



Board of Education

Minutes

The Board of Education

A Regular School Board Meeting of the Board of Education of Fort Smith Public Schools was held Monday, March 29, 2021, beginning at 5:30 PM in the Service Center, Bldg B., 3205 Jenny Lind, P.O. Box 1948, Fort Smith, AR 72901.

Mr. Hanesworth, president, called the meeting to order. Other board members present were Ms. Susan McFerran, Ms. Talicia Richardson, Mr. Dalton Person, Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin Ms. Dee Blackwell and Mr. Wade Gilkey. Dr. Terry Morawski, Superintendent, Mr. Martin Mahan, Deputy Superintendent, Ms. Sherri Penix, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Campus Support, Mr. Charles Warren, Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Darian Layes, Executive Director of Student Services, Mr. Vance Gregory, Executive Director of Technology, Ms. Zena Featherston Marshall, Executive Director of Communication and Community Partnerships, and Ms. Nadine Brooks, Secretary to the Superintendent were also present.

A moment of silence was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

RECOGNITIONS

Ms. Marshall presented the following recognitions for February and March. February is included this month due to inclement weather.

Superintendent Stars are selected for this recognition by their principals and teachers as students who are exceptional citizens and who consistently make good choices.

Superintendent Stars – February and March

Thiago Barroso, Sunnymede Elementary School

Marco Castro Zamorano, Morrison Elementary

Kaydrianna Chairs, Ballman Elementary

J.C. Collier, Beard Elementary

Maverick Davis, Carnall Elementary

Loren Foster, Barling Elementary

Deleiny Garcia, Trusty Elementary

Chase Legaria, Sutton Elementary

Sofia Manriquez, Cook Elementary

Yessica Mares, Tilles Elementary

Rorry Marrow, Woods Elementary

Hagen Oden, Bonneville Elementary

Giovani Ortiz Vasquez, Howard Elementary

Carlie Russell, Euper Lane Elementary

Kaitlin Swaim, Fairview Elementary

Bella Thornburg, Cavanaugh Elementary
Montgomery Wiley, Orr Elementary

Other Recognitions

ALL-STATE MUSICIANS

This year, more than 50 students earned positions in All-State Music groups. Two of these students earned the top seats in their divisions.

Jazz Band

Pablo Cortez, Northside High School, earned the first chair Trombone seat in the All-State Jazz Band

Choir

Kevin Willis, Northside High School, earned the first chair Tenor 1 seat in the All-State SATB (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) Choir.

Ramsey Junior High Gold Team averaged 550 points per game, making their final score a total of 2200 points. Team member Sam Pritchard was named MVP of the tournament and he, along with Dipa Patel and Vincente Otero made the All-Star Team.

National Merit Finalists

Four students from Fort Smith Public Schools have been named 2021 National Merit Scholarship Finalists by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). Jackson Hannan, Jackson Minnick and Haris Rana, all seniors at Southside High School and Jaicie Clayton, Southside class of 2020 are finalists who will be considered for National Merit Scholarship awards to be offered in 2021. There were approximately 16,000 Semifinalists in the 66th annual National Merit Scholarship Program representing less than 1% of U.S. high school seniors. Clayton, Hannan, Minnick and Rana will continue in the competition for some 7,600 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$30 million, earning the Merit Scholar® title.

Northside High School JROTC Battalion

The Northside High School Grizzly Battalion recently completed their JROTC Program Accreditation (JPA) inspection and received a 97/100. This superior score earns the team the Honor Unit with Distinction award and provides for an additional gold star uniform decoration for cadet battalion.

State Champions

Southside High School student Andrew Stephens won the 6A State Bowling Championship with a three-game total score of 657. Stephens is excited to defend his title next year and is determined to help give the Mavericks a team title.

NHS/SHS Wrestling

March 5 was a state championship day for two FSPS student wrestlers. Southside High School's Ti Lockwood took first place in the 152 lb weight class, and Northside High School's Damarius

Medlock won first place in the 220 lb weight class during the Arkansas State Wrestling Tournament.

NHS Lady Bears and Tracey Bershers

The Northside High School Lady Bears faced off against the Fayetteville High School Lady Bulldogs during 6A State Championship play on Thursday March 18. The Northside Lady Bears won in double overtime, 52-51. This is their eighth state championship title under Coach Rickey Smith. 6'2" senior forward Tracey Bershers scored 16 points and grabbed 13 rebounds earning the game's MVP.

SHS Computer Students

Four Southside High School students have received the 2021 Aspirations in Computing Award from the National Center for Women & Information Technology. Caroline Keck, Arkansas Winner and National Certificate of Distinction, Ethne Hester, National Certificate of Distinction, Makayla Cobb, Arkansas Winner, and Sierra Baskin, National Certificate of Distinction. The Award recognizes 9th-12th grade students for computing-related achievements and interests. Award winners were selected based on their aptitude and interest in IT and computing, solid leadership ability, good academic history, and plans for post-secondary education. Caroline, Ethne, Makayla, and Sierra join more than 17,000 other award winners named since 2007.

