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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, May 22, 2023, 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**

Ms. Blackwell, president, called the meeting to order noting seven board members were present. Other board members present were: Ms. Talicia Richardson, Mr. Dalton Person, Mr. Matt Blaylock, Mr. Davin Chitwood, Ms. Sandy Dixon and Mr. Phil Whiteaker. 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 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; Ms. Zena Featherston Marshall, Executive Director Community & Business Partnerships; Ms. Shari Cooper, Director, Communications; 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:

#### May Superintendent Star Awards

Beau Cantrell – Tilles Elementary  
Julissa Guzman – Sunnymede Elementary  
Kwantavious Jackson – Sutton Elementary  
LaRon Moore – Fairview Elementary  
Steven Raya – Howard Elementary

Woods Elementary student Zeeshan Anowar won the 2023 Arkansas State Spelling Bee. He will represent Arkansas and Fort Smith Public Schools at the Scripps National Spelling Bee in National Harbor, Maryland.

Southside High School Esports placed first in the state at the League of Legends state championship.

Northside High School Esports won the PlayVS Central Region Splatoon 3 competition in Arkansas. They will compete in the national competition.

Southside High School students Kayleigh Arnold, Elizabeth Do, Jewell Callahan, Katherine Marcotte, Clair Merry, Zoe Crook, Natalie Tucker, Natalee Lomeli, Dipa Patel, and Nancy Trieu, were recognized for receiving the 2023 Aspirations in Computing Award from the National Center for Women & Information Technology.

The Southside Freshman Quiz Bowl team finished first nationally during the Spring Junior High Online Competition.

Josh Adams, Southside High School Quiz Bowl coach, was named Senior High Quiz Bowl Coach of the Year from the Arkansas Governors Quiz Bowl Association.

Southside soccer coach, Mahmoud Ihmedian, was named the 6A West Conference boys coach of the year from the Arkansas High School Coaches Association.

Executive Director of Facilities Operations Shawn Shaffer and Construction Project Manager Joe Velasquez received recognition for their professional design and construction work on the District's high school campuses. The Outstanding Design Award for the additions and renovations to Southside High School, The Award of Excellence for construction work on the Southside High School Arena, and the Award of Excellence for additions and renovations at Northside High School.

### **CITIZENS PARTICIPATION**

Ms. Mary Payne spoke regarding the fighting and bullying policies.

Ms. Melissa Hanesworth, Mr. Larry Ellis, and Mr. Gary Wehunt spoke on the Southside High School baseball program.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Morawski reported the Adult Education Center graduation ceremony is scheduled for May 23, 2023.

District offices will be closed on Monday, May 29, 2023 in observance of Memorial Day.

Thursday, June 1, 2023 is the final student day of the year. Friday, June 2, 2023 will be a professional development flex day for certified staff.

Arkansas Education Commissioner Jacob Oliva will be the featured speaker at the Chamber's First Friday Breakfast on June 2, 2023.

The next scheduled board meeting will be Monday, June 26, 2023 at 5:30 PM.

Dr. Morawski's report on Good Things Going on in the District included: The Northside Grizzly Gear store was able to award \$5,000 to 20 small business operations students, six students graduated from Peak's Computer Integrated machining program, Southside High School held a special graduation for some of their seniors and their families, Secretary of Education Jacob Oliva visited Northside High School to congratulate the staff on completing their PLC at work project. He also visited the Peak Innovation Center. Congressman Steve Womack read to kindergartners at Bonneville Elementary, a picnic was held to celebrate 100 years of the Fort Smith Public Schools patrol program, Southside High School senior Daniel Hernandez Donato graduated from the University of Arkansas Fort Smith with his associate's degree in Network Engineering Technology. He earned his degree through the Peak Innovation Center. Cavanaugh Elementary and Chaffin Middle School were recognized from the University of Arkansas for showing growth on their ACT Aspire scores.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The consent agenda included the April Financial Report, April 24 and May 1 Minutes, May Professional Staff Recommendations, May Student Services Report, Title I Part C Migrant Educational Grant Assurance, and Community Service List.

