



# SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS MINUTES

MEETING: Regular Board Meeting	DATE: March 11, 2025	TIME: 7:00 p.m.	LOCATION: John W. English Administrative Center
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ashanti Bland, President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yvette Ware- DeVaul, Vice President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leslie L. Smith-Thomas, Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Talisha Belk, Treasurer
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amani Johnson, Trustee	<input type="checkbox"/> Jillian Holloway, Trustee
ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jennifer Green, Ed.D. Superintendent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lanissa Freeman, Deputy Superintendent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Jackson, Chief of Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> , Chief of Talent Mtg
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marc Ingram, Chief Financial Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rebecca Luddington, Manager of Pupil Accounting
<input type="checkbox"/> April Rogers, Exe. Dir., State and Federal Programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Angela Smith, Exec. Director of ISSN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minutes: Carolyn Foster, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and the Board of Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sommer Caldwell- Carruthers, Executive Director of Instruction
			Student Board Representatives: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Micaela Beckford, U K-12 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eric Spragins, Southfield A&T

## 1. Opening of Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Board President Bland at 7:01 p.m. Board President Bland read the opening statement and Trustee roll call was taken. Trustee Johnson arrived at 7:03 p.m. and Trustee Holloway has an unexcused absence. Our technical spoke is being handled by M1 Studios. We all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

## 2. Board Matters

- March is Reading Month...it was a pleasure reading to the young scholars.
- U K-12 has had some welcoming transition with the new K-5 Dean, Dr. Ingra Howard.
- Rosemary Williams and Dr. Howard are assisting with directing the traffic at U K-12.
- Shout out to Principal Jackson and her team for providing the Trustees with their DISC bird pins.
- Progress Reports have come out at some schools. Parents should be on the lookout for them.

## 3. Report of the Student Board Representatives

### a. Micaela Beckford – University K-12 Academy (U K-12)

#### University K-12 Academy: Exciting Updates and Upcoming Events!

##### School-Wide Highlights

- **February 12<sup>th</sup>:** Count Day with a Silent PJ Party
- **February 28<sup>th</sup>:** HBCU Day – A Celebration of Excellence!
- **March 1<sup>st</sup>:** U K-12 JV and Varsity Cheer – Champions
- **March 5<sup>th</sup>:** NHS Boxed Food Drive
- **March 20<sup>th</sup>:** High School Black History Month Performance
- **Tutoring Club:** Raegan S. is taking the lead in helping middle and high school scholars excel. Sign up on Schoology. Nurturing Tomorrow's Leaders, Today!

##### High School Highlights

- **February 14<sup>th</sup>:** Love on Wheels – Bonaventure Skating Party
- **February 26<sup>th</sup>:** Class of 2026 – Senior Year Prep Begins
- **March 7<sup>th</sup>:** Family Feud

##### Middle School Highlights

- **February 10<sup>th</sup>: Spelling Bee Champions**
- **March 11<sup>th</sup> and March 13<sup>th</sup>: First Girls' Volleyball Games**

#### **Important Reminders for Middle Schoolers**

- **No Cell Phones During Class** – Any student caught using a device during instructional time will have it confiscated, receive lunch detention and they will have to come to the main office to pick it up. \*Three violations will have a more severe consequence.
- **Student Pickup Procedures:** If a scholar has a younger sibling to pick up, they must wait in the library (if the weather is below freezing) or exit through designated doors to meet you after class dismissal. **Students CANNOT** pick up younger siblings from their classrooms before 3:30 p.m. - this disrupts learning and creates safety concerns. When the weather gets warmer, students will have to exit through doors 32, 35, and 37 and walk around to doors 23, 25, 27 to pick up their siblings.
- Middle schoolers must exit through their designated doors – not through elementary, high school, or gym doors to be picked up. Security will redirect them! We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

#### **Elementary Highlights**

- **February 14<sup>th</sup>: Sweet Treats and Special Guests**
  - Elementary Student Council hosted a bake sale during lunch
  - Judge Kameshia D. Gant from Oakland County 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court came to read to our K-2 students.
- **February 24<sup>th</sup>: Welcome Dr. Ingra Howard, Elementary Associate Dean!**
- **February 26<sup>th</sup>: 100 Days Smarter**

