

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, DECEMBER 7, 2017

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: Mr. Gerald W. Boone (District II)
Vice Chair: Mr. Patricia Hightower (District IV)
Board Members: Mr. Kevin L. Adams (District I)
Ms. Lee H. C. Hansen (District III)
Mr. Bill Slayton (District IV)

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

Meeting advertised in *Pensacola News Journal* on November 17, 2017 - Legal No. [2542875](#)

NOTE: Minutes from this session have been prepared according to *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

Video from this session is available at <http://escambiacountysdfl.swagit.com/play/12072017-664>

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Boone called the Special Workshop to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. OPEN DISCUSSION

- FLDOT Pensacola Bay Bridge Replacement Project - *Superintendent*

Representatives of the Specialized Outreach Team for the Pensacola Bay Bridge replacement project narrated a brief PowerPoint® [presentation](#) regarding a school-based outreach program designed to engage students in this local project. *The priority of the student outreach program is to introduce students in pre-K through Grade 12 to the elements of bridge construction, provide career information to high school students, and support existing school district outreach programs.*

- Calendar

NOTE: *In addition to reviewing and discussing their monthly schedules of workshops/meetings, the School Board Members also reviewed and/or discussed events outlined on the School District's calendar.*

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

- Regular Workshop, December 8, beginning at 9:00 a.m.*

Purpose: Discussion of items on the December 12 Regular Meeting agenda

- Regular Meeting, December 12, beginning at 5:30 p.m.*

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

- Special Workshop, January 11, beginning at 3:00 p.m.*
Purpose: Open discussion & presentations
- Regular Workshop, January 12, beginning at 9:00 a.m.*
Purpose: Discussion of items on the January 16 Regular Meeting agenda
- Regular Meeting, January 16, beginning at 5:30 p.m.*

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

- FERPA/Public Relations – Adams

Mr. Adams had concerns about several incidents of late reported incorrectly in local media reports and/or on popular social media sites. The Superintendent said it was difficult to manage misinformation, given the School District was limited to providing only generic information, as specific details may violate a student's right to privacy under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). (*In general, FERPA states that, unless written permission is given, school personnel cannot release any "personally identifiable information" about a student to a third party.*) The Superintendent suggested that the recirculation of a [viewpoint written by the School Board's General Counsel](#) as a means to inform the public and to remind District and school staff of the School District's duty to protect student privacy.

- Process for Replacing Stage Curtains* – Hightower

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Hightower, the Superintendent explained the process that a school would follow in requesting financial assistance from the District when lacking the financial resources for an expensive, yet necessary, capital purchase. (*Although the title of this topic refers specifically to the process for replacing stage curtains, the discussion focused primarily on the general process whereby a school principal would make a request to the appropriate level director, who in turn, would make the request to the Superintendent's Executive Staff.)

- Football Playoffs – Slayton

Mr. Roger Mayo, District Athletic Director, reviewed [information](#) regarding the new Florida High School Athletics Association (FHSAA) football playoff structure, including how teams would now earn points, and the qualifying criteria for the point system.

- Florida Constitution Revision Commission (Elected v Appointed & Term Limits) – Slayton

Mr. Slayton asked the Superintendent comment on two proposals of interest from the Constitution Revision Commission (CRC) to change Florida's Constitution:

Proposal 33 – Appointed Superintendents – This proposal revises Section 5 of Article IX to require that the superintendent of schools of a school district be appointed by the district school board rather than elected. The proposal provides an effective date of November 17, 2020.

The Superintendent had no issue with an appointed or an elected superintendent; however, he believed such a decision should remain in the hands of the people and the local community, as provided for under the

current constitution. (Currently, the constitution requires that superintendents be elected or, when provide by resolution of the district school board, or by special law, approved by the voters, the superintendent may be appointed.)

Proposal 43 – School Board Member Term Limits – This proposal amends Section 4 of Article IX to limit school board members to two consecutive four year terms. After serving two terms for a total of eight years, the school board member is ineligible to run for another term. The proposal provides that current service on the school board counts towards the eight year limit.

The Superintendent had no issue with terms limits; however, it seemed discriminatory to him that one group (school board members) be subjected to these limitations and not applied equally to similar groups of local elected officials.

The Superintendent advised that these two proposals would be addressed at the next Constitution Revision Commission (CRC) Local Government Committee meeting scheduled for December 14, 2017, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., at 401 Senate Office Building, in Tallahassee, Florida. *Any recommended changes to the Florida Constitution would be placed on the November 6, 2018 General Election ballot for consideration by voters.*

III. [PUBLIC FORUM](#)

-None

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Workshop adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair