Dr. Deanie Mehl, president, called the meeting to order. Other Board members present were Dr. David Hunton, Mr. Wyman R. Wade, Jr., Esq., Dr. Deanie Mehl, Ms. Susan McFerran and Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin. Mr. Russell Owen was absent. Dr. Benny Gooden, Superintendent, Dr. Gordon Floyd, Deputy Superintendent, Dr. Barry Owen, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services, Mr. Charles Warren, Director of Financial Services, Mr. Darian Layes, Director of Student Services, Ms. Zena Featherston Marshall, Director of Communication and Community Partnerships and Ms. Nadine Brooks, Secretary to the Superintendent, were also present.

The pledge of allegiance was recited and Dr. Barry Owen gave the invocation.

The consent agenda included the May School Board minutes, and May Financial Report. Ms. Yvonne Keaton Martin made a motion, seconded by Dr. David Hunton, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The vote for approval was 6/0.

Dr. Benny Gooden yielded to Dr. Gordon Floyd to review the professional staff recommendations.

**Resignations**
Barlow, Richard
Beachy, Alisa
Branch, Jeremy
Comer, Paula
Cravens, Paula
Davis, Shannan
Fonville, Morgan
Goff, Amber
Harper, Audra
Hill, Brittany
Lopez, Virginia
Mays, Danny
McFerran, Malarie
Myrick, Morgan
Richardson, Emily
Shaffer, DeAnna
Wagoner, Sheryl
Whatley, Teresa
White, Amy
White, Sherry
Williams, Brittnie

**Retirements**
England, John
Holder, Roberta
Skelton, Ruth
Strange, Jo Ruth

Mr. Wyman R. Wade, Jr., Esq. made a motion, seconded by Ms. Susan McFerran, to approve the resignations and retirements. The vote for approval was 6/0.

**Recommendations for Employment**

Akers, Lynne
Barnett, Amanda
Barthel, Keri
Bostick, Nicole
Clarke, Amber
Clements, Logan
Cook, Leslie
Cruz, Bertha
Deffenbaugh, Charlotte
Fitzgerald, Christopher
Grant, Randa
Hardin, Jennifer
Harris, Corey
Hindman, Janna
Jimenez, Jazmin
Johnson, Elizabeth
Jones, Sherry
Landry, Casey
Lee, Nathaniel
Mann, Gina
Martinez, Claudia
Massengale, Ricky
McAdams, Betty
McCain, Sydney
McGahee, Amy
Mings, Caroline
Musick, Micki
Noble, Kelsey
Nobles, Ashley
Pankey, Coley
Priester, Melody
Pumphrey, Beau
Reeves, Sarah
Rodebush, Danna
Sampson, Alison
Shelton, Jessica
Siebenmorgen, Jill
Stout, Angela
Stowers, Tonya
Tran, Ngoc
Mr. Wyman R. Wade, Jr., Esq. made a motion, seconded by Ms. Jeannie Cole, to approve the recommendations for employment. The vote for approval was 6/0.

Dr. Gooden reported that construction was behind schedule on Morrison Elementary because of rain, but contractors are working to complete the project as scheduled. Dr. Gooden also reported that the Summer Meals were available at nine schools. Reports indicate that participation is equal to or better than last year.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Sale of Refunding Bonds
Dr. Benny Gooden reported that Mr. Kevin Faught of Stephens Inc. received eight qualified bids on June 17 for the District in the sale of the Refunding Bonds, Series 2015. Ross, Sinclaire & Associates, Inc., presented the most competitive bid with a savings of $341,300.48 with $316,537.98 realized in 2016. Ms. Jeannie Cole made a motion, seconded by Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, to accept Ross, Sinclaire & Associate’s Inc., bid and authorize this financing to achieve significant savings for the District. The vote for approval was 6/0.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT:

Revisions to the 2015/2016 Student Handbook
Dr. David Hunton reported the following policy changes to the 2015/2016 Student Handbook:

Section I - Attendance Policies, A - Eligibility for Enrollment, Paragraph 5. Page 1
Pursuant to state law, the deadline for submitting school choice applications will change from June 1 to May 1.

