

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, NOVEMBER 13, 2014

The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, convened in Special Workshop at 3:00 p.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center, 30 East Texar Drive, Pensacola, Florida, with the following present:

Chair: Mrs. Linda Moultrie Vice Chair: Mrs. Patricia Hightower

Board Members: Mr. Jeff Bergosh
Mr. Bill Slayton

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

(NOTE: Board Member Gerald W. Boone was not present for this session.)

Meeting was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on November 3, 2014 - Legal No. [1632719](#)

NOTE: The minutes from this session have been prepared according to *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised*. The video from this session is available at <http://escambiacountysdfl.swagit.com/play/11132014-1212>

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Moultrie called the Special Workshop to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. OPEN DISCUSSION

- November and December Calendar – Moultrie

November Schedule of Workshops/Meetings

There were no changes to the School Board's schedule of workshops/meetings for November:

- Special Workshop, November 13, 2014, beginning at 3:00 p.m.
- Regular Workshop, November 14, 2014, beginning at 9:00 a.m.
- Installation Ceremony & Organizational Meeting, November 18, 2014, beginning at 5:00 p.m.
- Regular Meeting, November 18, 2014, immediately following the Installation Ceremony & Organizational Meeting

All November sessions were to be held in Room 160 at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center

December Schedule of Workshops/Meetings

There were no changes to the School Board's tentative schedule of workshops/meetings for December. The December schedule was to be officially decided during the November 18, 2014 Organizational Meeting:

- Special Workshop, December 11, 2014, beginning at 3:00 p.m.
- Regular Workshop, December 12, 2014, beginning at 9:00 a.m.
- Regular Meeting, December 16, 2014, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

All December sessions were to be held in Room 160 at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center

- Behavior Matrix – Bergosh

At the request of Mr. Bergosh, the Superintendent took a moment to explain the difference between the previous “adjudication guidelines” and the new “behavior matrix” used for determining student discipline. The Superintendent noted that the “adjudication guidelines” were much more broad than the new “behavior matrix” and did not list a series of consequences specific to each occurrence of an incident (i.e., first offense, second offense). He said the new “behavior matrix” included referral codes for consequences/interventions that were consistent with the coding system used in the School District’s FOCUS system and with those used for reporting SESIR (School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting) violations. He noted that the new “behavior matrix” was introduced during the current school year for the most part, it seemed to be working well; however, he was already seeing a few misalignments and therefore, the Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook Committee would be considering edits/adjustments for the next school year. It was noted that the new “behavior matrix” would eventually become an appendix to the Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook.

Drug Use/Possession

Mr. Bergosh noted that some of the incidents such as drug use/possession, had the same consequences/interventions listed for each occurrence (i.e., 1st, 2nd, 3rd). The Superintendent responded that for major incidents such as drug use/possession, a school principal did not have to go through each of the consequences/interventions in order; rather, they could “go right to some of the more stringent consequences” depending on the details of the situation.

*Fighting/minor, Fighting/serious
Harassment/major, Harassment/minor*

Mr. Bergosh wanted to know who would make the determination as to whether an incident of fighting was considered minor or serious. The Superintendent said a school’s dean, assistant principal, principal, or “discipline committee” (if one existed) would use their own judgment to make that determination after reviewing all the particulars of the fighting incident or the level, duration, frequency, type and impact of harassment.

- Availability of Buses for Extracurricular Trips – Slayton

Mr. Slayton was concerned about the availability of school buses for extracurricular trips and the inability to get students to an out-of-town location in a timely manner. He noted that oftentimes the situation was caused by the starting times for events held in other counties. As a primary example, he referred to football games held in Okaloosa County that would often begin at 7:00 p.m. He noted that Escambia County middle schools did not dismiss until 4:00 p.m. and therefore, the earliest that school buses would be available for an extracurricular trip was often 5:00 p.m. This of course, created a problem for Escambia County bus drivers being able to get students to Okaloosa County by the 7:00 p.m. starting time. In response to Mr. Slayton’s concerns, the Superintendent offered to write a letter to the Superintendent in Okaloosa County requesting that next year’s football games not start until 7:30 p.m.; he was also to follow-up with a phone conversation.

- Discussion regarding Organizational Meeting of the School Board - Moultrie

Mrs. Moultrie noted that the School Board would select a new Chair and Vice-Chair at the November 18, 2014 Installation Ceremony & Organizational Meeting. She noted that in the past, the current Vice-Chair had simply assumed the position of Chair and the Vice-Chair was essentially selected in numerical order by district. There was no objection to continuing the same process. Mr. Slayton said he intended to nominate Mrs. Hightower to serve as Chair for 2014-2015 and Mrs. Hightower said she wished to nominate Mr. Slayton to serve as Vice-Chair.

- Facilities Strategic Overview Update – *Superintendent*

At the request of the Superintendent, Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, narrated a brief PowerPoint® [presentation](#) that provided the School Board with an update to the facilities strategic overview.

- Legislative Priorities – *Superintendent*

At the request of the Superintendent, Mr. Jim Hamilton, Mixon and Associates, Inc., provided the School Board with a brief legislative review.

- Lincoln Park Primary’s STEM – *Superintendent*

The Superintendent introduced Cassandra Smith, Principal of Lincoln Park Elementary. Ms. Smith narrated a brief PowerPoint® [presentation](#) that provided the School Board with an update on Lincoln Park’s STEM initiative. A brief video was also shown so that School Board Members could see the STEM program “in action” at Lincoln Park.

- Booker T. Washington High School’s Marketing and Entrepreneurship Academy – *Superintendent*

The following students who were enrolled in the Booker T. Washington High School’s Marketing and Entrepreneurship Academy commented on the knowledge and experience they had gained through this telecommunications program: Erica DeVaughn, Mosheh Vann, Tyree Jackson, Blake Buchanan, Drew Miller, Bailey Porch, and Danny Nguyen.

III. PUBLIC FORUM

The following individual requested to address the School Board during Public Forum:

- James C. Nims, Jr., speaking as an individual, suggested that the School Board consider televising their special and regular monthly workshops. He also questioned the School Board’s attorney as to whether it was appropriate that Mr. Bergosh had referred to him by name during the last workshop when expressing concerns about security at School Board sessions. He commented on the inappropriateness of a School Board Member referring to a citizen by name when the School Board’s own procedures for public speakers indicated that speakers should refer to individuals by position, not name.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Workshop was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair