for Homeless and Foster Care Students

Homeless and Foster Care Students (HFCS), who wish to attend a school outside their school of location may do so, if it is determined by the parents, the school administration, and the local welfare agency, in the case of foster care students, to be in the best interest of the child.

For the purposes of school transportation, Homeless and Foster Care (HFCS) students will be considered “at-large students” eligible to ride to or from any bus stop that serves their school of choice. (Comparable Service)\*

If the school of choice is within a two mile radius of their residence, then no bus transportation will be provided. (Comparable Service)\* However, if any school within that two mile radius has a bus route that connects to their school of choice, the HFCS student may ride that bus from that school to their school of choice. This is an additional service that provided to HFCS students and this option is not available to other students and parents. (Additional Service)\*\*

If the school of choice or a connecting school is outside a two-mile radius of their residence, then the FSPS will make arrangements for that student to be transported from a bus stop or a neighborhood school, to the school of choice. Parents should be aware that this option may require earlier pick up /later drop off times and possibly one or more bus transfers to get the students to their destination. (Additional Service)\*\* Students in foster care or awaiting foster care are eligible for these same transportation services if requested by the local welfare agency. However, in order to account, control, and

share transportation costs, a completed registration form, along with documentation from the Department of Human Services of each qualifying student's status (only those students requesting bus transportation), must be made and provided to the District each school year. The registration form and documentation letter should be submitted to the FSPS Homeless Liaison by September 15th of each year; who will then forward copies to the FSPS Student Services Office and the FSPS Transportation Office by October 1st of each year. If HFCS students are being transported between neighboring school districts, then both districts share the responsibility and the costs of arranging transportation details. The cost for any additional services for foster students, such as those listed above, will be the responsibility of the local welfare agency, as stated under the provisions of the law.\*\* \*Paragraph 3; Sect. A – Transportation Services – 42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(4) Comparable Services \*\* The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 and Amendments on Foster Care in Title 1 Part-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

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**Section I. Attendance Policies, Attendance, A. Absences, 2. Parental Permission, b., page 5**

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b. The student may not exceed five (5) parental permission absence days for the school year. If a student exceeds five (5) days of parental permission absences in any class for the school year, all parental permission days thereafter beyond the first five (5) are classified as unexcused. For the purposes of elementary school attendance, parent permission days will be counted in the form of five (5) a.m. and five (5) p.m. absences. No more than five (5) of either a.m. or p.m. absences will be excused as parental permission.

**Section III. Student Health, G. Immunization Requirements for Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 4., page 11**

A facility may temporarily admit a child provided that the child becomes appropriately immunized, is in process of receiving the needed doses of vaccine, or shows proof that he or she has applied for an exemption for those vaccines he or she has not received within thirty (30) program days after the child's original admission. In process may only be verified with a paper copy of a scheduled appointment from a health care provider who will administer the needed immunizations. Any student without all required immunizations (or approved serology) may be excluded from

school in the event his or her health is jeopardized by a communicable disease outbreak.

### **IX. Eligibility for Athletic Competition, In District Transfers, page 24**

A student who chooses to transfer schools within the district and who is entering the eighth, ninth, eleventh, or twelfth grade will lose athletic eligibility for that school year unless the student attended the receiving school the entire previous year. If a ninth grade student entering the tenth grade desires to transfer out of his attendance zone, that student must inform the Fort Smith Public Schools' Director of Athletics and Student Activities. If a student has made a legal transfer to a school in 7<sup>th</sup> grade or 10<sup>th</sup> grade by July 1 then chooses to return to his/her home attendance area school, eligibility will be lost for 365 days.

A ninth grade student may participate in a sport not offered at his/her junior high school. If a ninth grade student desires to transfer out of his/her attendance area to participate in athletics not offered at his/her junior high school, the following conditions must be met:

1. The student must be granted an Attendance Area Exception from Student Services for the following school year. The Attendance Area Exception will take effect the fall semester of the tenth grade year.

2. The student and his/her parent or guardian must sign a Declaration of Intent with the Fort Smith Public Schools Director of Athletics and Student Activities.

If the student returns to his/her home attendance area, athletic eligibility will be lost for 365 days. If a ninth grade student entering the tenth grade desires to transfer out of his/her attendance zone, that student must inform the Fort Smith Public Schools Director of Athletics and Student Activities. If the student has made a legal transfer to a school in the 7th grade or 10th grade by July 1 and then chooses to return to his/her home attendance area school, eligibility will be lost for 365 days.

### **XVII. Transportation Rules for Students, Bus Rules, #6, page 32**

6. Students are not to eat, drink, smoke, spit, litter, use obscene language or gestures, ~~play radios/tape/dvd/MP3 players, video games or band instruments~~ or make any distracting noises at any time. Texting is allowed but voice calls are not allowed.

Mr. Layes, Dr. McKinney and Dr. Brubaker reviewed the policy changes with committee members. Mr. Layes explained the attendance policy changes. Regarding Athletic Policy for Eligibility for Athletic Competition, In-District Transfers, Ms. Talicia Richardson requested that there be a signature required from parents/students acknowledging that they have met with coaches and this was explained to them as part of their Declaration of Intent and they fully understand that if the student returns to his/her home attendance area school, he or she will not be eligible for 365 days. Dr. McKinney and Dr. Brubaker stressed that the District makes every attempt to comply with AAA rules.

Ms. Susan McFerran made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wade Gilkey, to present the five policy changes to the Board of Education for approval on May 22. The vote assed 5/0.

## **V. Personnel Policy**

Presenter: Yvonne Keaton-Martin

Ms. Keaton-Martin reported that each year the administration and Fort Smith Classroom Teachers Association (FSCTA) meet to consider changes to personnel policies. Any changes agreed upon are submitted as a recommendation to the School Board and require two readings and affirmative votes before they are considered official. Personnel policy changes become effective on the July 1<sup>st</sup> following adoption.

Ms. Keaton-Martin reported that the committee is to consider Policy *GCL* Professional Development. Under the revised policy, the number of hours of required professional development will be reduced by one day (or six hours). The number of hours required to “waiver out of” the final professional development day is comparably reduced. Since the overall number of contract days for teachers remains unchanged, it is the hope that professional staff will use the extra day to pursue professional development activities tailored to each person’s individual needs. The goal is for teachers to be able to spend some time pursuing developmental activities in which they have a specific interest. The proposed policy also has some minor revisions to conform with state regulations.

Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wade Gilkey, to waive the formal reading of the policy. The vote passed 7/0.

Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wade Gilkey, to recommend to the Board of Education Policy *GCL* - Professional Development be approved for First Reading.” The vote passed 7/0.

## **VI. Properties - Beard Elementary Roof Repairs**

Presenter: Talicia Richardson

Ms. Richardson reported that two bids were received for repair to the storm damaged roof at Beard Elementary. The assigned architect firm, MAHG, recommended accepting the low bid of \$97,856 from Dale Crampton as a qualified bidder. This roof repair is fully covered by insurance proceeds.

Ms. Richardson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hanesworth, to accept the bid from Dale Crampton in the amount of \$97,856 for the roof repairs and improvements at Beard Elementary. The vote passed 7/0.

## **VII. Strategic Planning**

Presenter: Doug Brubaker

Dr. Brubaker reported that through a Request for Proposal for Strategic Planning Facilitation Services, three firms submitted proposals by the April 19 deadline. He noted that based on particular criteria, the evaluation committee determined that Cambridge Strategic Services, LLC, submitted the proposal that represents the best value for the district. Approval of the attached contract with Cambridge Strategic Services, LLC, is recommended by the Administration with a cost of \$33,100 which includes travel expenses and a 10% project contingency of \$3,310 for a total not-to-exceed \$36,410.

Mr. Hanesworth made a committee motion, seconded by Ms. Richardson, to approve the award of the contract for Strategic Planning Facilitation Services to Cambridge Strategic Services, LLC, with a not-to-exceed amount of \$36,410. The motion passed with 7/0.

Ms. Richardson requested consistency in kindergarten registration practices. Dr. Brubaker reported the District has looked into online registration.

Ms. Richardson expressed concern after learning that a teacher in another area school district had been required to report to work while not on contract. Dr. Brubaker stated that he believes teachers may choose to begin preparing their classroom before their contract dates because of enthusiasm for the upcoming year but that it was by choice.

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.