

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF  
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, OCTOBER 10, 2019

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: 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 September 26, 2019 – Legal No. [3803009](#)

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

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Hightower called the Special Workshop to order at 3:00 p.m. She welcomed those in attendance as well as those watching by live streaming. Mrs. Hightower reminded those who wished to speak during public forum, to submit a registration form.

II. OPEN DISCUSSION

West Florida High School Engineering Academy – Superintendent

Students enrolled in the Engineering Academy at West Florida High School addressed the School Board regarding their experienced in this program.

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.*

*-October 2019*

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

*-November 2019*

The School Board made the following changes to the schedule of workshops/meetings for November:

Added: November 6 Special Meeting, 5:00 p.m., Room 160, J.E. Hall Educational Services Center, 30 East Texar Drive (Purpose: Salary Schedules)

*-Rescheduling of October 4 Florida School Board's Association (FSBA) Master Board Training Session*

Rescheduled: October 4 FSBA Master Board Training to November 21, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Superintendent's Conference Room, Dr. Vernon McDaniel Building, 75 North Pace Boulevard

Public Forum Update

-None

Legislative Update – Adams

Mr. Adams addressed the following matters associated with the upcoming 2020 legislative session:

-Governor DeSantis' proposal to raise teachers' starting salary from \$37,600 to \$47,500;

-Proposed repeal of the "Best and Brightest" teacher bonus program (Senate Bill 440 filed by Senator Rob Bradley, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee)

Mr. Adams provided School Board Members and the Superintendent with a copy of the Florida School Boards Association 2020 Legislative Platform and 2020 Federal Platform. Mr. Adams noted that a

proposal submitted by Escambia County was included on the 2020 Legislative Platform: *Adjust the weight of statewide, standardized end-of-course assessments in calculating a student's final course grade so that students who are required to take these statewide exams are not placed at a disadvantage in comparison to students who are not required to take them.*

Grade Change Policies at Our Schools, Especially Secondary – Slayton

At the request of Mr. Slayton, the Superintendent asked Ms. Lesa Morgan, Director-High School Education, to describe the District's procedure for initiating and processing gradebook changes after posting has occurred in the Focus Gradebook. In summary, to initiate a grade change after grades are posted at the end of each nine weeks, a teacher must complete a Grade Change Request form. The teacher must sign that form and submit to the principal or assistant principal for approval. The principal or assistant principal reviews the form and if the request is appropriate, the principal or assistant principal will sign the form and submit to the data specialist. The data specialist will verify the request was approved by the principal or assistant principal and make the grade change in the Focus Gradebook. The data specialist will sign the Grade Change Request form indicating the grade was changed in the Focus Gradebook and the date of the change. The data specialist is responsible for filing the grade change form. The remainder of discussion centered on the School District's expected transition to the latest version of Focus Gradebook.

Success Academy – Superintendent

Ms. Dawn Gibbs, principal of Success Academy, narrated a brief [presentation](#) that outlined information about the Success Academy. *The Success Academy was established in 2016 to address overage and failing middle school students. In 2018, Success Academy also became the home for the Second Chance program for students removed from high school due to behavior. The Second Chance program provides students the opportunity to remain on track in their academics. In 2019 Success Academy moved to a new facility at 7045 Wymart Road. The larger facility has allowed the school to expand and the proximity to George Stone Technical College has allowed for a new partnership between the two programs.* Following her presentation, Ms. Gibbs responded to questions and comments by School Board Members.

2019-2020 Strategic Plan – Superintendent

*(This topic was previously addressed at the August 15, 2019 Special Workshop.)* The Superintendent planned to have the chair of each strategic plan pillar committee take a moment to review the 2019-2020 Strategic Plan; however, due to time constraints only one review occurred: Quality Pillar – Ms. Lesa Morgan, Director-High School Education. The remaining pillars were to be reviewed at the October 11, 2019 Regular Workshop.

III. [PUBLIC FORUM](#)

The following individuals registered to address the School Board during Public Forum:

- Rodney Jones, registered to *discuss a special problem or issue*
- Ellison Bennett, representing National Movement for Civil and Human Rights, registered to *discuss a special problem or issue*
- Jerry McIntosh, representing Movement for Change, registered to *discuss a special problem or issue: arrest of a 12 year old*

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Workshop adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

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Superintendent

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Chair