#### **Upcoming Events**

- **March 12<sup>th</sup>: PD Day** – Staff Professional Development – NO SCHOOL for students
- **March 17<sup>th</sup> – March 21<sup>st</sup>: Book Fair**
- **March 22<sup>nd</sup>: First Annual Daddy-Daughter Dance**
  - Theme:** Fairy Lights & Grove
  - Location:** U K-12 Gymnasium
  - Time:** 4-6pm
  - Tickets:** \$12 – Dress to Impress
- **March 24<sup>th</sup>-March 28<sup>th</sup>: Career Week**
- **March 31<sup>st</sup> – April 4<sup>th</sup>: Spring Recess** – NO SCHOOL
- **April 7<sup>th</sup> – May 2<sup>nd</sup>: M-STEP Testing**
- **April 8<sup>th</sup>: 3<sup>rd</sup> Marking Period Ends**
- **April 9<sup>th</sup>: SAT and PSAT Testing Begins**
- **May 5<sup>th</sup>: AP Exams Start**
- **May 29<sup>th</sup>: Prom** – Enchanted Oasis
- **June 6<sup>th</sup>: Graduation** – Class of 2025

#### **b. Eric Spragins – Southfield High School for the Arts & Technology (SA&T) Student of the Year**

- Tyson Howard has been selected as the Michigan Association of Student Councils (MASC) Student of the Year. Tyson has been an active member of the SA&T Student Council for four years and has led numerous projects. Tyson has served on the Senior Class Board, Principal's Advisory Council, Link Crew, and OAA Student Council.

#### **Black & Positively Golden Scholarship Recipient**

- Awarded Eric Spragins this scholarship for his committed service, leadership, and advocacy.
- Senior Pinning Ceremony – A Night to Remember**

- Thank you to Jaylah Robinson, the National Honor Society, Junior Class Board, and the volunteers who made the night a memorable success.

#### **Black History Play – A Powerful Ending to Black History Month**

- Thank you to Ms. Williams and her Social Studies classes for the great performances.

#### **Senior Updates – Class of 2025**

- Prom ticket incentive...top sellers get free prom tickets. The Double Good Popcorn Fundraiser started today, March 11, 2025 and it will run for four days.

#### **Prom Details**

Location: The Meridian, Farmington Hills

Date: Thursday, May 29, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m.

Tickets on Sale: Monday, April 7, 2025

Price \$120 per ticket

**Grammy Night – Senior Mock Elections:** details coming soon.

#### **Graduation Details**

Location: Aretha Franklin Amphitheatre

Date: Friday, June 6, 2025

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Details regarding cap and gown pickup and graduation rehearsal are coming soon.

#### **Yearbooks**

Price: \$80

Deadline: April 12, 2025

#### **Teen Court Club – Making an Impact**

- Under the leadership of Ms. Monique Williams, the Teen Court Club students serve as attorneys, bailiffs, and jurors. The club operates under Judge Cindy Arvant of the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court.

#### **Warrior Athletics Update:**

- Wrestling: Kenneth Brooks advanced to Regionals with a 25-3 record.
- Boys Basketball: Had a tough season.
- Girls Basketball: Finished the season with a record of 15-6 clinching the #1 seed for the Districts.
- Bowling: Jaysa Taylor won the OAA Conference Championship and placed 27<sup>th</sup> at the States.
- Swimming: Tanner Harrington won 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the OAA Blue League Championship for the 50 Freestyle and 100 Breaststroke. Tanner will compete in the MHSAA State Championship next weekend.
- Spring sports tryouts have started for softball, baseball, girls' soccer, boys golf, girl's tennis, and track & field.

#### **Upcoming Important Dates:**

**March 12, 2025:** Professional Development Day – No School

**March 31 – April 4, 2025:** Spring Break – No School

**May 29, 2025:** Senior Prom

**June 6, 2025:** Graduation Ceremony

**Board Project:** The “Bringing Back the School Spirit the Warrior’s Way” is 98% complete. The final piece will be presented during the May Board Meeting.

- Tomorrow, Wednesday, March 12, 2025 is a Professional Development day and there is No School.
- Tomorrow, Wednesday, March 12, 2025 is the State of the District at SA&T @ 6:00 p.m.
- Thank you to Chief Jackson, Dr. Freeman, Tyler Schmidt, Ron Sallade, and Avance Communications for coordinating this together.
- Thank you to all the parents, staff, community members, State Representatives who have RSVP'd.

#### **4. Report of the Superintendent**

**a. County-Wide Spelling Bee Participants – Sommer Caldwell-Carruthers and Angela Smith**

Aubrey Cadmus – Adler Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade  
 Bryan Nchichupa – Birney K-8 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
 Axel Castillo-Lozano – University K-12 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
 Blake Sanders – Thompson K-8 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
 LaNita Crump – Stevenson Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade

**b. Recognition of Athletics – Athletic Director/Varsity Girls Basketball Coach Shaquita Coltrane Jaysa Taylor – Bowling**

- Jaysa is a junior at U K-12 and the girls bowling team captain. Jaysa bowled a season high score of 278. She received a high average overall with a 195+ for the OAA Conference. Jaysa swept 1<sup>st</sup> Place in every category. She won 1<sup>st</sup> Place in our division Regionals with 1067 six game series, which she qualified for the States Singles tournament. With several teammates in tow, Jaysa bowled six games of qualifiers to finish in 27<sup>th</sup> place for Division 1 Girls statewide.

