

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, JUNE 17, 2019

The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, convened in Regular Workshop at 9:00 a.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center, 30 East Texar Drive, Pensacola, Florida, with the following present:

Chair: Mrs. Patricia Hightower (District IV)
Vice Chair: Mr. Bill Slayton (District V)
Board Members: Mr. Kevin L. Adams (District I)
Mr. Paul Fetsko (District II)
Dr. Laura Dortch Edler (District III)

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

School Board General Counsel, Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters

Meeting advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on June 3, 2019 – Legal No. [3519738](#)

Minutes prepared according to *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised*

Video available at <http://escambiacountysdfl.swagit.com/play/06182019-604>

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Hightower welcomed everyone in attendance as well as those watching via live streaming and thanked them for their interest in public education. She called the Regular Workshop to order at 9:00 a.m.

II. OPEN DISCUSSION

- Calendar - In addition to reviewing and discussing their monthly schedules of workshops/meetings, School Board Members also reviewed and/or discussed various events posted on the School District's calendar.

-June 2019

There were no changes to the remaining schedule of workshops/meetings for June.

-July 2019

There were no changes to the current schedule of workshops/meetings for July. School Board Members discussed possible dates/times for the next component of the Florida School Boards Association Master Board Training: July 15 or 16, beginning at 8:00/9:00 a.m. or July 24, beginning at 9:00/9:30 a.m.

-August 2019

There were no changes to the current schedule of workshops/meetings for August.

- Public Forum Update - The Superintendent provided follow-up to/on issues raised by the following speaker during the Public Forum portion of the May 21, 2019 Regular Meeting:

▪ *Jerry McIntosh, representing Movement for Change* – Mr. McIntosh had registered to address the School Board regarding the closing of McMillian School and posed questions specific to the School District's overall budget. The Superintendent said Mr. Terry St. Cyr, Assistant Superintendent – Finance & Business Services, had followed-up with Mr. McIntosh to show him where budget information was location on the School District's website.

- Legislative Platform & Discussion - *Adams*

It was noted that all platform proposals were to be submitted to the Florida School Board's Association by July 26, 2019. Mr. Adams initiated a discussion on each of the following proposals he planned to submit for consideration for the 2020 FSBA Legislative Platform:

Proposal: Keeping Students Safe – Provide students, education professionals, volunteers, and parents with safe learning environments by: Providing school districts with funding support for compliance with a realistic, practical, and cost-conscious criterion regarding hazardous walking conditions while also providing them flexibility in choosing the extent to which they provide transportation service around those options. Mr. Adams invited Mr. Robert Doss, former Director-Transportation for the Escambia County School District, to explain the rationale for this proposal by reviewing information outlined in a handout provided to School Board Members.

Proposal: Public Student Equity – Elimination of EOC counting as “30 percent of a student’s final course grade.” Mr. Adams cited the following benefits to this proposal: elimination of the prolonged delay in releasing report cards and transcripts for public students in the State of Florida; and restores equity and fair competition for applying for college entrance, regardless whether a public-school student or private school student within or outside of the State of Florida.

III. COMMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Terry St. Cyr, Assistant Superintendent - Finance & Business Services, and Ms. Theresa McCants, Director – Budgeting, gave a brief update on the budget by reviewing the following information outlined in handouts provided to School Board Members:

First FEFP Calculation For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020		
Prior Year Comparison	2019-20	2018-19
FEFP Revenue Increase	\$ 10,161,574	\$ 4,360,421
Less – Significant Categorical Increases:		
Safe School Increase		
Mental Health Allocation Increase	316,246	1,253,926
Best and Brightest	78,564	969,662
Turnaround Supplement	3,819,777	-
Adjusted FEFP Increase (Flexible Increase)	2,783,090	-
	\$ 3,163,897	\$ 2,136,833

Tax Roll Forecast	
2019-20 First FEFP Calculation	20,678,338,872
2018-19 Certified Tax Roll	19,112,454,522
Change	<u>\$ 1,565,884,350</u>
% Change	8.19%
2019-20 June 1 Estimate (ECPA)	20,363,873,103

Public Education Capital Outlay For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020		
Prior Year Comparison	2019-20	2018-19
PECO Maintenance, Repair, Renovation (1)	\$ -	\$ 898,479
PECO New Construction	-	-

(1) No 2019-20 allocation for traditional schools. \$158.2 million statewide for charter schools.

Local Sales Tax (1/2 cent) For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020		
Prior Year Comparison (Budget)	2019-20	2018-19
Sales Tax Revenue	\$ 26,000,000	\$ 24,000,000

Ms. McCants also reviewed a “draft” spreadsheet outlining the capital outlay millage for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020.

