

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF  
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, SEPTEMBER 17, 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)  
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 Regular Workshop to order at 9:00 a.m.

II. COMMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Instructional Continuity Plan - Mr. Steve Marcanio, Assistant Superintendent-Curriculum & Instruction, advised that District staff were currently working on an instructional continuity plan that was due to the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) by September 30, 2021. Once finalized, staff would share that plan with the School Board.

III. MINUTES

-No items discussed

IV. COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

- Charter School Quarterly Report

Mr. Steve Marcanio, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, reported no issues of concerns outlined in the Charter School Quarterly Report for September 2021. Upon inquiry by Mrs. Hightower, Mr. Marcanio confirmed there were three charter schools with higher than projected student enrollment. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Adams, Mr. Marcanio said he did not have any specific information concerning the average daily attendance at Jackie Harris, but he would check to see if there was anything going on and how the District might be able to assist.

Implementation of BoardDocs – Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, responded to an inquiry by Mrs. Hightower regarding the implementation of BoardDocs. Mr. Dennis reported that, as expected when transitioning to a new platform, departments had encountered some challenges this month and as such, staff would continue working through those challenges, running BoardDocs parallel to the current agenda format again in October, before going live with BoardDocs in November.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

-No items submitted

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES

2. Permission to Advertise

A. The School Board of Escambia County, Florida Notice of Intent to Advertise Naming the Gymnasium at Brown Barge Middle School the Camille Barr Gymnasium

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Hightower, Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent-Operations, confirmed that staff had followed proper procedure regarding this naming.

b. CONSENT AGENDA

The Superintendent listed all changes made to the September 21, 2021 Regular Meeting agenda, since publication and prior to this session.

1. Curriculum

-No items discussed

2. Finance and Business Services

E. Purchasing

8. Addendum 2: Evolution Labs Software and Services Agreement

Upon inquiry by Mr. Fetsko, Mrs. Odom confirmed that this addendum serves to update company information and statutorily required documents because of an acquisition.

3. Human Resource Services

C. Risk Management

2. Medical Plan and Premium Changes, effective January 1, 2022

Mr. Kevin Windham, Director-Risk Management, reported that the Bargaining Counsel and the District had agreed to a 2% increase in employee medical premium schedules.

4. Operations

A. Facilities Planning

2. Miscellaneous

a. First Amendment to Lease Agreement between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and Community Action Program Committee, Inc. with a Purchase Option

Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent-Operations, confirmed the Community Action Program Committee, Inc. was extending the lease for one year and not exercising the purchase option.

c. ITEMS FROM THE BOARD

1. School Board Member Travel Requests: Out of District FY 2021-2022

There were no questions/concerns regarding Mr. Adams' travel; however, there were comments about the National Summit on Education. Chair Slayton said he was looking forward to a report from Mr. Adams following this November 16-18 conference.

d. ITEMS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

-No items discussed

e. INTERNAL AUDITING

-No items submitted

f. ITEMS FROM GENERAL COUNSEL

1. Appeal of Denial of Contractor Prequalification

Ms. Odom provided a brief explanation regarding this item, which she previously brought to the School Board's attention in August.

VII. PUBLIC FORUM

The following individuals registered to address the School Board and/or Superintendent:

Name

Lara Audelo

Issue

Requesting Masks in Schools

Ellison Bennett, representing National Movement for Human & Civil Rights	COVID-19 measures and masks
Scott Trotter	<i>Yielded time to Dianne Krumel</i>
Tyge Trotter	
Dianne Krumel	
Doris Hayes, East Side Neighborhood Improvement	Mask wearing in the schools
Amanda Nission	Mask/COVID

School Board Members responded to those individuals who expressed a desire for mandatory masking in Escambia County schools. Mrs. Hightower was open to discussing masks at a future meeting, but she wanted to make sure the public had proper notice that it would be on an agenda to give people on all sides of the issue a chance to weigh in. She asked the board if there was any support for a special meeting. Mr. Adams said he would not support a mask mandate of any kind and did not see a need for the School Board to meet on it. Mr. Fetsko said his personal preference was to wear a mask, but he would not mandate someone else to do so. Mr. Fetsko said he would not support a special meeting. Chair Slayton commented, "If you believe your child should wear a mask, tell them to wear the mask. Don't come tell us (School Board) to tell them. I feel like you are copping out to make us force a mask mandate. I'm sorry, I cannot support that." Though there was no formal vote, Chair Slayton noted it was obvious (from the discussion) the School Board was not in favor of mandating masks in Escambia County schools.

#### VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Regular Workshop adjourned at 12:40 p.m.