



Board of Education

Minutes of Called School Board Meeting
The Board of Education

A Called School Board Meeting of the Board of Education of Fort Smith Public Schools was held April 8, 2019, beginning at 5:30 PM at the Bonneville Elementary, 2500 South Waldron Road.

Ms. Susan McFerran, president, called the meeting to order. Other board members present were Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, Mr. Greg Magness, Mr. Bill Hanesworth, Ms. Jeannie Cole, Mr. Wade Gilkey, and Ms. Talicia Richardson. Dr. Doug Brubaker, Superintendent, Dr. Terry Morawski, Deputy Superintendent, Mr. Martin Mahan, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Campus Support, Dr. Barry Owen, Chief Academic Officer, Mr. Charles Warren, Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Darian Layes, Executive Director of Student Services, Ms. Zena Featherston Marshall, Executive Director of Communication and Community Partnerships, and Ms. Nadine Brooks, Secretary to the Superintendent were present.

A moment of silence was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. McFerran read the mission statement.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Personnel Policy Committee (PPC) Update

Ms. Sherri Penix reported on the second PPC meeting held April 4. The committee announced several subcommittees that will meet to research topics such as election process and bylaws. Mr. Warren presented on the Act 170. The 35 members attending participated in a survey about compensation. "Please indicate the degree to which you agree with this statement: 'Salary increases for certified and classified employees should continue to be one of the District's highest budget priorities.'" The survey was sent to all FSPS employees. 710 responses were received by April 8.

Regarding Act 170, a law to increase minimum pay for teachers, Dr. Brubaker noted that FSPS beginning salary is thousands above the minimum salary required by Arkansas law.

RECOMMENDATION OF 2019/2020 PERSONNEL CONTRACTS

Mr. Mahan presented the 2019-2020 personnel contracts. The staff totals follow:

Certified Personnel

1,098.39 Instruction & Support
52.00 Principals & Assistant Principals
57.00 Central Office
7.51 Adult Education
1,214.90 Total Certified Personnel

Non-Certified Personnel

156.00 Paraprofessionals
153.40 Secretaries/Office Personnel
184.00 Custodians & Maintenance
154.00 Child Nutrition
647.40 Total Non-Certified Personnel

1,869.31 TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

He reported that these recommendations exclude part-time personnel: bus drivers and bus aides, SPICE workers, Saturday School staff, homebound instructors, band adjuncts, substitute teachers, substitute aides, and substitute clerks.

Mr. Mahan reported that the district's practice has been to bring these contracts for board approval prior to the upcoming year. He added that since the certified contracts are approved monthly, the classified staff will also be presented monthly beginning with the April 22 board meeting. Current contracts will no longer be presented for the upcoming year. The administration's recommendation is to adopt the 2019-2020 contracts at the April 22 board meeting. No action was taken at this time.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF BUDGET PARAMETERS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 - Action

Mr. Warren provided a school finance update for 2019-2020 which included sources of new revenue, budget reduction opportunities and specific initiatives regarding outstanding debt.

He reported that seventy-seven percent (77%) of the District's budget is paid in the form of salary and benefits. He reported that the annual approval of certified and classified salary schedules is an important element of setting budget parameters for the approaching fiscal/school year. The presentation included recommendations for certified and classified salaries to be incorporated into the 2019-2020 budget.

The Administration recommended that the Board approve the 2019-2020 budget parameters and certified salary schedule as presented. Mr. Hanesworth made a motion, seconded by Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin to approve the Fort Smith Public Schools 2019-2020 budget parameters as presented. The vote passed 7/0.

CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE OF MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS EDUCATION GRANT ASSURANCES

Dr. Biggs reported that the District would like to apply for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Grant. She reported that the grant assurances must be approved by the Board of Education. Dr. Biggs provided the set of assurances that the local school district receiving McKinney-Vento funds agrees to follow. After discussion, Mr. Hanesworth made a motion, seconded by Ms. Cole, to accept the set of assurances to support the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program from July 2019-June 2022. The vote passed 7/0.

VISION 2023 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Dr. Morawski and Mr. Jay Kirkpatrick updated board members on Vision 2023 Capital Improvement Projects to date. Risley & Associates Architects presented design updates for Southside renovations. Lewis Architects presented design updates for the Southside gym. High Jackson presented design updates for the Northside gym.

Ms. McFerran excused herself at 6:50 p.m. and Mr. Hanesworth presided over the remainder of the meeting.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF REFUNDING BONDS, SERIES 2014

Mr. Warren reported that Mr. Kevin Faught, Senior VP with Stephens Inc., identified a refunding opportunity for Fort Smith Public Schools. Mr. Faught provided a letter indicating the District could save an estimated \$738,263.39 in debt service costs over the lifetime of the bond. \$462,004.59 and \$225,618.76 of this savings would be recognized in FY2020 and FY2021. These are estimates based upon current market conditions. The savings would not be required to be transferred to the Capital Projects Fund, but it could be. A preliminary schedule of events to refund the outstanding 2014 bond issue, a copy of the resolution, certification and agreements were provided for review.

The administration recommended that the Board consider approval of the refinancing of the Series 2014 Bonds at the April 22 Board meeting. There was no action taken at this time.

CONSIDER ADOPTING STUDENT RELATED POLICY CHANGES FOR FIRST READING - SECTION 4

Mr. Layes reported that the administration reviewed and revised current policies to the structure and language used in the model policies provided by the Arkansas School Board Association (ASBA). The new policies will have specific references to Arkansas statutes in the policies and can be quickly updated as statutes change. Mr. Layes reported that a number of current policies were outdated and not necessary. Additional policies that previously were not addressed will be introduced for approval. He provided a cross-reference table identifying the old and new polices as related when applicable. Some sections are left labeled as "Reserved".

Those sections have not been found to be needed at this time but hold a place should an additional policy be needed later.

The administration is currently working on procedures to support the new language in the revised policies to be placed in the student handbook. Therefore, the policies are requested to be effective July 1, 2019.

The administration recommended that the board approve for first reading at the April 22 board meeting the changes to Board Policies, Section 4 – Students, as presented to be effective July 1, 2019. There was no action taken at this time.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

No one was present for citizen participation.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

Ms. Richardson commended Principals Keri Rathbun and Lisa Miller for recognizing the students at both Northside and Southside high schools publicly for success in athletics, academics, and fine arts.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Susan McFerran, President

Yvonne Keaton-Martin, Secretary