



# **JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

## **Minutes of Regular Work Session of September 16, 2025**

**Work Session** of the Jefferson County Board of Education held at VanHoose Education Center, 3332 Newburg Road, Louisville, Kentucky, on Tuesday, September 16, 2025.

### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chairman Corrie Shull

Vice-Chairman James Craig

Mr. Trevin Bass

Mrs. Linda Duncan

Mr. Taylor Everett

Ms. Tricia Lister

Ms. Gail Logan Strange

Ms. Lister attended via video teleconference.

### **STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Superintendent Brian Yearwood, Ed.D.

Dr. Tom Aberli, Executive Administrator Budget

Kevin Brown, General Counsel

Edward D. Muns, Chief Financial Officer

This meeting was conducted via videoconference pursuant to KRS 61.823 and KRS 61.826. The primary location for this meeting and where all members could be seen and heard by the public was the VanHoose Education Center. Members of the Board were permitted to attend in person or via video teleconference pursuant to KRS 61.826. Members of the public were permitted to attend in person or watch the live stream of the meeting.

## REGULAR WORK SESSION

### I. Call to Order

Chair Shull called the September 16, 2025, Work Session of the Board of Education to order at 6:01 p.m.

### II. Recommendation for Approval of Meeting Agenda

**Order #2025-158 - Motion Passed:** Superintendent Brian Yearwood recommends the Board of Education approve the agenda. The recommendation passed with a motion by Mr. James Craig and a second by Mr. Taylor Everett.

Mr. Trevin Bass	Absent
Mr. James Craig	Yes
Mrs. Linda Duncan	Yes
Mr. Taylor Everett	Yes
Ms. Tricia Lister	Yes
Ms. Gail Logan Strange	Yes
Dr. Corrie Shull	Yes

### III. Recommendation for Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

**Order #2025-159 - Motion Passed:** Superintendent Brian Yearwood recommends the Board of Education approve the September 2, 2025, meeting minutes. The recommendation passed with a motion by Ms. Gail Logan Strange and a second by Mr. Taylor Everett.

Mr. Trevin Bass	Absent
Mr. James Craig	Yes
Mrs. Linda Duncan	Yes
Mr. Taylor Everett	Yes
Ms. Tricia Lister	Yes
Ms. Gail Logan Strange	Yes
Dr. Corrie Shull	Yes

### IV. Persons Requesting to Address the Board on Action Items or Consent Calendar Items to be Voted Upon Separately at Board Member Request

There were no speakers.

### V. Action Item

## **A. Recommendation for Approval of the Working Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026**

Dr. Yearwood acknowledged that the District is facing significant financial challenges. He stressed that while this Budget addresses immediate needs for the upcoming year, it also serves as a starting point for more difficult conversations regarding the 2026-27 Budget. He emphasized the need to "diagnose the problem" and determine the necessary level of reductions before rushing into solutions.

Dr. Yearwood outlined three core standards that will guide the District's future financial planning:

1. Central Office will aim to bear the highest share of budget reductions.
2. The District will work to maintain salaries and avoid universal pay cuts.
3. The integrity of the classroom and the student experience will be protected.

He concluded by stating that the District's plan is to move from a deficit to a surplus with transparency and discipline. He quoted James O'Toole, saying, "Transparency is the key to trust. Trust is the foundation of leadership." He then turned the floor over to Edward D. Muns, Chief Financial Officer; and Dr. Tom Aberli, Executive Administrator of Budget, to deliver the presentation. Each Board member had an opportunity to comment and ask questions.

Chair Shull acknowledged that Dr. Yearwood inherited the current financial situation. He emphasized that the Board must frame and acknowledge that the District's financial state is "not of Dr. Yearwood's creation," but that he is now tasked with leading the District through it.

Dr. Yearwood assured the Board that his leadership would be based on honesty and transparency. He promised to provide the "good, the bad, and the ugly," including both successes and challenges. He stated that giving the Board and the public the "real financial picture" is the only way for the District to be successful.

Mr. Bass's comments and questions centered on revenue sources and financial oversight. First, he questioned if property taxes are the District's only significant source of revenue. He asked if any laws or regulations prevent the District from engaging in other fundraising activities, such as partnerships with local businesses. He expressed concern about the District's financial situation and his desire to help by exploring all potential revenue streams, no matter how small. Second, he inquired about the District's contracts. He asked if the administration plans to conduct audits to ensure that the money spent on these contracts provides a positive return on investment, aligning with the goal of fiscal responsibility. He wanted to know when these audits would be implemented and how the process would work.

Mrs. Duncan asked what percentage of the General Fund Budget goes toward salaries, implying that this leaves little money for other expenses. She then questioned the impact of property assessments, she noted that this hasn't been enough to close the budget gap. Mrs. Duncan also inquired if an outside party is being brought in to review the Budget with "fresh eyes" to help evaluate positions and identify potential reductions. Finally, she asked about the potential for savings through virtual learning.

Mr. Everett asked a series of questions to clarify the financial situation. He first sought to confirm that the District's overspending is currently being paid for using money left over from previous years. He then asked if other school districts in the state are facing similar financial challenges or if JCPS is an outlier in its fiscal management. Mr. Everett then asked why the District has not operated with a balanced budget, where expenses are lower than revenues. He wanted to know why this choice was made, especially given that it is possible to do so. He also asked if the Board could implement a policy to prevent itself from approving spending that leads to a deficit in the future. He suggested renegotiating contracts with external vendors. He asked for an estimate of how much the District spends on vendors annually and if the District has attempted to ask them for a cost reduction, as cities often do in similar situations. He proposed that even a 2% reduction would be significant, as many vendors would likely want to continue working with a District the size of JCPS. Finally, he questioned the process of negotiating with employee unions, noting that the cost-of-living adjustments has caused employee costs to rise significantly.

Ms. Lister expressed gratitude and optimism that Dr. Yearwood is taking the deficit seriously and that a new committee was formed to explore revenue options. She hoped these actions would build public trust and eventually allow the District to ask for a tax increase, though she acknowledged this would not be a quick fix. Additionally, she questioned whether the District could lobby the city or state for more money, she recognized this would also be a long-term solution.

Ms. Logan Strange asked if the 72% of the General Fund Budget allocated to schools includes capital projects. She then questioned if the District would consider asking for increases in other revenue sources, such as occupational or car license taxes and asked for clarification about utility tax.

Mr. Craig asked for a one-page document detailing every tax available to the Board and a brief oral report on cash flow at every meeting to ensure solvency. While questioning if more budget cuts were needed, he defended past spending on salaries, racial equity, and safety measures, stating he had no regrets. He challenged the Superintendent to keep student outcomes, not just a balanced budget, as the top priority.

Chair Shull began by seeking clarification on the District's financial situation. He asked if there was anything the Board could do to prevent having to sell off assets in October 2026. After pressing for a clear answer, he stated that the public and the Board deserved to know the District's financial position. He expressed deep concern and frustration that this information was not provided to the Board sooner. He stated that the Board had been repeatedly admonished to trust prior leadership and approve what was presented. He questioned how the Board could be certain that the information they were now receiving was accurate, particularly asking why prior presentations had omitted or removed data. He characterized this as a form of deception and requested that moving forward, the Board be provided with all pertinent information for every decision. Finally, he asked if the Working Budget up for approval could be cut further to help bolster the District's financial position, even if it wouldn't prevent the sale of assets. He asked if it would be beneficial to table the Budget to take a closer look at it. He also asked if ARMAC was involved in the budget conversation.

Mrs. Duncan stated that the Board was aware of the financial costs of the items they approved, such as the stipends for Choice Zone schools. She explained that the Board was aiming for an "ideal" situation, like needs-based funding and equity. She said that while they initially saw positions being added and removed, over time they noticed positions were only being added, and they were aware of the accumulating cost to the District.

Chair Shull clarified that the Board was not surprised by the cost of the expenditures themselves. Instead, he said the surprise was the District's overall financial position and the fact that they were never told these expenditures would lead to having to sell off assets.

**Order #2025-160 - Motion Passed:** Superintendent Brian Yearwood recommends the Board of Education approve the attached Working Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-26. The recommendation passed with a motion by Mr. James Craig and a second by Mrs. Linda Duncan.

Mr. Trevin Bass	Yes
Mr. James Craig	Yes
Mrs. Linda Duncan	Yes
Mr. Taylor Everett	Yes
Ms. Tricia Lister	Yes
Ms. Gail Logan Strange	Yes
Dr. Corrie Shull	Yes

## **VI. Consent Calendar**

**VI.A** Report of Certified Leaves

**VI.B** Report of Personnel Actions

**VI.C** Recommendation of Approval of Field Trips Request and Receipt of Report of Field Trips Approved by the Superintendent

**VI.D** Recommendation for Approval of Projects, Assignment of Architects/Engineers, and BG-1 Forms

**VI.D.1** Recommendation for Approval of the Project, Assignment of Architects/Engineer, and BG-1 Form for Partial Soffit and Gutter Replacement at 3901 Atkinson Square

**VI.D.2** Recommendation for Approval of the Project, Assignment of Architect/Engineer, and BG-1 Form for Structural Repair at Blake Elementary School

**VI.D.3** Recommendation for Approval of the Project, Assignment of Architect/Engineer, and BG-1 form for Secure Vestibule at Fern Creek Elementary School

**VI.E** Recommendation for Approval of Bid and Revised BG-1 Form for New School Building at Okolona Elementary School

**VI.F** Recommendation for Approval of Contract Completion and BG-4 Form for Domestic Water Piping Replacement at Stonestreet Elementary School

