



SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS MINUTES

MEETING: Regular Board Meeting	DATE: September 8, 2026	TIME: 7:00 p.m.	LOCATION: John W. English Administrative Center
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:			
☒ Talisha Belk, President	☒ Leslie Love Smith-Thomas Vice President	☒ Yvette Ware- DeVaul, Secretary	☒ Nicole Denson, Treasurer
		☒ Amani Johnson, Trustee	☐ Jillian Holloway, Trustee
ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:			
☒ Jennifer Green, Ed.D. Superintendent	☒ Sommer Caldwell- Carruthers, Associate Superintendent of Instruction	☒ James Jackson, Chief of Staff	☒ Devaughn Stephens, Chief of Talent Mtg
☐ April Rogers, Director of State and Federal Programs	☒ Minutes: Carolyn Foster, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and the Board of Education	☐ Marc Ingram, Chief Financial Officer	☒ Paula Lightsey, Executive Director of Academic Advisement & SEL
		Rebecca Luddington Cherri Dougherty	☒ Angela Smith, Director of Intense Student Services Network (ISSN)
			Student Board Representatives: ☒ Samantha Amesse, SA&T ☒ Favour Ibirinde, UK12

1. Opening of Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Board President Belk at 7:03 p.m. Board President Belk read the opening statement and Trustee roll call was taken. Trustee Holloway has an excused absence. The EDN Team is in the audience. Technical support is provided by M1 Studios.

2. Board Matters

a. Moment of Silence

- We held a Moment of Silence for all staff and community partners that are no longer with us.

b. Area Council PTA Resolution

- Ms. Herrington, who is the 1st Vice President of the Area Council PTA, read the resolution for the Area Council PTA President Celestine Sanders.
- Ms. Sanders was a part of the PTA for 10 years participating in several different roles.
- A copy of this resolution will be submitted to the Ms. Celestine Sanders family and to Southfield Public Schools (SPS) on August 29, 2026.

3. Report of the Student Board Representatives

a. Favour Ibirinde: University K-12 Academy (UK12)

- Good evening everyone, for the month of September, I would like to share a few updates about the start of the 2026-2027 school year.
- Due to the reconstruction of our main K-12 building, our elementary, middle and high school students are currently in different locations. We remain connected as one K-12 family.
- For the high school, students and staff are adjusting to a new learning environment. On the first day of school, the Class of 2027 participated in a Senior Clap-In. Community members, students and staff welcomed and celebrated the students as they begin the first day of the school year.
- The Class of 2027 held their Senior Sunrise on September 6, 2026, where they came together to celebrate the start of the school year.
- There is a \$50 parking fee for high school students who want to park in the student parking lot. The fee is due by September 30, 2026.
- Class of 2027 Parent and Senior Meeting – September 9, 2026 @ 5:30 p.m.

- High School Meet the Teacher Night – September 9, 2026 @ 6:00 p.m.
- High School Picture Day – September 11, 2026
- Fall athletic sports are currently being held at Southfield A&T. Congratulations to the boys' tennis team for winning their opening match against Waterford on September 1, 2026.
- Middle school students and families had the opportunity to attend JumpStart before the school year began. Families were provided a chance to have a walk through of the building, become familiar with the classrooms and their new environment.
- For middle school athletics, girls' basketball tryouts will take place from September 8-September 10, 2026. Practices will take place from September 14-September 26, 2026. Games will be played starting October 1-November 5, 2026 and the championship game will be played on November 7, 2026.
- Girls cheer tryouts will take place on October 20-October 22, 2026. Practices will take place from November 9-November 20, 2026. Games will take place from December 3-January 21, 2027 and the championship will take place on January 23, 2027 and the cheer competition on January 30, 2027.
- Boys basketball tryouts will take place November 3-November 5, 2026, with practices from November 9-November 20, 2026. Games will run from December 3-January 21, 2027, followed by the championship on January 23, 2027.
- Middle School Meet the Teacher Night – September 15, 2026 @ 4:00 p.m.
- Lastly, our elementary school is off to a great start. Students and families were welcomed with excitement on the first day of school, which created a positive and welcoming environment. The K-5 transition has been smooth. Teachers have already begun building relationships with students and establishing classroom expectations.
- The K-5 students received a warm welcome from community members.
- Thank you and I look forward to sharing more updates throughout the year.

b. Samantha Amesse: Southfield High School for the Arts & Technology (SA&T)

