



Board of Education

Minutes

The Board of Education

A Regular School Board Meeting of the Board of Education of Fort Smith Public Schools was held Monday, May 23, 2022, 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

Ms. McFerran, president, called the meeting to order. Other board members present were: Mr. Dalton Person, Ms. Dee Blackwell, Mr. Matt Blaylock, Mr. Troy Eckelhoff and Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin. Ms. Talicia Richardson was absent. 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 Laves, 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.

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

RECOGNITIONS

Ms. Marshall presented the following recognitions.

May Superintendent Star Students

Breklyn Butcher, Orr Elementary
Kinsley Donahue, Euper Lane Elementary
Evelyn Gonzalez, Sunnymede Elementary
Cannon Hudlow, Fairview Elementary
Ashleigh Linimon, Park Elementary
Bella Lopez, Sutton Elementary
Giselle Martinez, Morrison Elementary
Giani Medel, Trusty Elementary
Marcelo Orellana Benitez, Spradling Elementary
Zadie Perrin, Ballman Elementary
Asael Ramos, Howard Elementary
Bryan Velasquez, Tilles Elementary

Arkansas Scholastic Press Association Winners

Mav Media attended the annual Arkansas Scholastic Press Association Convention in Jonesboro. Guided by their teacher and sponsor, Susan Colyer, winners and their categories are: Ellie Bunnell; Yearbook Designer of the Year and All-State Journalist

Trista Truong; Newspaper Designer of the Year

Carsyn Lincks; Yearbook Writer of the Year

Boushra Raache; Photojournalist of the Year

Mailey Woolf and Gabby Woodie; Best of ASPA Honors for Editorial Cartooning and Sports Photography

Cooper Oxford and Kate Bunnell; 1st Place in Advertising and Student Life Design

Mav Media team members received: 22 Superiors, 16 Excellents, and 12 Honorable Mentions.

Northside High School Esports

The Northside High School eSports team 'Wheelie Good Team' consisting of Noah Ralston, Captain, JT Beasley, Nathan Fuhrman and Emmanuel Uribe, won their first State Championship on May 7 in the Arkansas Activities Association High School Esports Mario Kart League. The Northside eSports teams are coached by April Coats and Zack Coats. This is the first championship given for Mario Kart in Arkansas.

Southside High School Quiz Bowl

The 2022 Southside High School Quiz Bowl team members Sam Pritchard, Callie Shannon, Vivian Apple, Victor Nguyen, Tzideny Romero, Isabel Nuno, Dipa Patel, Zain Rana, Jackson Austin, Jordan Kennedy, and Jackson Miller captured its second consecutive 7A Arkansas Governor's Quiz Bowl Association State Championship defeating Rogers 265-235 on Saturday, April 21. This is the 7th state quiz bowl title for the Mavericks. The Southside Quiz Bowl team is coached by Walter Woodie and Josh Adams.

Juan Velasquez

Juan Velasquez, ESL paraprofessional at Sunnymede Elementary, is the 2022 Outstanding TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Student in the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville M.Ed. program.

In addition to this award, he has been accepted in ArPEP program.

National Board Certified Teachers

This year, five Fort Smith Public School teachers earned their national board certification and joined more than 90,000 teachers across the United States who have achieved board certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

Kristin Been, Northside High School
Angie Clark, Darby Middle School
Christina Cusick, Barling Elementary

Brittney Jackson, Sutton Elementary
Michael Johnson, Northside High School

Dr. Keri Rathbun

Northside Principal, Dr. Keri Rathbun, has received the 2022 Arkansas Secondary School Principal of the Year Award given by the Arkansas Association of Secondary School Principals and the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators. Dr. Rathbun has been in the FSPS district for 22 years as a teacher, counselor, assistant principal, and principal. She will assume new duties as the Fort Smith Public School's Director of Coordinated School Health and Career Counseling in July.

Susan McFerran and Yvonne Keaton-Martin

Susan McFerran and Yvonne Keaton-Martin were recognized for their accomplishments and time served on the Board. Ms. McFerran served 10 years and Ms. Keaton-Martin served 19 years. Collectively, these two have presided over 58 graduations, guided the school district through the first successful millage election in 30+ years, as well as steered us through some of the most trying times in recent history.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

Mr. Jason Bugeja spoke regarding rental of facilities as a representative of the Boy Scouts BSA. Ms. Elizabeth Ogle also spoke regarding rental of facilities on behalf of Pac 123, a Cub Scout pack with Cook Elementary.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Morawski reported there were a total of 920 graduates this year; 562 at Northside High School and 358 at Southside High School.