**VI.G** Recommendation for Approval of Construction Change Orders

**VI.H** Recommendation for Approval of Professional Services Contracts of \$40,000 or More

**VI.I** Recommendation for Approval of Bid Tabulations, Contract Renewal, and Amendments

**VI.J** Acceptance of Summary of Professional Services Contracts

**VI.K** Acceptance of Orders of the Treasurer

**VI.K.1** Acceptance of Orders of the Treasurer-Invoices

**VI.K.2** Acceptance of Orders of the Treasurer-Purchase Orders

**VI.K.3** Acceptance of Orders of the Treasurer-Vouchers

**VI.L** Acceptance of Donations, Grants, and Funding

**VI.L.1** Acceptance of Donations and Small Grants

**VI.L.2** Acceptance of Funding from the Jefferson County Public Education Foundation

**VI.M** Recommendation for Approval of Agreements

**VI.M.1** Recommendation for Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Campbellsville University for Dual Credit

**VI.M.2** Recommendation for Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Eastern Kentucky University for Dual Credit

**VI.M.3** Recommendation for Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Elizabethtown Community and Technical College

**VI.M.4** Recommendation for Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Marriott Louisville East

**VI.M.5** Recommendation for Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Morehead University for Dual

Credit

**VI.M.6** Recommendation for Approval of Data Privacy Agreement with Renaissance Learning Inc.

**VI.M.7** Recommendation for Approval of Commercial Listing Contract for the Property Disposal – Disposition (Sale) of Waller-Williams @ Riverport

**VI.M.8** Recommendation for Approval of Second Amendment to Sale and Purchase Agreement for the Purchase of 5127 Terry Road

**VI.M.9** Recommendation for Approval of Second Amendment to Sale and Purchase Agreement for the Purchase of 5500 Terry Road

**VI.M.10** Recommendation for Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Seven Counties Services

**VI.M.11** Recommendation for Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Norton Healthcare Inc.

**VI.M.12** Recommendation for Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Okolona Baseball

**VI.M.13** Recommendation for Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Texas Roadhouse

**VI.M.14** Recommendation for Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with J.B. Speed Art Museum

**VI.N** Recommendation for Approval of the Internal Audit Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2025-26

**VI.O** Review of Board Policy 09.4341 and Alternative Education Program Profiles

**VI.P** Acceptance of Superintendent's Personal Growth Plan

**VI.Q** Recommendation for Approval of the Renaming of Eastern High Schools Press Box After Long-Time Volunteer Chris Bonham

Mr. Everett pulled down item **VI.H** *Recommendation for Approval of Professional Services Contracts of \$40,000 or More* for discussion.

Mr. Everett raised three questions regarding professional services contracts. First, he asked for an update on any new processes being developed for approving non-competitive contracts. Second, he questioned the necessity of approving all \$2.3 million in contracts on the current agenda, given the District's financial situation. Finally, he expressed concern that the contracts' language lacks specific outcome deliverables, meaning there is no clear way to measure their effectiveness or a return on investment. He concluded by reiterating his belief that the District could save a significant amount of money by carefully re-evaluating these vendor contracts.

Mr. Craig asked for an update on the reporting process for professional services contracts. He requested a running list of all approved contracts, including their total costs, to help the Board understand their place in the overall budget. He also sought confirmation from Dr. Yearwood that any contracts placed on the agenda going forward are deemed "essential" and that their approval would not bring the District closer to insolvency. He acknowledged that "essential" is a subjective term but emphasized that, in his view, any service that benefits children is essential.

**Order #2025-161 - Motion Passed:** A motion to approve the Consent Calendar minus *VI.H Recommendation for Approval of Professional Services Contracts of \$40,000 or More* passed with a motion by Mr. James Craig and a second by Mrs. Linda Duncan.

Mr. Trevin Bass	Yes
Mr. James Craig	Yes
Mrs. Linda Duncan	Yes
Mr. Taylor Everett	Yes
Ms. Tricia Lister	Yes
Ms. Gail Logan Strange	Yes
Dr. Corrie Shull	Yes

**Order #2025-162 - Motion Passed:** A motion to approve consent item *VI.H Recommendation for Approval of Professional Services Contracts of \$40,000 or More* passed with a motion by Mr. James Craig and a second by Mr. Taylor Everett.

Mr. Trevin Bass	Yes
Mr. James Craig	Yes
Mrs. Linda Duncan	Yes
Mr. Taylor Everett	Yes
Ms. Tricia Lister	Yes
Ms. Gail Logan Strange	Yes
Dr. Corrie Shull	Yes

**VII. Persons Requesting to Address the Board (If Necessary)**

**VIII. Adjournment**

**Order #2025-163 - Motion Passed:** A motion to adjourn the September 16, 2025, meeting of the Jefferson County Board of Education at 7:39 p.m. passed with a motion by Mr. James Craig and a second by Mr. Taylor Everett.

Mr. Trevin Bass	Yes
Mr. James Craig	Yes
Mrs. Linda Duncan	Yes
Mr. Taylor Everett	Yes
Ms. Tricia Lister	Yes
Ms. Gail Logan Strange	Yes
Dr. Corrie Shull	Yes

<hr/> Dr. Corrie Shull Chairman	<hr/> Dr. Brian Yearwood Superintendent/Secretary
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**THESE ACTIONS, ALONG WITH THE AGENDA ITEMS, MAKE UP THE OFFICIAL MINUTES,  
WHICH ARE ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**