



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 27, 2025, 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

Mr. Dalton Person, president, called the meeting to order noting seven board members were present. Other board members present were: Mr. Phil Whiteaker, Ms. Susan Krafft, Ms. Brittney Hall, Mr. Brad Harding, Ms. Lynnett Lott, and Ms. Maria Martinez. District administrators present included: Mr. Marty Mahan, Superintendent; Dr. Tiffany Bone, Deputy Superintendent; Dr. Chris Davis, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Campus Support; Dr. Kellie Cohen Minton, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Mr. Charles Warren, Chief Financial Officer; Dr. Michael Farrell, Executive Director of Student Services; Mr. Shawn Shaffer, Executive Director of Facility Operations; Mr. Vance Gregory, Director of Technology; Ms. Kimberly Mundell, Executive Director of Communications and Engagement; 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.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

Ms. Katie Priest spoke regarding the Arkansas Prevention Needs Assessment (APNA) survey.

Ms. Joe Elsken spoke on advertisement targets.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Mahan reported that due to the decline in enrollment and cuts in federal funding the district will look internally about prioritizations of staffing positions and programming.

Mr. Mahan reported 181 employees have signed up for the identity theft program Aurora.

Mr. Mahan shared work has begun on his performance goal of 2.1; building a charter school within a school at Booneville Elementary. This school will be focused on science, technology, engineering, Singapore math, and Mandarin. The letter of intent will be completed by June of 2026. A survey will go out to stakeholders this week regarding the naming of the program. The names to choose from will be Global Innovation Academy, International School of Innovation, or Global School of Innovation.

Mr. Mahan informed the board a recommendation regarding the next phase of corrective construction at Peak will be considered at the November or December board meeting.

Mr. Mahan gave a Meet the Superintendent report from the September event. There were ten community members in attendance with discussions around civic engagement, LEARNS legislation, enrollment, and right sizing. There are three other Meet the Superintendent events scheduled over the school year.

Mr. Mahan made note of a couple of items in the consent agenda: the Master Facility Plan and a verbiage change to his performance goal of 6.1.

Mr. Mahan's Good Things Going on in the District include: Fort Smith Public Schools hosted Leadership Fort Smith Education Day; Cook Elementary celebrated its 50th Anniversary; Woods Elementary teachers Karen Mills, Allie Scantling, Julie Stec, and Lilibeth Pineda won a Bessie B. Moore Award; Rye Hill Baptist Church donated a new pair of shoes to every student at Tilles Elementary; First graders at Bonneville Elementary grew plants as part of their science unit; Southside High School fashion design students teamed up with Fairview first graders for a creative project; Howard Knights & Jewels students took a field trip to the 188th Wing Arkansas Air National Guard; Southside High School Quiz Bowl team won the Hawgs Invitational Championship at the University of Arkansas; Northside and Southside High Schools Marching Bands earned superior ratings at the 2025 ASBOA Region 8 Marching assessment; Chaffin Charmers won first place at the Southern Spirit Competition; Congratulations to this month's Superintendent's Stars: Scarlett Rodriguez, Barling; Blayne Stewart, Bonneville; Evolet Hernandez, Howard; Zoe Bertin, Woods; Perla Araujo, Tilles; Elsa Salianekham, Euper Lane; and Southside High School volleyball team won in the first round of the state tournament.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included the September Financial Report, September 22 Minutes, October Professional Staff Recommendations, Student Services Report, Consider Approval of the Master Facilities Plan Resolution, Consider Adopting Student Related Policy Changes, Consider Amendment to the 2025-2026 Student Handbook, and Consider an Edit to the Superintendent's 2025-2026 Performance Goals.

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

CONSIDER SELECTION OF A VOTING REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE ASBA DELEGATE

Mr. Mahan reported that the Arkansas School Boards Association (ASBA) Delegate Assembly would meet at 4:00 PM, Wednesday, December 10, 2025 during the ASBA Annual Conference in Little Rock.

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

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF A WAIVER LETTER FOR DISTRICT UNUSED FACILITIES – BELLE POINT

Mr. Shawn Shaffer explained that according to Arkansas Code Ann. 6-21-816, if school districts determine that any public school facility is no longer needed for school purposes or is unused or underutilized, the district may sell or lease the facility. The district may also petition for a waiver letter that allows it to apply for a 30-day waiting period. By law, charter schools have the first right of refusal; and if no charter school is interested within that period, the district can then sell or lease the building at fair market value.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harding, to approve the submission of the waiver letter for the sale or lease of the Belle Point property. The vote passed 7-0.

CONSIDER THE APPROVAL OF THE ARKANSAS PREVENTION NEEDS ASSESSMENT (APNA) SURVEY

Dr. Michael Farrell provided an overview of the Arkansas Prevention Needs Assessment (APNA), a tool used in Arkansas to assess the prevention-related needs of youth including substance abuse, mental health, and other social behaviors.

Due to the decrease in the number of students taking the APNA survey, it is recommended that students in grades 8, 10, and 12 use an opt out format.

Mr. Whiteaker made a motion, seconded by Ms. Krafft, to approve the opt-out model for the administration of the APNA survey beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. The vote passed 7-0.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT – PRESENTATION – CONSIDER APPROVING THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Dr. Kellie Cohen Minton presented the board with the school letter grades for the 2024-2025 school year, explaining the new accountability system calculations. Dr. Minton also presented the school improvement plans.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lott, to approve the 2025-2026 school improvement plans. The vote passed 7-0.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be Monday, November 17, 2025.

Ms. Lott encouraged community members to participate in the district's surveys and provide valuable input.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 6:31 PM.

Phillip Whiteaker, Vice-President

Susan Krafft, Secretary