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## Board of Education

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### Minutes of The Board of Education

A Regular School Board Meeting of the Board of Education of Fort Smith Public Schools was held Monday, November 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.

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; 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:

#### November Superintendent Star Awards

Thiago Barroso – Sunnymede Elementary  
Sarah Brooks – Tilles Elementary  
Fiona Hansen – Orr Elementary  
Scarlett Iraheta Riley – Park Elementary  
Joshua Lee – Spradling Elementary  
Allison Linares – Trusty Elementary  
Ximena Ortiz – Morrison Elementary  
Aylin Sanchez Roman – Howard Elementary  
Diego Santoyo – Sutton Elementary  
Christian Watkins – Fairview Elementary

Charles Warren, Chief Financial Officer, was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award in Accounting from Arkansas Business.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Morawski reminded the board of several upcoming dates:

The filling period for the upcoming school board election closes on November 14, 2023 at noon.

The district will be closed for Thanksgiving break November 20-24, 2023.

The Arkansas School Board Association (ASBA) Conference will be held on December 6-8, 2023 at the Marriott Hotel and State House Convention Center in Little Rock. The ASBA Delegate meeting will held on December 6 at 4:00 PM.

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The next regular school board meeting will be on December 18, 2023 at 5:30 PM.

The winter break for students will begin on December 18, 2023 until January 2, 2023. Students will return to school on January 3, 2024.

Dr. Morawski stated that last year the district discontinued participation in the Arkansas Prevention Needs Assessment Survey. The concern was the content of the survey related to the age of some students. The District's participation in the survey impacts grants in the community as well as the District. Considering this, the current plan is to sign up students in eighth, tenth, and twelfth grade to participate and parents would need to opt in for the survey.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Ms. Richardson, to proceed with the survey as presented where parents have the option to opt in only for eighth, tenth, and twelfth grade students. Mr. Chitwood stated he would be abstaining from the vote due to his spouse is employed by a receiving program in the community.

The vote passed 5-2 with Mr. Chitwood and Ms. Dixon abstaining.

Dr Morawski's Good Things Going on the District included: The 188<sup>th</sup> Wing taught Kimmons Middle School students the proper way to fold the American Flag; Southside is ranked #1 in Arkansas for eSports; Chaffin Middle School was recognized as a school where students demonstrated high growth on the ACT Aspire; The Grizzly Battalion Raider team finished 14<sup>th</sup> out of 65 teams at Nationals in Fort Knox, Kentucky; Assistant Band Director at Darby Middle School, Gabby Chandler, was named one of Arkansas Tech University's 19 of the Last 9 for being an outstanding role model; Fairview Elementary student, Pierce Carroll was named Military Kid of the Month; Chaffin Middle School and Woods Elementary have been named 2023 Schools on the Move Towards Excellence; and Lacey Thomas, a paraprofessional at Euper Lane, sang on the Kelly Clarkson Show.

Mr. Person clarified that the practice for an abstention vote and the board member does not leave the room before the discussion that is considered a no vote. Mr. Person offered to have a re-vote; both Mr. Chitwood and Ms. Dixon were comfortable with the vote as is.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The consent agenda included the October Financial Statement, October 23 Minutes, November Professional Staff Recommendations, the Community Service Learning Partner Site Applications, the purchase approval of property on 225 Belle Avenue, and adopting the student related policy 4.11.

Mr. Blaylock requested that the item number 8.4, Community Service Learning Partner Site Applications be removed for individual consideration.

Ms. Richardson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dixon, to approve the consent agenda with the exception of the Community Service Learning Partner Site Applications. The vote passed 7-0.

At 6:00 PM, Mr. Blaylock recused himself from this agenda item. Mr. Blaylock's spouse submitted a Community Service Learning Partner Site application for Northside Athletic Booster Club.

Ms. Richardson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dixon, to approve Community Service Learning Partner Site Application. The vote passed 6-0.

Note: Mr. Blaylock returned to the meeting at 6:01 PM.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF PROPOSED BUDGET OF EXPENDITURES WITH TAX LEVY OF FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2025 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2026**

Mr. Warren provided the proposed budget of expenditures and the corresponding tax levy. It is a requirement to publish the budget and tax levy prior to the March 2024 election. This proposed budget is based on the current rate of 42.058 mills.

Mr. Whiteaker made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dixon, to approve the proposed budget of expenditures for fiscal year July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026. The vote passed 7-0.

