



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, April 27, 2026, beginning at 5:30 PM in the Service Center, Bldg. B, Auditorium, 3205 Jenny Lind, P.O. Box 1948, Fort Smith, AR 72901.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Phil Whiteaker, president, called the meeting to order noting seven board members present. Other board members present were: Ms. Susan Krafft, Ms. Brittney Hall, Mr. Matt Garner, 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; 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

Dr. Tiffany Bone presented the following recognitions:

Northside High School senior, Anthony Mendez, was named the 2026 Positive Energy Scholar from OG&E and received a \$60,000 college scholarship.

Seven students received their Associate of Applied Science Electronics Technology degree: Chris Barroso, Lukas Campbell, Hunter Gourdon, Nicolai Hernandez, Matthew Ortiz, Emilio Sanchez, and Kevin Sedano. Two students received their Associate of General Studies: Ethan Branson and Marc Brandon Rodriguez.

Schools recognized as Capturing Kids' hearts National Showcase Schools were: Ballman Elementary, Beard Elementary, Bonneville Elementary, Carnall Elementary, Cavanaugh Elementary, Cook Elementary, Euper Lane Elementary, Fairview Elementary, Howard Elementary, Morrison Elementary, Park Elementary, Spradling Elementary, Sutton Elementary, Tilles Elementary, and Woods Elementary.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

Ms. Cassie Vachon spoke about student safety and student concerns being taken seriously.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Mahan drew the Board's attention to the administrative and classified contracts for 2026-27 and the resolution for the proposed Global Innovation Academy charter school located in the consent agenda.

Mr. Mahan shared feedback received from surveys conducted with the Parent and Community Advisories.

Mr. Mahan's Good Things Going on in the District include: Fairview Elementary performed *The Little Mermaid, Jr.*; Barling Elementary celebrated the ribbon-cutting of its new playground; Kindergarten students at Cook Elementary explored real-world economics by creating and selling crafts; Morrison Elementary students participated in the River Valley Student Art Competition; Ms. Teresa Riggs was named Fort Smith Public School's Classified Employee of the Year and Ms. Melissa Purifoy was named Teacher of the Year; this year's Purple Up event had a record attendance of 225 participants; Chaffin Middle School celebrated the first induction of students into its Computer Science Academy; Students at Darby's Health Sciences Academy were honored in a special white coat ceremony; the Foundation Recognition Award Winners for Quarter 3 are Ignite Award: Grace Kindy, Booneville Elementary; Kind Counts Award: Karen Vicens Nash, Northside High School; Every Day Leader Award: Coach Bradley Johnson, Darby Middle School; Congratulations to the following Superintendent's Stars: Bryson Kremer, Ballman Elementary; Maelee Banning, Bonneville Elementary; Henley Loveless, Euper Lane Elementary; Salma Cruz, Tilles Elementary; Scarlett Williamson, Woods Elementary.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included the March Financial Report, March 13, March 16, and April 7 Minutes, April Professional Staff Recommendations, Student Services Report, Consider Approving the 2026-2027 Administrator Contract Renewals, Consider Approving the 2026-2027 Classified Staff Contract Renewals, Consider Approving the Military-Connected K-5 Charter School Resolution, Consider Authorizing the Sale or Disposal of Commodities, and Consider Special Education 2026-2027 Tuition Agreement with Residential Facilities Within the District.

Mr. Harding requested that item number 8.3, Professional Staff Recommendations, be removed for individual consideration.

Mr. Whiteaker requested that item number 8.5, Consider Approving the 2026-2027 Administrator Contract Renewals, be removed for individual consideration.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harding, to approve the consent agenda with the exception of item number 8.3 and 8.5. The vote passed 7-0.

Mr. Harding requested clarification regarding how the number of resignations and retirements compares to other years.

After discussion, Mr. Garner made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harding, to approve consent agenda item 8.3. The vote passed 7-0.

At 6:08 PM, Mr. Whiteaker recused himself. Mr. Whiteaker has a family member that is listed on the contract renewals in item number 8.5.

Mr. Harding made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lott, to approve consent agenda item 8.5. The vote passed 6-0.

Note: Mr. Whiteaker returned to the meeting at 6:10 PM.

INFORMATION – NAMING SCHOOL FACILITIES PROCESS – STUDY OF PUBLISHED COMPLIANT NAMES

Dr. Bone provided an update to the Board on the committee's work regarding the timeline for the Service Center renaming process. The Board reviewed each of the fifty-three compliant submissions.

The meeting was open for public comment. Dr. Barry Owen and Mr. Sean Carrier addressed the Board in support of renaming the Service Center in honor of former Superintendent Dr. Benny Gooden.

The Board, by majority vote, will either adopt a facility name or choose to take no further action at the next regular meeting.

This is an information item only. No action is required.

CONSIDER ADOPTION OF THE PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE FRAMEWORK

Mr. Mahan presented the finalized Portrait of a Graduate framework. This framework establishes the expectations for a graduate and implementation of the framework into our schools, culture, and expectations will occur over the next three to five years.

Mr. Harding made a motion, seconded by Mr. Garner, to adopt the Portrait of a Graduate document as presented. The vote passed 7-0.

PRESENTATION – ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Mr. Rusty Bush, Director of Athletics and Activities, proposed implementing a district-wide cashless ticketing system for all athletic and activity events, beginning July 1, 2026.

Mr. Harding made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lott, to approve the cashless ticketing system as presented. The vote passed 7-0.

Mr. Bush also proposed continuing the District's support for non-core sports by allocating \$3,000 to each of the underserved athletic programs. These funds are intended for activities such as instruction, group clinics, individual lessons, and coach professional development, for a total of \$90,000.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Garner, to approve the specialty sports recommendation of \$3,000 per singleton sport for the 2026-2027 school year. The vote passed 7-0.

PRESENTATION – SUMMER EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Dr. Kellie Minton provided an overview of the extended learning programs to be offered this summer, including ACT and PSAT prep, career camps, credit recovery, and literacy camp. She also shared the locations of the summer meals program.

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

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT PRESENTATION – STUDENT WORK ANALYSIS

Dr. Minton presented a comparison of student work samples collected in October 2025 with those from March 2026. The samples analyzed focused on content, context, and cognitive demand.

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

PRESENTATION – PITSCO CURRICULUM

Dr. Minton introduced the Board to the Pitsco Education curriculum, which emphasizes STEM focused learning. The pilot for this curriculum will begin in the 2026-27 school year at Bonneville Elementary for grades Kindergarten – 5th grade. The estimated first year cost is \$78,171.44.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION – PRE-LITIGATION AND PERSONNEL

At 7:20 PM the Board and Mr. Mahan went into executive session to discuss pre-litigation and personnel.

Board members and Mr. Mahan returned to open session at 7:45 PM.

Mr. Garner made a motion, seconded by Ms. Krafft, to proceed with litigation related to the Peak Innovation Center. The vote passed 7-0.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harding, to uphold the recommendation to terminate the contract of Laura McLeod. The vote passed 7-0.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be Monday, May 18, 2026.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 PM.

Phillip Whiteaker, Board President

Brittney Hall, Board Secretary