

**RECORD OF BOARD PROCEEDINGS**  
(MINUTES)

**Fulton, KY August 20, 2024**

The **Fulton Independent** Board of Education met at **Fulton High School** at **5:30** o'clock

**P. M.** on the **20th** day of **August 2024** with the following members present:

- (1) **Mrs. Carol Bransford, Chair** (2) **Mrs. Debbie Vaughn, Vice-Chair** (3) **Mrs. Christy Pettigrew**  
(4) **Mrs, Rea Jones** (5) **Dr. Austin Ferrell**

**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF  
FULTON INDEPENDENT BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**CALL TO ORDER**

1. Chair Bransford called the Regular Monthly Meeting of Fulton Independent Board of Education to order at 5:32 p.m.

**OPENING PRAYER**

2. Carr Dean, Matt Moxley, led the opening prayer.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board Secretary, Betty Bartimus and recited by those in attendance.

**READING OF THE MISSION STATEMENT**

4. As read by Mr. Sullivan, At Fulton Independent School District, we guide students to success by providing rigorous learning experiences in a safe school climate supported by a partnership with students, parents, community members, staff and administrators.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

5. With the recommendation of the Superintendent, a motion by Mrs. Vaughn and second by Mrs. Pettigrew, the Board approved the agenda of the July 18<sup>th</sup> as presented.

Members voting yes: Mrs. Bransford, Mrs. Pettigrew, Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. Jones and Dr. Ferrell

**ROLL CALL**

6. Mrs. Bransford, Mrs. Debbie Vaughn, Mrs. Christy Pettigrew, Dr. Ferrell and Mrs. Jones were present for roll call.

**SUPERINTENDENT ATTENDANCE**

7. Superintendent Sullivan was present for the August meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

8. With a motion by Mrs. Jones and second by Dr. Ferrell, the Board approved the amended minutes of the August 2024 meeting as presented by the Board Secretary.

Members voting yes: Members voting yes: Mrs. Bransford, Mrs. Pettigrew, Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. Jones and Dr. Ferrell.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

9. No public comments.

## **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

**Board members received all Communication/Consent Item information to review in advance of the meeting.**

10. With a motion by Mrs. Jones and a second by Mrs. Vaughn, the Board accepted the reports and approved action items listed in the consent agenda as follows:

### **A. ASAP**

Cartwright began by thanking the board, Sullivan and FISD staff for their support and confidence in bringing him into the FISD family. He then began laying out his planned strategy for the school year that lies ahead. Cartwright explained how he will approach the start of the school year by breaking it down into three categories: culture, structure and personalization. “As I started thinking about what have we done the way of culture? We can make an intentional effort to set a culture of not just high expectations, but of trust,” Cartwright said. He said that they will work to build trust between staff and the students by openly talking with the students about trusting them to do the right thing.” And if that trust is broken, they will take a clean slate approach. This build will reinforce that while trust can be lost, but also reestablished. The school year has just started, but Cartwright said the students have really responded. “They’re learning that we expect them to behave and to follow the rules. They’re also learning that when we have to correct them, we correct them and we still like them,” he said. It will make students feel they have a voice and the teachers and administration will hear them. He also praised the families of the students, saying they “have really done a good job getting them ready.” Cartwright said so far, the students are very well behaved. Cartwright said, “These are good kids that are here. They’re not perfect, but nor am I or anyone else.” This showed him that the students have been exposed to good structure and routines.

Structure was the second category in his strategy. He explained they start each day with a short time together in the commons area to share news, announcements and praise the work being done. The structure of reciting the Pledge of Allegiance together and being one whole will reinforce the atmosphere of trust and structure. According to Cartwright, establishing a structural environment is key to student success. The basic foundation of structure is schedules. “As we started the year, we spent a great deal of time working on schedules, that’s master schedules, that’s teaching schedules, that’s student schedules, he said. Cartwright said this started by building a master schedule, noting that this was difficult because of staffing shortages, but that he was confident they had created a schedule that maximized the use of resources. “We’ve been able to tap everyone, tap into everyone’s strengths and their willingness to help each other, which is just amazing.” In the end, Cartwright said they have set a schedule that is beneficial to the students, the staff and the school, overall.

The last category Cartwright implements is personalization. “Once we had a master schedule, we identified areas to supplement, then we moved on to the transcript of each student. We reviewed each student to see what courses they had, what they need to be on track to graduate and courses to help them with college and career preparation,” he said. The school then began gathering benchmark assessment data to help identify exactly where each student is with their knowledge and ability. By logging this data, it will show strengths and weaknesses are. “We’re going to do everything we can to meet the needs of all students. We’re going to roll up our sleeves, do everything we can to catch them up. If they are bored and show mastery, then we will challenge them,” Cartwright said. Cartwright was very excited to announce that the benchmark assessments will be compiled digitally and analyzed to provide each FHS student with a personalized education plan to maximize the personalization of the students individually and help them be more successful academically.

He also gave a quick update on the enrollment and participation of some of the academic programs offered. “This is just a start to the year, and it’s showing similar numbers as in the past,” Cartwright said. He reported that there are eight students enrolled in dual credit courses this year, up from last year’s five.

Cartwright shared that last year, FHS had six students enrolled in the Four Rivers Academy. This year there are seven. He was excited to say that FHS has more elective classes being taught in house, as opposed to going to Hickman to the Fulton County Vocational/ Technical Center. He noted it is not a new program, but they offer a pathway to becoming a professional educator to help build local teachers. He said there are two students on that pathway. There are currently 77 students taking various levels of technology courses in the FHS building. There are 18 students enrolled in the part time Law Enforcement program. Cartwright said they now have a H.A.P.V.A. program and an appreciation of performing arts, providing some choices on arts and humanities programs. There are two different levels of theater offered this year, regular theater and then they have acting and performance classes.

The board then heard from Matthew Moxley, the new Dean of Students at Carr Elementary School. Moxley said he was very excited for the coming year, telling the board that he feels they have the students and teachers in the right place. Moxley said he believes that the two most important things for an elementary school are to keep the students safe and keep the students learning. Moxley said he approached the school year asking how they could maximize on the time they have to do what is best for the students. “That is what I want my visitors to see, our staff making the best of their time to keep students learning and doing everything that they can to do what’s best for each student. Moxley said they will do the same type of diagnostics testing, Cartwright had talked of, for the same purposes. They will set benchmarks on an individual level to help each student with what they know, what they need to know, and how to get them where they need to be. He noted that he and the staff of Carr Elementary are aware of some of the recent hardships of other area schools, specifically the recent loss of Emma Williams, a student at South Fulton High School. “We want to acknowledge our neighbors and show support for those in our community,” Moxley stated. Moxley had shared some photos taken during the teacher enrichment days and the start of school for the students. “We have spent a lot of time talking about procedures and expectations, but we also fit some good fun stuff in as well,” Moxley said. There were many photos that appeared on the interactive screen showing Carr Elementary fourth and fifth graders who had written letters to themselves. He said the letters will be given back to the students at the end of the school year to reflect on what they had hoped to achieve and compare that to where they end up. He made note that board member Dr. Austin Ferrell had helped set up a group to come over from the University of Tennessee at Martin to come to the school on Aug. 22 for the Call Me Mister program during the library time of the classes. He also said Grandparents’ Day would be observed on Sept 12.

Moxley said that Carr Elementary had been awarded a TVA grant to create a STEM lab at the school. At that point, Moxley let Sullivan take the floor to share more on the grant. Sullivan said that Carr had been awarded the grant from TVA to create a STEM lab, explaining that this is a step towards making the school district a magnet school for STEM, which stands for science, technology, engineering and math. “When you think of those four categories, that’s pretty much what every job that’s out there is about. We want to be preparing kids for the future jobs and do so even close to home,” Sullivan said. The STEM lab will include 3D printers, robotics, hydroponics, and VR goggles. Sullivan also said that the lab will be open to all classes to reinforce their lessons. As an example, Sullivan used was a geography or history class. If a class is learning about the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France, a book can attempt to show dimension and projection, but with the VR goggles, a student can literally stand under the tower and see its true proportions. Sullivan said this is something they are planning to begin immediately. They would begin setting up the lab at the end of last week, as Sullivan said it had to be ready as soon as possible for Fulton students to use.

Finally, the new Dean of Students at FHS, Prophet Giles, was recognized by Sullivan as he works with the students at FHS and makes sure the students are being taken care of properly. Cartwright also praised Giles for his honesty about what he feels would benefit each student independently. “He’s been a lifesaver to me as he spends time around the students and knows how important consistency is. He provides a perspective that I hadn’t even thought of based on his time here and the knowledge of these kids that I may not have.

Sullivan said he really has faith in the team that the school board has brought together for the best school district possible. He also introduced Amanda LeClere, who serves as the school district’s Director of Pupil Personnel and Sarah Townsend, who had been the FHS principal but transferred to serve as director of the preschool and special education. “The team is solid, and that is best for our kids,” Sullivan said.

**B. Employee of the Month**

The school board also wanted to recognize Ms. Diana Penney as the district’s employee of the month. Ms. Penney serves as the FHS secretary and has a very busy life, as a mother and holding two jobs. Cartwright said Penney could not make it to the meeting that evening, but he praised her for always arriving early for each school day and made his transition into FHS as smooth as it could be.

Sullivan then announced a slight change would be made to recognizing its monthly employees. Going forward, they would still recognize both a certified and uncertified employee of the month, but also a, fittingly, “Top Banana” of the elementary, middle and high school students, as nominated by their teachers.

