

Board of Education

Minutes of Work Session
The Board of Education

A Work Session of the Board of Education of Fort Smith Public Schools was held July 9, 2018, beginning at 5:30 PM in the Service Center, Bldg. B.

Board Members Present: Ms. Susan McFerran, Ms. Talicia Richardson, Ms. Jeannie Cole, Mr. Bill Hanesworth, Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, Mr. Greg Magness and Mr. Wade Gilkey.
Administrators and Staff Present: Dr. Doug Brubaker, Superintendent, Dr. Terry Morawski, Deputy Superintendent, Mr. Charles Warren, Chief Financial Officer, Dr. Barry Owen, Chief Academic Officer, Ms. Zena Featherston Marshall, Executive Director of Communication and Community Partnerships, Mr. Martin Mahan, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Campus Support, Dr. Michael Farrell, Supervisor of Student Services, and Ms. Nadine Brooks, Secretary to the Superintendent.

Ms. McFerran, president, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

REVIEW OF THE BOND ISSUE TIMELINE

Dr. Brubaker, Mr. Warren and Dr. Morawski reviewed the bond issue timeline with board members. The table lists various estimates and options provided by Stephens for issuing bonds for capital projects. Mr. Warren reported that the administration has worked out an aggressive time line with Stephens for an August 15, 2018 closing date to “lock” favorable rates. The Administration’s review of these options and projected construction schedules leads to a moving forward with the first option, “Option 1A”. The course of action is to issue bonds in the fall of 2018 for \$90 million. Mr. Kevin Faught was in attendance and stated that based upon a review of current market conditions, Stephens anticipates interest rates to continue to grow. Dr. Morawski reported that the construction schedule can meet the three year spending requirement. After discussion, Mr. Warren reported that a resolution will need to be approved and executed at the July 30, 2018 school board meeting when the winning bid is determined on July 17, 2018.

PRESENTATION ON HOW LETTER GRADES ARE ASSIGNED UNDER THE (EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA) AND HOW SCHOOLS USE THESE ASSIGNED GRADES TO DEVELOP SPECIFIC SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS (SIPs)

Ms. Kellie Cohen and Ms. Caroline Neel presented on how letter grades are assigned under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). She noted that plans were approved at the June 25, 2018 school board meeting. Plans are written in response to each school’s performance based on the previous ACT Aspire assessment administered each spring. This presentation explained how

grades are derived based on the ESSA performance indicators. Ms. Neel stated that the quarterly reports will be shared with the board and superintendent.

CONSIDER STUDENT HANDBOOK CHANGES FOR 2018-2019

Dr. Brubaker reported that the District is working toward getting the District board policies and handbook policies in greater alignment with best practices that other districts use and the model policies modeled by the Arkansas School Boards Association. Dr. Brubaker reported that change recommendations are reviewed by the district Handbook Committee and then forwarded to the school board for approval. He reported that the Handbook Committee met on June 20, 2018 and agreed to recommend eight changes to the district handbook and these changes are the result of changes in school regulations, law, district policy or best practices in public schools. The administration recommended these handbook changes be approved for inclusion in the 2018-19 District Handbook at the July 30, 2018 Board of Education meeting.

CONSIDER A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE SEBASTIAN COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Dr. Morawski reported that the Sebastian County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) was recently approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of the Department of Homeland Security. The Western Arkansas Planning and Development District coordinated the development of the required plans with all the agencies in Sebastian County which are affected by the plan. He reported that In order for agencies in the County to be eligible for any funds from FEMA, each participating jurisdiction in Sebastian County must adopt a resolution which affirms its support for the portions of the plan affecting the respective entity. The activities identified in the HMP are under the oversight of the Fort Smith Public Schools District Crisis Team which meets monthly to review needs and to make plans for the evaluation of potential risks. The administration recommended that the Board of Education adopt the resolution in order that it may be submitted to the Sebastian County Emergency Management authorities as requested. The administration recommended approval of the Resolution adopting the Sebastian County Hazard Mitigation Plan at the July 30, 2018 Board of Education meeting.

CONSIDER NAMING A LEGISLATIVE LIAISON FOR ASBA ADVOCACY NETWORK

Ms. McFerran recommended that Ms. Cole serve as the legislative liaison for Arkansas School Boards Association. Ms. Cole agreed to serve in this role if all board members were in agreement. This item will be placed on the July 30, 2018 Board of Education meeting.

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.