



Board of Education

Minutes of
The Board of Education

A Regular School Board Meeting of the Board of Education of Fort Smith Public Schools was held Monday, March 13, 2023, beginning at 5:30 PM in the Service Center, Bldg. B, Auditorium, 3205 Jenny Lind, P.O. Box 1948, Fort Smith, AR 72901.

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Blackwell, president, called the meeting to order noting seven board members were present. Other board members present were: Ms. Talicia Richardson, Mr. Dalton Person, Mr. Matt Blaylock, Mr. Davin Chitwood, Ms. Sandy Dixon and Mr. Phil Whiteaker. District administrators present included: Dr. Terry Morawski, Superintendent; Mr. Martin Mahan, Deputy Superintendent; Dr. Chris Davis, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Campus Support; Dr. Tiffany Bone, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Mr. Charles Warren, Chief Financial Officer; Mr. Vance Gregory, Director of Technology; Mr. Shawn Shaffer, Executive Director of Facility Operations; Ms. Zena Featherston Marshall, Executive Director Community & Business Partnerships, Ms. Shari Cooper, Director, Communications; and Ms. Leslie Phelps, Office Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent. Mr. Marshall Ney, of Friday, Eldridge, and Clark, District Attorney was also in attendance.

The district mission and vision statement was followed by a moment of silence and the pledge of allegiance.

RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Mahan presented the following recognitions.

March Superintendent Star Awards

Mina Lin – Barling Elementary

Joel Solis – Orr Elementary

Sam Thomas – Woods Elementary

Hutchinson Walrod – Euper Lane Elementary

The Southside High School Freshman Arkansas Governor's Quiz Bowl team is the champion for the 7A Red Division. The team is coached by Walter Woodie and Josh Adams.

Southside High School band members competed at the regional level band competition and eight students achieved All-State status. They are eligible to compete at the national competition. Their director is Ralph Brody.

Northside High School band students competed in the 2023 All-State band competition and ten students earned All-State honors. These students qualified to compete at regional competition. Their director is Aaron Durham.

Southside High School had nine students that earned All-State choir honors. The Southside choir teacher is Donald Thames.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Morawski gave a presentation to the Future Fort Smith Committee regarding the district's Continuous Improvement Plan, projects related to Vision 2023, and current legislation.

The draft day Be Pro Be Proud event starts Tuesday, March 14, 2023. High school seniors from the area and around the region will meet with prospective employers to learn about career opportunities.

The district's channel and videos on YouTube have been deleted. The district has been working with YouTube to work on getting the videos recovered. The cause has not been determined but it does not appear to be a cyber-attack or malicious behavior. Going forward, multiple copies of the board meeting recordings will be stored. The incident was reported to the Arkansas Department of Education State Standards.

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be Monday, April 24, 2023. A called board meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 1, 2023 for the superintendent evaluation process. The regular scheduled board meeting will be on Monday, May 22, 2023.

Upcoming events include Southside High School graduation on Thursday, May 18, 2023. Northside High School graduation will be on Friday, May 19, 2023. Both will start at 7:00 PM. The Adult Education graduation will be on May 23, 2023 at 6:00 PM at Peak Innovation Center.

Dr. Morawski's report of Good Things Going on in the District included: Southside High School cheer placed 5th in the nation at the UCA cheer camp, the Grizzly Battalion Army JROTC Academic Team A and Leadership Team qualified for the JROTC Leadership and Academic Bowl (JLAB) National Championship in Washington, DC, Fort Smith Public Schools and University of Arkansas-Fort Smith Western Arkansas Technical Center (WATC) students represented PEAK at Career and Technical Education (CTE) day at the capital, ArcBest honored and presented Value Awards for growth and excellence to Southside High School students and staff members, Fort Smith Public Schools recently hosted a Drone Racing demonstration for local students, the Northside High School Lady Bear Bowlers won Individual 6A State Champ, Overall 6A State Champ, and 2nd in Overall 6A State. They are coached by Ryan Solley. Southside High School Mavs Quiz Bowl team finished second in the AGQBA 7A-West Regional Tournament. They are coached by Josh Adams.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included the February Financial Report, March Professional Staff Recommendations, and the March Student Services Report.

Mr. Person made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dixon, to approve the consent agenda items as presented. The motion passed 7/0.

LEGISLATIVE LIAISON UPDATE

Dr. Terry Morawski and Ms. Richardson, the board's legislative liaison, provided the latest updates to several individual legislative bills and their potential impact to the district and board.

