



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, December 16, 2024, 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, Ms. Susan Krafft, Ms. Lynnett Lott, and Ms. Talicia Richardson. 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; Mr. Vance Gregory, Director of Technology; Mr. Allan Marshall, Chief Communications & Engagement Officer; and Ms. Leslie Phelps, Office Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent. Ms. Katherine Campbell, of Friday, Eldridge, and Clark, District Attorney was also in attendance.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT

At 5:31 PM the Board and Dr. Morawski went into executive session to discuss the superintendent contract.

Board members and Dr. Morawski returned to open session at 6:03 PM.

CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION

Citizens that were recognized and spoke to the Board were:

Mr. Brandon Croom spoke on behalf of Felix Curry.

Mr. Dan Williams spoke on the funding of a noise mitigation grant and hiring processes.

Mr. Jackie Flake spoke on behalf of Felix Curry.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

Ms. Richardson, made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chitwood, to move board members forum to the next agenda item following citizen's participation. The motion passed 5-1 with Mr. Person opposing.

Ms. Richardson shared Bill Martin, husband of longtime board member Ms. Yvonne Keaton Martin, passed away.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Morawski informed the board of several key events: The Adult Education graduation will be December 17, 2024 at the Peak Innovation Center; the winter break for students will be December 23, 2024 through January 6, 2025; students and all staff will be dismissed for Martin Luther King, Jr day on

January 20, 2025; and the next regularly scheduled school board meeting will be held on January 27, 2025.

Dr. Morawski's Good Things Going on in the District included: the Student Athletics & Activities Advisory Committee visited residents at Brooken Hill Health & Rehab; students from several schools helped assemble wreaths for the Fort Smith National Cemetery; schools across the district celebrated the season with festive holiday activities; Dr. Gary Udouj, Director of Career Education and District Innovation, was named to the 2024 Arkansas 250 in the Education and Healthcare category in *Arkansas Business*; and congratulations to this month's Superintendent's Stars: Marshall Gibbons from Barling, Khloe Stevents from Bonneville, Jayden Gilyard from Beard, Allyson Galvez from Orr, Amelia Nelson from Cook, Kinsley Lawson from Cavanaugh, Ana Mejia from Euper Lane, Eleanor Moats from Woods, and Jordan Smith from Carnall.

Note: Mr. Matt Blaylock joined the meeting at 6:36 PM.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included the November Financial Report, November 21 Minutes, December Professional Staff Recommendations, Update to Student Related Policy Changes Section 4.5, United Way FSPS Parents as Teachers Contract Agreement, and Authorizing the Sale and Disposal of Commodities.

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

PRESENTATION – PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE UPDATE

Mr. Shaffer gave a progress report regarding the work of the playground committee. Mr. Shaffer shared information concerning the life cycle of the playground equipment, the layout, the design and aesthetics as well as the ongoing upkeep of the equipment. These updates will create a District standard and will make all playgrounds more equitable across the District.

Mr. Shaffer stated the goal is to start installation in summer 2025 and will have an approximate three year roll out. The estimated cost is \$250,000 per playground and the budget for the playgrounds was approved in August 2024.

This is an information item. No action is required.

PRESENTATION – MIDDLE SCHOOL TRACK UPDATE

Dr. Morawski informed the board an early analysis of the cost to construct a competition track at Northside High School would be an estimated \$15-20 million. Dr. Morawski also stated outside of a mileage increase the District would not have the funds to construct that track.

Mr. Shaffer presented recommendations and cost estimates, provided by MAHG Architecture, to update each of the middle school tracks. These updates, using the current footprint, would include site preparation and a rubberized track surface.

This is an information item. No action is required.

CONSIDER ADOPTING THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Dr. Davis presented the proposed 2025-2026 school year calendar to the Board. The proposed calendar, developed with the help of the Certified and Classified Personnel Policy Committees, is a minutes based model and will have a mid-week start date.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lott, to approve the 2025-2026 school year calendar as presented. The vote passed 7-0.

PRESENTATION – STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Dr. Bone presented to the Board the results of the Arkansas Teaching, Learning, and Assessment System (ATLAS) scores. The results presented showed comparisons of the average of Fort Smith Public Schools scores to the state average. The ATLAS test was taken in spring 2024.

This is a presentation only. No action is required.

SUPERINTENDENT STATEMENT

Dr. Morawski announced that his wife, Dr. Courtney Morawski, was named the superintendent of Granbury ISD; Granbury, Texas. Dr. Morawski stated he has begun discussions with the Board regarding a leadership transition.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT

At 7:38 PM the Board went into executive session to discuss the superintendent’s contract.

Board members returned to open session at 8:19 PM.

Mr. Person requested a called board meeting be scheduled in early January to finalize the process for the superintendent search. Mr. Person will also manage the initial steps in the process.

ADJOURN

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

Dalton Person, President

Davin Chitwood, Secretary