

**ESTILL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
RECORD OF BOARD PROCEEDINGS
(MINUTES)**

**Regular Board Meeting
June 19, 2025 6:00 PM
Estill County Board of Education
Boardroom
253 Main Street
Irvine, Kentucky 40336**

Present Board Members:

Ms. Tammy Hardy
Ms. Donna Isfort
Ms. Shiela Samples
Ms. Carrie Smallwood
Ms. Sharon Whitaker (Remote)

Visitors: Jeremy Simpson, Jeff Rogers, Wes Cornett, and Carlee Cornett

I. Call To Order

Chairperson Ms. Donna Isfort called the meeting to order at 6:06 P.M.

A. Welcome/Pledge

Chairperson Ms Donna Isfort led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Reminder to Sign In

C. Revisions: There are no revisions at this time.

II. Action

A. Consideration/Approval of International Travel Trip in 2027

Order #15270 - Motion Passed: The board approved an International Trip to Lucerne, Switzerland, Florence, Italy, and Paris, France, in 2027, passed with a motion by Ms. Shiela Samples and a second by Ms. Tammy Hardy.

5 Yeas - 0 Nays

Ms. Tammy Hardy	Yes
Ms. Donna Isfort	Yes
Ms. Shiela Samples	Yes
Ms. Carrie Smallwood	Yes
Ms. Sharon Whitaker	Yes

B. Consideration/Approval Of The Following MOA

1. FY 26 Engineering Program Instructor at Estill Co ATC
2. Lori Howard, PT, LLC
3. Mountain Comp
4. New Vista
5. Consider/Approval of Athletic Training MOA with Bluegrass Orthopedic

Order #15271 - Motion Passed: The following MOA FY26 Engineering Program Instructor, Lori Howard, PT LLC, Mountain Comp, New Vista, and Athletic Training MOA with Bluegrass Orthopedic passed with a motion by Ms. Shiela Samples and a second by Ms. Sharon Whitaker.

5 Yeas - 0 Nays

Ms. Tammy Hardy	Yes
Ms. Donna Isfort	Yes
Ms. Shiela Samples	Yes
Ms. Carrie Smallwood	Yes
Ms. Sharon Whitaker	Yes

C. Consideration/Approval KSBA Policy Update: Approve Annual Updates(First Reading) and Review of Procedure Updates

Order #15272 - Motion Passed: Approval of the KSBA annual updates procedure and first reading of the policies passed with a motion by Ms. Tammy Hardy and a second by Ms. Carrie Smallwood.

5 Yeas - 0 Nays

Ms. Tammy Hardy	Yes
Ms. Donna Isfort	Yes
Ms. Shiela Samples	Yes
Ms. Carrie Smallwood	Yes
Ms. Sharon Whitaker	Yes

D. Consideration/Approval of Out-of-State Trips**1. 8th Grade to Washington, D.C.**

Order #15273 - Motion Passed: The Board approved the eighth-grade Middle School Trip to Washington, D.C. passed with a motion by Ms. Shiela Samples and a second by Ms. Tammy Hardy.

5 Yeas - 0 Nays

Ms. Tammy Hardy	Yes
Ms. Donna Isfort	Yes
Ms. Shiela Samples	Yes
Ms. Carrie Smallwood	Yes
Ms. Sharon Whitaker	Yes

E. Consideration/Approval Of The 2024-2025 Staffing Policy and Salary Schedule

Order #15274 - Motion Passed: Approval of The 2024-2025 Staffing Policy and Salary Schedule passed with a motion by Ms. Sharon Whitaker and a second by Ms. Shiela Samples.

5 Yeas - 0 Nays

Ms. Tammy Hardy	Yes
Ms. Donna Isfort	Yes
Ms. Shiela Samples	Yes
Ms. Carrie Smallwood	Yes
Ms. Sharon Whitaker	Yes

F. Consideration/Approval 2025-2026 Staffing Policy and Salary Schedule

Order #15275 - Motion Passed: Approval of the 2025-2026 Staffing Policy and Salary Schedule passed with a motion by Ms. Tammy Hardy and a second by Ms. Shiela Samples.

5 Yeas - 0 Nays

Ms. Tammy Hardy	Yes
Ms. Donna Isfort	Yes
Ms. Shiela Samples	Yes
Ms. Carrie Smallwood	Yes
Ms. Sharon Whitaker	Yes

G. Consideration/Approval Of The Updated Handbooks.

1. GT Handbook
2. 2025-2026 - Employee Handbook
3. SUBSTITUTE TEACHER HANDBOOK
4. Coaches' Handbook

Before this was voted on, Mr. Brock asked Ms. Carlee Cornett to provide a brief update on the GT handbook and share information about the STEM and Create Academy with the board.

Ms. Cornett provided an overview of the significant revisions made to the Gifted & Talented Handbook for the 2025–2026 academic year.

Key Updates:

The updated handbook was created in partnership with GT consultant Fonda Crawford.

It now aligns closely with Estill County Board policy and state GT regulations.

New content includes:

- Referral forms for both teachers and parents.
- Clear guidance on identification areas: general intellectual ability, specific academic subjects (e.g., math, language arts, science), leadership, and the arts (visual art, music, drama, dance).
- A detailed explanation of the referral and identification process, highlighting data collection after a referral.
- Expanded resources for supporting gifted students through classroom and enrichment activities.

