



Board of Education

Minutes of Regular School Board Meeting The Board of Education

A Regular School Board Meeting of the Board of Education of Fort Smith Public Schools was held July 27, 2020, beginning at 5:30 PM in the Service Center, Bldg. B, 3205 Jenny Lind Road, per COVID-19 CDC guidelines.

Bill Hanesworth, president, called the meeting to order. Other board members present were Mr. Dalton Person, Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin and Ms. Dee Blackwell. Mr. Wade Gilkey, Ms. Talicia Richardson and Ms. Susan McFerran were absent. 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 was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

There was no one present for Citizen Participation.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Brubaker reported that the District received notice that the Economic Development Authority had approved the bidding process for the Peak Center. Dr. Brubaker reported that Mr. Gregory secured an agreement with Verizon for hot spots and saved approximately \$500,000 from the estimated cost. These funds will be reinvested for curriculum for students attending virtual school. Dr. Brubaker reported that Mr. Mahan and his team have launched a curriculum for students with the blended option if students need to be home for online learning. Dr. Brubaker reported that the Vision 2023 Equity Action Team met jointly with the Minority Recruiting Committee and began to lay out the work they will be doing in the upcoming years to provide equity and opportunity for students. Dr. Brubaker referenced the video that parents and students could view that explained the virtual and blended learning options available. Dr. Brubaker informed the Board that the District was required by the State to have a point of contact person to report COVID-19 cases to the Arkansas Department of Health. That contact person is Nurse Tracy Matthis with Nurse Cindy Mitchell as the District backup contact. The District has received a \$500,000 school-based Health grant and will begin interviewing for that position to bring a person in as early as possible. The summer feeding program was extended to August 21 to provide meals to students with the governor's directive that schools not begin before August 24.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included: the July 27 Professional Staff Recommendations, minutes of the July 20 Called Board Meeting, July 13 Work Session, June 25 Called Board Meeting and June 22 Board Meeting, June Financial Report, July Student Services Report, approval of Student Handbook Changes for 2020-2021, Information on Safe Schools Hotline Data, and Discipline Data.

Mr. Person made a motion, seconded by Ms. Blackwell, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The vote passed 4/0.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS FOR 2020-2021

Mr. Mahan reported that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requires that all schools create a School Improvement Plan for 2020-2021. These plans must be approved by the School Board and placed on the district website by August 1. Mr. Mahan stated that the detailed plans that were made available for the board to review included comments, accomplishments and goals for each school. Dr. Kellie Minton and Ms. Caroline Neel were in attendance for any questions. Dr. Minton and Ms. Neel oversee quarterly assessments and quarterly meetings to benchmark data, accomplishments and provide resources individually as well.

Mr. Person noted that Peak was not included in the list of schools. Mr. Mahan stated that Peak has not been assigned an LEA and it is unsure what DESE will require for this location. Mr. Person referenced accomplishments and ACT Aspire testing and the need for additional measures with testing not available during the COVID-19 pandemic. The administration's recommendation was that the Board approve the 2020-2021 School Improvement Plans.

Mr. Person made a motion, seconded by Ms. Blackwell, to approve the School Improvement Plans for all FSPS schools for 2020-2021. The vote passed 4/0.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FEDERAL PROGRAMS STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES FOR PROGRAMS UNDER THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965, AS AMENDED BY THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

Mr. Mahan reported that the Federal Programs Assurances are for local education agency (LEA) use in requesting district funds for programs covered under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. To assure the LEA's eligibility for funds and agree to follow state guidelines, the Superintendent must annually provide an original signature attesting to compliance with all assurances applicable to each program for which the plan is submitted.

Ms. Blackwell made a motion, seconded by Ms. Keaton-Martin to approve the 2020-21 Federal Programs Statement of Assurances and authorize the Superintendent to sign so the assurances may be submitted to the Arkansas Department of Education on or before October 1, 2020. The vote passed 4/0.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

Ms. Blackwell thanked Dr. Brubaker and staff for the communication that has been made available for parents and students and continues to come out for back to school plans.

Mr. Hanesworth asked for patience from the community as administrators work through the plan of beginning school under these circumstances.

Mr. Person asked if COVID-19 was a primary reason for resignations and retirements this year.

Dr. Brubaker stated employees that are of retirement age certainly could consider it.

Mr. Person stated that the District should do all that we can to make employees and students feel safe.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 5.45 p.m.

Bill Hanesworth, President

Dee Blackwell, Secretary