**Tanner Harrington – Swimming Team**

- Tanner is a senior at U K-12. He competed in the prelims and the finals in the OAA Blue League. Tanner won 1<sup>st</sup> Place in 100 Breaststroke and 50 Freestyle. The Relay Team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 200 Freestyle Relay. Tanner will be competing in the MHSAA State Championship in the 50 Freestyle and the 100 Breaststroke this weekend.

**Kenneth Brooks – Wrestling**

- Kenneth is a junior at SA&T. He is a Regional qualifier and District Champion. Kenneth won 1<sup>st</sup> Place at the Lincoln Invitational, Bishop Foley Tournament, and Shrine-Quad Tournament. Kenneth won 2<sup>nd</sup> Place at the Sonny's Classic Invitational. He finishes the season with 27-5. Kenneth was also a member of the championship football team.

**Girls Basketball Team**

- They ended the season with a record of 15-6 clinching the #1 Place.
- Erica** is a sophomore and a team captain. Erica has a 3.3 GPA. Erica received honorable mentions by MHSAA and OAA first team.
- Kiana Harrison** is a junior and a team captain. Kianna has a 3.6 GPA. Kianna is an outstanding shot blocker.
- Christen “Money” Banks** is a senior and 4 year team captain. Christen has a 5.0 GPA. Christen had 18 double doubles this season.

**c. Partner of the Month – Yolanda Shavers: Paraprofessional at Adler Elementary****d. Birney K-8 School Presentation – Principal Tierra Baldwin and Vice Principal Kimberly Pritchett**

- Teamwork Makes the Dream Work!
- Great Things Happening at Birney K-8! SPS Fine and Performing Arts Middle School
- One of the only middle schools in Michigan that has a recording studio in their building.
- Award Winning Band led by Randy Scott.
- State of the Art Dance Studio led by Jennifer Hawkins.
- Art Studio
- Birney Bobcats:** Extracurricular activities – Band, Learning Lunch, Tutoring, Basketball, Michigan First Credit Union, Safety Patrol, Volleyball, STEM Club, Bobcats Yearbook, National Junior Honor Society, Cheerleading, Student Leadership Council, and Track & Field
- There's Power in Partnerships:** Building Better Men, Michigan State University 4H-STEM and Environmental Science, Alliance of Coalition for Healthy Communities, Sound Mind-Sound Body, Parent Teacher Association, Off Leash K-9 Unit, The Carr Center for Music, and Books are Fun
- Setting the Foundation for Excellence:** Culture and Climate – Vision of the Culture and Climate for Birney K-8 Middle School Staff and Student Expectations
- Caught You Doing Good – PBIS Initiative

