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, March 16, 2026, beginning at 5:33 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 present. Other board members present were: Mr. Phil Whiteaker, Ms. Susan Krafft, Ms. Brittney Hall, Mr. Brad Harding, Ms. Lynnett 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; Ms. Kimberly Mundell, Executive Director of Communications and Engagement; 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
Ms. Kimberly Mundell presented the following recognitions:

To celebrate Theater in Our Schools Month, the Maverick Theater - comprised of students from Northside High School and Southside High School – performed *The Flesh Failures* from *Hair the Musical*. Ms. Chloe Entrekin was also recognized for being elected as a State Thespian Officer for 2026-2027.

Students from Darby Middle School earned first place at the Health Occupations Students of America state competition. Fiona Hansen was recognized in Foundations of Veterinary Science, and Samiya Hardgrave, Aking Jones, Marleigh May for Exploring Medical Innovation.

Mr. Mike Burkepile received the Orchestra Director of the Year from the Arkansas Chapter of the American String Teachers Association.

Southside High School counselors Savannah Smith, Isela Avila, Stephanie Legris, Cindy Lattimore, Sarah Williams, and Trish Yepez earned Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) Designation.

Mr. Dalton Person was recognized for his service as a member of the school board, including three years as Board President.

SWEARING IN OF BOARD MEMBERS
The Honorable Sam Terry of the Sebastian County District Court administered the oath of office to new Board member Mr. Matt Garner and Board members Ms. Maria Martinez and Mr. Phil Whiteaker.

ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS
Mr. Mahan stated that officer elections can be nominated as a slate of officers or by individual nominations for the positions of President, Vice President, and Secretary.

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

The motion passed 7-0.

DESINGATION OF DISBURSING OFFICERS
Mr. Warren explained the disbursement officer is the school board member that is designated as a signator for disbursements from the payroll and accounts payable file. It is typically the role of the president.

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

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

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION
Ms. Michele Walker and Ms. Ruth Anne Nelson spoke on the proposed change to catastrophic leave.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
Mr. Mahan presented the Transparency Dashboard housed on the District website. This will complete his performance Goal 1.4.

Mr. Mahan's Good Things Going on in the District include: Morrison Elementary and Woods Elementary celebrated their 50th anniversary; Bonneville Elementary hosted a Multicultural Night for students and families; Graduating seniors from across the River Valley connected with employers during the River Valley Career Launch at Peak Innovation Center; Three students placed in the Optimist Youth Essay Contest: Holly Wisley, Southside High School, First Place; Jordy Mays, Northside High School, Second Place; and Jessica Ferrari, Southside High School, Third Place; Congratulations to the following Superintendent's Stars: Sophie Maddox, Beard

Elementary; Vivien Hutson, Cavanaugh Elementary; Aileen Palomares, Cook Elementary; and Emma Grigg, Carnall Elementary.

CONSENT AGENDA
The consent agenda included the February Financial Report, February 23, March 9, and March 11 Minutes, March Professional Staff Recommendations, Student Services Report, and Approving the 2026-2027 Certified Staff Contract Renewals.

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

CONSIDER ADOPTING LICENSED & CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL POLICY CHANGES 3.1, 3.8, AND 8.5.1-8.5.4
Dr. Chris Davis presented the proposed revisions to Policies 3.1, 3.8, 8.5.1 – 8.5.4 for the Board's review. He explained that the recommended changes to the sick leave policy include the removal of partially paid extended catastrophic leave, which currently serves as an additional layer of leave after all other leave has been exhausted.

Mr. Ryan Gray, Chairperson of the Certified Personal Policy Committee, addressed the Board against the removal of the extended catastrophic leave portion of the policy.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Garner, to adopt the licensed and classified personnel changes to Policy 3.1 as presented and to table Policies 3.8 and 8.5.1-8.5.4 for further discussion. The vote passed 7-0.

CONSIDER APPROVING SALARY SCHEDULES FOR 2026-2027
Mr. Warren provided a follow-up to his presentation given at the regular school board meeting on February 23, 2026. Administration is recommending, given the lack of new revenue and unknown benefit costs, the salary schedules remain the same for the 2026-2027 school year.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hall, to approve the salary schedules for 2026-2027 as presented. The vote passed 7-0.

PRESENTATION – 2026 GRADUATIN UPDATE
Dr. Tony Jones, Director of Secondary Education, presented the plan for graduation in the event of inclement weather. The graduation ceremonies will be held at the Fort Smith Convention Center, and each student will receive ten tickets. The total cost of the Convention Center is $21,133.50 for two days and that cost will be incurred whether it is used or not. A livestream option of graduation will also be available.

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

PRESENTATION – ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT – 3-10 ATLAS INTERIM DATA
Dr. Cohen Minton and Ms. Laura Gladden, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, provided an update on the 3-10 ATLAS Interim Assessment results in English Language Arts,

Mathematics, and Science, including a comparison of the results administered in November 2025 and February 2026.

This is a presentation only. No action is required.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM
A board work session will be held on April 7 at 5:30 PM at the Service Center, Building B Auditorium.

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be Monday, April 27, 2026.

ADJOURN
There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:18 PM.

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Phillip Whiteaker, Board President

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Brittney Hall, Board Secretary