



SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS MINUTES

MEETING: Special Board Meeting/Study Session	DATE: June 24, 2025	TIME: 6:00 p.m.	LOCATION: John W. English Administrative Center
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ashanti Bland, President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yvette Ware- DeVaull, Vice President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leslie L. Smith-Thomas, Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Talisha Belk, Treasurer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amani Johnson, Trustee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jillian Holloway, Trustee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nicole Denson, Trustee	
ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jennifer Green, Ed.D. Superintendent	<input type="checkbox"/> Lanissa Freeman, Deputy Superintendent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Jackson, Chief of Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> , Chief of Talent Mtg
<input type="checkbox"/> Marc Ingram, Chief Financial Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> Rebecca Luddington, Manager of Pupil Accounting	<input type="checkbox"/> Sommer Caldwell- Carruthers, Executive Director of Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> Joseph Corace, Chief Operations Officer
<input type="checkbox"/> April Rogers, Exe. Dir., State and Federal Programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Angela Smith, Exec. Director of ISSN	<input type="checkbox"/> Minutes: Carolyn Foster, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and the Board of Education	Student Board Representatives: <input type="checkbox"/> Micaela Beckford, UK12 <input type="checkbox"/> Eric Spragins, Southfield A&T

1. Opening of Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Board President Bland at 5:48 p.m. Board President Bland read the opening statement and Trustee roll call was taken. All Trustees were present.

2. Budget Reports

a. Report 63-110 FY25 Final Budget Amendment

- The Blueprint: Systemic Reconfiguration
- Equitable Allocation of District – Level Resources Based on Student Need:
 - Staff ratios
 - Problem-solving driver system
 - Licenses, software and subscriptions
 - Communications driver system
 - Parent and community partnerships
- Equitable Allocation of Building – Level Resources Based on Student Need:
 - School supplies, personnel and programs
 - Performance Management
 - Curriculum, literacy and math coordinators
- Pastoral Care
 - Care: every adult supports every student with a ferocious unwillingness to allow a student to flounder or to fail
 - Support: Student participation in academic tasks must be accompanied by personal support from teachers
 - Safety: action is centered on students as persons not simply as occupants of the institution of school
 - Membership: engaging students in a physically present intellectually immersed, socially connected and emotionally centered manner
- FY 2025 Adopted General Fund Budget
- Fund Equity Benchmarks:
 - Board Policy: % of expenditures (10%+) 9.8%

- State – Early Warning: % of revenues (5%+) 10.1%
- Revenue Assumptions
 - Foundation Allowance: \$217 increase (\$12,627 per FTE) – The foundation allowance remained the same from the previous fiscal year (\$12,410 per FTE)
 - Student Enrollment: 4,687 Student FTE – the actual membership count was 4,482 FTE; 2% decrease – 6.3% decline from FY 2024
 - Property Taxes: Non-Homestead Mill Rate remains 18.0000 and decrease in Homestead Mill Rate to 8.6141
- Revenue Budget Variances
 - PA-18 Millage funding is projected to exceed the adopted budget by \$830K
 - Capital Asset Sales: the amended budget includes \$2.4 million in capital asset sales (Brace, Leonhard, and Magnolia), which were not in the FY 25 Adopted Budget
- Adopted Budget Personnel Assumptions (Updates)
 - Staffing: Assumes the District saves \$3.6 million through the elimination of vacancies, staff leveling, consolidations at the University campus, and consolidating of Vandenberg/Thompson (employee count as of 5/31/2024 – 500; employee count as of 5/31/2025 – 482)
 - Salaries and Benefits: salaries are based upon the prevailing contractual bargaining agreements, pension rate remains 48.88% - the three branches of state government are considering proposals, which could reduce our pension rate; this is a conservative estimate. The pension rate declined to 41.94%
- Personnel Budget Variances
 - Salaries and Benefits: costs are projected to be \$2.0 million less than the adopted budget
 - Most favorable budget variances: Basic Program (high school); Pupil Services (counselors, social workers, speech pathologists)
- Adopted Budget Non-Payroll Assumptions (Updates)
 - Operations – Buildings and Grounds: budget consistent with FY 2024 (costs are projected to be \$1.8 million more than the adopted budget primarily related to the completion of ESSER III projects); Security: budget consistent with FY 2024 (costs are projected to be \$225K higher than the adopted budget primarily related overtime for security officers); Transportation: budget consistent with FY 2024 (costs are projected to be \$800K lower than the adopted budget primarily related to third-party contractor costs)
- Non-Payroll Budget Variances
 - Non-Salaries and Benefit Costs – projected to be \$2.3 million higher than the adopted budget
 - Technology – incurred \$460K in security infrastructure costs related to Section 97 that was not included in the adopted budget
 - Health Services – costs are projected to be \$425K higher than the adopted budget primarily related to contracted services associated with social and emotional learning and intense student support
- Revenue Budget Variances
 - Food Service Transfer – the interfund transfer from the General Fund to the Food Service Fund is \$250K higher than anticipated in the adopted budget
- Fund Equity Benchmarks
 - Board Policy % of expenditures (10%+). We are at 11.4%
 - State-Early Warning: % of revenues (5%+). We are at 11.5%
- Vice President Ware-DeVaull moved to open and approve Report 63-110 FY25 Final Budget Amendment and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Ware-DeVaul, Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Denson, Trustee Bland, Trustee Belk

