



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, July 21, 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. Lynnette 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; and Ms. Leslie Phelps, Office Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent. Mr. Marshall Ney, of Friday, Eldridge, and Clark, District Attorney was also in attendance.

RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Tiffany Bone presented the following recognitions:

Outgoing board member Mr. Gregory Carthon was honored for his service to the district and its students.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

None.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Mahan updated the board on the cyber security breach stating that restoration of phones and internet is planned for later this week.

Mr. Mahan announced three district administrative positions have been absorbed. These positions were vacated due to retirements over the summer.

Mr. Mahan's Good Things Going on in the District included: Students in grades 2-4 participated in STEAM Ahead Camp; Peak Innovation Center hosted a variety of hands-on, career-focused camps for secondary students this summer; and twelve sites across the district provided 5,797 breakfasts and 13,639 lunches free of charge for children in the community.

Mr. Mahan informed the board of several key events. The open house for the Fort Smith Public School-Based Health Center will be July 23; Nuts & Bolts Conference for district administrators will be July 24-25 at The Peak Innovation Center; Breakfast of Champions will take place July 31 at The Peak Innovation Center; board training will be July 31 at The Bakery District; Mr. Mahan will be speaking at First Friday Breakfast on August 1; New Teacher Orientation will be August 1 at The Peak Innovation Center; and Launch For Learning is August 7 at Southside High School Arena.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included the May Financial Report, May 19 Minutes, July Professional Staff Recommendations, Consider Approving an Ethics Disclosure Resolution, Consider Adopting Student Related Policy Changes, Consider Approval of Student Handbook Changes, and Consider Revision to Board Governance and Operations Policies.

Mr. Harding requested that item number 8.4, Ethics Disclosure Resolution, and item number 8.5 Student Related Policy Changes be removed for individual consideration.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whiteaker, to approve the consent agenda with the exception of item number 8.4 and 8.5. The vote passed 7-0.

Mr. Harding inquired about the type of services the ethics disclosures covered. Mr. Warren explained the nature of work and services provided by the staff member and a family member of a staff member. Mr. Warren also explained the District's procurement process.

Mr. Harding requested more definition regarding the proposed personal electronic device policy for students in Section 4.47 of the student policies.

After discussion, Mr. Whiteaker made a motion, seconded by Ms. Krafft, to table the pulled agenda items of 8.4 and 8.5 until after the Bell to Bell No Cell Presentation later in the meeting. The vote passed 7-0.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Mahan stated that officer elections can be nominated as a slate of officers or individually.

Ms. Krafft nominated a slate of officers consisting of Mr. Person, President; Mr. Whiteaker, Vice President, and Ms. Krafft, Secretary. Ms. Lott seconded the motion.

The vote passed 7-0.

DESIGNATION OF BOARD DISBURSING OFFICERS

Mr. Warren explained the disbursement officer is the school board member that is designated as a signer for disbursements from the accounts payable file and payroll direct deposits. It is historically the role of the president.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lott, to nominate Mr. Person as primary Board Disbursing Officer and Mr. Whiteaker as alternate Board Disbursing Officer to serve until the next annual election. The vote passed 7-0.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lott, to adopt the resolution designating Mr. Person as primary Board Disbursing Officer and Mr. Whiteaker as alternate Board Disbursing Officer to service until the next annual election. The vote passed 7-0.

ACT 503 SCHOOL BOARD TERM LENGTHS

Mr. Marshall Ney, District Attorney, presented information regarding Arkansas Act 503 of 2025 that adjusted board member terms to align with either four or six year terms with elections held only in even-numbered years. The recommendation is board members be elected to a term of six years in length creating an equal number of positions filled every school election.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whiteaker, to adopt a policy whereby all members of the school board shall be elected to a term of office of six (6) years. The vote passed 7-0.

CONSIDER APPROVING CHILD NUTRITION MEAL PRICES FOR 2025-2026

Ms. Grace George, Director of Child Nutrition, requested an adjustment to meal prices for the 2025-2026 school year. These adjustments are due to an increase in purchased food, supplies, and cost of labor. The proposed increases would be effective August 1, 2025.

Meal Type	Current	Proposed	Increase
Lunch - Elementary	\$2.75	\$3.00	\$0.25
Lunch - Secondary	\$3.00	\$3.25	\$0.25

While the first breakfast students receive are universally free, students receiving a second breakfast are charged for the meal.

Meal Type	Current	Proposed	Increase
Breakfast	\$1.50	\$2.00	\$0.50

Mr. Whiteaker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harding, to approve the child nutrition meal prices for the 2025-2026 school year as presented. The vote passed 7-0.

PRESENTATION – FEDERAL FUNDS: FORT SMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Ms. Caroline Neel, Director of Federal Programs, presented information to the Board regarding federal fund sources and amounts and how the District uses these funds.

This is a presentation only. No action is required.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT INCENTIVE PROPOSAL

Dr. Amy Manley, Director of Recruitment and Retention, and Ms. Dominique Alexander, Director of Special Education, proposed an incentive structure aimed at addressing retention and recruitment challenges with special education and alternative learning environments in the District. The proposal offered monetary incentives to eligible staff members in these areas. Certain criteria must also be met in attendance, compliance, and professional conduct to be eligible for the incentive. The incentive will be paid in two installments at the end of the fall and spring semesters. The incentive structure is as follows:

Role	Amount Per Year
SPED Self Contained Teachers and ALE Classrooms	\$5,000
SPED Inclusion, Resource Teachers	\$3,000
SPED Paras in Self contained, 1:1, Personal Care Aides, and ALE Paras	\$3,000

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lott, to approve the special education and alternative learning environment incentive as presented. The vote passed 7-0.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF A SPECIALTY SPORTS SUPPORT

Mr. Michael Beaumont, Director of Athletics, presented a proposal to allocate \$3,000 to provide specialized certified coaching instruction and professional development for each of the specialty sports.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lott, to approve the specialty sports support of \$3,000 per singleton sport as indicated in the proposal. The vote passed 7-0.

ACADEMIC PRESENTATION – STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Ms. Krystle Smith, Supervisor of Special Programs, gave an update regarding the English Language Proficiency Assessment, comparing data from the last two years.

This is a presentation. No action is required.

PRESENTATION – BELL TO BELL NO CELL UPDATE

Dr. Tony Jones, Director of Secondary Education, updated the board on the Senate Bill Bell to Bell, No Cell Act which does not allow personal cell phones, tablets, smart watches or Bluetooth devices to be used during school hours.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lott, to approve the items removed from consent

Agenda that included item number 8.4, Ethics Disclosure Resolution, and item number 8.5 Student Related Policy Changes with the specific approval of Student Policy 4.47 as amended. The vote passed 7-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – DISCUSSION PERTAINING TO REAL PROPERTY AND PERSONNEL

At 7:54 PM the Board and Mr. Mahan went into executive session to discuss real property and personnel.

Board members and Mr. Mahan returned to open session at 8:25 PM.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be Monday, August 25, 2025.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM.

Dalton Person, President

Susan Krafft, Secretary