Dr. Morawski provided an update of upcoming dates for the month of May. He noted that the Splash Into Kindergarten registration event at Parrot Island was moved to May 26, 2022, Adult Education graduation on Tuesday, May 24 and Election Day on Tuesday, May 24.

A called Board meeting will be held on June 20, 2022 to install new board members and elect new board officers. The next regular Board meeting will be on June 27, 2022.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included the April Financial Statement, April 18 Minutes, May 9 Minutes, May Professional Staff Recommendations, May Student Services Report, approval of Title I Part C Migrant Education Grant Assurances, and approval of United Way FSPS Parents as Teachers Contract Agreement.

Ms. Keaton-Martin made a motion, seconded by Dee Blackwell, to approve the consent agenda items as presented. The vote passed 6/0.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE 2022-2023 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING SCHEDULE

Dr. Morawski presented the Board meeting schedule for 2022-23, noting there are dates moved from the 4th Monday of the month due to holidays or other conflicts.

Mr. Eckelhoff made a motion, seconded by Ms. McFerran, to approve the 2022-2023 Board of Education Meeting schedule. The vote passed 6/0.

CONSIDER ADOPTING CLASSIFIED POLICY CHANGES

At 6:02 p.m., Mr. Person recused himself from this agenda item. Mr. Person has a family member employed by the District.

Mr. Mahan, working with Classified Personnel Policy Committee (PPC), brought a recommendation for changes to the Classified Policy 8.5.2 Classified Employees Sick Leave – Security and Facilities, Classified Policy 8.5.3 Classified Employees Sick Leave – Child Nutrition and Policy 8.5.4 Classified Employees Sick Leave - Paraprofessionals regarding pay out for unused sick leave. Before these recommendations, these classified employees could be paid upon retirement or resignation, according to policy, up to 60 days for banked sick days they did not use. This recommendation would align classified to the certified policy, allowing a pay out of 120 maximum unused sick days. Mr. Mahan also noted a change to Policy 8.5.1 Classified Employees Sick Leave and Other Office Personnel regarding changing titles from Secretary to Office Administrative Assistant.

The Classified PPC met several times regarding this recommendation and unanimously voted to support these changes.

Ms. Blackwell made a motion, seconded by Ms. Keaton-Martin, to approve changes to Board policies 8.5.1, 8.5.2, 8.5.3, 8.5.4. The vote passed 5/0.

At 6:06 p.m., Mr. Person returned to the meeting.

CONSIDER APPROVING A SUPPLEMENTAL NONRECURRING SALARY PAYMENT IN FY 22

Mr. Warren proposed paying the individuals that are working part time or at 50% capacity a \$500 non-recurring payment (50% of the original \$1,000 non-recurring payment). These individuals did not receive an initial non-recurring payment. Mr. Warren also reviewed previous incentive plans that were given to substitutes in the classrooms for specific periods of time. Long-term substitutes were not compensated at that time. The administration recommended recognizing their work during the pandemic times. This will be a nonrecurring salary payment. The total cost is less than \$10,000. Total number impacted is approximately 20 employees.

Mr. Person made a motion, seconded by Ms. Keaton-Martin, to approve the supplemental nonrecurring salary as presented. The vote passed 6/0.

PRESENTATION – SUMMER EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Dr. Morawski noted this was a presentation for the board and no action was required.

Dr. Morawski thanked the staff for their work to make these opportunities available.

Dr. Minton reported on many summer opportunities that will be available to students. She reported on how these summer opportunities have expanded over the years from a reading and math camp now to drone camp, bumps, bruises, & boo-boos, nuts, bolts, and thingamajigs. As well as ACT and PSAT academy. Ms. Minton gave details on locations, dates, and grades that are included. This information is also on the school's website.

PRESENTATION - DYSLEXIA PROGRAM

Dr. Morawski noted this was a presentation for the board and no action was required.

Dr. Bone introduced Ms. Ford to present the process involved in selecting a new Dyslexia program.

Ms. Ford gave a brief summary of the District's dyslexia program started in 2013 and where it is today. Lindamood Bell was selected to address the needs of students with characteristics of dyslexia. In 2017, 11 elementary schools piloted the Lindamood-Bell program. 120 teachers were trained in this program. In 2019, the legislature passed a bill that required DESE to create a list of approved literacy programs. Lindamood-Bell passed phase 1 of the approval process and would advance toward phase 2 approval. However, in 2021 Lindamood-Bell was denied approval of phase 2. In Fall of 2021, Fort Smith Public Schools began to look at different programs on the approved list. By January 2022, the selection was narrowed down to three programs that were the best fit for the District. A committee was formed to present these three programs. The committee of 43 members included classroom teachers familiar with the intervention program, dyslexia interventionists, special education resource teachers, and community members. The programs reviewed were Spire, Phonics First, and Structures. Sixty percent of the committee members voted for the Spire program, the program selected.