**CONSIDER ADOPTING UPDATE FOR CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL POLICY 8.0**

Dr. Morawski stated the PPC Committee is looking to make the proposed changes this year to broaden their committee effective immediately.

Dr. Davis explained that this policy change was to add representation to the classified PPC as well as extend the terms from two years to three years for elected representatives.

Ms. Dixon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whiteaker, to adopt the update to the classified personnel policy 8.0. The vote passed 7-0.

**PRESENTATION - ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

Dr. Gary Udouj, Director, Career Education & District Innovation, gave an update on the programs that are available in the district for career and technical education as well as new programs offered at Peak Innovation Center.

Dr. Udouj explained that the District is aligning a K-12 career plan to address career pathways at all levels. Beginning with Kindergarten – fifth grade the focus is on career awareness, sixth – eighth grade is focused on career exploration, ninth and tenth grade focus on career planning, and eleventh – twelfth grade is career preparation and training.

The focus is on six major career clusters: information technology, advanced manufacturing, human services, health services, business management, and arts and communication.

Dr. Udouj shared some new additions to the career tech education programs. Those include: Project Lead the Way Robotics and Automation for seventh and eighth graders, Paxton Patterson Career Ready Labs for seventh grade career exploration, and at the high school level construction skilled trades at Southside High School and digital marketing at Northside High School. Three new programs added this year at Peak Innovation Center include emerging art and design, construction technology, and patient care technician. There are also new programs being offered during the evening. These programs include: construction trades pre-apprenticeship, plumbing apprenticeship, and a residential construction apprenticeship. The plumbing and residential construction apprenticeships are in partnership with Fort Smith Adult Education.

This is an information item and no action is required.

**PRESENTATION - ATTENDANCE ZONES (MORRISON AND HOWARD)**

The administration presented three proposals for the attendance boundary changes as a result of the closure of Trusty Elementary. Mr. Matthew Cluck with Zonda Education elaborated on each of the three proposals.

1. Adjust Howard Elementary and Morrison Elementary boundary lines to match the existing middle school boundary lines. The enrollment projections with this plan for next school year would have Howard Elementary with 274 students and Morrison Elementary with 528 students.
2. Extend Howard Elementary boundary line further North beyond the existing Middle School attendance boundary line. The enrollment projections with this plan for next school year would have Howard Elementary with 298 students and Morrison Elementary with 504 students.
3. Adjust Howard Elementary and Morrison Elementary boundary lines to match the existing middle school boundary lines. This plan would adjust the Tilles Elementary boundaries further Northwest to cover the neighborhood East of Midland Boulevard and extend the Tilles Elementary boundary to the South to Rogers Avenue. The enrollment projections with this plan for next school year would have Howard Elementary with 225 students, Morrison Elementary with 528 students, and Tilles Elementary with 425 students.

An informational night will be held at Morrison, Howard, and Trusty Elementary to gain additional feedback from parents and staff regarding the three proposals. Information will also be placed on the website for the community to review.

Mr. Cluck also reviewed the current alignment of attendance feeder patterns as well as proposed elementary school boundary changes to match the middle school lines. These observations will be considered more in detail, if needed, after the long-term facility plan is presented in March.

#### **PRESENTATION - SCHOOL SAFETY UPDATE: WEAPONS DETECTION SYSTEMS**

Mr. Mahan presented components of the district's current safety plans and the findings of the research on safety systems, logistics, as well as long range and short range focuses. Mr. Mahan also reviewed the different type of security systems offered and the approximate investment amount of each of these systems; including staffing needs. The different systems may include AI systems, metal detection systems, weapon detection cameras, and a weapons and drug detection canine.

Mr. Mahan informed the board the next steps would be to be present a proposal of implementation of some of these systems. This plan would be a five year rollout of how to implement these systems across all campuses.

Mr. Chitwood asked where the funding source for these systems would come from. Mr. Warren stated that would be dependent on what is considered to be a one-time purchase and what will be an annual cost. Mr. Warren also stated that the funding source is not readily available at this time and current resources would have to be expanded.

#### **BOARD MEMBERS FORUM**

The next regular scheduled meeting will be Monday, December 18, 2023.

Ms. Richardson reminded the board that wooden Christmas trees that the Fort Smith Public Schools students cut out and decorated will be on display at Cisterna Park beginning November 25, 2023.

Mr. Person updated the board that a site visit had been completed from Envista Forensics, the third party review regarding Peak. A report has not been received but the work is still ongoing.

**ADJOURN**

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:31 PM.

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President, Board of Education

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Secretary, Board of Education