- **Creating and Maintaining Traditions:** Scripps National Spelling Bee, Honor's Assembly, Fine Performing Arts Program-Winter Showcase, Black History and Spring Concert, National Junior Honor Society, Birney's Community Closet, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Field Trip to D. C., and the African American Living Museum
- **Scripps National Spelling Bee:** Scripps Regional Competition – Top 20 of 81 participants.
- **Student Perspective:** Malik Washington 5<sup>th</sup> Grade likes how Birney K-8 is a creative school, peanut-free and a loving community. The Therapy Dog, Cody Jay Pritchett, helps whenever we need it. The teachers help us to prepare for the next grade.
- **Parent Perspective:** "A great school is the reflection of great leadership."
- **Behavior Matters – Trending in the Right Direction:** Student behavior is decreasing since the start of this school year.
- **Academic Performance:** Closing the Achievement Gap – i-Ready
- **AARI (Adolescent Accelerated Reading Initiative) Summary Data 2023-24 SY**  
Pre-post reading levels were assessed to track reading growth for each semester. AARI participants showed large increases in reading level and growth towards grade-level proficiency.  
It is used as 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading intervention daily for one hour.  
MTSS for Tier II and Tier III scholars.  
Fourth year of success with AARI in Mrs. Daniels ELA class.
- **Building Our Community with a Growth Mindset**  
It is all about: Respect, Kindness, Mindfulness, and Leadership
- **Elementary Student Council**
- **The Success of Our Elementary Scholars**  
**Targeted Interventions:** Implementing specific, research-based interventions tailored to students' individual needs can significantly boost both reading and math skills.  
**Classroom Rich in Literature:** Providing a classroom filled with diverse books, from picture books to chapter books, fosters a love for reading and builds vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.  
**Interactive Read Aloud:** Engaging students in literacy centers while implementing collaborative learning.  
**Technology Integration:** Using educational apps and websites for reading and math practice offers students additional ways to engage and practice key skills at their own pace.  
**STEM:** Students are engaged in learning activity with SPS STEM Library.
- **It is Never a One Size Fits All**  
**Differentiated Instruction:** Using a variety of teaching methods and materials to address diverse learning styles ensures that every student has the opportunity to succeed in reading and math.  
**Tier II Intervention:** Centers and Cooperative Learning Groups
- **Instructional Strategies: Our K-8 Scholars are Soaring**  
**Consistent Practice:** Regular, short practice sessions help solidify foundations skills in both reading and math, ensuring long-term retention and improvement.  
**Positive Reinforcement:** Birney K-8's Caught Being Good!  
**Math Manipulatives:** Using physical math tools, such as counters, base-ten blocks, and number lines, helps students visualize mathematical concepts, making abstract ideas more concrete and easier to understand.  
**Frequent Assessments and Feedback:** Regular formative assessments and immediate, constructive feedback help track progress and adjust instruction to meet the needs of each student.  
**Collaborative Learning Opportunities:** Group activities and peer partnerships allow students to learn from one another, reinforcing both reading and math skills in a supportive environment.
- **United in Support with the ASD Dream Team!**
- **Building Bridges: Empowering Learning in the ASD Setting**

**Student Engagement in Lessons:** Our students who are verbal and non-verbal are engaged in a lesson about proper nouns.

- **Power of One: Personalized Support for Every Learner**

**Unique Learning Needs:** Students with autism are fully engaged in the general education curriculum. Also, our students are engaged and enjoying a reading lesson with one of our other phenomenal ASD teacher, Mr. Martin.

- **Unwavering Support for Student Success**

**Sensory-Friendly Environments:** At Birney K-8 the environments are designed to accommodate sensory sensitivities and includes a calming station in a quiet environment.

- **Celebrating Our Scholars: Birney's K-8 Honors Assembly**

- **The Love That We Share is PRICELESS!**

- **Birney Middle Schoolers Leading the Way**

**School-wide Mock Elections:** Fall 2022 Midterms, Fall 2024 Presidential, Grades K-8 participate, Organized and Staffed by the Birney Bobcat N.J.H.S., Introduce students to the process and importance of voting in our democracy

**P.B.I.S. Inspired Field Trips:** are designed to reward students for good citizenship and no referrals, student eligibility restarts each marking period, students who receive low citizenship marks or a behavior referral can enroll in our Daily behavior Progress Report to show improve and requalify for the field trip. Our destinations have included: Zap Zone, BonaVenture, Universal Nonstop, Wayne State, and The DIA.

**Birney 8<sup>th</sup> Graders Explore Washington, D.C.:** Birney reintroduced this opportunity for our 2022-2023 8<sup>th</sup> graders, and have continued every year since, 2 full days touring D.C., 1 day at Six Flags, our local travel company: Xtreme Xcursions owned and operated by Crystal Ackins.

- **New Therapy Dog Program – Cody Jay Pritchett: Social Emotional Learning**

**What Research Shows**

**Promotes Positive Behavior:** SEL fosters self-regulation, empathy, and conflict resolution.

**Builds Stronger Relationships:** SEL encourages students to understand and manage their emotions

**Prepares for Real-Life Challenges:** SEL equips students with skills like problem solving and decision making.

**Reduces Bullying and Violence:** By teaching empathy and emotional management

**Welcoming Cody Jay as Birney K-8's Therapy Dog (March 4, 2025):** Research supports that therapy dogs provide social emotional support by offering unconditional companionship and comfort in helping to reduce stress, anxiety, and while promoting well-being.

**Inner Explorer Use in the Classroom:** Breathing techniques and mindfulness is the start of our students' day. Royalty expressed her thoughts on Inner Explorer.

**Birney Black History Program – February 27, 2025**

- e. **Staffing Update Presentation – Dr. Green:** Dr. Green went over the Staffing Update Presentation.

- f. **Legislative Update – Dr. Green**

- 50% of the Department of Education on the Federal level has been released.
- The District has received its Federal funds for this academic school year ending June 30, 2025.
- With that being, we are not sure if we can carry out our programming from the Federal level in the same capacity for the 2025-26 academic SY.