- Southfield Public Schools (SPS) Opening Day for all staff was held on August 25, 2026, which marked a strong start to the academic year. The district was welcomed by senior Tylar Smith and her beautiful rendition of the national anthem. Later that afternoon, the teaching staff attended a professional development session.
- During the last board meeting of the 2025-2026 school year, the new Student Board Representatives were officially appointed to their term for the upcoming school year. The meeting proceeded with the various agenda items. The overall tone of the meeting reflected collaboration, readiness, and shared commitment to academic excellence across SPS.
- On August 31, 2026, students returned to campus for the 2026–2027 school year with renewed energy and enthusiasm. This year's schedule introduces updated seminar structures and extended instructional time to support deeper learning and student engagement. Classes will remain in session until September 3, 2026, leading into the Labor Day weekend. Both students and faculty will return on September 8, 2026 to resume their regular schedules and continue the momentum of a successful start.
- The fall sports season has officially begun, bringing excitement and school spirit to SA&T. Our Varsity Football Team opens the season against Pontiac on September 4, 2026, with tickets available for purchase through the A&T Athletics website.
- Beyond football, several athletic programs are actively preparing for competition. The Men's Cross Country and Soccer Teams have begun training and will participate in scheduled meets and

matches throughout the season. On the women's side, flag football, volleyball, and cross country teams are also in full preparation mode, ready to represent SA&T with determination and pride.

- Supporting these athletic efforts is our cheerleading squad, Dance Company, and Marching Band with their continued performance readiness, rehearsing for upcoming pep rallies, community festivals, and district showcases. These groups play an essential role in fostering school spirit and community across campuses.
- For detailed schedules, game times, and ticket information, students and families are encouraged to visit the SA&T Athletics webpage or contact the respective coaches and program directors.
- As the academic year begins, additional student life activities, club meetings, and community events are being finalized. Updates will be shared as dates and details are confirmed.
- A heartfelt thank-you goes out to our SA&T faculty and staff for their dedication, guidance, and support during this first week of school. Their commitment ensures that every student begins the year with confidence and a clear path toward success.
- The opening weeks of the 2026–2027 school year have demonstrated SA&T's continued excellence in academics, athletics, and community engagement. With strong leadership, enthusiastic participation, and a shared vision for growth, our school is poised for another outstanding year.
- Thank you for your time and attention, and best wishes for a productive and inspiring September.

4. Report of the Superintendent

a. Employee of the Month – Tarana Stewart, Paraprofessional at Thompson K-8 International Academy

b. Partner of the Month – Robert Howard III, GDI

c. Legislative Update

- The legislative updates have been forwarded to the Trustees weekly from our partners at Oakland Schools. We are meeting in person for our Governance Relations Committee (GRC) Meetings.
- We are proud that our scholars are adhering to the new law regarding personal devices in the classrooms. Glad that they are living up to our Excellence by Design.
- Trustees are now able to registration for the NSBA Advocacy Institute in Washington, D.C.

d. Back to School Report Out

- We had a heavy lift in some areas to get the buildings prepared to receive our staff and scholars on the first day of school. Kudos to our staff that when above and beyond to assist in getting the buildings ready for our scholars on the first day of school.
- Our enrollment is up for the first time in many years. Thank you to everyone that worked very hard to make it happen.
- We will bring the Board more accurate data after the final numbers come in.
- With the higher enrollment numbers, SPS may move back to D1 athletic status for next school year. We will remain in our current division this year.
- Count Day is on Wednesday, October 7, 2026. Attendance is important for students and staff every day.
- Ms. Smith spoke about the 105c agreements not being signed by the sending district; therefore, we are not able to enroll the scholar. We are having our legal counsel drawing up an opinion regarding that matter.
- On Thursday, we had a severe weather alert regarding a tornado. We practice fire, tornado and lockdown drills often to ensure the safety of our scholars and staff in hopes that we never have to use it. We had staff members asking parents into the building and out of the severe weather. Dr. Green thanked every administrator, teacher and partner for trusting us with their scholar.

f. Staffing Update

- We have several vacancies listed created by our increase in enrollment.

4. Action Items

a. MASB 2026-2027 Delegate Assembly

- MASB Delegates will be Secretary Ware-DeVaul and Treasurer Denson. Vice President Smith-Thomas will be the delegate.
- Secretary Ware-DeVaul introduced a motion to open and approve MASB Delegate Assembly with Trustee Ware-DeVaul, Trustee Denson as the delegates and Trustee Smith-Thomas as the alternate delegate and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.