Section III - Student Health, A - Student Health Guidelines and B - Communicable Diseases. Pages 7-8
This proposal is an attempt to provide more clarification in communicating with parents about when students should come to school and when they should stay home in case of illness.

Section III - Student Health, C - Medication Policy. Pages 8-9, Items 6 and 13.
This proposal states our intention to follow the law regarding students carrying their own inhalers and epinephrine. It also incorporates District guidelines into the Student Handbook. This proposal also provides clarification on our policy regarding student medicine left at school at the end of the school year.
Section VI - Academic Policies, E - State Mandated Testing and Student Academic Improvement Plans. Pages 17-18
This amendment deletes references to PARCC testing and reflects changes to the grades required to participate in standardized testing.

Section IX - Eligibility for Athletic Competition. Pages 21-22
A sentence was added to the in-district transfer policy to deny immediate eligibility to students who transfer to a school outside their attendance area and subsequently transfer back to their home school. This is designed to discourage “shopping” different athletic programs. A sentence was also added to the paragraph on hardship exceptions to clarify the appeal process for those students who seek a hardship exception. The Superintendent has the authority of final decision.

Dr. Hunton made a committee motion to approve these changes as presented. The vote for approval was 4/2. Dr. Deanie Mehl stated that she voted against the motion because she believes that final decision authority should be the Board’s responsibility.

Insurance Bids/Renewals for 2015/2016
Ms. Jeannie Cole reported that insurance proposals were received and reviewed for 2015/2016. Ms. Cole made a committee motion to approve coverage with Arkansas School Boards Association for property insurance for $599,529.91, mobile equipment coverage for $2,550.00 and vehicle insurance for $76,528; Lawrence E. Smith and Associates for student accident life insurance for $83,055.00; Brown-Hiller-Clark for ROTC Bond for $1,000.00; and First Arkansas Insurance for Errors and Omissions for $29,111.00. The vote for approval was 6/0.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT: June 15, 2015

Attorney Agreement 2015/2016
Ms. Jeanne Cole reported that Mr. Mitch Llewellyn, Esq., submitted a proposal to provide legal services from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. Mr. Llewellyn’s proposal is the current rate of $200 per hour plus expenses. Ms. Cole made a committee motion to accept this attorney agreement. The vote for approval was 6/0.

Community Use of School Facilities Policy – First Reading
Dr. Benny Gooden summarized changes to Policy KF - Community Use of School Facilities and Policy KFD - Guidelines Governing the Use of School Facilities. These policies clarify the potential participation of students in activities of outside organizations using school facilities. The District assumes a viewpoint neutral position that while students may participate in activities, they may not be required to participate as members of school organizations. Dr. Deanie Mehl objected to the policy advocating for more specific guidelines. The motion carried 4/2.
Special Education Contracts 2015/2016
Ms. Jeannie Cole reported that the District is required to provide appropriate services to students with disabilities. Annual contract proposals for 2015/2016 were received from:

Valley Behavioral Health Systems
Horizon-Western Arkansas Counseling and Guidance Center
Brownwood School, Inc.
Western Arkansas Counseling and Guidance (licensed psychologist)
Becky Hartsfield (licensed physical therapist)
Dr. Ron McInroe (clinical neuropsychologist)

Ms. Jeannie Cole made a committee motion to approve the contracts submitted for 2015/2016. The vote for approval was 6/0.

Child Nutrition Bids 2015/2016
Ms. Jeannie Cole reported that bids were received for dairy and bread contracts for 2015/2016. Harris Baking Company and Hiland Dairy submitted the low bids. Ms. Cole made a committee motion to approve these contracts for 2015/2016. The vote for approval was 6/0.

