

Board of Education

A Called School Board Meeting of the Board of Education of Fort Smith Public Schools was held Thursday, June 25, 2020, beginning at 4:00 PM in the Service Center, Bldg B., 3205 Jenny Lind, per COVID19 CDC guidelines.

Mr. Bill Hanesworth, president, called the meeting to order. Other board members present were Ms. Susan McFerran, Ms. Talicia Richardson, Mr. Dalton Person, and Ms. Dee Blackwell. Mr. Wade Gilkey and Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin. Dr. Doug Brubaker, Superintendent, Dr. Terry Morawski, Deputy Superintendent, Mr. Martin Mahan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Ms. Sherri Penix, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Campus Support, Mr. Charles Warren, Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Darian Layes, Executive Director of Student Services, Mr. Vance Gregory, Executive Director of Technology, Ms. Zena Featherston Marshall, Executive Director of Communication and Community Partnerships, and Ms. Nadine Brooks, Secretary to the Superintendent were also present.

A moment of silence followed.

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr. Brubaker spoke regarding the District's mission statement and Vision 2023 regarding equity and diversity for every student and staff.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ANNUAL CONTRACT FOR 2020-2021 WITH SCREENCASTIFY

Dr. Brubaker reported that Screencastify is a Chrome browser extension. This browser extension will give teachers several blended instructional options that include recording a single tab in their web browser, capturing all screen activity, and/or using the web camera to record and post instructional videos. The annual subscription and contract amount is \$16,200.

The administration recommended that the Board approve the 2020-2021 instructional materials contract with Screencastify. Ms. Blackwell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gilkey, to approve the 2020-2021 contract with Screencastify. The vote passed 7/0.

GRADUATION

Dr. Brubaker reported that State authorities announced on April 25 that "traditional high school graduation would not be available until July 1" and that plans for graduation ceremonies scheduled to take place after July 1 would have to be submitted to the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) for approval. The form for this process became available June 9.

Since then, high school principals and district staff members have surveyed students, measured bleachers, calculated seating capacities of different venues in light of state-required social

distancing restrictions, gathered input from stakeholders, and created several graduation ceremony options that appear to meet state requirements. Attached are options that are pending approval by DESE and ADH. Each outdoor graduation option includes an inclement weather contingency plan. Some inclement weather contingency plans involve use of the Fort Smith Convention Center (FSCC), which is available on July 16 and 17. The FSCC has advised the district that they must also secure ADH approval to host individual events using a separate process.

The administration recommended that the Board select one graduation option and identify two alternate options in order of preference so that preparations for graduation on July 16 and 17 can continue should ADH and/or DESE deny approval of any option.

Dr. Ginni McDonald reviewed six plans in detail. Both high school principals, Dr. Lisa Miller and Dr. Keri Rathbun, indicated that they had received a lot of feedback and the majority of students preferred to graduate on the field, although not all were comfortable with that option. Staff attendance and heat factor were discussed. There would not be a celebration with the throwing of caps and social distance was also discussed.

After discussion, Mr. Person made a motion, seconded by Ms. Keaton-Martin, to select 1A as the district's primary graduation plan for July 16 and July 17.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

Board members commended students and staff for their time, input and respectfulness in this difficult decision making event.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Bill Hanesworth, President

Dee Blackwell, Secretary