



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, January 22, 2024, beginning at 5:30 PM in the Service Center, Bldg. B, Auditorium, 3205 Jenny Lind, P.O. Box 1948, Fort Smith, AR 72901.

Mr. Dalton Person, president, called the meeting to order noting seven board members were present. Other board members present were: Ms. Talicia Richardson, Mr. Phil Whiteaker, Mr. Matt Blaylock, Mr. Davin Chitwood, Ms. Sandy Dixon and Ms. Susan Krafft. 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 & Instruction; Mr. Charles Warren, Chief Financial Officer; Dr. Michael Farrell, Executive Director of Student Services, Mr. Vance Gregory, Director of Technology; 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.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Morawski reported the next regular school board meeting will be Monday, February 26, 2024.

Dr Morawski's Good Things Going on the District included: Southside alumni Madison Marsh was crowned Miss America; the City of Fort Smith received the Arkansas Municipal League's Trendsetter Award recognizing the work of the Peak Innovation Center; videos for the Peak Innovation Center are being featured in our local movie theaters; Fort Smith Public Schools were featured in the *Arkansas Love Where You Live* magazine; Euper Lane Elementary was celebrated as being a 2023 Capturing Kids Hearts National Showcase school; Samuel Evans, a student at Euper Lane Elementary, was named the Military Kid of the Month; Northside High School students were featured in a news story when they witnessed a theft and returned the property to the owner; and several students from Northside and Southside received the OSHA Construction Safety and Health certification.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included the December Financial Statement, December 18 Minutes, January Professional Staff Recommendations, January Student Services Report, and the Community Service Learning Partner Site Applications.

Mr. Whiteaker requested that the item number 8.5, Community Service Learning Partner Site Applications, be removed for individual consideration.

Ms. Richardson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dixon, to approve the consent agenda with the exception of the Community Service Learning Partner Site Applications. The vote passed 7-0.

At 5:39 PM, Mr. Whiteaker recused himself from this agenda item.

Ms. Dixon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chitwood, to approve the Community Service Learning Partner Site Application. The vote passed 6-0.

Note: Mr. Whiteaker returned to the meeting at 5:40 PM.

CONSIDER ADOPTING THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Dr. Davis presented the guidelines and different options provided by the state concerning school calendars. These include a traditional school calendar, alternate school calendar, 4-day week school calendar, and year round school calendar. Fort Smith Public Schools currently uses the traditional calendar which is a 190 day teacher contract. This contract includes 178 student days, 2 parent/teacher conference days, 8 professional development days, and 2 teacher work days.

Dr. Davis continued by stating that the alternate school calendar is also referred to as an instructional hours based calendar. This calendar requires 1068 instructional hours per year. In using the current structure for elementary students and extending the instructional minutes for the secondary students by 15 minutes each day this would provide 172 student days, 2 parent/teacher conference days, 8 professional development days, 6 staff collaboration days, and 2 teacher work days.

Dr. Davis advised with the banked minutes of the alternate calendar the end date for students was earlier as well as building in more flexibility for inclement weather days.

Dr. Davis stated that feedback regarding the calendar was gathered from the Personal Policy Committee Calendar Committee, the Classified Personnel Policy Committee, staff, and parents.

Mr. Warren confirmed that the summer feeding programs would continue on the day after Memorial Day for 2024.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whiteaker, to approve the 2024-2025 school year calendar as presented. The vote passed 7-0.

CONSIDER AMENDING THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Dr. Morawski explained that the use of Alternative Methods of Instruction (AMI) is not available to use during days school is closed for inclement weather. Currently, the district has a total of four weather days to make up.

Dr. Morawski stated information recently received from the Commissioner of Education gives the district the option to convert to using instructional minutes to assist in making up days. In addition, the Commissioner would allow the district to substitute remaining professional development days or holidays on the existing calendar could be used for makeup days.

Dr. Davis stated the Personal Policy Committee and the Classified Personal Policy Committee met and voted to convert professional development days to student days as needed. These days include February 19, March 15, and April 22. The professional development days would then be moved to June 3 and June 4. Dr. Davis continued that the use of instructional minutes would build in two days of instructional time that would not need to be made up.

Ms. Richardson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blaylock, to approve the amended 2023-2024 school year calendar to including the use of instructional minutes and/or professional development days as student make up days. The vote passed 7-0.

CONSIDER APPROVING AMENDED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Dr. Cohen Minton provided a mid-year update to each school's improvement plans. Dr. Cohen Minton also shared how the schools were progressing using the Common Summative Assessment comparisons for grades 3-5 and grades 6-10. Dr. Cohen Minton stated each school's improvement plans align with the district continuous improvement plan.

Dr. Cohen Minton also provided results from the safe learning environment survey from parents, students, and staff, and compared percentages from last school year and this school year regarding out of school suspension, students achieving 95% attendance, and district staff attendance.

Ms. Dixon made a motion, seconded by Ms. Krafft, to approve the amended school improvement plans for the 2023-2024 school year. The vote passed 7-0.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE RESOLUTION REQUIRED FOR THE 2024 MASTER BUILDING PLAN

Mr. Velasquez explained the master building plan is a process that is required from the state to update the district's master plan. These plans are to be submitted every three years for a six year master plan. The district is not obligated to complete projects listed in the master facilities plan.

Mr. Velasquez proceeded to review each of the proposed projects for each of the years, including those that are covered under insurance due to hail damage. The estimated total cost of the master plan cycle for 2024-2030 is \$23,372,000, which \$19,632,000 of that total is insurance work.

Mr. Richardson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chitwood, to approve the resolution for support of the 2024 master plan and academic facilities partnership program. The vote passed 7-0.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

The next regular scheduled meeting will be Monday, February 26, 2024.

Ms. Richardson thanked Dr. Morawski and administration for the careful consideration of all students during the inclement weather.

Mr. Chitwood recognized Dr. Morawski for his involvement in the community, specifically the Boys and Girls Club.

Mr. Blaylock questioned why it is cold in the hallways at Northside and inquired how many square feet is not heated. Mr. Velasquez answered during the HVAC project heat was installed where heat was already established.

Mr. Person stated at this time there is not an update to the Peak third party review.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:19 PM.

President, Board of Education

Secretary, Board of Education