Facility Projects to Address Space Needs
Ms. Jeannie Cole reported that projects to address space needs include: tornado shelters at Northside and Southside High Schools, an events complex/performing arts center, events complex/multipurpose arena, renovations and additions to Southside High School, Kimmons Junior High School, Ramsey Junior High School, Cook Elementary School, and Trusty Elementary School. Ms. Cole noted that these projects are estimated to cost $77,700,000 and will require FEMA, partnership funding and a future millage increase. Mr. Wyman R. Wade, Jr., Esq., and Dr. David Hunton echoed Ms. Cole’s remarks regarding the necessity of future millage increases. Ms. Cole made a committee motion allowing the District to complete the necessary planning in order to move forward with these projects. The vote for approval was 6/0.

Proposed Budget of Expenditures and Tax Levy 2016/2017
Ms. Jeannie Cole reported that the Proposed Budget of Expenditures and Tax Levy is based upon projections for the 2016/2017 fiscal year. She noted that the proposed 36.5 mills rate has been in effect since 1987. It is required by law that this proposal be published 60 days prior to the school election. Emphasizing the need for a future millage increase to complete future projects, Ms. Cole made a committee motion to approve the publication of the Proposed Budget of Expenditures and Tax Levy 2016/2017. The vote for approval was 6/0.
**Appeal of Partnership Funding Denial**

Ms. Cole made a committee recommendation to forego further legal appeals of the partnership application denial. She noted that the next partnership funding cycle could be complete by the time this litigation makes it through the court system. The vote for approval was 6/0.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Dr. Deanie Mehl commented on attending both Northside and Southside graduations and complimented the Northside staff on their efficient relocation of the ceremony to University of Arkansas – Fort Smith because of inclement weather.

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:**

There was no one present for citizen participation.

**ADJOURN:**

There was no further business and Mr. Wyman R. Wade, Jr., Esq. made a motion, seconded by Ms. Susan McFerran to adjourn at 6:20 p.m.

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Deanie Mehl, President

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Wyman R. Wade, Jr., Esq., Secretary
TO: Board of Education  
FROM: Benny L. Gooden, Superintendent of Schools  
DATE: June 25, 2015  
SUBJECT: Committee of the Whole Minutes/Called School Board Minutes

Ms. Susan McFerran made a motion, seconded by Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, to convene as a Committee of the Whole at 5:45 p.m. on Tuesday, June 23. The vote for approval was 5/0. Board members present were Ms. Jeannie Cole, Mr. Wyman R. Wade, Jr., Esq., Dr. Deanie Mehl, Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, and Ms. Susan McFerran. Dr. David Hunton arrived at 6:20 p.m. Mr. Russell Owen was absent. Superintendent Benny L. Gooden was also present.

Giving great consideration to the continuing impact of perceived symbols of racism on the community, state and nation, the Fort Smith Public School Board committee members discussed changing the Southside High School mascot and discontinuing the “Dixie” fight song. Symbols associated with Southside High School have been a topic of discussion with the FSPS Board of Education since a resolution to study the use of these symbols passed in 1989.

Ms. Susan McFerran made a motion, seconded by Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, to discontinue the use of “Dixie” as the Southside High School fight song immediately and to phase out the Rebel as the Southside mascot over the next year completing the process in 2016/2017. The motion passed with a 5/0 vote, with Dr. David Hunton expressing an affirmative vote upon his arrival. This recommendation will be placed on the Board of Education agenda for consideration on July 27, 2015.

The Committee of the Whole adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

A called school board meeting for the purpose of evaluating the superintendent was convened at 6:35 p.m.

Board members met with Superintendent of Schools Dr. Benny L. Gooden to complete his annual evaluation.

Directors went into closed session to discuss the Superintendent’s performance at 7:45 p.m. Board members opened the session at 8:20 p.m. Ms. Jeannie Cole made a motion, seconded by
Ms. Yvonne Keaton-Martin, to extend Dr. Gooden’s contract by one year providing for the renewal of a three year agreement between the Board of Education and the Superintendent. The term of the 2015/2016 contract extends to June 30, 2018 and the current salary remains the same. The vote for approval was 6/0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

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Deanie Mehl, President

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Wyman R. Wade, Jr., Esq., Secretary