Nays: Nil

Motion carried

b. Report 63-111 FY26 Proposed Budget Presentation

- The Blueprint: Systemic Reconfiguration
- Equitable Allocation of District – Level Resources Based on Student Need:
 - Staff ratios
 - Problem-solving driver system
 - Licenses, software and subscriptions
 - Communications driver system
 - Parent and community partnerships
- Equitable Allocation of Building – Level Resources Based on Student Need:
 - School supplies, personnel and programs
 - Performance Management
 - Curriculum, literacy and math coordinators
- Pastoral Care
 - Care: every adult supports every student with a ferocious unwillingness to allow a student to flounder or to fail
 - Support: Student participation in academic tasks must be accompanied by personal support from teachers
 - Safety: action is centered on students as persons not simply as occupants of the institution of school
 - Membership: engaging students in a physically present intellectually immersed, socially connected and emotionally centered manner
- Budget Assumptions
 - Foundation Allowance: \$417 increase per FTE (\$12,827 per FTE); House Proposal: Executive Proposal - \$392; Senate Proposal - \$400
 - Zero Based Budgeting: Bare Bones (Minimum Spending Level); Past Practice
- Revenue Assumptions
 - Student Membership – 4,351 student FTE; 3% decrease
 - Property Taxes – Total revenue decrease of \$8.8 million; ESSER III, projected 20% reduction in all federal grants due to uncertainty at the federal level, reduction in Section 31a, Reduction in State Aid due to student loss
- Dr. Green explain the difference between a Homestead Mill Rate and a Non-Homestead Mill Rate. Non-Homestead Mill (18.000) is the rate levied against a non-primary resident.
- Dr. Green explained the difference of the assumption total of students and the audited total of students.
- President Bland indicated that we are only using half of the assumed decrease in students from 2024, which was 6.3%.
- We will check with Mrs. Luddington to verify the accuracy in the numbers projected by Middle Cities.
- Our eighth-grade students are leaving the district because they do not want to attend SA&T. Principal Reese and his team have worked really hard in turning around the bad rap on SA&T.
- We have to do a better job of attracting and retaining our students.
- Southfield High Schools are recognized for their sports teams, specifically football and basketball.
- We are looking to attract more students interested in swimming. We will have a beautiful natatorium at University K-12.
- Personnel Assumptions