President Belk asked Secretary Ware-DeVaul to call for the vote.

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

Nays: Nil

Absent: Trustee Holloway

Motion carried.

b. Report 65-01 CUBE/NSBA Membership

- Vice President Smith-Thomas introduced a motion to open and approve Report 65-01 CUBE/NSBA Membership and it was supported by Trustee Johnson.

President Belk asked Secretary Ware-DeVaul to call for the vote.

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

Nays: Nil

Absent Trustee Holloway

Motion carried.

c. Report 65-02 SPS Large Format AV Upgrades (BP-T2)

- Southfield Public Schools (SPS) issued RFP 2026-21 (BP-T2) for Large Format AV Upgrades to support renovations at Birney K-8 School, Levey Middle School, and Thompson K-8 International Academy. Bid specifications were issued on July 17, 2026, and representatives from seven companies attended the pre-bid meeting on July 20, 2026. Four bids were received on August 5, 2026: Digital Age Technologies, Inc. – \$422,082.00

Telsystems – \$437,237.00

Capricorn Diversified Systems LLC – \$533,692.36

VSC, Inc. – \$572,449.00

All four bidders submitted the required Bid Bond, Familial Disclosure, and Affidavit of Compliance. The technology team, consisting of representatives from Oakland Schools and Integrated Design Solutions (IDS), reviewed the bids. A post-bid interview was conducted with Digital Age Technologies, Inc. on August 11, 2026. Following its review, IDS determined that Digital Age Technologies' bid was complete and compliant with the bid documents and historical pricing models. The contract also establishes unit pricing that may be used for future large-format AV upgrades at additional buildings throughout the Bond Program project phases through the change order process. Pricing is guaranteed for 36 months beyond the November 13, 2026 Substantial Completion date, subject to the equipment cost and tariff adjustment provisions established in the bid documents.

- SPS Large Format AV Upgrades (BP-T2) was tabled.
- Birney K-8 – gymnasium, dance space, cafeteria and multipurpose room
- Levey Middle – gymnasium and cafeteria,
- Thompson K-8 – gymnasium and cafeteria
- Original Bid Price - **\$422,083.00**

Remove Birney K-8 multipurpose room- \$29,399.00 and remove Birney K-8 cafeteria- \$25,966.00

NEW BID TOTAL- \$366,718.00

- Trustee Johnson introduced a motion to open and approve Report 65-02 SPS Large Format AV Upgraded (BP-T2) and it was supported by Vice President Smith-Thomas.

President Belk asked Secretary Ware-DeVaul to call for the vote.

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

Nays: Nil

Absent: Trustee Holloway

Motion carried.

d. Report 65-04 Personnel Action Report

- Partnering with MDE**

- Trustee Johnson introduced a motion to open and approve Report 65-04 Personnel Action Report and it was supported by Vice President Smith-Thomas.
- We will partner with MDE where allowable for any permits and any mutual alignment.

President Belk asked Secretary Ware-DeVaul to call for the vote.

Aye: Trustee Ware-DeVaul, Trustee Johnson, Trustee Smith-Thomas, Trustee Denson, Trustee Belk, Trustee Anderson

Nays: Nil

Absent: Trustee Holloway

Motion carried.

5. Information Items**a. Financial Report****b. Monthly Bill Disbursement**

- SPS is using our funding for top priorities that reach our scholars such as, strong literacy, mathematic instruction, enrichment, advanced coursework, social emotional and mental health supports, special education programming, and college and career readiness opportunities. High quality instructional materials and educator professional development help support this work in every classroom. Together, the investments advance scholars outcomes while maintaining the district's long-term financial stability.
- We will discuss how we would like to see the reporting of our financial reports at our next study session.
- We will have a budget update after the Count Day data has been presented so that we will have the accurate financial information presented.

6. Public Participation

- Participant #1: all is well and receiving great reports from her student; Ms. Pope dance class; Celestine Sanders; great first game of the school year experience
- Participant #2: PTSA at UK12; UK12 increased their ranking; first PTSA meeting is next Tuesday on the September 15th (hybrid) Vandenberg @ 6pm

7. For the Good of the Order

- We attended an event with one of our community partners, Denso. They had a stuff the bus event where they fully stocked 500 backpacks on a school bus. Thank you to Denso for all of their support.

- ## 8. Future Meetings

- ## 9. Adjournment

- Approved on: October 13, 2026**
- Yvette Ware-DeVaul, Board Secretary**