



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, October 23, 2023, beginning at 5:30 PM in the Service Center, Bldg. B, Auditorium, 3205 Jenny Lind, P.O. Box 1948, Fort Smith, AR 72901.

Mr. Dalton Person, president, called the meeting to order noting seven board members were present. Other board members present were: Ms. Talicia Richardson, Mr. Phil Whiteaker, Mr. Matt Blaylock, Mr. Davin Chitwood, Ms. Sandy Dixon and Ms. Susan Krafft. 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, Curriculum & Instruction; Mr. Charles Warren, Chief Financial Officer; Dr. Michael Farrell, Executive Director of Student Services, 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 via Zoom.

RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Mahan presented the following recognitions:

October Superintendent Star Awards

Jackson Barling – Ballman Elementary
Angelo Brewer McGill – Euper Lane Elementary
Kayla Koger – Barling Elementary
Hutson Rodebush – Carnall Elementary
Temperance Schnider – Carnall Elementary
Avery Selby – Bonneville Elementary
Carley Watley – Cavanaugh Elementary
Tykerian Whiteaker – Cook Elementary
Paj Ting Taw – Beard Elementary

Northside High School JROTC Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Na Ho was awarded the Legion of Valor Bronze Cross.

Northside High School students and staff were recognized at the Ozark Media Arts Festival. First Place in Architecture Photography: Dele Flores, Addie Bieker, Juliza Quintana, and Omar Castillo; First place in Creative Photography category: Xena Litchford, Maria Buford, Neveah Smith, and Adamaris Ramirez; Teacher of the Year: Olivia Jennings; and Photography Program of the Year: Northside High School.

Tilles Elementary was recognized for achieving Level I certification for High Reliability Schools.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Morawski updated the board on some upcoming dates and meetings: The filing period for the March 2024 election begins on Monday, November 6th at noon and concludes on Tuesday, November 14th at noon. The next regular board meeting will be Monday, November 13th. The Arkansas School Board Association

Annual Conference will be held in Little Rock on December 6-8, 2023. The December regular board meeting will be on December 18th. The District's winter break will be December 18, 2023 – January 2, 2024.

A lunch was hosted to thank the Ballman Elementary and Fairview Elementary staff for their collaboration and work during the first few months of school.

Dr. Morawski reported that district staff are researching weapon detection systems and other safety enhancements. An update will be given at the November 13, 2023 meeting.

At the November 13, 2023 meeting a presentation will be given regarding the Trusty Elementary and Morrison Elementary attendance zones related to the closing of Trusty Elementary.

Dr. Morawski's Good Things Going on in the District included: Amy Gordon of Barling Elementary received the Bessie B. Moore Award for Excellence from Economics Arkansas; Southside Freshman Volleyball won their conference tournament; the Fort Smith Noon Exchange Club held their Shoes That Fit Drive and provided 48 pairs of shoes to Beard Elementary; the Northside High School and Southside High School marching bands received superior ratings at the Region Eight Marching Band assessment; the Peak Innovation Center hosted the iCAN Career Conference for regional eighth graders; Southside High School senior, Elizabeth Do, created the illustrations for the Fort Smith Police Department's podcast The Adventures of Pawfficer Fuzz; Northside High School Jag Club donated handmade blankets to Project Linus for children in need; Ballman Elementary staff and students returned to their school on October 11, 2023 after starting the school year at Fairview Elementary, and the communications department is working with the elementary and middle schools to update their school logos to strengthen the Fort Smith Public Schools brand with consistent and compliant logos.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included the September Financial Statement, September 25 Minutes, October Professional Staff Recommendations, October Student Services Report, the Community Service Learning Partner Site Applications and the School Choice Capacity Resolution.

Ms. Richardson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dixon, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The vote passed 7-0.

SELECTION OF VOTING REPRESENTATIVE FOR ASBA DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Dr. Morawski reported that the Arkansas School Boards Association Delegate Assembly would meet at 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, December 6, 2023 during the ASBA Annual Conference in Little Rock.

Ms. Dixon made a motion, seconded by Ms. Richardson, to designate Mr. Whiteaker as the voting representative at the ASBA Annual Conference in Little Rock. The vote passed 7/0.

CONSIDER APPROVING AMENDED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Dr. Bone stated that the school improvement plans presented in July showed a step-by-step plan how the school improvement plans were aligned with the District's continuous improvement plan. Each school has now received their ACT Aspire Data and ESSA Index scores and have put together their final improvement plans.

Ms. Richardson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whiteaker, to approve the amended school improvement plans for the 2023-2024 school year.

PRESENTATION – EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA) INDEX

Dr. Bone gave an in-depth presentation on how the ESSA Index scores were calculated. The elementary and middle schools use three indicators: weighted achievement, value added growth, and school qualities and student success indicator to calculate grades. The high schools also use graduation rate to calculate grades.

This is a presentation item and no action is required.

PRESENTATION – SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Dr. Farrell presented information regarding student attendance at Fort Smith Public Schools. The state attendance goal is 95% or nine days a year. In the 2022-2023 school year Fort Smith Public Schools were at 91.24%.

Dr. Farrell also reported on what several schools are doing to increase and promote school attendance.

This is a presentation item and no action is required.

PRESENTATION – DEMOGRAPHIC UPDATE

Zonda Education gave an update highlighting Fort Smith’s current economic development including an overview of the housing activity and development within the District.

Also presented were enrollment projections for the next ten years. It is anticipated that the District enrollment could decrease over the next several years due to lower Kindergarten numbers entering the District and larger grade groups graduating out. However, enrollment could increase to the 14,100 range in the 2033-2034 school year.

This is a presentation item and no action is required.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

The next regular school board meeting will be Monday, November 13, 2023.

Ms. Krafft acknowledged that the Southside High School volleyball team would be playing in the state volleyball tournament and encouraged everyone to cheer them on.

Ms. Richardson commended the work of Dr. Farrell and his team for their participation in the ACE Trauma Awareness Symposium.

Mr. Whiteaker praised the district’s school bus drivers for making the students feel safe.

Mr. Person reported there has been an onsite visit at Peak for the third party review. Mr. Person discussed with the third party about a \$10,000 threshold that the board did not want to exceed. Once that threshold is reached, it will come back to the board to discuss further.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:37 PM.

President, Board of Education

Secretary, Board of Education