- g. **Bussey's Director's Report – Dr. Connie Thompson**

- Director's Report for February 2025
- **Enrollment:** Early Head Start – 16 enrolled, 13 waitlisted  
Head Start – 78 enrolled, 18 vacant      GSRP – 69.5 enrolled, 10.5 vacant
- **Drops:** Early Head Start – 0      Head Start – 0      GSRP – 2
- **Children Receiving Support Services:** 3 IEPs/IFSPs, 5 Referrals, 10 Compliance HS, 1 Compliance EHS

- **Average Daily Attendance (ADA)** – 85% ADA
- **Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Month of February 2025**
  - Breakfast, lunch, and snack meals provided during the month of February 2025 totaled 4,920.
- **Compliance**
- **Education:**
  - Implementation of High Scope Curriculum
  - COR Advantage Data Collection Period 3 – 3/3/2025 to 6/2/2025
  - Weekly Tips for Teachers – Academic and Social Emotional
  - Teacher Trends (Post Observation) - [Educational Trends](#)
- **Family Engagement:**
  - Black History Month Program – Thursday, February 26, 2025 – 129 participants
  - Link Sheets – educational resources provided to parents to support and extend their child's learning experiences from the classroom
  - Family Volunteers – creating bulletin boards, assisting in classrooms
- **Enrollment Updates:**
  - The ERSEA team is actively processing applications and continuing to enroll children for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 program years.
- **Vacancies:**
  - 1 Lead Teacher (GSRP)
  - 4 Teachers CDA (Assistant Teachers) – 1 Head Start, 2 GSRP, 1 Head Start/GSRP
- **InKind Contributions for February 2025**
  - July 1, 2024 – February 28, 2025: \$160,790.32
- **Upcoming Events:**
  - Kindergarten Signing Day – Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., Media Center
  - Parents vs. Staff Basketball Game – Saturday, April 12, 2025, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., Location to be announced
  - Invitation to the Trustees for a Board Breakfast, so they can see what is going on at Bussey.
- Thank you to Dr. Thompson for providing the information that was asked of her.
- We will ask Ms. Snyder about incorporating the CDA for High Schoolers Assistant Teacher program into the Heath and Science pathway.
- Dr. Thompson has reached out to about 8 or 9 daycares to build a relationship.

## 5. Public Participation

- There was no public participation.

## 6. Action Items

### a. Consent Agenda

#### Approval of Minutes

- i. **February 11, 2025, Regular Board Meeting**
- ii. **February 25, 2025, Special Board Meeting**
- Vice President Ware-DeVaul moved to open and approve the Consent Agenda – Approval of Minutes and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Ware-DeVaul, Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Denson, Trustee Bland, and Trustee Belk

Nays: Nil

Absent: Trustee Holloway

Motion carried.

**b. Report 63-55 Personnel Action Report**

- Vice President Ware-DeVauld moved to open and approve the Consent Agenda – Approval of Minutes and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.
- #3 is a great thing.
- #5 is posted and we have a few candidates in the pool.

President Bland asked Secretary Smith-Thomas to call for the vote.

Ayes: Trustee Belk, Trustee Bland, Trustee Denson, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Ware-DeVauld

Nays: Nil

Absent: Trustee Holloway

Motion carried.

**7. Information Items**

**a. Financial Report**

**b. Monthly Bill Disbursement**

- The district remains fiscally responsible. We will have to continue to keep our eye on the tariffs and see how they affect us. We are preparing for the second series of our bond funds. The cash collection in the district is and will be our only risk, if it continues. The Cease and Desist Notice is for the collection of large funds. There is still ongoing discussion about the amounts under \$20. We will have an electronic option later in the spring.

**8. For the Good of the Order**

- There was discussion about considering moving JWE staff to Southfield A&T.
- We are aware of the potholes at U K-12 and we will be working on getting them resolved.
- We have a hardworking Board. The Board has received some good feedback.
- Parents please take the time to fill out the survey that was sent out.
- Thank you to Ms. Luddington and her team. We had a .03 error rate on our Fall Audit.

**9. Future Meetings**

- Wednesday, March 12, 2025, State of the District Address @ 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 25, 2025, Special Board Meeting/Study Session
- Monday, March 31–Friday, April 4, 2025, Spring Recess - NO SCHOOL
- Tuesday, April 8, 2025, Regular Board Meeting

**10. Adjournment**

President Bland adjourned the Special Board Meeting/Study Session at 8:48 p.m.

**Approved on: April 8, 2025**

**Leslie L. Smith-Thomas, Board Secretary**