The Regular Workshop recessed at 10:23 a.m. and reconvened at 10:33 a.m., with all School Board Members, the Superintendent, and Mrs. Waters present.

IV. MINUTES

c. 05-21-19 Regular Meeting

Dr. Edler requested revision to the minutes from the May 12, 2019 Regular Meeting*. She asked that the following verbiage be inserted:

“Dr. Edler questioned the relationship between the students’ Rights and Responsibility and the Cost per FTE document included on the back cover. She stated the information was inappropriately placed and it appeared as an afterthought. Here are your rights and responsibilities, and oh, by the way, here is how much it cost to educate you. Dr. Edler recommended that the cost per FTE be removed from the R/R or change the name of the handbook.”

*It was later determined that the insertion would apply to the minutes from the [April 12, 2019 Regular Workshop](#), not the May 12, 2019 Regular Meeting.

V. COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

-Charter School Quarterly Report

Pensacola Beach Elementary School – The Charter School Quarterly Report indicated that for March, equity had decreased more than 5% since the prior month. Also, the prior month ending fund balance plus current month revenues minus current month expenses did not equal current month fund balance. Because these two issues required further clarification, Mr. Jeff Castleberry, principal of Pensacola Beach Elementary School, appeared before the School Board to read the following prepared statement: *The difference from February to March fund balances can be attributed to audit adjusting entries to close out the activity of the fiscal year 2017-2018 and balanced with a completed auditors report, the debt service fund was combined with the general fund for the amount of \$91,651.30. The debt service balance from fiscal year 2017-2018 is the final payment on a line of credit to construct the kindergarten and first grade building. The Board of Directors chose to pay off the balance due, to help the cash position due in part from a roll over certificate of deposit.* Mr. Castleberry reported that Pensacola Beach Elementary was debt-free as of the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

-No items submitted

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES

2. Permission to Advertise

A. [Approval to Advertise Notice of Intent to Adopt Amendments to Rules and Procedures of the District School Board: Chapter 2 – Human Resource Services](#)

2.04 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

(12) Additional Requirements

E. All individuals employed by the Escambia County School District will be issued an employee ID badge bearing a photo of the employee that shall be worn and visible at all times while at work in order to promote a safe learning and working environment. The employee photo will also be utilized in the School District’s employee management system and email system as part of the School District’s security protocol to protect the safety and well-being of students and staff.

At the request of Mr. Slayton, the Superintendent clarified that this particular amendment was essentially to put into policy, the existing “safety practice” of expecting all employees to wear their employee ID badge at all times while at work. Upon inquiry by Mr. Slayton, the Superintendent confirmed that coaches would be expected to wear their employee ID badge even when coaching a game, whether at home or away. Mrs. Hightower commented that in this day and time, it was important especially should something tragic happen, that students, parents, and others be able to identify those individuals who are School District employees. Mr. Slayton said

he would not support this particular amendment; although he had no issue with all employees being expected to wear their employee ID badge during a typical workday, he believed that for certain employees, such as coaches, band directors and agriculture teachers, it was simply not feasible to expect them to wear an employee ID badge in all situations.

b. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Curriculum

A. Alternative Education

3. [Amendment to the Charter Contract Between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and New Road to Learning, Inc. DBA Jacqueline Harris Preparatory Academy](#)

At the request of Mrs. Hightower, Mrs. Waters advised that this amendment reflects an extension of the current contract (ending June 30, 2019) until September 30, 2019 due to the delay in the new Florida Model Charter School Contract template being approved by the State Board of Education and the Florida Department of Education. *The Charter School Contract Renewal will be submitted for Board approval once the new Florida Model Charter School Contract template is approved by the State Board of Education and the Florida Department of Education.*

J. Title I

1. [Contract Between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and Community Action Program Committee, Inc.](#)
2. [Cooperative Agreement Between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and the Community Action Program Committee, Inc.](#)

Dr. Edler advised that she would abstain from voting on these items at the June 18, 2019 Regular Meeting given that she currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Community Action Program Committee, Inc.

2. Finance and Business Services

E. Purchasing

5. [Annual Agreement Renewal: Beverage Vending](#)

Mr. Slayton advised that he would abstain from voting on this item at the June 18, 2019 Regular Meeting given that a relative of his was currently employed by Pensacola Coca-Cola Bottling Company.

7. [i-Ready Diagnostic and Instruction Software and Services Agreement](#)

Mrs. Hightower said it was brought to her attention that the School District was asking schools to use their own funds to purchase i-Ready diagnostic and instruction software and services. The Superintendent confirmed that all schools were able to afford using UNISIG or Title I funds, and several schools had even used SAI funding.