Staff and School Awards

Southside High School AP Chemistry teacher Jeffrey Rice has been recognized with the 2021 Distinguished High School Mentor Award from the Ralph E. Martin Department of Chemical Engineering at the University of Arkansas. The Distinguished High School Mentor Award is presented to recognize outstanding high school mentors who have consistently motivated their students to strive for higher achievement. Recipients of this award are nominated by students currently enrolled in Chemical Engineering at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Kaida Sheets, Katie Settle and Barrett Weidman, three chemical engineering students and former Southside Mavericks nominated Mr. Rice. In recognition of this honor, the Arkansas Academy of Chemical Engineers will make a \$1,000 donation to Southside High School for use in Mr. Rice's classroom activities.

Kathleen Dorn

Dr. Kathleen Dorn, Director of Adult Education, applied and was selected to participate in the new State Advocates for Adult Education Fellowship. This program builds upon the Coalition on Adult Basic Education's national Adult Education advocacy work. SAAEF Fellows, like Dorn, will help to ensure each state is represented by a team of innovative and effective advocates. In her role, Dr. Dorn will lead a team to meet with the governor and members of congress.

Spradling Elementary

Spradling Elementary School has earned the Highly Effective Schools Accreditation from Solution Tree. Spradling is the second school in Arkansas to receive designation. It is a significant achievement that reflects Spradling's commitment to reaching and maintaining the

highest levels of educational quality. The Spradling Learning Team is maintaining and growing identified areas that have the greatest impact on student success. These are directly aligned to the Professional Learning Communities at Work® (PLC) process and the High-Reliability Schools™ (HRS) framework.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

There was no one present for Citizens Participation.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Morawski reported that he attended the recent Northside High School Championship Lady Bears game with two overtimes resulting in a win for Northside.

Dr. Morawski reported that there would be an update on the #On Track Program and Sixth Grade Reconfiguration specifically related to Fine Arts and Athletics at the April 12 Work Session.

Dr. Morawski reported that Ms. Penix and staff have been contacting principals and staff about assignments for sixth and ninth grade placements.

Dr. Morawski reported that a COVID Vaccination Clinic will be held at Kimmons Junior High on Saturday, April 3 for the general public.

Dr. Morawski recognized Dr. Tiffany Bone, incoming Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, who was attending the board meeting this evening. He stated that he is excited for her to join the FSPS and he continues to hear positive remarks about her from people across the state.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included February 22 Minutes and March 8 Minutes, February Financial Report, March Professional Staff Recommendations, March Student Services Report, and Current Proposals, Bids and Renewals. Mr. Gilkey made a motion, seconded by Ms. Keaton-Martin, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The vote passed 7/0.

PRESENTATION - MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH - MAY

Dr. Michael Farrell introduced Kerri Tucker, Coordinator of School Based Health Center Cherri Byford, Lead Secondary Counselor from Darby Junior High School and Sherry Logsdon, Fort Smith Schools School Based Therapist. These employees are actively involved with this initiative.

Dr. Farrell also welcomed the District's Hatching Results Partners: Terri Tchorzynski - 2017 ASCA National Counselor of the Year and Felipe Zanartu - 2019 First School in California recognized as model elementary school counseling program.

Dr. Farrell's presentation referenced the following:

National campaign in May is to raise awareness regarding mental health and reduce the stigma associated with it

Providing mental health support to students, families and the community through presentations and training sessions

Secondary focus groups for students – needs assessment led by school counselors and therapists

Student input included: Anxiety, Depression, Not being understood, Stress, Feeling Alone, Trauma/PTSD, Suicide, Eating Disorders

Parent input included: Anxiety, Depression, Stress, Feeling Alone, Trauma/PTSD, Suicide, Social Media Influence on their children

Next Steps include: Meetings with local mental health service providers, how best to respond to the stated needs of students and parents through education and outreach, providing tools and resources, establish and promote a calendar of sessions for May 2021, calendar of mental health supports, fact sheets for students and parents.

PRESENTATION - ACCELERATED LEARNING AND SUMMER CAMP OPTIONS

Mr. Mahan recognized Ms. Cathy Ford and Dr. Kellie Minton to present virtual student accelerated learning opportunities for spring. Ms. Ford reviewed the core sessions that begin on April 12 and go through May 20. These include Literacy, Vroom Vroom Vocabulary, Math and Science. 60+ certified teachers have committed to these sessions.

PRESENTATION - READY TO LEARN UPDATE

Mr. Mahan reported that the Ready to Learn Plan will be brought back to the Board in the Fall. The Ready to Learn Plan that was submitted to the Arkansas Department of Education covered the virtual option, blended option that was later transitioned to an application process, communication and access to parents, learning management systems used are Schoology for Secondary and Google Classroom in the elementary schools. Videos for tutorials for parents and staff were communicated through the Ready to Learn Plan. 60+ teachers completed model lesson plans for others to use as resources. Teachers received stipends for 18 hours of technology training. Mr. Mahan also reported on the staff and student safety component. School staff suggested proceeding with caution through the school year with safety measures already in place with the exception of students being allowed to intermingle at recess with masks worn and washing hands frequently.

Board members were supportive of the plan Mr. Mahan outlined and commended the administration and staff for the effort that has been put forth to get through the school year.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

No comments.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Bill Hanesworth, President

Dee Blackwell, Secretary