

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF  
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, JANUARY 14, 2016

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:

Vice Chair: Mrs. Linda Moultrie (*served as Chair in Mr. Slayton's absence*)  
Board Members: Mr. Jeff Bergosh  
Mr. Gerald Boone  
Mrs. Patricia Hightower

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

*Board Chair Bill Slayton was not present for this session.*

Meeting was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on January 4, 2016 - Legal No. 1651701

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/01142016-681>

[*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

- Escambia High School Culinary Arts Academy – *Superintendent*

Chef Jason Duckworth and students enrolled in the Escambia High School Culinary Arts Academy addressed the School Board regarding this program in which students learn a multitude of recipes and gain vast knowledge about the culinary arts over four years. Students also have an opportunity to obtain certifications such as Serve Safe and Safe Staff, which can help students further their education in the culinary business.

- Calendar Update

There were no changes to the remaining schedule of School Board workshops/meetings for January:

- Regular Workshop, January 15<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 9:00 a.m.\*
- Regular Meeting, January 19<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 5:30 p.m.\*

*\*To be held in Room 160 at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center*

There was general discussion regarding the schedules for individual School Board Members and Mrs. Waters. There was also mention that the School Board had not received an invitation to Escambia Westgate's annual Mardi Gras Parade that was scheduled for February 5<sup>th</sup>. It was noted that the School District would conduct a Teacher Fair on February 27<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Booker T. Washington High School.

- Discussion of Proposed Education-Related Legislation from Tallahassee – Bergosh

Mr. Bergosh initiated a discussion\* on a few of the proposed education-related bills. He said it was his desire to identify, from the discussion, which bills the School Board and/or the Superintendent intended to advocate for. As several School Board Members were not prepared for the discussion, it was suggested that perhaps it would be more appropriate to schedule a separate session in the future to allow ample time for School Board Members, the Superintendent, and the Superintendent's staff to review and discuss the various education-related bills. The Superintendent commented that he would be focusing his advocacy on those bills which would have the greatest impact locally.

\* The following education-related bills were briefly addressed during the discussion of this topic:

Senate Bill 672: Educational Options - *Educational Options; Creating the "Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program Act"; establishing student eligibility requirements for enrollment in the program; establishing the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities; establishing a Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program Scholarship for certain qualified students; authorizing certain school districts and charter schools to be eligible to receive incentive payments for implementing a standard student attire policy that meets certain criteria; changing the name of the "Florida Personal Learning Scholarship Account Program" to the "Gardiner Scholarship Program", etc.*

Senate Bill 1360: Student Assessments - *Student Assessments; Authorizing a district school board to choose to implement certain rigorous alternative assessment options by a certain school year; requiring each school district to annually notify students and parents of standard high school diploma requirements by a specified date; requiring a classroom teacher's performance evaluation to be based on the performance of certain students, etc.*

Senate Bill 1426: Membership Associations - *Membership Associations; Requiring membership associations to file an annual report with the Legislature; prohibiting a membership association from using public funds for certain litigation; requiring the Auditor General to conduct certain audits annually, etc.*

House Bill 7043: Education - *Education; Creates Florida College System Performance-based Incentive for Florida College System institutions & Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program; revises provisions relating to preeminent state research universities program, state university system performance-based incentives, & teacher liability insurance.*

- Process for Naming New Schools – Superintendent

With the construction of two new schools\* imminent, the Superintendent felt it was time to discuss the process for naming those schools. At the request of the Superintendent, Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, reviewed the current process for naming a new school as outlined in School Board Rule [3.11, Selection of School Names](#). (\*A new middle school located at 6001 West Nine Mile Road and a new elementary school located at 900 West Kingsfield Road). It was the School Board's preference to assign this matter to a committee consisting of an appointee by each Board Member and the Superintendent. There was a consensus among the School Board that one committee would be sufficient to handle the naming of both schools, concurrently. School Board Members were in agreement that the solicitation period should be no less than thirty (30) days. The Superintendent asked that each School Board Member provide him with the name of his/her appointee by January 29<sup>th</sup>.

- Alternative Bell Schedule for Selected Schools – Superintendent

The Superintendent said that during initial discussions about the School District's Vision 20/20 plan, schools had been challenged to "transform" their school days to better meet the needs of students; as a result, several schools including Pine Forest High School, had proposed the idea of an alternative bell schedule. Those schools however, were advised that in order to proceed with such a change, they would need support from their school administration as well as support from at least 60% of their faculty. The Superintendent reported that Pine Forest High School had garnered support for this alternative bell schedule from 83% of their faculty and as such, the schedule changes would be piloted during the 2016-2017 school year.

Ms. Laura Touchstone, principal of Pine Forest High School, along with assistant principal Mr. Jeff Elliott, narrated a brief PowerPoint@ [presentation](#) that outlined their school's plan to change to an alternative

bell schedule that would be implemented at no additional cost, at the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year. Ms. Touchstone said this new schedule was essentially an “alternating block” schedule for 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> period with a daily 7<sup>th</sup> period. She advised that the new schedule would also include “Eagle Hour” in which students could engage in a variety of activities including: lunch, sports and/or club meetings, meetings with teachers for assistance, make-up tests, and/or assessment practice/review. The majority of Ms. Touchstone’s and Mr. Elliott’s presentation focused on the reasons why the change was being implemented and the support that would be provided to the faculty to ensure that they were prepared for this change. Mr. Bergosh commented that he especially liked the idea that students’ transitions would be minimized under the “alternating block” schedule. Mrs. Hightower applauded Pine Forest High School for “thinking outside the box” and for committing to providing support for their faculty as they embarked on this new initiative. Mr. Boone and Mrs. Moultrie echoed Mrs. Hightower’s comments.

~~**DELETED** – National Association of Charter School Authorizers – Superintendent~~

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Mrs. Moultrie called for public forum; however, there were no speakers.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Workshop was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

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Superintendent

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Chair