

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, JUNE 14, 2021

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: Mr. William E. Slayton (District V)
Vice Chair: Mr. Kevin L. Adams (District I)
Board Members: Mr. Paul Fetsko (District II)
Mrs. Patricia Hightower (District IV)

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Ellen D. Odom

Superintendent of Schools: Dr. Timothy A. Smith

Not present: Dr. Laura Dortch Edler (District III)

Advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on June 1, 2021 – Legal No. 4748323

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Slayton called the Regular Workshop to order at 9:00 a.m.

ADD - Preparation for Presenting the Plan for Warrington Middle to the State Board of Education in July – Slayton

The Superintendent advised that the School District would have additional time to complete its “turnaround” plan to improve the grade of Warrington Middle School before it is presented at the state board of education meeting July 14.

- Public Forum Update
-None

- Calendar

At the request of the Superintendent, the School Board agreed to schedule a Special Meeting for June 28, 2021, beginning at 5:00 p.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center, 30 East Texar Drive. The primary purpose of this special session is to consider approval of the Superintendent’s recommendations for administrative appointments.

DELETE — ~~idgroup Strategic Initiative Update and Next Steps – Superintendent (15 minutes)~~

- School Bus Stop Safety – Fetsko

As suggested by Mr. Fetsko, the Superintendent agreed to reach out to the Escambia County Sheriff’s Office and ask that they encourage members of the County’s 100+ neighborhood watch groups, to help keep watch of students waiting at nearby school bus stops.

- Gulf Coast Kids House – Superintendent

Representatives from Gulf Coast Kids House made a brief presentation regarding a free 40-minute training available at KnowChildAbuse.org. The Superintendent agreed to promote that training by way of the School District website.

- Charter School Quarterly Report

Ms. Kerri Coots, Director-Alternative Education, reported no issues/concerns with the Charter School Quarterly Report for June 2021. The Superintendent and School Board Members congratulated Jeff

Castleberry, principal-Pensacola Beach Elementary School and Dee Wolfe-Sullivan, principal-Byrneville Elementary School, on their upcoming retirements.

II. DISCUSSION

-Legislative Update - provided by Jessica Janasiewicz and Jim Hamilton from Rutledge Ecenia

-Update on Hiring – provided by Keith Leonard, Assistant Superintendent-Human Resource Services and Ms. Kelly Krostag, Director-Human Resource Services

The Regular Workshop recessed at 10:55 a.m. and reconvened at 11:05 a.m., with Chair Slayton, Mr. Adams, Mr. Fetsko, Mrs. Hightower, the Superintendent, and Mrs. Odom present.

DELETE

~~-Legislative Update—Adams~~

III. COMMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent listed all changes made to the June 15, 2021 Regular Meeting agenda since initial publication and prior to this session.

IV. MINUTES

-No items discussed

V. COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

-Charter School Quarterly Report

Handled earlier in the session

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

-No items submitted

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES

1. Rule(s) Adoption

-No items submitted

2. Permission to Advertise

A. Approval to Advertise Notice of Intent to Adopt Amendments to the School District of Escambia County Student Progression Plan

Page 56 – Section 4.10 – delete the added language regarding valedictory and salutatory awards

Ms. Lesa Morgan, Director-High School Education, shared a proposal that would eliminate high school valedictorian and salutatorian awards beginning with the graduating class of 2025.

Ms. Morgan said the problem with these awards was the pressure on students and how that pressure can affect their wellbeing. She also noted that students working for the top of the class do not always participate in other activities. Both Mr. Adams and Mr. Fetsko said they received a large number of contacts, all of which were against the proposal. Mr. Adams said making such a decision would be a slippery slope when the very best students are honored in sports and other school programs. Mrs. Hightower detailed reasons why the awards might should be eliminated, and clarified that the proposal “is not giving everyone a trophy; it is not about no competition.” School Board Members discussed that sometimes students must choose whether to pursue the goal of being top of the class or make decisions to take part in other activities or sports. After a lengthy discussion, Superintendent Smith informed the School Board that he would pull the proposal.

School Board Members requested or suggested the following changes:

Page 11 & all through the document – remove the statement (This area intentionally left blank)

Page 24 – Section 2.5.1 – add sentence regarding parent conferences
Parents/guardians of students must receive accurate and timely information regarding their children’s academic progress and must be informed of ways they can help their child to succeed in school. Parent conferences are strongly encouraged as a means of communicating student progress. Progress reporting must be provided as requested by the parent in a format adopted by the District School Board. The District provides ongoing computer access to student grades and other records through a Parent Portal located on the District website.