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

**CONSIDER APPROVING 2023-2024 CERTIFIED SALARY SCHEDULES**

Mr. Warren presented the proposed certified salary schedules. This proposal reflects a base salary of \$50,200, which should rank Fort Smith Public Schools in the top five for average base certified salaries. This also includes adding steps 23, 24, and 25.

A separate schedule was proposed for certified administrators, which includes principals, assistant principals and curriculum directors. Certified administrators are included in the LEARNS act which mandated a \$2,000 increase and is included in funding.

Mr. Warren proceeded to present each of the different classified salary schedules. The salary schedule proposes an increase of \$1,000 to the base salary and added steps 23, 24, and 25. Child nutrition and operations would see a minimum starting pay of \$15/hr for full time employees.

A separate schedule was also proposed for classified administrators. This group includes administrators that do not hold a teaching license, for example the chief financial officer.

Mr. Whiteaker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blaylock, to approve the 2023-2024 certified salary schedules as presented. The motion passed 7-0.

**CONSIDER APPROVING 2023-2024 CLASSIFIED SALARY SCHEDULES**

Mr. Person recused himself from this agenda item at 6:44 PM. Mr. Person has a family member that is a classified employee of the District.

After discussion regarding the classified administrator's salary schedule and the formatting/layout of that schedule, Ms. Richardson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blaylock, to approve the 2023-2024 classified salary schedules based on the modification of the classified administrative schedule as per the discussion with Mr. Warren. The motion passed 6-0.

Note: Mr. Person returned to the meeting at 7:02 PM.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT**

Ms. Blackwell noted that the superintendent's evaluation had been completed and Dr. Morawski received a favorable evaluation. The Board voted to extend his contract, however there were some adjustments on goals and wording in the contract.

Ms. Dixon stated that the performance metrics of a superintendent's duties discussed during the evaluation were not included in the updated contract. Ms. Dixon made a motion to move to executive session to discuss this matter. The motion failed due to lack of a second.

Mr. Whiteaker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chitwood, to approve the superintendent's contract as presented. The motion passed 6-1 with Ms. Dixon opposing.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE 2023-2024 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING SCHEDULE**

Dr. Morawski presented the Board the regular meeting schedule for 2023-24, noting any dates moved from the fourth Monday of the month due to holidays and other conflicts.

Ms. Richardson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whiteaker, to approve the 2023-2024 Board of Education meeting schedule as presented. The motion passed 7-0.

**CONSIDER AUTHORIZING THE SALE AND DISPOSAL OF COMMODITIES**

Mr. Warren presented the Board with a list of surplus commodities to sell noting that these items were unique print shop equipment that have special markets and have been isolated from normal auction procedures.

Mr. Person made a motion, seconded by Ms. Richardson, to authorize the sale and disposal of commodities as listed. The motion passed 7-0.

**PRESENTATION – PEAK SITE DRAINAGE**

Mr. Velasquez's presentation discussed drainage options and site improvements at Peak Innovation Center as the center continues to develop.

Mr. Alan Deaver with Halff Associates was available to help present drainage options. These revised options would include raising the existing parking, removing existing 42" diameter concrete pipes and installing enclosed 4.5'X 6' box culverts and adding a trickle channel.

Note: Ms. Dixon recused from the meeting at 7:31 PM.

There was discussion concerning the decision to install the 42" concrete pipes. Representatives from Halff Associates, Turn Key Construction Management, and the District were available for the discussion.

This was an information item and no action is required.

Note: Ms. Dixon returned to the meeting at 8:02 PM.

**BOARD MEMBERS FORUM**

Mr. Person suggested the Board explore a limited scope investigation by a third party into the drainage issues at Peak and the root causes of the issues.

Ms. Richardson stated that there needs to be a clear outline of what a third party would be looking for and what to do with the information.

Ms. Blackwell stated that she would like to see an improvement to the policy and processes for construction projects going forward.

The board was in agreement to conduct a called meeting to discuss the entity and scope of third party review process.

The next regular scheduled meeting will be June 26, 2023.

Mr. Chitwood requested more information on the bullying policies. Other topics mentioned by board members for further information was vaping, student discipline, and cell phones.

**ADJOURN**

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

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President, Board of Education

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Secretary, Board of Education