

**FORT THOMAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**  
**Board of Education Regular Meeting**  
Fort Thomas City Building – 130 N. Fort Thomas Avenue  
Fort Thomas, Kentucky 41075  
March 9, 2026  
6:30pm

**Attendance Taken at 6:28 PM:**

Present Board Members:

Mr. Jeff Beach  
Mr. Clem Fennell IV  
Mrs. Sarah Foster  
Mrs. Julie Kuhnhein  
Mr. David Russell

**I. OPENING OF MEETING**

Board Chair Julie Kuhnhein opened the meeting at 6:30pm.

**A. Pledge of Allegiance**

**B. Recognitions**

**1. Board Bravos and Updates**

Board members shared the following:

- Both HHS basketball teams are district champs
- HHS Swim/Dive won the combined State Championship
- Band, Symphony and choir performed a combined concert
- HHS TSA has 12 students moving on to State
- HHS Archery Team is headed to State
- JES Recall Team was undefeated this season
- HMS Personal Finance finished 2nd at State
- FTIS has 2 Golden Apple Winners: Claire LaNicca and Marie Zimmerman
- Brian McDowell was named 1 of only 2 State Network Champions
- Winter Guard placed 5th at State
- JES Color Run is this weekend
- Defense of Learning presentations will begin at the end of March
- 4th Quarter begins next week

**2. National Merit Finalists**

HHS Principal John Darnell recognized our 3 National Merit Finalists. While the students were not present, they will receive Certificates of Achievement and Tradition of Excellence shirts. These students include: Flynn Cook, Addyson Eifert and Dylan Spears.

### **3. Wrestling State Champion - Emma Hood**

HHS Principal John Darnell introduced Emma Hood, the Girls' Wrestling 152-pound State Champion. Emma is also the school's first Wrestling State Champ. The Board congratulated her and presented her with a Certificate of Achievement and a Champions shirt.

### **4. Forensics State Champion - Sophia Noah**

HHS Principal John Darnell introduced the HMS Forensics State Champion Sophia Noah. Sophia shared her enjoyment and her experience at the State Competition. The Board congratulated her and presented her with a Certificate of Achievement and a Champions shirt.

### **5. KSBA Banner Artists**

Assistant Superintendent Keith Faust explained to the Board the KSBA banner theme, and the process working with the students to get the final product. HHS students Charity Class and Balou McFarland designed this year's banner artwork. The Board sent Tradition of Excellence shirts to the students who couldn't attend the meeting.

### **6. Tradition of Excellence - Shelby Jones**

Woodfill teachers Samantha Reynolds and Natalie Heidrich nominated fellow teacher Shelby Jones for a Tradition of Excellence Award. The ladies talked of Shelby's dedication to the students at Woodfill and the competencies he demonstrates regularly. Four students also shared their favorite things about Mr. Jones. The Board congratulated Shelby and thanked him for his service to the district.

### **C. Student Showcase - HMS: World Culture Club**

HMS teacher Alyona Greene introduced the students of the World Culture Club to the Board. The students talked about the different countries they had "visited" and shared their thoughts on learning about different cultures. Students presenting included:

*Zachary Algie*

*Raegan Ashcraft*

*Isaac Hoppius*

*Udviti Kandula*

*Russell Laake*

*Aubree Peebles*

*Katherine Rayner*

*Bennett Sebree*

*Ramona Smith*

*Diamond Swaitti*

*Julian Tedeschi*

The Board thanked the students and presented each with a Tradition of Excellence shirt.

## D. Community Forum

There were no community members wishing to speak to the Board.

## II. ACTION ITEMS

### A. Highlands Athletic Complex at Tower Park Renovation

#### 1. Project Update

Chad Niedert shared Tower Park is nearly complete with the focus on finishing the storage building and the HVAC commissioning.

#### 2. Phase 2 - Renovations Change Order #1

**Order #2722 - Motion Passed:** Approval of Phase 2, Change Order #1 in the amount of (\$357.94) for the Highlands Athletic Complex at Tower Park Project passed with a motion by Mr. Clem Fennell IV and a second by Mrs. Sarah Foster.

Mr. Jeff Beach	Yes
Mr. Clem Fennell IV	Yes
Mrs. Sarah Foster	Yes
Mrs. Julie Kuhnhein	Yes
Mr. David Russell	Yes

#### 3. Morel Construction Co. Pay Application #20

**Order #2723 - Motion Passed:** Approval of Pay Application #20 to Morel Construction Co. in the amount of \$220,644.85 for the Highlands Athletic Complex at Tower Park Project passed with a motion by Mr. Jeff Beach and a second by Mr. David Russell.

Mr. Jeff Beach	Yes
Mr. Clem Fennell IV	Yes
Mrs. Sarah Foster	Yes
Mrs. Julie Kuhnhein	Yes
Mr. David Russell	Yes

#### 4. Riegler Pay Application #8

**Order #2724 - Motion Passed:** Approval of Pay Application #8 to Riegler Blacktop in the amount of \$5,000 for the Highlands Athletic Complex at Tower Park project passed with a motion by Mr. David Russell and a second by Mrs. Sarah Foster.

Mr. Jeff Beach	Yes
Mr. Clem Fennell IV	Yes
Mrs. Sarah Foster	Yes
Mrs. Julie Kuhnhein	Yes
Mr. David Russell	Yes

**B. Revised 2025-26 Calendar**

**Order #2725 - Motion Passed:** Approval to amend the 2025-26 School Calendar making May 19, 2026 a school day and changing May 22, 2026 to the last student day passed with a motion by Mr. Clem Fennell IV and a second by Mr. Jeff Beach.

Mr. Jeff Beach	Yes
Mr. Clem Fennell IV	Yes
Mrs. Sarah Foster	Yes
Mrs. Julie Kuhnhein	Yes
Mr. David Russell	Yes

**III. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Board Committee Updates**

There were not committee updates to share at this time.

**IV. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**Order #2726 - Motion Passed:** With all Board members having had the opportunity to review and pursue any questions about all of the items contained therein, approval of the consent agenda passed with a motion by Mrs. Sarah Foster and a second by Mr. David Russell.

Mr. Jeff Beach	Yes
Mr. Clem Fennell IV	Yes
Mrs. Sarah Foster	Yes
Mrs. Julie Kuhnhein	Yes
Mr. David Russell	Yes

**A. Minutes of Regular Meeting of February 9, 2026, and Working Meeting of March 5, 2026**

**B. Financial Report for Month of February 2026**

**C. Food Service Report for February 2026**

**D. Attendance Report for 6th Month of 2025-26**

**E. Authorization for Payment of Claims**

**F. RFP for Banking Services**

**G. JES Schoolwide Fundraiser**

Water Project PBL - H2O for Life

**H. Notification and Approval of Student Trips**

- 1. HHS Swimming & Diving - Lexington, KY - February 19-21, 2026**
- 2. HHS Wrestling - Lexington, KY - February 25-27, 2026**
- 3. HHS Bluebird Cuisine - Louisville, KY - March 5-6, 2026**

- 4. HHS Band - Knoxville, TN - March 6-8, 2026**
- 5. HHS TSA - Louisville, KY - March 16-18, 2026**
- 6. We The People - Washington, D.C. - April 16-20, 2026**
- 7. HHS Strings - Orlando, FL - October 1-4, 2026**

**I. Personnel Action Taken Since February 9, 2026**

Employment of the following Certified Employee

Jenny Miller-Horn - Director of Special Education, Preschool and Transportation - CO

Employment of the following Extra-Service Employees

Alyssa Brown - HMS Choreographer - HMS

Christopher Eaton - HMS Music Director - HMS

Employment of the following Paraprofessional Employees

March Brackman - Technical Director - HHS

Jennifer Schmidt - Boys Head Track Coach - HMS

Scott Turner - Sixty Minute Club - HMS

Resignation of the following Certified Employee

Collin Shadwell - Art Teacher - HMS

Resignation of the following Classified Employee

Tanya Ard - Cafeteria I - WES

Melissa Ofori-Attah - Cafeteria I - HHS

Resignation of the following Paraprofessional Employees

Vincent Berry - JV Cheerleading Coach - HHS

Jim Delong - Varsity Volleyball Coach - HHS

Brian McNay - Boys Assistant Golf Coach - HHS

Kenny Race - Boys Head Golf Coach - HHS

Becca Richards - Girls 8th Grade Basketball Coach - HMS

Erin Riggs - Assistant Volleyball Coach - HHS

Ashley Wroblewski - Varsity Dance Coach - HHS

**J. Grant Extended Leave**

- 1. Ellen Buchanan - Maternity - May 9-27, 2026**

**K. Approval of Superintendent Travel**

**V. OTHER BUSINESS**

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Board Chair Julie Kuhnhein adjourned the meeting at 7:18pm.

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Chairperson

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Superintendent