Primary Talent Pool Clarification:

- Designed for grades K–3 to identify students with potential giftedness.
- Students can be formally identified in grade 4 if qualifying data is available.

II. Summer Academy Programs Report

Ms. Cornett also shared the success of the district's Create and STEM Academies, which provided summer enrichment for about 80 students.

Create Academy Highlights (Arts & Culinary):

- Choir students learned and performed:
Siyahamba (African folk song)
La Llorona (Nicaraguan folk song)
My Old Kentucky Home (Kentucky state song)
- Musical Theatre: Students performed Hakuna Matata with choreography, acting, and custom-decorated puppets.
- Culinary Arts: Students prepared and shared various dishes, including:

Homemade pizzas, ice cream sandwiches, pickles, coconut macaroons, and biscuits with gravy.

STEM Academy Highlights:

- Students took part in a forensics-themed investigation, including:

Blood spatter analysis, fingerprint, and footprint matching.

Solving a “crime” committed by two teachers (engaging role-play).

Order #15276 - Motion Passed: Approval of all the following handbooks: GT, Employee Handbook, Substitute Teacher Handbook, and Coaches Handbook passed with a motion by Ms. Shiela Samples and a second by Ms. Tammy Hardy.

5 Yeas - 0 Nays

Ms. Tammy Hardy	Yes
Ms. Donna Isfort	Yes
Ms. Shiela Samples	Yes
Ms. Carrie Smallwood	Yes
Ms. Sharon Whitaker	Yes

III. Consent Items

- A. Approve Minutes of May 15, 2025, Regular Board Meeting
- B. Approve Treasurer's Report and Payment of Bills
- C. Approve Superintendent's Travel

Order #15277 - Motion Passed: All consent items passed with a motion by Ms. Tammy Hardy and a second by Ms. Carrie Smallwood.

5 Years - 0 Nays

Ms. Tammy Hardy	Yes
Ms. Donna Isfort	Yes
Ms. Shiela Samples	Yes
Ms. Carrie Smallwood	Yes
Ms. Sharon Whitaker	Yes

IV. Superintendent's Report**A. Update:****End of Year Academic Update:**

Despite significant absenteeism, data suggests continued academic progress at elementary, middle, and high school levels. Growth may not be as substantial as last year, but it remains positive.

Staffing and Hiring:

Multiple open positions remain at elementary, middle, and high schools (including physics and JAGS positions). Interviews are ongoing with leads on candidates.

Planning for Next Year:

Preparation is underway with leadership retreats and professional development (PD) planned.

PD will focus on emotional poverty (Ruby Payne) and trauma-informed practices to strengthen student-teacher relationships.

Funding and Facilities:

The district's SAR report, linked to funding, shows a positive increase for the following year.

Efforts continue toward funding the \$16 million middle school project with potential action in the fall legislative session.

New High School Principal Introduction:

Jeff Rogers introduced himself, emphasizing his background in education and athletics, passion for relationship-building, and excitement about supporting and growing the high school.

B. Notification of Personnel Action

(See Insert)

C. KSBA's 2025 Summer Leadership Institute (July 11-12 in Lexington, Kentucky)**V. Board Member Forum**

Ms. Sharon Whitaker shared personal experiences related to international travel.

VI. Public Comments

Peggy Baca

Q: After reviewing the KSBA changes/updates for the upcoming school year, I have just two questions/concerns.

1. For 09.4261 - “cell phone use is prohibited during instructional time and social media use.” I agree with this completely. However, the board already has this as their policy. It is not enforced. Many teachers at the HS encourage cell phone use to keep the students occupied when they are busy, done with a lesson/work, and sometimes even to help them with or to do their work. So what is the school board going to do differently to make sure this policy is actually applied/enforced and not just words on a paper? Parents are flat out lied to about how much and what for, students use their cell phones during class time. However, we are able to check their usage and history as well as ask them directly. When kids are able to use 7-8 hours worth of time on their phone in a school day and only 2 hours of that is the bus and lunch- obviously the policy is not enforced. So what changes are going to be made to enforce it, so our children are learning instead of playing games and talking on Snapchat?

A. In compliance with Kentucky Senate Bill 181, the school district is implementing a stricter communication policy regarding interactions between staff and students. All communications must be traceable to ensure transparency and legal compliance. The district will permit the use of standard email, while additional approved platforms include Sports U for athletics and APG Rooms—which integrates with the district’s Thrillshare website—for general communication.

2. 09.227 “Safe Haven baby boxes crisis line shall be prominently displayed”. I understand having a child abuse hotline number displayed and even the human trafficking hotline displayed- but baby drop boxes? This does not have to do with child abuse 99.99% of the time. Why should this be “prominently displayed”? It seems more like a political statement than a necessary resource.

A. This issue was not addressed at the Board meeting, as it was not included on the agenda.

VII. Adjourn

Order #15278 - Motion Passed: The Board adjourned their meeting at 6:37 PM passed with a motion by Ms. Shiela Samples and a second by Ms. Carrie Smallwood.

5 Yeas - 0 Nays

Ms. Tammy Hardy	Yes
Ms. Donna Isfort	Yes
Ms. Shiela Samples	Yes
Ms. Carrie Smallwood	Yes
Ms. Sharon Whitaker	Yes

Charlie Brock, Secretary

Donna Isfort, Chairperson