



---

## Board of Education

---

### Minutes

A Regular School Board Meeting of the Board of Education of Fort Smith Public Schools was held Monday, October 25, 2021, beginning at 5:30 PM in the Service Center, Bldg. B, Auditorium, 3205 Jenny Lind, P.O. Box 1948, Fort Smith, AR 72901.

Ms. McFerran, president, called the meeting to order. Other board members present were: Ms. Talicia Richardson, Mr. Dalton Person, Ms. Dee Blackwell, Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, Mr. Matt Blaylock and Mr. Troy Eckelhoff. 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; 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, Office Manager to the Superintendent. Mr. Marshall Ney, of Friday, Eldridge and Clark, District Attorney was also in attendance.

A moment of silence was followed by the pledge of allegiance and mission statement.

### **RECOGNITIONS**

Ms. Marshall presented the following recognitions.

#### October Superintendent Star Awards

Kiley Hill, Fairview Elementary  
Jennifer Castelo, Cavanaugh Elementary School  
Evan Cerda, Bonneville Elementary School  
Anna Cusick, Barling Elementary School  
Baylor Davis, Cook Elementary School  
Hayden Harper, Woods Elementary School  
Nolan Martin, Orr Elementary School  
Luis Mendez, Euper Lane Elementary School  
Mason Todd, Carnall Elementary School

#### Other Recognition

Dr. Christopher Johnson, principal at Kimmons Middle School is the 2021 Mayor's Educator of the Year. This award was presented by Fort Smith Mayor George McGill recognizing Dr. Johnson for his contributions to his school and the community and for the work that he has accomplished toward providing a rigorous and equitable education for all students while ensuring a safe learning environment conducive to student success.

### **CITIZENS PARTICIPATION**

There was no one present for Citizens Participation.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Morawski reported that COVID cases and quarantines had increased slightly.

Dr. Morawski reported that Governor Hutchinson and the Department of Health reduced social distance from six to three feet for students. District staff are hopeful that this will decrease quarantine numbers.

Dr. Morawski reported that the District is interested in the "test to stay program" that Governor Hutchinson introduced recently.

Dr. Morawski reviewed upcoming events that included the Annual Chamber Luncheon on October 27, Board Policies Review Committee on October 27 for the three board members who volunteered to serve, Leadership Fort Smith Education Day on October 28, Board Policies Review Committee on November 2, and Vision 2023 Capital Improvements Celebrations on November 14.

Mr. Mahan reported that the State Volleyball Tournament is going to be hosted at both Northside and Southside high school arenas beginning on Tuesday, October 26.

Mr. Mahan reported that the installation of the scoreboard would begin on November 1 and take several days with training to follow.

Mr. Mahan reported that connectors for the chair backs are on back order. These are manufactured in Vietnam and this manufacturing lab has just recently reopened. The expected date to receive and install is December.

Dr. Morawski expressed appreciation to Mr. Mahan, Mr. Shaffer and Mr. Beaumont and their team for working to get these projects finished. Dr. Morawski expressed appreciation and patience from the community as the District works through finishing these projects and providing opportunities for students to enjoy these facilities.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The consent agenda included September 27 Minutes and October 11 Minutes, September Financial Report, October Professional Staff Recommendations, October Student Services Report, and adoption of student policies for second reading.

Mr. Person made a motion, seconded by Ms. Keaton-Martin, to approve the consent agenda items as presented. The vote passed 7/0.

**SELECTION OF VOTING REPRESENTATIVE FOR ASBA DELEGATE ASSEMBLY**

Dr. Morawski reported that the Arkansas School Boards Association Delegate Assembly would meet at 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, December 8, 2021, during the ASBA Annual Conference in Little Rock. The Assembly will take place in the Grand Ballroom Salon B, located on the Ballroom Level of the Marriott Hotel. All ASBA member school boards are allotted one voting representative at that meeting.

Dr. Morawski recommended that the Board choose one board member who planned to attend to serve as its delegate.

Ms. Keaton-Martin made a motion, seconded by Ms. Blackwell, to designate Ms. Susan McFerran to serve as the voting representative at the ASBA Annual Conference. The vote passed 7/0.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE RESOLUTION REQUIRED FOR THE 2022 MASTER BUILDING PLAN**

Mr. Mahan, Mr. Shaffer and Consultant Chuck Stein were present to answer any questions that the Board might have regarding the 2022 Master Building Plan. Mr. Mahan reported that the District adopts a master plan every two years. Board members were provided a list of items for possible construction. Mr. Mahan noted it is required that the item be listed on the plan if the District should decide to place any under construction.

The support of the 2022 Master Plan allows for the proposed projects to be considered during the 2023 – 2025 timeline.

The administration recommended that the Board approve the resolution for local support of the 2022 Master Plan and the Academic Facilities Partnership Program.

Ms. Richardson noted that the list was shorter than in past years. She referenced Kimmons Cafeteria as an example of one that did not get renovated with the millage funds and her hope that some of these projects can be completed in the future. Dr. Morawski stated that District administration would continue evaluating projects as funding becomes available whether from monies left from the millage funds, ESSER or other sources.

