

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF  
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, JANUARY 14, 2021

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

Superintendent of Schools: Dr. Timothy A. Smith

*Not present: Mr. William E. Slayton, Chair (District V)*

Advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on January 4, 2021 – Legal No. [4505107](#)

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Adams called the Special Workshop to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. DISCUSSION:

- Pine Forest High School Cybersecurity Academy – *Superintendent*

Students enrolled in the Cybersecurity Academy at Pine Forest High School, provided a virtual presentation outlining their experiences in this program.

- Calendar

January 14, 2021 through April 20, 2021 - reviewed [calendar](#).

*Tentatively Scheduled:* Joint Meeting with Escambia County Planning Board, February 4, beginning at 9:00 a.m., at the Escambia County Central Office Complex, 3363 West Park Place (requested by the Planning Board).

*Scheduled:* Special Meeting, February 4, beginning at 8:00 a.m., in the Superintendent's Conference Room, at the Dr. Vernon McDaniel Building, 75 North Pace Boulevard. Primary Purpose: To consider approval of out-of-field teachers prior to February FTE Survey.

*Rescheduled:* March Regular Meeting, from March 16 to March 23 (due to Spring Break).

Public Forum Update

-None

**DELETE**

~~Master Board Reinstatement – *Slayton*~~

Interview Committee for General Counsel – *Slayton*

*[Previously discussed the November 12, 2020 Special Workshop (1:00 p.m.)]* There was a lengthy discussion regarding the formation of a search committee to review applications for the position of School Board General Counsel. The following individuals were suggested as possible appointees: Deputy Superintendent (as the Superintendent's designee); one assistant superintendent (perhaps Mr. Steve Marcanio, Assistant Superintendent-Curriculum & Instruction); a principal/assistant principal from each level (elementary, middle, high); three district-level representatives, one from each of the following areas: Purchasing, Human Resource Services, and Exceptional Student Education; Ms. Sharon Goshorn, Paralegal; and Mr. David Bryant, Director-Internal Auditing (to serve a facilitator only, non-voting member). Dr. Edler requested that diversity and inclusion be considered with regard to the composition of the committee. The search committee was to conduct their meetings and interview sessions by mid-February given the School

Board wished to conduct their final interviews the first week of March. (Placeholder to be submitted for the March 23, 2021 Regular Meeting agenda until contract negotiated.)

Legislative Update – Adams

Vice Chair Adams, as the School Board’s representative to the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA), gave a brief update on recent and upcoming legislative matters.

Looking Back, Moving Forward – Edler

Dr. Edler noted that she had presented this same topic at the January 16, 2020 Special Workshop. [At that time, she shared how she felt it important that School Board Members take a critical assessment of their performance, both individually and collectively, to ensure that the business of the district was in order, as they moved in serving the citizens of Escambia County.] Dr. Edler asked fellow School Board Members, the Superintendent, and the Superintendent’s staff to make note of their goals for 2021, including what they wanted to see improved, how they would participate in that improvement, and what measure they would use to determine whether the goals had been met. Her desire was to have everyone engage in conversation about how to move forward in ensuring a quality education for all children in this school district. Dr. Edler initiated the conversation by discussing her goals for 2021: *To continue to look at the disciplinary policies and procedures. To strongly advocate for diversity and inclusion.* Several School Board Members said they preferred to discuss their goal/goals once they opportunity to give more thought to the matter.

Transportation Bus Operator Shortage Update – Superintendent

[Handout provided to School Board Members] Ms. Darlene Hart, Director-Transportation, narrated a brief presentation entitled, “[Transportation Hiring & Retention SWOT Analysis - January 2021.](#)”

III. PUBLIC FORUM

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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Special Problem/Issue*</u>
Claudia Litchfield	Critical thinking – open discussion in class

\*As specified by the individual on registration form submitted to the School Board.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Workshop adjourned at 5:36 p.m.