

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF  
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, SEPTEMBER 13, 2012

The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, convened in Special 2:00 p.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center, 30 East Texar Drive, Pensacola, Florida, with the following present:

Chair: Mr. Bill Slayton Vice Chair: Mr. Jeff Bergosh

Board Members: Mr. Gerald W. Boone  
Mrs. Linda Moultrie  
Mrs. Patricia Hightower

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

*Meeting was advertised in the Pensacola News Journal on August 21, 2012 - Legal No. 1574298*

[General discussion among Board Members, the Superintendent, and staff occurred throughout this meeting.]

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Slayton called the Special Workshop to order at 2:00 p.m.

II. OPEN DISCUSSION

At the request of Mr. Slayton, Mrs. Hightower provided a brief update on her recent meeting with Florida Governor Rick Scott. Mrs. Hightower, as president-elect of the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA), met with Governor Scott for dinner at a Boca Raton restaurant on September 11, 2012 along with other members of the FSBA Executive Committee. Mrs. Hightower said she found the Governor to be "a very genuine person" and interested in what stakeholders had to say. Mrs. Hightower said that the Governor was traveling throughout the state talking with parents, students, teachers and educators and encouraging all stakeholders to become involved in the legislative process early, before proposals became laws.

- September & October Calendar - Slayton

There were no changes made to the School Board's workshop and meeting schedules for September and October.

- Status of Garden Street Property, "For Sale Sign" - Slayton

At the request of Mr. Slayton, the Superintendent provided a brief update on the status of the property at 215 West Garden Street. The Superintendent clarified that the property was still for sale but noted that the School District had not been very aggressive in trying to sell the property because the market was so depressed. He said there had been only a few inquiries about the property but should an appropriate offer be received, he would bring that offer forward to the School Board for consideration. At the request of Mr. Slayton, the Superintendent said that a "for sale" sign could be put up in front of the property.

- Procedures for Changing High School Schedules - Hightower

Mrs. Hightower chose to postpone this item until October.

- Notification of Issues after Storm/Emergencies - Hightower

Mrs. Hightower said she appreciated that the Superintendent's Office had done a good job of noticing School Board Members about school closures due to Hurricane Isaac; however, she did not receive any follow-up notice after the storm about damage. The Superintendent responded that there was no damage to report other than a scoreboard that had blown down at Pensacola High School and several bus windows that had been broken. He said the total estimate of damage related to the storm was less than \$30,000. Mrs. Hightower noted that although the estimated \$30,000 worth of damage may not have seemed like a "big deal," it was something that she believed should have been reported to the School Board. Her primary concern was that there had been times when information had been released to the press but yet the School Board Members are not made aware of such information. Mr. Bergosh said he understood Mrs. Hightower's concern as while most of the time the School Board is made aware of issues, there had been times where he had learned of an issue or situation second-hand by seeing it on the news rather than being notified first-hand by the Superintendent's office. He said that while some things may not seem to be a "big deal," it might very well be something that School Board Members may be interested in knowing.

- District Information Phone Messages during Emergencies - Hightower

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Hightower, the Superintendent confirmed that if a phone was not answered for a School District "call-out" then the automated message, in its entirety, would be recorded on the phone's voice mail system if available.

- Update/Request for Information on Establishment of Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline, Tip-line, Web Reporting Portal (follow up from February 16, 2012 request) - Bergosh

(NOTE: This topic was addressed/discussed at the February 16, 2012 Special Workshop.) Mr. Bergosh followed-up on his previous suggestion for the establishment of an anonymous tip-line for reporting possible incidents of waste, fraud and abuse, to be managed by an independent third-party rather than any District operating department. Mr. Bergosh believed that with an independent resource for reporting possible violations, individuals may feel empowered to report concerns without fear of retaliation or lack of action. The Superintendent reminded Mr. Bergosh that when this topic was last discussed in February, he had suggested an on-line reporting system as opposed to a call-in tip-line. He noted that the on-line reporting system would be similar to the on-line system that had been established for the anonymous reporting of bullying, teen dating violence, harassment, and other incidents. He said that it was on the "to-do list" but the Skyward conversion and continuing implementation had consumed all of the School District's Information Technology (IT) resources. Mr. Bergosh said he would like to see both an on-line reporting system and a phone-in reporting system established. It was noted the cost for an independent third-party to manage the tip-line was nominal at approximately \$5,000 to \$10,000 per year.

- Status of Streaming of Video and Viewer-ship - Bergosh

Mr. Bergosh questioned whether the School District was tracking the usage of the online video streaming of School Board sessions. The Superintendent said that data showed that there had been less than 1,000 "hits" on the video streams over the past two months but he was hopeful that number would increase over time as more people became aware that the video streaming was available.

