Regular School Board Meeting  
January 27, 2014  
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT:  
Ms. Jeannie Cole, president, called the meeting to order. Other Board members present were Dr. Deanie Mehl, Ms. Susan McFerran, Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, Mr. Wyman R. Wade, Jr., Esq., Dr. David Hunton and Mr. Russell Owen. Dr. Benny Gooden, Superintendent, Dr. Gordon Floyd, Deputy Superintendent, Dr. Annette Henderson, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Support Services, Dr. Barry Owen, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services, Ms. Zena Featherston Marshall, Communication and Community Partnerships Director and Ms. Nadine Brooks, Secretary to the Superintendent, were also present.

The pledge of allegiance was recited and Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin gave the invocation.

The consent agenda included the December School Board Minutes, December Financial Report and Student Services Report. Dr. David Hunton made a motion, seconded by Dr. Deanie Mehl, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The vote for approval was 7/0.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:  
Dr. Benny Gooden yielded to Dr. Gordon Floyd to review the professional staff recommendations.

Resignations

James Wood  
Michael Bailey

Dr. David Hunton made a motion, seconded by Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, to approve the resignations. The vote for approval was 7/0.

Recommendations for Employment

Danna Smith  
Gregory Stephens  
Leah French

Dr. Deanie Mehl made a motion, seconded by Dr. David Hunton, to approve the recommendations for employment. The vote for approval was 7/0.

Dr. Gooden and Ms. Cole recognized the following community leaders, staff and students:

Mr. Jim Patridge and Ms. Saundra Lockhart of BancorpSouth were honored for sponsoring the Sebastian County Spelling Bee for 30 years.
Spradling Elementary School led by the student council members won the 2014 Spirit of Arkansas Food Drive sponsored by the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance collecting over 15,000 lbs. of food. Student council members include: Jadon Syharath, Rafael Herrera, Leilani Rivera Rodriguez, Lakyia Taylor, Carlos Gutierrez, Angie Negrete, Jacqueline Rios, Dacherelle Tucker, Michelle Raymundo, Jadyn Lloyd, and Michelle Henry. Ms. Robyn Dawson, Principal and Dana Booth, Student Council Sponsor were also recognized.

Nine teachers who recently earned their National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification were recognized: Eden Buergler, Jenny Craig, Maria Galvan, Cindy Grizzle, Cordelia Heffner, Rebecca Macy, Kimberly Morgan, Rachel Pendleton, and Tammy Ray. Several other NBPTS teachers were in attendance and were asked to stand as well. Dr. Gooden noted that 105 Fort Smith Public School teachers have now completed this certification.

Mr. Chris Carter, Northside High School, was named the 2014 Assistant Principal of the Year by the Arkansas Association of Secondary School Principals (AASSP). Dr. Richard Abernathy, Executive Director of the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators presented Mr. Carter with the award on January 6 at Northside. Mr. Carter will be honored at a gala event in Washington, D.C. in April and he is a candidate for the 2014 National Assistant Principal of the Year.

Dr. Gooden recognized Board members by the proclamation issued by Governor Beebe declaring the month of January as Arkansas School Board Member Recognition Month. He noted that all school board members have met or exceeded the required training hours for the calendar year ending 2013. The total training hours are attached.

Dr. Gooden reported that FSPS is piloting a total digital conversion at Morrison Elementary School, Sunnymede Elementary School and Ramsey Junior High School for the 2014/2015 school year. He noted that faculty and staff are developing instructional models for a digital learning environment and that there will be challenges to be addressed.

Dr. Gooden also reported on the district’s improvement status and that funds lost due to sequestration are being restored at 80% of previous funding.

Ms. Cole reported on the Master Facilities Plan public hearing held on January 13 noting projects that address long-term needs. Mr. Wyman R. Wade Jr., made a motion, seconded by Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin to waive the formal reading of the resolution authorizing the Master Facilities Plan. Dr. Deanie Mehl noted that the additional high school campus and event complex projects which are in developmental stages will be submitted for partnership funding before moving forward for a millage increase. After discussion, Mr. Wyman R. Wade Jr., made a
motion, seconded by Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin to approve the Master Facilities Plan 2015/2017 as presented. The vote for approval was 7/0.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT:

Ms. Cole presented 1) a resolution to intervene legally in the Deer/Mt. Judea case and 2) a resolution to intervene legally with the requirements for liability insurance for PK services which conflicts with tort immunity for Arkansas public school districts. Dr. Gooden stated that other area schools are in agreement to intervene. Mr. Wyman R. Wade, Jr., made a motion, seconded by Dr. David Hunton to waive the formal reading of the resolutions. The vote for approval was 7/0. After discussion, Mr. Wyman R. Wade Jr., made a committee motion to approve the Deer/Mt. Judea resolution. The vote for approval was 7/0. Dr. Deanie Mehl made a committee motion, seconded by Mr. Rusty Owen to approve the resolution for intervention of the requirement for liability insurance for PK services which conflicts with tort immunity for Arkansas public schools. The vote for approval was 7/0.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS:

Dr. Gooden reported that Belle Point Alternative Learning Center and Trusty Elementary School are listed as “Priority Schools” and have the opportunity to apply for school improvement grant funding awarding up to $2 million each year over a three year time period. Dr. Gooden stated that this application process requires approval by the Board, signatures from the Board President and Superintendent as well as notation in the school board minutes. Mr. Wyman R. Wade, Jr. made a motion seconded by Dr. David Hunton to authorize the Superintendent to apply for the SIG funds. The vote for approval was 7/0.

MARCH SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATE

Ms. Jeannie Cole noted that the March School Board meeting date conflicts with Spring Break and made a motion to move the March Board meeting to March 17, 2014. The vote for approval was 7/0.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

There were no requests for citizen participation.

BOARD MEMBERS FORUM:

Ms. Jeannie Cole commented on the article published by the Times Record highlighting Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin’s educational career as a role model.

ADJOURN:

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

________________________________________
Jeannie Cole, President

________________________________________
Russell Owen, Secretary