Ms. Ford shared a cost comparison of the Spire program vs Lindamood-Bell. Ms. Ford stated training will begin in June of 2022 for dyslexia interventionists, paraprofessionals and special education resource teachers. Classroom K2 teachers will not be trained.

Ms. Blackwell thanked Ms. Ford for the history and background knowledge.

Mr. Blaylock asked what the annual cost was. Ms. Ford stated that the initial cost of the program was \$374,752 and this included training and materials. The recurring cost will be around \$50,000 per year.

Mr. Person asked if this was curriculum and required board approval. Dr. Morawski stated that this is a program and does not need Board approval.

Mr. Blaylock asked how many dyslexia specialists Fort Smith Public Schools has. Ms. Ford informed him there will be 27 next year. Three are retiring that will not be replaced.

Dr. Morawski confirmed with Mr. Warren and Dr. Bone funding for this program will come out of ESA funds and not operations funds. The savings to the District will go back into programmatic expenses.

INFORMATION - FACILITY RENTAL PROCEDURES

Dr. Morawski stated that the Board first reviewed new rental agreements in February of 2020, however rentals have not been allowed due to the pandemic. Dr. Morawski requested feedback so that policies can be reviewed at a future board meeting as a proposal or for further discussion.

Mr. Shaffer gave an overview of the current facilities rental agreement. There are three different rental groups with their own rental guidelines.

Group A: School or District Sponsored Event. These groups are not charged any fees.

Dr. Morawski pointed out that the fee for police is not a guaranteed charge, it is only if there is a need for security. This was also included in policy before the District had their own police.

Group B: Community Youth Groups or Patriotic Societies. The Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, other school Districts and government entities would fall in this group. There is an energy use fee of \$100. There would be one custodian per 100 patrons at \$35/hour. Also a fee for one officer per 200 patrons at \$35/hr.

Group C: Non-District. Special events. This group has an actual rental fee as well as an energy use fee. Rental includes a three hour minimum with \$50 on each additional hour. There would be one custodian per 100 patrons at \$35/hour. Also a fee for one police officer per 200 patrons at \$35/hr.

Dr. Morawski indicated that by law, access must be provided to patriotic groups. It does not indicate that it has to be free of charge but guaranteed access must be provided.

Mr. Person asked if utilities are already on at certain facilities why charge the energy fee? Mr. Shaffer explained that certain facilities go into unoccupied mode at 4:30, meaning the set point for the systems are set at a higher setting. Mr. Person stated that he would be interested to know if any of the utilities are running in these facilities for the duration of the week. If so, an energy fee might not be necessary. Mr. Person also stated that he felt like the base fee for Group C was too high.

Mr. Ecklehoff asked when the tornado shelters are shut down. Mr. Shaffer explained this could be different at the elementary schools versus secondary schools. At the elementary schools, the shelters are dual use facilities. Classes are in the shelters throughout the day as well as the middle schools. Therefore, schools give the facilities department their schedules and facilities will input that schedule into the building automation system.

Ms. Blackwell asked if there were conflicts with having the current rental requests staffed for custodians or other staff requirements. At this time, it has not been an issue. Typically, between the maintenance and custodial team support can be provided to cover events. Ms. Blackwell asked if custodians covering these events were doing this in addition to their normal workload. Mr. Shaffer stated that they were. Ms. Blackwell stated she would like to look at the energy fees and the cost of using a larger venue versus a smaller one to make sure that the fee fits the requirement.

Mr. Blaylock asked if the current requests for facilities were during the school year or during the summer. Mr. Shaffer stated they were during the summer.

Mr. Person requested clarification about the fee for renting one of the facilities multiple times. Mr. Shaffer stated per the current policy the fee is per rental. Mr. Person stated that he does not believe the way the current policy reads it is clear regarding rental usage.

Ms. Blackwell asked for clarification on what groups would be included in Group B. She requested an outline of this group. Also, she requested “a look” at the groups that currently have a standing contract with the District.

Dr. Morawski stated that a committee would be formed to review the rental agreement process and an update or recommendations could be provided at the next regular board meeting.

Dr. Morawski stated that he wants to guarantee the school and school oriented groups have use of the facility. He also pointed out the need to keep flexibility related to multiple rentals while remaining sensitive to energy cost and staffing.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM

No comments.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Susan McFerran, President

Dee Blackwell, Secretary