

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, MARCH 13, 2018

The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, convened in a Joint Meeting with the Escambia County Board of Commissioners, at 5:00 p.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center, 30 East Texar Drive, Pensacola, Florida, with the following present:

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chair: Mr. Jeff Bergosh (District I)
Vice Chair: Mr. Lumon J. May (District III)
Commissioners: Mr. Doug Underhill (District II)
Mr. Grover C. Robinson, IV (District IV)
Mr. Steven Barry (District V)

County Administrator: Mr. Jack Brown

Meeting advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on March 1, 2018 – Legal No. [2748341](#)

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Boone called the Joint Meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

II. INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pastor Lonnie Wesley of Greater Little Rock Baptist Church delivered the invocation and Mr. Boone led the Pledge of Allegiance to Flag of the United States of America.

III. COMMENTS – GERALD W. BOONE, CHAIR, DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. Boone welcomed everyone to the Joint Meeting. He looked forward to the opportunity for the two entities to share ideas on making Escambia County even better.

IV. COMMENTS – JEFF BERGOSH, CHAIR, BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Bergosh thanked the Superintendent and his staff for hosting this joint session. He too, looked forward to meaningful discussion between the two entities.

V. GRADUATION RATE

At the request of the Superintendent, Ms. Lesa Morgan, Director of High School Education, narrated a brief PowerPoint presentation delineating the progress made with on time, four-year graduation with a standard diploma, which was currently at 79.5% - up from about 60% in 2008.

The following items were discussed at length, concurrently:

- VI. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT FOR BEULAH MIDDLE SCHOOL
- VII. SIDEWALK PRIORITIES (SAFE WALK TO SCHOOL)
- VIII. ESCAMBIA PATHWAYS COALITION (EPC) REPORT

Much of the discussion focused on the new Beulah Middle School and the realization that access to that school would be challenging for students who walk due to a lack of sidewalks in the area. Access coming out of Allegheny Road directly across the street from Beulah Middle School was also a concern, as the current Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) plan called for that entrance to be a "right-turn only," which residents did not want.

IX. DISCUSSION OF JOINT COOPERATION BETWEEN BCC AND ECSD IN WORKING WITH STATE LEADERS AND UWF TO BRING A LAW SCHOOL AND A MEDICAL SCHOOL TO PENSACOLA

Mr. Bergosh initiated a discussion about the feasibility of bringing a law school and/or a medical school to Pensacola. His idea was that instead of exporting its students and their spending to places like Tallahassee (Florida State University) and Mobile (University of South Alabama), Escambia County might keep them and their spending local. The Superintendent said he was certainly supportive of any opportunity to help students, yet he was not sure this idea was feasible and noted that it was certainly not within the realm of the School District's to be involved; Mr. Boone agreed. Commissioner May said if there were traction with the legislative delegation and university trustees, he would support it. Commissioner Robinson said he was certainly receptive to the idea, but suggested it was probably more of a long-range consideration.

X. DISCUSSION OF MAKING A TRIUMPH REQUEST TO ESTABLISH A PUBLIC CHARTER BOARDING SCHOOL FOR AT-RISK ESCAMBIA COUNTY STUDENTS

Mr. Bergosh presented the idea of establishing a public charter boarding school for at-risk students in Escambia County; possibly using grants available through Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. as an initial funding source for start-up costs. The Superintendent commented that the challenge with such an idea was the cost, noting that while there was some funding available from the state of Florida, it was certainly not enough to cover the millions in recurring operational costs. He also noted that the School District's funds certainly could not support such a costly initiative, so it would take the contributions of investors and/or corporate partners.

XI. DISCUSSION OF ESTABLISHING AN ESCAMBIA YOUTH COMMISSION

Mr. Bergosh discussed the possibility of establishing a Youth Commission in Escambia County, similar to those in Atlanta, Georgia and San Diego, California as a means of giving motivated students an opportunity to engage in the political process. Mr. Bergosh received support from not only his counterparts on the County Commission, but also members of the School Board and the Superintendent. Mr. Bergosh said he would work with County staff to establish this new group and would then ask the School District to assist with identifying students from each high school who would be willing to serve.

XII. PUBLIC FORUM

-No registration forms submitted

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Joint Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair