

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, JUNE 16, 2016

The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, convened in Regular Workshop at 8:00 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. Bill Slayton

Board Members: Mr. Jeff Bergosh
Mr. Gerald Boone
Mrs. Patricia Hightower

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

Linda Moultrie, Vice Chair and Donna Sessions Waters, General Counsel were not present for this session.

Meeting was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on May 27, 2016 – Legal No. 1658619

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/06162016-551>

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Slayton called the Regular Workshop to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. OPEN DISCUSSION

- Calendar Update

July 20, 2016 Special Meeting (*Purpose: To consider approval for the advertisement of the 2016-2017 Tentative Budget & Tentative Millage*) – Several School Board Members questioned whether the Florida Truth in Millage (TRIM) law specifically required that this meeting be held on July 20th or would allow for it to occur the same date as the July Regular Meeting (July 19th). The Superintendent was to communicate via email to the School Board whether or not the adjustment was permissible.

August 1, 2016 Special Meeting (*Purpose: To consider adoption of the 2016-2017 Tentative Budget & Tentative Millage*), beginning at 5:01 p.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Center - Several School Board Members had no recollection of the scheduling of this meeting; however, the Superintendent noted that School Board Members were provided a copy of the [proposed budget and TRIM calendar](#) during the February 11, 2016 Special Workshop.

Open House Schedules for 2016-2017 School Year - The Superintendent advised that Open House for high schools was scheduled for Tuesday, August 30, 2016, beginning at 6:00 p.m. and Open House for middle schools would be Thursday, September 1, 2016, beginning at 6:00 p.m. School Board Members were provided a copy of the [Open House schedule](#) for elementary schools. It was noted that August 30th was Election Day; as such, the Superintendent said he would determine if there was another date available to schedule Open House for high schools and would communicate any change via email to the School Board.

- Graduation – Slayton

Mr. Slayton indicated that he had submitted this topic for discussion in order to provide School Board Members an opportunity to express any comments and/or make recommendations about graduations. In general, School Board Members commented that the graduation ceremonies had ran pretty smoothly. The only recommendations for improvement were:

Traffic – request that Pensacola Bay Center staff direct traffic on both days of graduation

*Video Streaming** – request that camera be repositioned to ensure footage of students receiving diploma

Timing/Spacing – remind school faculties/administrators not to rush through ceremony, but to give each student sufficient time to get to the stage and receive their diploma before calling the next student

Sign Interpreter – secure a sign interpreter for all graduation ceremonies

Presentation of Colors – no need to start all the way at the back

*Later in the session, the Superintendent provided School Board Members with a [handout](#) that outlined the number of time that graduation YouTube videos had been accessed as of June 16, 2016.

Graduation Schedule for 2016-2017 – At the request of Mr. Slayton, the Superintendent provided the schedule for the 2016-2017 graduation ceremonies:

May 25, 2017 at the Pensacola Bay Center

Washington High School, 11:00 a.m.

Pensacola High School, 2:30 p.m.

Escambia High School, 6:00 p.m.

May 26, 2017 at the Pensacola Bay Center

Pine Forest High School, 11:00 a.m.

West Florida High School, 2:30 p.m.

Tate High School, 6:00 p.m.

May 27, 2017 at Northview High School

Northview High School, 4:00 p.m.

- School Construction Update – Slayton

At the request of Mr. Slayton, Mr. Anthony Noles, Director of Facilities Planning, gave a brief update on the construction of the new northwest elementary school and northwest middle school. Mr. Noles said the construction of both schools was on schedule with the elementary school design approximately 75% complete and the middle school design about 65% complete. He noted that both schools were on target for opening in the 2017-2018 school year.

- Reducing Cafeteria Food Waste while Simultaneously Providing Relief to the Needy – Bergosh

Mr. Bergosh discussed the possibility of implementing some efforts to reduce the amount of school cafeteria food waste, including: allowing students to take non-perishable food items back to class to be consumed as an afternoon snack if students are unable to consume those items during their regular breakfast/lunch period; and providing an area separate from but near the trash area, where students could place their uneaten food items that could in turn, be distributed to local food banks. The Superintendent clarified that schools should already be allowing students to take non-perishable items back to class with them; so, if any School Board Member was aware of a school where that was not being permitted, they should let him know. Ms. Jaleena Davis, Director of Food Services, addressed the concept of “share tables” which was similar to Mr. Bergosh’s suggestion to providing an area for students to place uneaten food items. Ms. Davis said her department had already looked into that concept a few years ago and in working with the local health department, had drafted a few basic procedures based on those used by the school district in Orange County, Florida. In short, Ms. Davis said the primary concern with “share

tables” was ensuring food safety as it related to temperature control and tampering; as such, “share tables” would require constant monitoring by a staff member (other than a food-service employee) or volunteer. She noted that an agreement with the local food bank(s) would also be necessary and steps would need to be taken to ensure that the “share table” was not associated with the School District’s existing food service program. She and the Superintendent noted that the School District was certainly open to the concept of “share tables” but noted that the numerous restrictions may not warrant the effort. To determine the merit of such effort, the Superintendent said that he might consider piloting the concept at an elementary school that was already using recycling as part of their curriculum and was also located in close proximity to one of the local food banks.

- 2016-2017 Budget Update – Superintendent

Mr. Terry St. Cyr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Business Services, gave a brief review of the information outlined in the [packet](#) he had provided to School Board Members.

Major Funding Priorities for 2016-2017

<i>Approximate Flexible Increase</i>	\$ 2,088,284
<i>Less:</i>	
<i>Salary/Benefits Pressure Points for 2016-2017 Budget:</i>	
<i>Projected Group Health Increase-District Portion (Fiscal Year Effect)</i>	(1,500,000)
<i>Increase in Retirement Rate</i>	<u>(600,000)</u>
 <i>Amount Available</i>	 \$ (11,716)

- Lincoln Park Primary Transition Plan – Superintendent

Ms. Cassandra Smith, principal of Lincoln Park Primary, narrated a brief PowerPoint presentation that outlined the school’s plan for transitioning from K-3 to K-5. Ms. Smith said rationale for the transition included: parent requests, current challenges, feedback from feeder schools, transportation, and community support. The project timeline for the transition is as follows:

2016-2017

- *Developing STEM curriculum for 4th grade*
- *Advertise return of 4th graders during the Spring*

2017-2018

- *4th graders return*
- *Developing STEM curriculum for 5th grade*
- *Advertise return of 5th graders during the Spring*

2018-2019

- *Return of 5th grade*

It was noted that this timeline would allow for the 2016-2017 third grade class to remain at the school and complete fifth grade in 2018-2019.

The Regular Workshop was recessed at 9:45 a.m. and reconvened at 9:55 a.m., with Mr. Slayton, Mr. Bergosh, Mr. Boone, Mrs. Hightower, and the Superintendent present. *Linda Moultrie, Vice Chair and Donna Sessions Waters, General Counsel were not present for this session.*

III. COMMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent listed the changes that had been made to the June 21, 2016 Regular Meeting agenda since initial publication and prior to this session.

IV. MINUTES

- a. [04-14-16 Special Workshop](#)
- b. [04-15-16 Regular Workshop](#)
- c. [05-12-16 Special Meeting](#)
- d. [05-17-16 Regular Meeting](#)

Mr. Bergosh said he appreciated that, at his request, Mrs. Holley DeWees, Administrative Recording Secretary, had incorporated additional verbiage into the minutes from the May 17, 2016 Regular Meeting as to more accurately capture the comments he had made during that session.

V. COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

[-Charter School Quarterly Report](#)

Mr. Charles Thomas, principal of Capstone Academy, addressed the School Board regarding a situation where the paperwork for the fingerprinting of two new Board Members had not been submitted to the School District and the actions that Capstone had taken to remedy that situation and to prevent a similar situation from occurring in the future.

Mr. Jerome Chisolm, principal of Escambia Charter School, addressed the School Board regarding the school's financial situation and the actions that Escambia Charter had taken to remedy that situation.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

-No items submitted

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES

1. Rule(s) Adoption

- B. [Notice of Intent to Adopt Amendments to the School District of Escambia County, Florida Rights and Responsibilities Handbook](#)

Mr. Bergosh noted that there had been quite a bit of news coverage about a recent "guidance" letter from the U.S. Department of Education which tells public school districts that federal law requires them to allow students to use restrooms and locker rooms "consistent with their gender identity". Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, the Superintendent confirmed that there had been no changes made to the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook in light of that "guidance" letter. Mr. Slayton reported that attorneys for the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) were encouraging individual school boards to simply "leave it alone" as there were lawsuits currently being filed against "one county for going one direction and another county for going the other direction."

The Superintendent requested that prior to adopting the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, the School Board consider offering an amendment to the Discipline Matrix on page 28, to insert "weapon" in between the words "bomb" and "threat" (*bomb/weapon threat*).

2. Permission to Advertise

- A. [Approval to Advertise: Notice of Intention to Name Beulah Middle School](#)
- B. [Approval to Advertise: Notice of Intention to Name Kingsfield Elementary School](#)

There were no concerns from any School Board Member regarding the recommendations to advertise the naming of the new northwest elementary school and the new northwest middle school; however, Mr. Bergosh did pose questions to Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations and facilitator of the 2016 Facility Naming Committee, regarding the process by which the Committee had selected the names Beulah Middle and Kingsfield Elementary.

(NOTE: This topic was previously discussed at the May 12, 2016 Special Workshop; see [School Facilities Naming Committee Recommendations](#).)

b. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Curriculum

A. Alternative Education

1. [Contract for Educational Services Between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and Camelot Schools of Florida, LLC](#)

Mrs. Hightower was supportive of the Superintendent's recommendation to continue the School District's contract with Camelot Schools of Florida, LLC; yet she wanted to see data with regard to the success of the students who enter in that program. Ms. Vicki Mathis, Director of Alternative Education, said information such as that would be a part of the school's end-of-year report which was due to the School District by June 30, 2016.

K. Workforce Education

5. [Workforce Education Fee Schedule 2016-2017](#)

Upon inquiry by Mr. Slayton, Mr. Thomas Rollins, principal of George Stone Technical Center, gave a brief review of the changes to the Workforce Education fee schedule:

- Tuition/Lab Fees for Aviation Maintenance Program had been added
- *Additional Fees Determined by Program* were increased/decreased as a result of fluctuating vendor fees

It was noted that there had been no change to the basic tuition fee of \$2.33 per hour for residents and \$9.32 per hour for non-residents.

2. Finance and Business Services

E. Purchasing

10. [Agreement: Discovery Education Assessment Services](#)

Mrs. Hightower questioned whether there would need to be some adjustments to student assessments in order to ensure that those assessments were more predictive of student FSA scores. The Superintendent confirmed that adjustments would be necessary, however, trying to determine which vendor was more capable of meeting the District's needs was an issue as Discovery Education had notified the School District that 2016-2017 would be the last year they would provide assessment services. He said staff had reviewed the assessment services/products of other vendors back in March/April 2015, but they were unable to come to a decision at that time, on a service/product that would benefit the School District long-term; as such, staff worked with Discovery Education on an agreement to continue services for one additional term.

22. [Bid Award: O.J. Semmes Elementary and Sherwood Elementary Schools Outdoor Covered Play Area and Multipurpose Room](#)

Mr. Slayton commented that he was glad to see that two additional elementary schools would be receiving an outdoor covered play area. It was noted that within four (4) years every elementary school would have a covered play area.

3. Human Resource Services

A. Instructional/Professional

7. Special Requests

Mr. Keith Leonard, Director of Human Resources, explained that in an effort to reduce the number of special requests items appearing on the School Board's agenda each month, the Superintendent would be adding verbiage on each instruction, professional, and administrative employee's initial appointment or annual reappointment request that would

allow for those employees to be eligible to serve in hourly as needed positions, if required by the appropriate supervisor.

4. Operations

A. Facilities Planning

1. Miscellaneous

- a. Lease Agreement Renewal Between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and Camelot Schools of Florida, LLC

Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, confirmed that there were no substantive changes in the renewal of the lease agreement with Camelot Schools of Florida, LLC.

c. ITEMS FROM THE BOARD

-No items submitted

d. ITEMS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

2. Student Discipline

B. Expulsions

1. Recommend that consistent with the decision of the due process committee, student discipline number 16-206-862 be expelled from all public schools of Escambia County for the remainder of the 2015-2016 school year and all of the 2016-2017 school year with the option to enroll, if qualified and if space is available, in an alternative educational program exclusive of regular school placement. Placement to be at the discretion of the Superintendent and to be available as an alternative during the full expulsion time frame.

In reviewing the disciplinary history for student 16-206-862, Mr. Bergosh discovered that the student's behavior had been an "absolute nightmare" for many years. It was noted that this student had received a total of twenty-two (22) referrals in the course of elementary school to high school. But Mr. Bergosh's primary concern was that the disciplinary history showed that beginning in October 2013, this student had been threatening students and teachers. Mr. Bergosh referred to the referral for an incident that occurred in February 2015, where the student's teacher made the following comments: *"*Bullying* Another student asked me to have XXXX stop throwing paper at him. When he did this, XXXX stood up and started posturing to fight. The other student stayed seated and told XXXX if he touched him, he would contact school officials. XXXX has been written up for doing this to the same student before in another class. XXXX also has a full intervention log for my class."* Mr. Bergosh pointed out that although the teacher specifically characterized and described the February 2015 incident as bullying, it was never coded as such; instead, it was coded as defiance, disrespect, and minor disruption and it resulted in only two (2) days in-school suspension. Noting that there was quite a difference between a minor classroom disruption and one student making violent threats towards another, Mr. Bergosh questioned why the incident had not been coded as bullying when the teacher specifically characterized and described it as such. Mr. Bergosh went on to say that it was his belief that the disciplinary situation in Escambia County was driving parents and teachers away and was also a primary reason why many individuals who were relocating to the Escambia County area for employment, were actually choosing to live and have their students educated in neighboring counties. The Superintendent and Mr. Jeremy Tompkins, Court Liaison recalled that February 2015 was around the time that the School District had introduced new procedures for handling incidents of bullying. (It was noted that the February 2015 incident involving student 16-206-862 had occurred prior to the implementation of and training on those new procedures.) Since that time, they believed that the School District had made much progress in training teachers and school administrators on the appropriate way for dealing with such incidents.

e. INTERNAL AUDITING

-No items submitted

f. ITEMS FROM GENERAL COUNSEL

-No items submitted

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM

Mr. Slayton called for public forum; however, there was no one who wished to speak.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Regular Workshop adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair

PENDING BOARD APPROVAL