

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, DECEMBER 13, 2013

The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, convened in Regular Workshop at 9:00 a.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center, 30 East Texar Drive, Pensacola, Florida, with the following present:

Chair: Mr. Jeff Bergosh Vice Chair: Mrs. Linda Moultrie

Board Members: Mr. Gerald W. Boone
Mrs. Patricia Hightower
Mr. Bill Slayton

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

Meeting was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on November 26, 2013 - Legal No. 1614028

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Moultrie called the Regular Workshop to order at 9:00 a.m. She welcomed everyone in attendance to the regular monthly workshop. There being no objection from the School Board, Mrs. Moultrie advised that the discussion on the Strategic Plan which began during the December 12, 2013 Special Workshop, would continue during this session.

Strategic Plan – Superintendent (continued from December 12, 2013 Special Workshop)

PEOPLE PILLAR – A representative from the “people pillar” committee reviewed the various goals and strategies related to that area. While each of the goals and objectives was reviewed, changes were only suggested for the following:

P.2.1. *Broaden the opportunities for all employees to participate in continuing professional development at the District level.*

2009-10 BASELINE: 1,057 sessions

2011-12 TARGET: 1,500 sessions

2011-12 ACTUAL: 1,887 sessions

2012-13 TARGET: 1,900 sessions

2012-13 ACTUAL: 2,730 sessions

2013-14 TARGET: 2,000 sessions

It was noted that the high number of sessions in 2012-13 (2,730 sessions) was due to the tremendous amount of training for the new evaluations that was offered during 2012-13. Although the actual for 2012-13 was 2,730 sessions, the committee had agreed to keep the target for 2013-14 at 2,000 sessions (an increase from the 2012-13 target of 1,900 sessions). After lengthy discussion, it was determined that the target for 2013-14 should be changed to 2,700 sessions.

P.2.4. Increase customer satisfaction as measured by Human Resource Services survey responses.

New 2012-13 BASELINE: 92.9%

2013-14 TARGET: 95%

It was determined that this objective related only to the Human Resource Services department; because the intent of the Strategic Plan was to encompass goals and objectives for the entire School District, it was decided that this objective would be removed.

At this time, the following item was handled:

December 2013 Charter School Quarterly Report (Section III, Committee/Departmental Reports)

Representatives from the following charter schools were in attendance: Byrneville Elementary School, Capstone Academy, Escambia Charter School, Beulah Academy of Science, and Pensacola Beach Elementary School. There was no representative in attendance from Newpoint Academy, Newpoint Pensacola or Jacqueline Harris Preparatory Academy. A copy of the Charter School Quarterly Report for December 2013 was provided to School Board Members prior to this workshop.

Ms. Kerri Coots, representing the Alternative Education department in Ms. Vicki Mathis's absence, asked if any of the School Board Members had questions or concerns about any of the information outlined in the December 2013 report. Mr. Bergosh had questions regarding the finances for Newpoint Academy and Newpoint Pensacola. Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Ms. Malinda Jones, Coordinator of Cost Accounting, clarified that some of the charter schools, specifically Newpoint Academy, Newpoint Pensacola, and Capstone Academy, were under the umbrella of other agencies. She acknowledged that Newpoint's corporation did tend to pull money from the school's fund balance but as long as the school was being supported financially by that corporation the small fund balance (as cited in the financial statements) was a non-issue. Mrs. Hightower requested a copy of Newpoint's board meeting schedule. There were no other questions or concerns from School Board Members related to the December 2013 report.

Strategic Plan – continued

FINANCE PILLAR – A representative from the “finance pillar” committee reviewed the various goals and objectives related to that area.

ENVIRONMENT PILLAR – A representative from the “environment pillar” committee reviewed the various goals and objectives related to that area.