**C. FRYSC Activities Update**

Ms. Tracy Pulley, Family Resource /Youth Services Center Coordinator, submitted a report to Board Members detailing the activities and services she provided during August 2024.

**C. Food Service Report**

Mrs. Ashley Teasley, Food Service Director, submitted the Monthly Food Service Report, outlining Food Service Department activity through August 2024.

**D. Fundraising Activity Requests**

All Fundraising requests were approved by the Board.

**E. Superintendent’s 30-60-90 Day Plan**

**PERSONNEL REPORT**

**11.** Superintendent Sullivan informed the Board of the following personnel actions:

*Appointments:* Anisleidy Alvarez, Instructional Assistant (PT)  
Adisley Alvarez, Instructional Assistant (PT)  
Jessica Canestrini, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Teacher (FMLA Leave Coverage)  
Adyline Evans, Instructional Assistant  
Amanda LeClere, DPP  
Tara Phillips, 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher

*Transfers:* Prophet Giles. Teacher to MS/HS Dean of Students  
Matthew Moxley, Teacher to Carr Dean of Students  
Kirk Paitsel, Special Education Teacher to Computer Science Teacher

*Resignations/Terminations:*

Sherry Langford, Librarian/KEA Representative

*Retirements:* None

**CARR YEARBOOK CONTRACT**

**12.** With a motion by Mrs. Jones and a second by Dr. Ferrell, at Superintendent Sullivan's recommendation, the board voted to approve the 2024 – 2025 Carr Yearbook Contract with Memory Book/Jostens.

Members voting yes: Mrs. Bransford, Mrs. Pettigrew, Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. Jones and Dr. Ferrell.

**FINANCIAL REPORT AND ORDERS OF THE TREASURER**

**13.** With a motion by Mrs. Pettigrew and a second by Mrs. Jones, the board approved to accept the Monthly Financial Reports and Orders of the Treasurer as presented by Mr. Morris, Chief Financial Officer.

He said that the district has started off on point but that the district would need to remain vigilant regarding school funding. He also said the district would have its annual financial audit the week of Sept. 3-6 and he had been focusing on providing the information to the auditors. Morris also informed the board that he had used the summer break to enroll in financial workshops offered by the University of Kentucky. In doing so, he has earned his financial officer certification. The board congratulated Morris on his achievement and thanked him for all he does for the FSD.

Members voting yes: Mrs. Bransford, Mrs. Pettigrew, Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. Jones and Dr. Ferrell.

**2024 – 2025 SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE PRICES & ALA CARTE ITEMS**

**14.** With a motion by Mrs. Vaughn and a second by Mrs. Jones, the Board voted to approve \$.10 increase to both breakfast and lunch meals making breakfast \$3.15 for adults and lunch \$4.85 for adults. The ala carte item prices did not change.

Members voting yes: Mrs. Bransford, Mrs. Pettigrew, Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. Jones and Dr. Ferrell.

**FOOD SERVICE PROCUREMENT PLAN**

**15.** With a motion by Mrs. Pettigrew and a second Mrs. Vaughn, the board approved to approve the Child Nutrition Plan as prepared by Food Service Director, Ashley Teasley,

Members voting yes: Mrs. Bransford, Mrs. Pettigrew, Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. Jones and Dr. Ferrell.

**TAX RATE**

**16.** With a motion by Mrs. Vaughn and a second by Mrs. Jones, the board heard Superintendent Sullivan regarding the tax rate.

Sullivan said that the board had three options. One option would be to take the compensating rate of 63.9 cents per \$100 assessed value. Another option would be to maintain the current tax rate of 62.4 cents and motor vehicle tax rate of 78.0 cents. The third option would be to take a 4% increase tax rate of 66.4 cents and motor vehicle tax rate of 78.0 cents.

Sullivan acknowledged that this is a dilemma that all school districts face. No matter what is chosen, there will be opposition. Sullivan recommended maintaining the tax rate this year, but to understand they can't take this route every year. He said keeping everything the same this year is workable and would provide the board to study neighboring school districts and see what they chose for their tax rates.

Sullivan’s reasoning for taking that avenue is very important. The tax rate affects many things, one of the biggest concerns is teacher salaries. Fisd must remain competitive with other districts to not only recruit good teachers, but to keep those teachers. The board approved to maintain the current tax rate of 62.4 cents and motor vehicle tax rate of 78.0 cents, which was Sullivan’s recommendation.

In addition the Board voted NO on optional taxes of Aircraft, Documented Watercraft and In-Transit Inventory.

Members voting yes: Members voting yes: Mrs. Bransford, Mrs. Pettigrew, Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. Jones and Dr. Ferrell.

**ADJOURNMENT**

17. With a motion by Mrs. Jones and second by Mrs. Pettigrew, the Board meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Members voting yes: Members voting yes: Mrs. Bransford, Mrs. Pettigrew, Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. Jones and Dr. Ferrell.

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Chair

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Secretary