

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, SEPTEMBER 16, 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:

Chair: Mr. William E. Slayton (District V)
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)

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Ellen D. Odom

Superintendent of Schools: Dr. Timothy A. Smith

Advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on August 17, 2021 – Legal No. [4867796](#)

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. DISCUSSION:

Calendar

Scheduled: Executive Session, September 30, beginning at 8:30 a.m., in the Superintendent's Conference Room, at the Dr. Vernon McDaniel Building, 75 North Pace Boulevard.

Scheduled: Special School Board Meeting, October 7, beginning at 8:00 a.m., in Room 160 at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center, 30 East Texar Drive. Primary purpose: School Board to consider approval of out-of-field teachers.

Confirmed: Joint Redistricting Workshop with Escambia County Board of County Commissioners, October 5, beginning at 5:01 p.m., in the Board Chambers (1st Floor), Ernie Lee Magaha Government Building, 221 Palafox Place.

Public Forum Update

-None

Enrollment Numbers – Hightower

Mrs. Hightower expressed concern with the low enrollment numbers reported at the beginning of September 2021. She suggested engaging the community in conversations as to why families were choosing to remove their children from public schools and how to communicate to families, all that the School District has to offer, in an effort to persuade them to return their children to public schools. Mr. Steve Marcanio, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, confirmed a significant decrease of 1,829 students across all levels from September 2019 to September 2021.

Legislative Update – Adams

Mr. Adams reported that a number of proposals submitted by the Escambia County School Board were included in the Florida School Boards Association's 2022 Legislative Platform.

Census/Redistricting – Adams

Mr. Adams said he had submitted this topic primarily to respond to comments recently made by Commissioner Doug Underhill, District 2 regarding a proposal that would unseat ECUA District I Board Member Vicki Campbell, as she lives in an area that Underhill wants to become part of District 2. Mr. Adams made the following declarations in response to Underhill's proposal: *I will not offer a proposal that*

redistricts any elected official from the district they serve. I will not submit a proposal to disenfranchise the voters of an elected official removed by this (proposal). I have no plans to disenfranchise any elected official by redistricting (him/her) out of that district. Mr. Adams encouraged School Board Members to visit census.gov to review Escambia County's data from the 2020 Census prior to the October 5 Joint Redistricting Workshop with the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners.

School Extensions – Slayton

Mr. Slayton initiated a discussion regarding inaccuracies with extensions outlined in the School District's 2021-2022 Directory. His concern stemmed from a recent situation where he tried to phone a school principal using the extension listed in the latest directory, but that does not actually exist. Mr. Tom Ingram, Director-Information Technology, clarified that District staff was unable to export phone numbers and extension directly from the phone system; instead, schools and departments must report that information directly to the person compiling the district-wide directory. Superintendent Smith said that in the future, staff would ensure information published in the annual district-wide directory was accurate.

Ticket Refunds from Other Districts – Slayton

Chair Slayton initiated a discussion regarding ticket refunds from canceled games. His concern stemmed from recent reports of people in Santa Rosa County experiencing problems with receiving refunds for canceled games. Ms. Lesa Morgan, Director-High School Education, clarified that the refund process through S2Pass, the ticketing system used by Santa Rosa County had proven to be rather cumbersome, thereby delaying the issuance of refunds; however, the refund process through GoFan, the ticketing system used by Escambia County seemed to be working well.

Superintendent Evaluation Timeline – Slayton

Chair Slayton advised that the School Board would need to devote time during an upcoming session to the development of the criteria and the evaluation instrument that School Board Members would use to evaluate the Superintendent's performance.

Strategic Initiative Update – Superintendent

Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, provided an update on the strategic initiative, outlining the things that idgroup was hired to assist the School District with, including contract support in public relations/marketing; strategic planning and brand/image transformation. Mr. Dennis asked School Board Members to be prepared for a facilitated discussion on core identify statements during the October 14, 2021 Special Workshop.

At this time, Chair Slayton advised that the School Board would need to recess this Special Workshop in order to convene a Special Meeting advertised to begin at 5:01 p.m. Mrs. Odom advised a motion to recess would be consider proper procedure. Motion made by Mrs. Hightower, seconded by Mr. Fetsko, to recess the Special Workshop at 4:55 p.m., carried unanimously. Following the conclusion of the 5:01 p.m. Special Meeting, the Special Workshop reconvened at 5:29 p.m.

III. PUBLIC FORUM

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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Issue*</u>
Whitney Parker	Vote on a mask mandate
Debbie Williams	Mask mandates in school
Kate McGurk	Request a vote is taken on a mask mandate
Brian Seifstein	
Beverly Perry	
Lilly Eubanks	
Jerry McIntosh, Movement for Change	Mask
Dianne Krumel	
Ronda Piche	
Rose Coon	

Samantha Herring
Yvonne Scott
Alma Woods
Rebekah Jones, The COVID Monitor

*Yielded time to Samantha Herring
Yielded time to Samantha Herring
COVID-19 Safety & Protocols
[Handouts provided to School Board Members]*

**As indicated on the registration form submitted by the individual.*

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Workshop adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

PENDING BOARD APPROVAL