This was an informational item and no action is required.

CONSIDER APPROVING ETHICS DISCLOSURE RESOLUTION

At 6:10 PM, Ms. Richardson recused herself from this agenda item.

Mr. Warren presented a resolution and a contract disclosure form due to the direct financial interest Ms. Richardson has with Bliss Cupcake Café. The district desires, on occasion, to do business with Bliss Cupcake Café.

Ms. Dixon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blaylock, to approve the ethics disclosure resolution. The motion passed 6-0.

Note: Ms. Richardson returned to the meeting at 6:12 PM.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION CONCERNING ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION

When there are no board members on the election ballot and the only issue for consideration is the unchanged local tax rate the administration recommends that the annual school election be by absentee ballot and early voting only, with no polling places open on election day. Dr. Terry Morawski presented this resolution to be adopted and sent to the Sebastian County Board of Election Commissioners if approved.

Ms. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Whiteaker, made a motion to adopt the resolution to conduct the annual school election by absentee ballot and early voting only with no polling places open on election day. The motion passed 7-0.

CONSIDER APPROVING A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE VIRTUAL ACADEMY CONVERSION CHARTER AMENDMENT APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Dr. Hall presented an amendment to increase the service of the virtual academy to Kindergarten – Twelfth grade.

Currently there are 167 students enrolled in virtual academy. The proposal for the virtual academy being Kindergarten – twelfth grade would include one school with a dedicated staff, coordinated resources, and continued opportunities for participation in AAA approved programs through zoned schools.

Two full time teachers would need to be added, however with capturing the core curriculum for ninth-twelfth grade back to the district's own teachers that will offset the cost of adding two teachers as well as save a projected \$24,000 based on current enrollment. Another channel will be used for teaching electives.

Mr. Person, seconded by Ms. Richardson, made a motion to approve the resolution to submit the virtual academy conversion charter amendment application to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The motion passed 6-1 with Mr. Blaylock opposing.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ADOPTION FOR 2023-2029

Dr. Jones explained the process and steps the textbook committee took to reach the recommendations for instructional resources for grades sixth through twelfth social studies adoption.

Dr. Morawski did state that administration is seeking approval of the recommended instructional resource however; the actual purchase will be at a later date after discussions with the Department of Education to confirm that these materials will meet the department's new requirements.

The total projected cost for the middle school and high school is \$1,043,986.66. Dr. Jones expects that cost to be significantly less due to ordering actual copies of the textbooks instead of having both copies of the textbook plus digital subscriptions.

Also discussed was the new alignment for social studies curriculum to consist of U.S. History I in seventh grade, U.S. History II/Arkansas History eighth grade, Civics/Economics in ninth grade, and World History in tenth grade. These changes are based on the new standards provided by the Department of Education.

Mr. Person made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chitwood, to authorize the adoption of the recommended instructional resources for grades 6-12 social studies. The motion passed 7-0.

PRESENTATION - SUMMER EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Dr. Minton shared the summer extended learning opportunities planned for summer 2023. Information about each of these opportunities will be sent from the principals to the students that they are going to invite and this information will also be highlighted on the District's website.

This is an information item and no action is required.

PRESENTATION - SKILLED TRADES/CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY AT PEAK

Dr. Udouj shared the plans to include a skilled trades construction program at Peak Innovation Center. Skilled trades was identified as an area of need in our region. Students will be able to choose several different career programs including construction, advance manufacturing, computer integrated machining, robotics & automation/electronics technology, welding, and automotive. These programs are considered industry recognized certifications.

This is an informational item and no action is required.

PRESENTATION - GRADUATION 2023 AND CELL PHONE POLICY UPDATE

Dr. Jones shared the graduation speech application process and how selection of speakers work. He also shared the inclement weather plan for graduation. Ceremonies would be held in the arenas and eight tickets will be distributed to each student. A livestream option will also be available.

Dr. Jones also discussed the district handbook policy regarding electronic devices including the consequences for elementary students and secondary students that violate this policy.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

Ms. Blackwell recapped several dates coming up. The next regular scheduled board meeting will be April 24. Superintendent's review will be on May 1 and the May regular board meeting will be on the 22.

Ms. Richardson thanked Dr. Morawski and team for their assistance in gathering information on scholarships that was given to students that attended a community college fair.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and this meeting was adjourned at 7:49 PM.

Dee Blackwell, President

Dalton Person, Secretary