- Total personnel budget decrease of \$1.5 million – Primarily related to a reduction in federal funding; the loss of funding will result in a loss of grant funded positions
 - Salaries and Benefits – Prevailing CBAs, pension rate increases from 41.94% to 44.93%
- Dr. Green indicated that once we know that there are specific grants that are being eliminated, then we will approach those positions.
- Non-Personnel Assumptions
 - Buildings and Grounds: 3% inflationary increase for general fund expenses
 - Security: Budget consistent with FY 2025
 - Transportation: Budget consistent with FY 2025
 - Total non-personnel budget decrease of \$7.0 million: Primarily related to ESSER III – Capital Projects, anticipated reduction in federal grants
- Fund Balance
 - FY 2025 Operating Deficit - \$1.3 million deficit for FY 2025, possible structural deficit
- Vice President Ware-DeVaul moved to open and approve Report 63-111 FY26 Proposed Budget Presentation and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.
- Dr. Green indicated that as we make the assumptions they are made blindly.
- Dr. Green stated that if it were not for the diligence of the Executive Team and the Board of Education that we are able to maintain the 10%.
- President Bland indicated that she would like to have a comprehensive look at the cost of maintaining our buildings.
- President Bland mentioned that with the sell of the Old Bussey Property for \$850K we could add that cost into the general fund.
- We are not allowed to list our property for sell because we would have to take the most reasonable offer.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Belk, Trustee Bland, Trustee Denson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Ware-DeVaul

Nays: Nil

Motion carried

3. Public Participation

- There was no public participation.

4. Action Items

- a. **Report 63-97 Contract Extension of Video Production Specialist Services: General Fund**
 - Mike Mulligan from M1 Studios emailed President Bland and Dr. Green, which President Bland read aloud. The contract cost is for 32 hours per week and there would not be an increase in cost for the next two years.
 - Vice President moved to open and approve Report 63-97 Contract Extension of Video Production Specialist Services and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.
 - The contract for 2023-2024 was \$51,487.50, The contract cost for the 2024-2025 was approximately \$56,000 and the requested contract is for \$59,650, to include the summer months. If there is an issue with an employee, let them know so that we can receive a replacement.
 - Chief Jackson states that there has been an increased presence of the M1 Studios team.
 - Tabled during the discussion, based on additional information needed.
 - Chief Jackson to sit down with M1 Studios and discuss the concerns mentioned during discussion to gain more clarity.

- Vice President moved to table Report 63-97 Contract Extension of Video Production Specialist Services to obtain more information and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.
- b. Report 63-106 Board Stipend: Second Read**
 - President Bland indicated that this report is to increase the Trustees stipend and lower the travel expense to ensure the Trustees are more intentional on the conferences/workshops that they attend.
 - Vice President Ware-DeVauall moved to open and approve Report 63-106 Board Stipend: Second Read and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.
 - Trustee Holloway did some research and she is proposing a different increase amount for the Trustees.
 - Trustee Holloway will email a copy to Ms. Foster to email to the Trustees as their first read.
 - Dr. Green mentioned since there will be a budget amendment that this could be included to factor in those costs when voted on in August. It would not be retroactive but it will go into effect from the date that it was voted in.
 - Vice President Ware-DeVauall moved to table Report 63-106 Board Stipend: Second Read to have a first read on the proposed amounts Trustee Holloway is submitting and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.
 - Tabled mid discussion due to a new proposal submitted by Trustee Holloway.
- c. Report 63-108 Policy 7300 Disposition of Real Property: Second Read**
 - Vice President Ware-DeVauall moved to open and approve Report 63-108 Policy 7300 Disposition of Real Property: Second Read and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.
 - Paragraph 3: The Board shall direct the periodic (*semiannual*) review of all District property and authorize the disposition by sale, donation, trade, or discard of any not required for school purposes in accordance with the provisions of this policy, (*specific grant provisions as outlined in EDGAR*) and Policy 7310 – Disposition of Surplus Property.
 - B. Written offers shall be referred to the Board Finance Committee (*and/or Board of Education*) for review and recommendations.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Belk, Trustee Bland, Trustee Denson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Ware-DeVauall

