



## Board of Education

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### Minutes of The Board of Education

A Regular School Board Meeting of the Board of Education of Fort Smith Public Schools was held Monday, August 25, 2025, 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. Dalton Person, president, called the meeting to order noting six board members were present. Other board members present were: Mr. Phil Whiteaker, Ms. Susan Krafft, Ms. Brittney Hall, Mr. Brad Harding, 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; Mr. Tyler Armstrong, Director of Community Engagement, 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.

Note: Ms. Lynnett Lott arrived at 5:31 PM.

#### **RECOGNITIONS**

Dr. Tiffany Bone presented the following recognitions:

Peak emerging art students Satoshi Rhodes, Jaelyn Alexander, Taylor Scoggins, Emily Abrego, Jack Sayaphath, Diana Castillo Rivera, Asher Smith, Ashtyn Leeper, along with art teacher Ms. Chelsea Marr for their artwork displayed in the Superintendent's office.

Schools recognized for achieving High Reliability Level 2 Certification were: Cavanaugh Elementary, Euper Lane Elementary, Park Elementary, Tilles Elementary, Sutton Elementary, Chaffin Middle School, Darby Middle School, and Ramsey Middle School.

Ms. Stephanie Freeman, Career Development Facilitator, received the Arkansas Association for Career and Technical Education Counseling and Career Development Professional of the Year.

Dr. Chris Davis, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Campus Support, received the HR Administrator of the Year by the Arkansas Association of School Personnel Administrators.

### **CITIZENS PARTICIPATION**

None.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. Mahan announced that the timeline for gathering signatures for petitions for anyone interested in running in the annual school election has begun. The filing period will run from noon on November 3, 2025 – noon on November 11, 2025. The annual school election will be held on March 3, 2026.

An October board work session is scheduled and will include a tour of facilities and the purchasing departments.

Mr. Mahan stated the Information Systems Department continues the work of rebuilding systems from the recent cyber incident.

The District will soon begin to study the need for turf replacement at both high school football fields. Mr. Mahan stated that sponsorships and advertisements on the fields will be available.

Mr. Mahan informed the board the district's leave policies, specifically extended catastrophic leave, is under review. The administration will bring this agenda item back in the spring semester for board consideration. Mr. Mahan also explained the different type of leave banks that are available to employees.

Mr. Mahan's Good Things Going on in the District include: there are several campuses celebrating anniversaries this year: Cook Elementary, Morrison Elementary, and Woods Elementary celebrate 50 years and Ballman Elementary and Sunnymede Elementary celebrate 75 years; the Breakfast of Champions welcomed our Partners in Education; the Welcome Center served 478 families with the enrollment process; Launch for Learning kicked off the school year with excitement; and the Communications team earned seven national awards from the National School Public Relations Association.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The consent agenda included the June Financial Report, July 21 Minutes, August Professional Staff Recommendations, Consider Approving the Participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Consider Adopting Student Related Policy Changes, Consider Adopting Certified Personnel Policy Updates, and Consider Adopting Classified Personnel Policy Updates.

Mr. Harding requested that item number 8.5, Consider Adopting Student Related Policy Changes, and item number 8.6 Consider Adopting Certified Personnel Policy Updates be removed for individual consideration.

Mr. Whiteaker made a motion, seconded by Ms. Krafft, to approve the consent agenda with the exception of item number 8.5 and 8.6. The vote passed 7-0.

Mr. Harding requested more clarification on Agenda Item 8.5; Policy 4.20 and Agenda Item 8.6; Policy 3.49 regarding the definition when a student repeatedly interferes in the classroom and defining so unruly and so disruptive.

Mr. Ney explained the language in the policy was addressed to add more definition and guidelines to the current statute.

After discussion, Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harding, to approve consent agenda items 8.5 and 8.6. The vote passed 7-0.

#### **CONSIDER APPROVAL OF A NOISE MITIGATION GRANT**

Mr. Mahan presented the outline of the community noise mitigation grant program in partnership with the City of Fort Smith.

Due to the proximity to the airport, Orr Learning Academy and Carnall Elementary were chosen to be able to access grant funding. The District will have to provide 10% local cost share. This match is \$435,063. The improvements will consist of thicker exterior windows, thicker doors, and roof enhancements. The estimated start date is December 2025 with an estimated completion date of December 2026.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whiteaker, to approve the Fort Smith Public Schools to work with the City of Fort Smith to pursue a noise mitigation grant to be used for improvements at Orr and Carnall. The vote passed 7-0.

#### **CONSIDER ADOPTING THE 2025-2026 DISTRICT BUDGET**

Mr. Warren reviewed the budget summary for the eight fund categories for school year 2025-2026, drawing attention to the capital project, federal funds, and child nutrition funds.

Mr. Whiteaker made a motion, seconded by Ms. Krafft, to adopt the 2025-2026 financial budget as presented, authorizing the Administration to make adjustments needed for DESE submission. The vote passed 7-0.

#### **PRESENTATION – IDENTITY AND FRAUD PROTECTION SEARCH**

Mr. Craig Tecmire, Supervisor of Purchasing, informed the board of the selection process of the vendor that will provide identity and fraud protection services. This service will be provided by the District for one year due to the cyberattack that occurred in July 2025. The cost is \$3.00 per employee per month for those employees that sign up for the coverage.

The administration recommends to proceed with Aura.

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

### **PRESENTATION – DISTRICT CONSTRUCTION UPDATE**

Mr. Joseph Valesquez, Construction Project Manager, invited each of the various construction managers to present an update on their projects going on in the District:

Ms. Kelly Wilson with Beshears Construction updated the Board on the Southside High School reroof. This project is approximately 160,000 square feet of new roofing on campus. The estimated completion date is mid-October. The funding source for this project is insurance and partnership funding from the state.

Mr. Nate Deason with MAHG Architecture informed the board during the tear off portion of the roof at Southside High School an area of damaged roof decking was discovered. After evaluation from a structural engineer the fine arts area was vacated and it is recommended to replace the existing decking and roofing in this area. The area that needs replacing is original to the 1961 construction of the building.

Mr. David McWilliams of Clark Contractors reported on three projects they are working on. The bus parking lot repaving project will be complete by mid-September and new stairs were poured at the Service Center, Building B, the Ramsey Middle School reroof will consist of approximately 300 roof patches and is estimated to start late September, the playground equipment additions will start in late September and phase 1 will include six elementary campuses: Ballman, Barling, Euper Lane, Fairview, Park, and Tilles.

Mr. Paul Hively updated the Board on the Peak Innovation Center drainage reroute where piping along the east side of the west building is being installed. The estimated completion date is mid-November.

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

### **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT PRESENTATION – ACT/AP DATA**

Ms. Krystle Smith, Supervisor Special Programs, explained that Advanced Placement (AP) courses are college-level courses where students can earn college credit when they score a three or higher on the AP exam.

Ms. Smith showed the percentage of students that scored a three or higher in each of the courses while also showing the yearly percentages for 2024, 2025, as well as the state average. Ms. Smith highlighted each of the courses where the average for students at Fort Smith Public Schools were higher than the state average.

Ms. Smith's presentation also showed the five year trends for Northside High School and Southside High School of students scoring a three or higher on the AP Exam.

Dr. Tony Jones, Director of Secondary Education, reported the percentage of eleventh grade students scoring a 19 or above on the ACT showed slight improvement in reading, math, and science.

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

**BOARD MEMBERS FORUM**

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be Monday, September 22, 2025.

**ADJOURN**

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 PM.

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Dalton Person, President

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Susan Krafft, Secretary