



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, August 28, 2023, beginning at 5:30 PM in the Service Center, Bldg. B, Auditorium, 3205 Jenny Lind, P.O. Box 1948, Fort Smith, AR 72901.

Ms. Richardson, vice president, called the meeting to order noting six board members were present. Other board members present were: Mr. Phil Whiteaker, Mr. Matt Blaylock, Mr. Davin Chitwood, Ms. Sandy Dixon, and Ms. Susan Krafft. Mr. Dalton Person was not in attendance. District administrators present included: Dr. Terry Morawski, Superintendent; Mr. Martin Mahan, Deputy Superintendent; Dr. Chris Davis, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Campus Support; Ms. Tiffany Bone, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Mr. Charles Warren, Chief Financial Officer; Mr. Vance Gregory, Director of Technology; Mr. Shawn Shaffer, Executive Director of Facility Operations; Ms. Zena Featherston Marshall, Executive Director Community & Business Partnerships, Ms. Shari Cooper, Director, Communications; and Ms. Leslie Phelps, Office Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent. Mr. Marshall Ney, of Friday, Eldridge, and Clark, District Attorney was also in attendance.

RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Mahan presented the following recognitions:

The Chaffin Middle School 7th grade band and the Kimmons Middle School 8th grade band were chosen as honor bands and was selected to perform at the 2023 all state music conference in February. Mr. Ha, director of Kimmons Middle School band, was also recognized for receiving the 2023 Arkansas Outstanding Young Band Director.

These schools were recognized for achieving Level I certification for High Reliability Schools:

Beard Elementary	Kimmons Middle School
Cavanaugh Elementary	Ramsey Middle School
Trusty Elementary	Northside High School
Chaffin Middle School	Southside High School
Darby Middle School	

Three teachers received High Reliability Teacher Level I Certification: Kimberly Gillman, Nicole Franklin, and Kristel Knubley. They are with Orr Elementary.

These schools were recognized as Capturing Kids' Hearts National Showcase Schools:

Euper Lane Elementary
Orr Elementary
Trusty Elementary

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Morawski updated the Board on a couple of key dates coming up: a board training retreat will be held on September 18 and the next regular scheduled board meeting will be on September 25.

Dr. Davis introduced the following new administrators:

Dr. Kim Starr, Director Elementary Education; Ms. Judy Pennington, Director Human Resources; Mr. Matthew Hominick (not present), Director of Adult Education; Ms. Laura Gladden, Supervisor Curriculum and Professional Development; Mr. Diego Olivarez, Director Belle Point; Ms. Miranda Watson, Principal Barling Elementary; Ms. Joni Donohoe, Principal Beard Elementary; Ms. Dana Brooks, Principal Tilles Elementary; Ms. Nancy Burris, Principal Ballman Elementary; Mr. Marshal Hurst, Assistant Principal Northside High School; Mr. Dimitri Williams, Assistant Principal Kimmons Middle School; Ms. Jennifer Scott, Assistant Principal Beard and Cavanaugh Elementary; Ms. Emily Young, Assistant Principal Sunnymede Elementary; Ms. Karen Meaders, Assistant Principal Woods Elementary; Ms. Katie Mankins, Assistant Principal Chaffin Middle School; and Ms. Susanna Post, Assistant Principal Southside High School.

Dr. Morawski informed the board the district would be adding four additional school resource officers to the elementary schools as well as provide additional coverage to the secondary schools, Belle Point, Peak, and the administrative facilities. Their primary focus will be the elementary schools. These positions will be funded through the enhanced student achievement funds.

The security, facilities, and technology departments are reviewing weapon detection systems. Vape detection systems are also being reviewed as well as early education and cessation programs with vaping.

Dr. Morawski provided information regarding adjustments made to outdoor athletics and activities due to extreme heat. The Arkansas Activities Association does not provide specific guidelines in relation to heat and ballgames but does provide guidance for practices. The decision to continue play is left up to each school district's athletic director. Fort Smith Public Schools accommodations for heat include later start times, rescheduling to different days, or potentially canceling games.

With Mr. Person not in attendance Dr. Morawski shared an update, provided by Mr. Person, regarding the third party review and the Peak Innovation Center. An RFQ was published on June 23, 2023 to the district's website, the Bonfire procurement portal, and in the legal section of the Sunday issue of the *Southwest Times Record* for four consecutive weeks. No submissions have been received. Several companies were then contacted directly about possible interest for this project. Mr. Person will provide an update at the September 25, 2023 meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included the June and July financial report, July 12 Minutes, August Professional Staff Recommendations, a July student services report, and the Federal Programs Statement of Assurances.

Mr. Whiteaker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dixon, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion passed 6-0.

PRESENTATION - ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Dr. Bone presented a monthly presentation regarding student academic achievement.

Dr. Bone reported that two new programs, EL Achieve and Benchmark Education Consultants was selected to assist with academic improvement. The EL Achieve program used in seven elementary schools showed all seven schools increased the English Language Arts (ELA) scores on the ACT aspire and five of the seven schools increased reading scores on the ACT Aspire. The Benchmark Education Consultants results showed nine of the eleven schools showed growth in reading on the ACT aspire and seven of the eleven schools showed growth in ELA on the ACT aspire. The schools selected for these programs were based on their school accountability letter grades. Fort Smith Public Schools will expand these programs into all elementary schools and eventually the middle schools.

This is a presentation item only no action is required.

CONSIDER APPROVING ETHICS DISCLOSURE RESOLUTION

At 6:18 PM, Mr. Blaylock recused himself from this agenda item.

Mr. Warren presented a resolution to conduct business with Blaylock Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc. on a time-sensitive, limited basis for the 2023-2024 school year. The Administration will closely monitor these transactions.

Ms. Dixon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chitwood, to approve the ethics disclosure resolution. The motion passed 5-0.

Note: Mr. Blaylock returned to the meeting at 6:20 PM.

CONSIDER APPROVING PARTICIPATING IN THE CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP) FOR 2023-2024

Mr. Warren presented the Child and Adult Care Food Program for approval. This program provides snacks for the Pre-K program.

Ms. Krafft made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blaylock, to approve the District's participation in CACFP for the 2023-2024 school year. The motion passed 6-0.

CONSIDER ADOPTING 2023-2024 DISTRICT BUDGET

Mr. Warren reviewed the four factors of funding and an in depth review of the seven major categories of funds. Mr. Warren furnished the final actuals summary of the 2022-2023 budget as well as presented the 2023-2024 proposed budget.

Mr. Warren confirmed that funds were received from the state insurance company to help offset the increase to the district's property insurance rates. These funds are reflected in the proposed budget.

Mr. Warren also addressed the reimbursement from the state regarding reduced lunch prices. Commissioner memos issued from the Arkansas Department of Education has stated that school districts are not to charge a student for the reduced meal price for lunch. The state will reimburse the district the shortfall of that costs. However, details of how the reimbursement will be processed have not been given. Fort Smith Public Schools are not charging students that has qualified for reduced meals.

Mr. Whiteaker made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dixon, to adopt the 2023-2024 financial budget as presented, authorizing the administration to make adjustments needed for DESE submission. The motion passed 6-0.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

Board training will be held on September 18, 2023 at the Bakery District at 5:30 PM.

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be September 25, 2023.

CLOSED STUDENT HEARING

At 7:06 PM the board moved into a closed student hearing.

Board members returned to open session at 7:37 PM.

Mr. Blaylock made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dixon, to uphold the decision of the district on expulsion. The motion passed 6-0.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:38 PM.

President, Board of Education

Secretary, Board of Education