Page 26 – Section 2.5.4 – change grades K-5 to grades 1-5
The grading system and interpretation of letter grades used with all students in Grades 1-5 shall be as follows:

Page 45 – Section 4.1.5 – delete “a candidate’s” and added candidates’
Page 90 – Section 12.2.2 – delete “a candidate’s” and added candidates’
However, if ~~a candidate’s~~ candidates’ Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores are high enough and they pass all four (4) sections of the official GED® Practice Test, ~~he/she~~ they may be eligible to be Fast Tracked.

Page 61 – Section 5.1 – add the word “of” to the first sentence
Any prekindergarten student who is suspected of having a disability demonstrates significant learning weaknesses and who is not yet served in a public school program should be referred to Child Find through the Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System (FDLRS) for consultation and/or screening evaluation in areas including cognitive, social/emotional, communication, sensory (hearing and vision), and motor development.

B. The School Board of Escambia County, Florida Notice of Intent to Advertise Naming the Tennis Complex at Oakcrest Elementary School the Tennis 4 Everyone Complex

There were no questions or concerns regarding the *Notice of Intent* to advertise naming the Tennis Complex at Oakcrest Elementary School the Tennis 4 Everyone Complex; however, there was a brief discussion specific to the actual tennis courts at Oakcrest Elementary School.

b. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Curriculum

-No items discussed

2. Finance and Business Services

C. Budgeting

3. Scrap List I and II for June 2021

Ms. Theresa McCants, Director-Budgeting, responded to questions regarding the process for “scrapping” software licenses.

E. Purchasing

29. Amendment II and Renewal of Annual Agreement: Custodial Services

Description of Purchase: *Recommend the renewal, for the fourth year of a five (5) year agreement, to clean eight (8) District Zone Three schools. All other schools within the District are cleaned in-house. The contractual program encompasses all aspects of custodial services operation for the eight (8) schools involved. The Contractor is responsible for a turn-key operation in the provision of custodial services for those schools, as well as personnel training and program management/administration. Renewal will be at the current year’s pricing structure. The Amendment has been issued to incorporate statutory requirements into the Agreement.*

Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent-Operations, was to email School Board Members naming the eight (8) schools that constituted Zone Three.

3. Human Resource Services
 - No items discussed
4. Operations
 - A. Facilities Planning
 1. Final Payments
 - a. Beulah Elementary School – Covered Play Area and Multipurpose Room - Quina Grundhoefer Architects, PA
 - b. Beulah Elementary School – Covered Play Area and Multipurpose Room – Morette Company
 - c. Pine Meadow Elementary School – Covered Play Area and Multipurpose Room - Quina Grundhoefer Architects, PA
 - d. Pine Meadow Elementary School – Covered Play Area and Multipurpose Room – Morette Company

Upon inquiry by Chair Slayton, Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent-Operations, confirmed that all projects for covered play areas and multipurpose rooms (as listed above) were complete; and therefore, final payment was recommended. It was noted that there were four elementary schools remaining, with two in design phase and two that had not yet started: Ferry Pass Elementary, Warrington Elementary, and Myrtle Grove Elementary.

- G. Protection Services
 1. 2020-2021 Facility Life Safety Inspections

Mr. Kyle Kinzer, Coordinator-Protection Services, reported that district-wide deficiencies decreased about 15% overall from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021.

c. **ITEMS FROM THE BOARD**

1. Selection of School Board Member & an Alternate to the FSBA Advocacy Committee

Mr. Fetsko indicated that he would offer motion at the June 15, 2021 Regular Meeting to appoint Mr. Adams as the School Board's representative to the FSBA Advocacy Committee.

d. **ITEMS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT**

4. Other Items

- B. Agreement for Legal Services Between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and Joseph L. Hammons, Attorney at Law, and The Hammons Law Firm (Counsel for Superintendent)

Mrs. Odom responded to Mrs. Hightower's inquiry by providing examples* of situations in which the Superintendent would require separate counsel as she would be unable to act as counsel for both the School Board and Superintendent.

**Student Disciplinary Hearings (Chapter 120); Employee Disciplinary Hearing (Chapter 120); Issue/situation where Superintendent disagrees with her legal opinion*

e. **INTERNAL AUDITING**

- No items submitted

f. **ITEMS FROM GENERAL COUNSEL**

- No items submitted

VIII. **PUBLIC FORUM**

- No registration forms submitted

IX. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the Regular Workshop adjourned at 12:48 p.m.