7. [i-Ready Diagnostic and Instruction Software and Services Agreement](#)

20. [Annual Agreement Renewal: Renaissance Learning STAR360 Assessment Software Licenses](#)

22. [Renewal and Amendment 1 to Annual Agreement: Renaissance Learning Hosting](#)

Mr. Fetsko asked if there was any redundancy between the i-Ready software and the STAR360 software in terms of what was being assessed. The Superintendent confirmed that there was redundancy given that both i-Ready and STAR360 measure the same standards for each grade level. However, he noted that STAR360 was actually used as the School District's predictive assessment tool because over the last two (2) years, it had proven to actually align with student test scores. The Superintendent said that although i-Ready does have assessment and diagnostic capabilities, it was more instructional in terms of providing adaptive classroom lessons to students on a daily basis. Mr. Fetsko said most teachers would prefer to work from just one platform.

12. [Annual Agreement Renewal: Wertz York Capital Management Group, LLC](#)

Mr. Fetsko noted that there was no dollar amount listed under “Amount of Purchase” on the executive summary sheet of the backup documentation. Mr. Terry St. Cyr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Services, explained that the payment was based on the size of the portfolio under management, which in this case was approximately \$50 million dollars so using the rate of .07% per Annum for a portfolio valued at less than \$60 million, the yearly cost was approximately \$35,000.

3. Human Resource Services

At the request of Mr. Adams, the Superintendent and his staff provided a brief update on staffing, citing the current number of vacancies in both the instructional and non-instructional positions.

C. Risk Management

3. [Property, Boiler & Machinery, and Crime Insurance](#)

Mrs. Hightower questioned whether the School District would need additional insurance for having armed employees [Campus Security Officers (CSOs)] on school campuses. Mr. Kevin Windham, Director – Risk Management, responded by clarifying that this particular crime insurance was specific to employee theft and would not be impacted by having the CSOs on school campuses. He mentioned that he would be discussing with the Superintendent’s executive staff, the possibility of acquiring a general liability policy to cover the CSO positions, an active shooter policy, or both.

4. Operations

A. Facilities Planning

2. Miscellaneous

a. [Lease Agreement Renewal between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and Camelot Schools of Florida, LLC](#)

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Hightower, Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent – Operations, confirmed there was a slight expansion in the facilities being used by Camelot Schools of Florida, LLC.

G. Protection Services

1. [Coach Aaron Feis School Guardian Program Agreement by and between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and the Sheriff of Escambia County, Florida](#)

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Hightower, Superintendent reported that a number of applicants had already completed their first interview and polygraph and were now working through their psychological evaluation. The Superintendent said the Escambia County Sheriff’s Office was holding up background checks until the School Board had approved this revised* agreement. **This agreement was originally submitted on the May 21, 2019 Regular Board Meeting. This revised agreement has additional language requested by the Sheriff of Escambia County, Florida and agreed upon by the School District.*

c. ITEMS FROM THE BOARD

1. Selection of the Florida School Boards Association Legislative Liaison and Alternate

There was no objection to Mr. Adams continuing to serve as the School Board’s legislative liaison to the Florida School Boards Association and Mrs. Hightower serving as the alternate.

d. ITEMS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

4. Other Items

A. [Memorandum of Understanding Between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and the Escambia County Public School Foundation, Inc.](#)

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Hightower, Mrs. Waters confirmed that the School Board, with just one motion, could rescind the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Escambia County Public School Foundation, Inc. that was approved in April 2018 and approve this new MOU. Mrs. Waters was asked to draft an appropriate motion for the School Board.

- e. INTERNAL AUDITING
-No items submitted
- f. ITEMS FROM GENERAL COUNSEL
-No items submitted

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM

The following individuals requested to address the School Board: Dory Nickerson. Ms. Nickerson asked the School Board to consider moving the time of the regular workshops to a time when teachers and other education staff professionals were able to attend and participate.

IX. DISCUSSION ON APPOINTED SUPERINTENDENT PROCESS

The following topics were addressed:

Citizens Advisory Committee - School Board Members were to review a list of suggested groups for representation on the Citizens Advisory Committee. There would be opportunities in July/August to provide input/feedback on the composition of the Citizens Advisory Committee. Dr. Edler commented on the importance of community involvement in the appointed Superintendent search. Given that she could not accommodate all the people who had expressed interest in serving on the Citizens Advisory Committee, she planned to establish focus groups within District III to allow for input from the community.

School Board Policy – In July/August, School Board Members would discuss necessary policy adjustments related to the change from elected to appointed superintendent. The Superintendent said his staff would present at the July 11, 2019 Special “Open Discussion” Workshop, a compilation of current School Board policies that reference superintendent.

Online Survey & Search Brochure – School Board Members would have opportunities in July/August to provide input/feedback on suggested online survey questions and brochure examples.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Regular Workshop adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair