



Contact Zena Featherston Marshall
Telephone 785-2501 ext. 1301
Cell (479) 651-0870
Email zfeather@fortsmithschools.org
Website www.FortSmithSchools.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 22, 2018

VOTERS SUPPORT DISTRICT'S MILLAGE 2018 BALLOT QUESTION

5.558 Millage Increase Approved

At a Glance

- Three incumbent directors re-elected for another three-year term
- Millage increase approved after 31 years
- Work to begin on transparency and accountability plan

Fort Smith, AR, May 22, 2018— Incumbent directors of the Fort Smith Public School Board of Education, Wade Gilkey, Bill Hanesworth and Yvonne Keaton-Martin, were re-elected to three-year terms on the district's governing board in today's primary election. Until this year, school board elections were held on the second Tuesday in September. Arkansas Act 910, however, directed boards statewide to choose either the preferential primary date or the general election date for local elections. On August 28, 2017, the FSPS Board approved a motion to hold future District's elections in the spring election cycle.

In this election cycle, Fort Smith and Barling voters have also approved a proposed 5.558 millage increase developed to address safety and security needs, technology replacement and the development of a robust career and technology program in addition to important building renovations. These priorities, recommended by a 57-person Citizens Committee, were approved by the Board of Education in March after the District's 2023 Strategic Plan established action plans in Career Planning, Equity, Instruction, Learning Environments/Facilities, Staffing, Technology and Wellness. Prior to the release of the election results, the school district millage was among the lowest in the state at 36.5 mills and had not changed in 31 years.

Dr. Doug Brubaker, Fort Smith Public Schools Superintendent, said "The results of the May 22 election are in, and the Millage 2018 Plan was approved by the voters. We want to thank the Fort Smith and Barling communities for their support of Fort Smith Public Schools and the students we serve. We also are grateful for the efforts of so many to get the word out about this ballot question. I am committed to ensuring that our processes and projects are characterized by the high degree of transparency that our community expects. Details about oversight processes and timelines will be shared over the next several weeks."

Preliminary numbers suggest that voters passed the proposed millage with more than 60 percent, approving the expenditure of approximately \$120 million in identified projects of greatest need. Turnout represented voters of all ages. With this affirmation, the district administration and school board will continue the complex work of providing the best opportunities for students.

“Of course, I am elated and so proud of the Fort Smith and Barling communities for realizing the importance of this decision. We are grateful to the Vision 2023 Strategic Planning volunteers and the Citizens Committee for their work in developing this proposal. We look forward to providing the enhanced safety and security systems, minimizing forced transfers and developing a world class Career and Technology Center,” said Susan McFerran, Fort Smith Board of Education President.

More information about Millage 2018 can be found under the “Our District” tab at www.FortSmithSchools.org

###

About Fort Smith Public Schools

From unmanned aerial systems programming to unforgettable kindergarten trips to the farm, Fort Smith Public Schools provides incredible opportunities and strong instruction for each of the almost 15,000 students in its 19 neighborhood elementary schools, four junior high schools, two senior high schools, one alternative learning center and one adult education center. With nationally recognized schools, students,

www.fortsmithschools.org