Following the review of the remaining pillars of the strategic plan, Mrs. Hightower commented that she would like for future strategic plans to focus less on “operational” and “financial” goals and objectives. She believed that the strategic plan should instead focus more on the goals and objectives necessary to become the school district where parents wanted to send the children. Mrs. Hightower also believed that there should be at least one “layperson” from the community or a parent serving on each of the strategic planning committees as they could provide a different perspective and offer valuable suggestions. The Superintendent agreed with Mrs. Hightower's suggestion. Mrs. Moultrie requested and the Superintendent agreed that the Strategic Plan would be posted to the School District's website after approval. Mr. Bergosh suggested that it should be posted to the homepage of the website rather than under a department's page. The Superintendent noted that the final version of the proposed Strategic Plan for 2013-14 would be submitted for the School Board's consideration on the January 21, 2014 Regular Meeting agenda.

The Regular Workshop was recessed at 10:18 a.m. and reconvened at 10:28 a.m., with all School Board Members, the Superintendent and Mrs. Waters present.

II. COMMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Recognition of Outgoing Leadership from School Board

The Superintendent noted that a new chair and vice-chair were elected at the School Board's November 19, 2013 Organizational Meeting. He took a moment to recognize the outgoing leadership from the School Board. Mr. Bergosh and Mrs. Moultrie were each presented with a plaque in appreciation for the services that they had rendered to the School Board in their respective roles as chair and vice-chair during 2012-2013.

Recognition of Payroll Department

The Superintendent alerted the School Board to the stellar work by the Payroll Department in ensuring that the recent pay raise was reflected in employee's November paychecks and also ensuring that retro-pay would be issued to employees prior to the Christmas break. The School Board joined the Superintendent and his staff in congratulating the Payroll Department on their hard work.

Update on Class Size

The Superintendent advised that the School District had received its official class size calculation from the Department of Education (DOE) and as expected, it showed that there were a few (1.9%) classrooms that were out of compliance. He noted that all elementary schools were in 100% compliance with the class size requirements; however, middle and high schools were not. The Superintendent said a proposed compliance plan for 2014-2015 would be presented for the School Board's consideration on the January Regular Meeting agenda. He noted that an appeal would be filed and once a decision was made by the DOE, he would communicate that to the School Board.

III. COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

-December 2013 Charter School Quarterly Report

This item was handled earlier in the session.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. 10-11-13 Regular Workshop Minutes – *Postponed from November 19, 2013 Regular Meeting*

(NOTE: *The minutes from the October 11, 2013 Regular Workshop were originally submitted for School Board approval on the November 19, 2013 Regular Meeting agenda; however, approval of the minutes was postponed by the School Board as it was determined that a significant discussion with the School Board's hearing officers was not reflected in the document provided.*) Mr. Bergosh said that he appreciated that the significant discussion with the School Board's hearing officers was now reflected in the October 11, 2013 Regular Workshop minutes.

Approval of Minutes (Section II on the December 17, 2013 Regular Meeting agenda)

- a. 10-07-13 Special Workshop
- b. 10-10-13 Special Workshop
- c. 11-14-13 Special Workshop

- d. 11-15-13 Regular Workshop
- e. 11-19-13 Organizational Meeting
- f. 11-19-13 Regular Meeting

Mr. Bergosh wanted to have a discussion regarding the items listed under the “Approval of Minutes” section of the December 17, 2013 Regular Meeting agenda. (NOTE: *The majority of the discussion under this section actual pertained to the preparation of School Board agendas and not School Board minutes.*) Mr. Bergosh first commented that it appeared that the Superintendent’s staff was “just on the cusp of getting caught up with the minutes.” (NOTE: *Mrs. Holley DeWees, Administrative Recording Secretary, was still in the process of finalizing minutes from several October sessions which she had not attended as she was on a leave of absence during that time.*) Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Mr. Norm Ross, Deputy Superintendent advised that Mrs. DeWees was still preparing the minutes from the October 7, 2013 Special Workshop; it was her goal to have those completed and submitted to the School Board by the close of business that afternoon but if not, that set would be deleted from this month’s agenda and resubmitted on next month’s agenda instead.