- Differentiated Teacher Pay Scale Model (high poverty track/suburban school track) - Bergosh  
[Handouts provided to School Board Members]

Mr. Bergosh said that he would follow the advice of Mrs. Donna Waters, General Counsel, and wait until the School Board met in Executive Session to have an in-depth discussion about the concept of a differentiated teacher pay scale. Mr. Bergosh remarked that he “would like to do something for teachers who work in tough schools.” He briefly commented on a recent article that the Pensacola News Journal had published about his idea to pay teacher in high-poverty schools more. He noted that two very important points were not made clear in the article: (1) that a concept such as this would never result in the loss of pay for any existing teacher and (2) that this concept was just one of many possible ideas “to start a conversation.”

The following speakers requested to address the School Board regarding this item: James C. Nims, Jr., speaking as an individual and Bill Vincent, representing the Escambia Education Association (EEA). Mr. Nims referred to the article that was published in the Pensacola News Journal about this topic. He said he was very disappointed in the “wordage” that was used in the article. He asked that School Board Members and School District personnel refrain from “using language that demeans the teachers and students.” Mr. Vincent said that he had seen the proposed salary schedule that Mr. Bergosh had recently posted on his blog. His primary concern was that anything dealing with employee salaries would have to be collaboratively bargained between the School District and union representatives.

- Discussion of Hurricane Shelters - Bergosh

Mr. Bergosh initiated a discussion about several issues related to hurricane shelters. His first concern was that he had been told that the “open available space” of school shelters that was reported to the state may not match the amount of space that was actually made available to evacuees. He was also concerned about the shelter “shut down” procedures as he had been told by volunteers that there had been “extreme pressure” to get all of the shelters closed down within a two-hour period. The Superintendent said there were many lessons learned about shelters during the Hurricane Isaac event. He said he would be discussing several issues with the County Administrator and the Escambia County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and the Red Cross including the need for identifying several community buildings that could be used as emergency shelters and the need to develop a process whereby community shelters could be used as the “first tier” of emergency shelters and the once a certain level of capacity was reached, the School District’s school shelters could then be utilized. The Superintendent asked that Mr. Bergosh discuss with him “off-line” the two specific concerns that he had mentioned.

- ECARE Program - Moultrie

Mrs. Moultrie chose to postpone this item until October.

- Focus Curriculum Goal Update – Superintendent

Mrs. Linda Maletsidis, Director of Elementary Education, Ms. Vicki Gibowski, Director of Middle School Education, and Mrs. Carolyn Spooner, Director of High School Education, reviewed information outlined in [handouts](#) provided to School Board Members relative to the status of each focus curriculum goal at each grade-level.

- Update on the Comprehensive Drug Plan – Superintendent

Mrs. Carolyn Spooner, Director of High School Education, gave a brief update on the continued success of the comprehensive drug plan. We have seen a Mrs. Spooner reported the results of the random K-9 drug searches from the 2011-2012 school year. She reported that out of 400 searches at middle and high schools, there were 52 K-9 alerts, with only 9 of those alerts resulted in the finding of drugs.

- Update on the START Mentoring Program – Superintendent

Dr. Karen Owen, Director of Staff Development, narrated a brief PowerPoint® [presentation](#) that outlined the results of the first year of the START program. *START*, which is an acronym for “Successful

*Teachers Assisting Rising Teachers,*” is a program that allows more experienced teachers to mentor and evaluate new teachers. Dr. Owen said that the program served 121 novice teachers in their inaugural year. In total 2,950 hours were spent consulting and evaluating the novice teachers. The average amount of formal time spent coaching and evaluating each teacher was 24 hours. The program had 12 Consulting Teachers (CTs) who mentored and evaluated the new teachers. The START program is sponsored by both the school district and the Escambia Education Association and uses a “reflection” method of evaluation, which allows the teachers to view and critique themselves through video. Dr. Owen reported that the START program had a 91% success rate in its first year.

- Wellness Policy Operational Procedures Update – Superintendent

Ms. Kay Johnson, Supervisory Technician-Food Services, narrated a brief PowerPoint [presentation](#) that outlined the 2011-2012 update on the wellness policy operational procedures. The presentation included an update of progress in the following areas: health education, physical education, health services, school food service, counseling, psychological and social services, and health promotion for staff. [NOTE: *Public Law 108-265 requires school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program to establish a local wellness policy. In accordance with State Statute Section 18 of Section 1003.453 school districts are required to annually review their school wellness policy and provide a procedure for public input and revisions.*]

- Energy Incentive Program Final Update – Superintendent

Mr. Eric Fritz and Ms. Jacquelyn Smith, Energy Managers, narrated a brief PowerPoint® [presentation](#) that outlined an introduction of the School District’s new Energy Incentive Plan. It was noted that site-based administrators/schools would have three ways to achieve incentive money:

- Point Incentive – Increase in Energy Star Score
- Milestone Bonus Incentive – Schools will be awarded each year when they achieve milestones of 20%, 30%, 40% or 50% improvement in their school scores
- “75 Bonus” – Achieving an Energy Star score of 75, in which their school achieves the “Energy Star Certified Building Award”

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Mr. Slayton called for public forum; however, there were no speakers.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Workshop was adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

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Superintendent

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Chair