



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, April 28, 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 six board members were present. Other board members present were: Mr. Phil Whiteaker, Mr. Davin Chitwood, Mr. Matt Blaylock, Ms. Susan Krafft, and Ms. Lynnette Lott. District administrators present included: Mr. Marty Mahan, Acting 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; Mr. Vance Gregory, Director of Technology; Mr. Allan Marshall, Chief Communications & Engagement Officer; 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.

Mr. Gregory Carthon arrived at 5:34 PM.

RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Allan Marshall presented the following recognitions:

Kimmons Middle School received High Reliability School Level 2 accreditation.

Orr Elementary was recognized as a Model Professional Learning Community at Work.

CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION

None.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Mahan's Good Things Going on in the District included: Northside junior Cody Goodson earned a perfect ACT score and an impressive 1500 on the PSAT; Southside senior Joseph Kincannon was named the 2025 Fort Smith Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year; Fort Smith Public Schools' Classified Employee of the Year is Mrs. Brockette Minnick of Cook Elementary; Northside High School FCCLA students participated in the United Way's Day of Caring; Southside High School's Southern Grounds awarded scholarships to their student employees; The Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce hosted a picnic for the honor graduates and

Arkansas Scholars; Miss Ozark Highlands, Alayna Turner, read to students at Cook Elementary; and Fort Smith Public Schools hosted the annual Purple Up Event honoring our military families.

Mr. Mahan informed the Board of the recently passed Act 503, which mandates the school boards terms to either four or six year terms. The District is working with legal counsel to better understand the specific guidelines. Mr. Mahan will give an update at the July board meeting.

Mr. Mahan informed the board of several key events: the Superintendent Student Advisory will be hosting a Fun Day event at the Evans and Jeffries Boys and Girls Clubs on April 30; Southside High School will host graduation on May 15 and Northside High School's graduation will be on May 16.

Mr. Mahan presented the board with his The First 100 Days plan.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - PERSONNEL

At 5:48 PM the Board and Mr. Mahan went into executive session to discuss personnel.

Board members and Mr. Mahan returned to open session at 6:17 PM.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included the March Financial Report, April 1 Minutes, April 2 Minutes, April 3 Minutes, April 8 Minutes, April 15 Minutes, April Professional Staff Recommendations, Student Services Report, Consider Special Education 2025-2026 Tuition Agreement with Residential Facilities, Consider Changes to the Bank Account Signature Cards, Consider Adopting a Resolution Authorizing Initial Contracts, Consider Approving the 2025-2026 Certified Staff Contracts, Consider Approving 2025-2026 Classified Staff Contracts, Consider Revision to Licensed Personnel Policies, Consider Revision to Classified Personnel Policies, Consider Adopting Student Related Policy Changes, and Consider Adopting Information Technology Security Policy.

Mr. Person requested that item number nine, Consider Approving 2025-226 Classified Staff Contracts, and item number eleven, Consider Revision to Classified Personnel Polices, 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 nine and eleven. The vote passed 7-0.

At 6:18 PM, Mr. Person recused himself. Mr. Person has a family member that is a classified employee in the District.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Carthon, to approve item number nine and eleven as presented on the consent agenda. The vote passed 6-0.

Note: Mr. Person returned to the meeting at 6:19 PM.

PRESENTATION – NORTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL MURAL

Artist Bryan Alexis presented to the Board his plan to create a mural on the exposed wall of the current print shop building. This mural is a tribute to the rich history of Northside High School and its community impact.

This is a presentation only. No action is required.

PRESENTATION – SUMMER EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Ms. Kellie Cohen Minton shared the extended learning programs that will be offered this summer as well as the locations of the summer meals program. The extended learning programs include ACT and PSAT prep, career camps, science, technology, and math.

This is a presentation item only. No action is required.

PRESENTATION – CELL PHONE POLICY UPDATE

Dr. Tony Jones informed the Board of the new Senate Bill 142, Bell to Bell, No Cell Act, which prohibits students from having personal cell phones, tablets, smart watches, or Bluetooth devices during the school day. The new law covers grades Kindergarten – Twelfth grade and will be effective the 2025-2026 school year. The only exemption is for a student with an individual educational plan or a 504 plan.

Dr. Kimberly Starr presented the District's current elementary school's cell phone policy, which already aligns with the new law.

The Board agreed with administration that students could keep devices in their backpack during the school day instead of utilizing the Yondr pouches.

This is a presentation item only. No action is required.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF INSTRUCTINAL MATERIALS ADOPTION FOR 2025-2031

Dr. Jones presented the process and selection of instructional resources for secondary English Language Arts. Administration recommended Houghton Mifflin Harcourt *Into Literature*.

The Houghton Mifflin Harcourt resources include an artificial intelligence component which will allow teachers to check for plagiarism. The cost will be a roll out over a six year period.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lott, to approve the adoption of the recommended instructional resources for secondary schools. The vote passed 7-0.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT – PRESENTATION – CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN DISTRICT SCORECARD

Dr. Bone updated the Board on the District Continuous Improvement Scorecard. She reported on measurement of progress being made from April 2024 to current and how those measurements compare to the District goals.

This is a presentation item only. No action is required.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

The next regular scheduled meeting is Monday, May 19, 2025.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:26 PM.

Dalton Person, President

Davin Chitwood, Secretary