Mr. Person made a motion, seconded by Ms. Richardson, to approve the resolution for local support of the 2022 Master Plan and the Academic Facilities Partnership Program. The vote passed 7/0.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE RESOLUTION REQUIRED BY ACT 1120 OF 2013**

Dr. Morawski presented this reoccurring annual item for consideration noting that Dr. Davis was available if board members had any questions.

Mr. Person recused himself from voting on this item due to having a family member on the list of employees.

Ms. Blackwell made a motion, seconded by Ms. Richardson, to approve the resolution required by Act 1120 of 2013. The vote passed 6/0 with Mr. Person abstaining.

Mr. Person returned to the meeting.

## **CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE RESOLUTION CONCERNING FORT SMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD ZONES**

Dr. Morawski reported that approval of this resolution will establish five (5) single-membered and two (2) at large district zones that are based on the 2020 Census. The current zoning is four (4) zones and three (3) at large. Demographers Tina Thompson and Shannon Scott, Arkansas Planning and Development Division were available for questions. Attorney Marshall Ney was available for legal advice.

Mr. Mahan presented the proposed zoning map for review and discussion. Mr. Mahan stated that Ms. Thompson and Ms. Scott took the 2020 census of 91,281 total population and divided it over the five zones to reach approximately 18,200 people per zone.

Mr. Person confirmed from Ms. Thompson that this 2020 census population included Barling.

Ms. Richardson inquired about an oddly shaped boundary line around the Rogers Avenue area. Ms. Thompson explained when dividing the zones, they attempted to keep neighborhoods together noting that census blocks could not be split and some of these were quite large populations in neighborhoods that made it difficult to move some of the census blocks to other zones to balance out the population. This created some odd shaped zoning boundary lines.

With no further questions, Ms. McFerran thanked Ms. Thompson and Ms. Scott for their work with the rezoning process.

Mr. Ney stated that the resolution was essentially to approve the map and transmit it to the Sebastian County Board of Elections Committee for review and approval. Mr. Ney stated that the resolution is drafted for the five zones and two at large zones to be elected in the 2022 School Board Election. Mr. Ney suggested that if there were revisions to the resolution he would make those if the board chose to make edits to the resolution this evening.

Mr. Blaylock made a motion, seconded by Ms. Richardson, to approve the resolution concerning the Fort Smith Public School Board Zones as presented. The vote passed 7/0.

## **PRESENTATION - ALE HUB**

Dr. Bone introduced Mr. Jason Burkman and Mr. Rafael Marlow to present their Alternative Education program. Mr. Gregg Grant, Executive Director of Arch Ford Cooperative was in attendance. Mr. Grant spoke about what services the Arch Ford Cooperative and other cooperatives offered school districts.

Mr. Burkman, presented the AE and HUB Programs offered by Arch Ford. The AE program is designed to accommodate education, behavioral, mental health and medical needs of students that cannot be adequately addressed in a traditional school environment. The HUB program is

designed for students to actively participate in collaborative and connected learning environments that are technology enhanced.

Mr. Burkman provided a proposed AE/HUB Salary comparison between Fort Smith Schools and Arch Ford Cooperative and timeline of partnership between Arch Ford and Fort Smith Schools. The costs savings for districts is tremendous.

Ms. McFerran asked Dr. Bone if the Belle Point Center would be the location for the AE and HUB program. Dr. Bone confirmed that it would with students having the opportunity to accelerate their graduation process or return to their previous campus as well. The focus is to get students graduated.

Mr. Person asked how it would affect the 21 existing District employees if the decision were made to partner with Arch Ford. Mr. Burkman stated that from discussions with Fort Smith administration, employees would be given the opportunity to remain as a FSPS employee or if they choose to be with the Arch Ford program, the salary packet would be explained and offered to them.

Ms. Blackwell asked how this transition would affect students already on the Belle Point campus. Dr. Bone stated that Arch Ford's point system is very similar to Belle Point and that the goal is to get students back to their campus.

Ms. Richardson asked how long this program had in place. Mr. Burkman stated that this model had been in place ten years. Mr. Burkman stated that Conway was the first large district to come on board with Arch Ford.

Mr. Richardson noted that it was a tremendous cost savings but asked what had been explained to employees at Belle Point. Dr. Bone stated that employees had been contacted. Employees were told that if hired by Arch Ford would maintain their current salaries, keep their sick days, remain with Arkansas Teachers Retirement and receive a 2% salary increase for their next contract.

Mr. Marlow spoke about the importance and emphasis of choosing the mental health providers.

Ms. Keaton-Martin asked about the registration process for the HUB. Mr. Burkman stated the HUB program is open to existing Belle Point and students from other campuses as well.

Mr. Mahan clarified that these students would remain FSPS students and their data would be maintained by the District.

#### **BOARD MEMBERS FORUM**

There were no comments.

**ADJOURN**

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

---

Susan McFerran, President

---

Dee Blackwell, Secretary