Nays: Nil

Motion carried

- d. Report 63-109 Policy 7310 Disposition of Surplus Property: Second Read**
 - The revisions/amendments are in parentheses and italicized:
 - The Board of Education requires the Superintendent or designee to review that property of the District periodically (*semiannually*) and to dispose (*and/or sell*) of that material and equipment which is no longer usable in accordance with the terms of this policy (*and uniform grant guidance*).
 - C. Disposition: The Superintendent or designee is authorized (*semiannually*) to dispose of obsolete instructional and other property by selling, it to the highest bidder, by donation to appropriate parties, or by proper waste removal. Disposal of surplus property purchased with Federal funds shall be disposed of in accordance with Federal guidelines (*outlined in EDGAR*).
 - Vice President Ware-DeVauall moved to open and approve Report 63-109 Policy 7310 Disposition of Real Property: Second Read and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Belk, Trustee Bland, Trustee Denson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Ware-DeVauall

Nays: Nil

Motion carried

e. Report 63-112 Superintendent 2025 Mid-Year Goals & FY 2026 COLA

- President Bland recapped some of the goals that were sent to her by the Trustees.
- Vice President Ware-DeVaull moved to open and approve Report 63-112 Superintendent 2025 Mid-Year Goals & FY26 COLA and it was supported by Treasurer Belk.
- The goals lifted for the Superintendent are: Early Childhood Education (specifics) and Retention of Staff and Students: community engagement and communication
- At the next Board Retreat, we need to set the Superintendent goals.
- Dr. Green mentioned that the Community Engagement and Communication piece are a big portion of the Superintendent Evaluation.
- Community Engagement Committee idea was tabled to finish the discussion of the Superintendent goals.
- It is a great idea to get the Southfield Foundation up and running again.
- The discussion of the COLA piece: The past two years the Board has given Dr. Green the ceiling and Attorney Pitchford indicated that 4%-5% is what he sees as the trend. Dr. Green would like that to be the standard for FY 2026. Dr. Green states that the average COLA for superintendents in the State of Michigan is 8%. Dr. Green states that everything in her contract is triggered by her salary. It is based off the amount she pays to the State for her retirement. If she has to wait into another fiscal year to get this approved then she has missed the opportunity and she will need to play catch up. Dr. Green's contract starts July 1.
- President Bland forwarded the Trustees an email from Attorney Pitchford with this information in it.
- Secretary Smith-Thomas would like to see Superintendent Mid-Year Goals and COLA separated out on the agenda.
- Treasurer Belk explained that because Attorney Pitchford represents the Board and according to the information in the email, she would like to vote on it with both listed as one report number.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Belk, Trustee Bland, Trustee Denson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Ware-DeVaull, Trustee Smith-Thomas

Nays: Nil

Motion carried

- Moving forward, Secretary Smith-Thomas would like to see Superintendent Mid-Year Goals and COLA separated out on the agenda so that they can be voted on separately.

f. Report 63-113 Personnel Action Report

- Vice President Ware-DeVaull moved to open and approve Report 63-113 Personnel Action Report and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Ware-DeVaull, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Holloway, Trustee Denson, Trustee Bland, Trustee Belk

Nays: Nil

Motion carried

5. For the Good of the Order

- President Bland mentioned the Back to School Fair is on Thursday, August 14, 2025 from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

- Dr. Green states that she and President Bland will leave the Back to School event early to attend the students’ event at the Aretha Franklin Amphitheatre.
- MASB Summer Institute will be in Lansing.

6. Future Meetings

- a. Tuesday, September 9, 2025, Regular Board Meeting @ 7:00 p.m.

7. Adjournment

- President Bland adjourned the Special Board Meeting/Study Session at 7:13 p.m.

Approved on: August 12, 2025
Leslie L. Smith-Thomas, Board Secretary