Mr. Bergosh said he had discussed his concerns with Mr. Norm Ross, Deputy Superintendent, regarding the availability of School Board agendas and associated backup materials. He believed that agendas and backup materials should be available for School Board Members seven (7) days prior to the School Board’s Regular Workshop session rather than seven (7) days prior to the Regular Meeting as the Regular Workshop was the session where in-depth discussion on agenda items typically occurred. He noted that he had discussed his concerns with Mrs. Waters in the past but inquired again as to the requirement for agenda posting/publication and backup material availability; specifically whether or not posting/publication of the agenda should include availability of the backup materials. Mrs. Waters advised that Florida statute indicated that agenda materials should be posted seven (7) days prior to the Regular Meeting; however, she could essentially argue the point either way, meaning that as long as the information was available seven (7) days prior to the Regular Meeting that was sufficient or that since discussion on the items typically occurs during the Regular Workshop that the information should be available seven (7) day prior to that session instead. Mrs. Waters believed that a strict reading of the statute required the materials to be available only seven (7) prior to the Regular Meeting. Mrs. Hightower suggested that a revision to Chapter 1 of School Board policy may be necessary to address Mr. Bergosh’s concern; she noted that the policy had not been changed since the School Board transitioned to an electronic agenda. Mr. Bergosh noted for the record, that he believed it would be helpful to the School Board and especially to him in particular, “to have the weekends interwoven between football and things of that nature to be able to go in and have everything available because once Monday hits, I know it’s light speed.” The Superintendent said his expectation was that staff would have the agenda and backup materials posted by the close of business on the Friday prior to the Regular Workshop; however, he and Mr. Ross would need to determine how that information would be posted in the event that the person typically responsible for that posting was not available.

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES

1. Rule(s) Adoption

-No items submitted

2. Permission to Advertise

- a. Approval to Advertise Notice of Intent to Adopt Amendments to Rules and Procedures of the District School Board: Chapter 6, Student Transportation

Mrs. Hightower said she appreciated the two-page “summary of changes” that had been included in the backup documentation for this item; yet she requested that the Superintendent or his staff explain the impact of those changes. Her concern was that parents may get “lost” in much of the verbiage contained in this document. At the request of Mrs. Hightower, Mr. Robert Doss, Director of Transportation and Mr. Chris McFarland, Coordinator of School Choice, clarified various aspects of

the policies outlined in Chapter 6 that pertained to transportation services and the District Choice plan. There were no changes suggested or any additional information requested by any of the School Board Members.

Mrs. Waters and Mr. Bergosh left the Regular Workshop at approximately 11:00 a.m. Mrs. Waters had advised earlier in the session that she would be attending a deposition in the Cook v. Stewart case. Mr. Bergosh said he had a pre-existing appointment to attend.

b. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Curriculum

-No items discussed

2. Finance and Business Affairs

-No items discussed

3. Human Resource Services

A. Instructional/Professional

6. Leaves of Absence

Mrs. Moultrie was concerned that there were employees who had been on a leave of absence (LOA) and had already returned to work before the School Board was even noticed and/or asked to approve their LOA. Dr. Alan Scott, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resource Services, explained the difficulty that the Human Resource Services department had in getting those types of requests from employees in a timely manner. The Superintendent advised that an amendment to this item was forthcoming as one of the items listed an incorrect date leave period of November 2013 through January 2013 that would need to be corrected to November 2013 through January 2014.

4. Operations

-No items discussed

c. ITEMS FROM THE BOARD

-No items submitted

d. ITEMS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent advised that the addition of several employee discipline items were forthcoming.

e. INTERNAL AUDITING

-No items submitted

f. ITEMS FROM GENERAL COUNSEL

-No items submitted

VI. PUBLIC FORUM

Mrs. Carissa Bergosh, School Liaison Officer (SLO) for Pensacola Naval Air Station (NAS), provided a [handout](#) to School Board Members that outlined “signs of stress” in the school-age child of a deployed parent.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Regular Workshop adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair

PENDING BOARD APPROVAL