

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, DECEMBER 14, 2007

The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, convened in Workshop Meeting 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: Mrs. Patricia Hightower Vice Chair: Mr. Pete Gindl, Sr.

Board Members: Mr. Jeff Bergosh
Mr. Gerald Boone
Mrs. Claudia Brown-Curry

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Norm Ross, Deputy Superintendent (represented Mr. Jim Paul)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Hightower called the Regular Workshop to order at 9:00 a.m.

Discussion on the following section was moved forward on the agenda:

Internal Auditing

1. Internal Funds Audits with findings

Mrs. Brown-Curry noticed that several schools had been cited for not following the appropriate procedures to ensure the proper oversight of fundraising activities. Mr. David Bryant, Director of Internal Auditing, remarked that the most consistent problem was that schools were not completing the "Fundraising Request/Reconciliation Form" for each fundraiser conducted. He recommended that each school principal review both Chapter 7, Section 4.4 of the State Board of Education Rules and the Fundraising Guidelines Handbook for information pertaining to fundraising activities; and to instruct school staff/sponsors on the proper procedures of conducting and monitoring fundraising activities.

Mr. Bergosh noticed that several schools had been cited for not following the proper procedures to ensure timely deposits of monies collected; specifically with regard to deposits less than \$50. Mr. David Bryant, Director of Internal Auditing, pointed out that a lag between when monies are received and when they are deposited raises the risk of monies collected being lost or stolen. He recommended that school principals review Chapter 7, Section 1.4(c) of the State Board of Education Rules pertaining to frequency of deposits for internal funds; and to instruct school staff on the requirement to make timely deposits. (NOTE: *Chapter 7, Section 1.4(c) of the State Board of Education Rules states "All money collected must be deposited intact to a depository as frequently as feasible and as dictated by sound business practices. In any event, funds collected must be deposited within five (5) working days after receipt."*)

Mr. Bergosh and Mrs. Hightower commented that some of the audit finding responses submitted by the school principals seemed quite defensive. Mrs. Hightower noted that the auditing process was not meant to be a confrontational procedure, but rather a procedure to assist schools in the efficient and effective use of all available resources; she asked that principals remember that when drafting their responses. Mr. Ross believed that the auditing process “lends itself to a certain degree of defensiveness” and noted that a principal typically feels personally responsible anything cited on his/her school campus; however, he would certainly ask the Elementary, Middle, and High School Directors to address that “defensiveness” with their school principals.

A. Open Discussion

Band Program - West Florida High School of Advanced Technology

Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Mr. Ross indicated that staff was currently working on the issue of establishing a band program at West Florida High School, separate from the current joint program with Pine Forest High School. He hoped to have a recommendation to the Board within the next few weeks.

Continuous Improvement Model (CIM) Specialist position
Special Administrator at O.J. Semmes Elementary position

Mrs. Brown-Curry noted for the record, that she had yet to receive an update that she had previously requested with regard to both the Continuous Improvement Model (CIM) Specialist position and the Administrator on Special Assignment position at O.J. Semmes Elementary. Specifically, she wanted information as to the duties and responsibilities of each position; she also wanted a “work schedule” for the CIM Specialist position, indicating how much time that individual was spending at each particular school.

Breakfast Program – Woodham Middle School

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Brown-Curry, Ms. Glenna Taylor, Director of School Food Services, indicated that the establishment of a breakfast program at Woodham Middle School was currently in the planning stages and that she would provide the Board with an expected start date for that program as soon as it was available.

School Board Rules, Chapter 1

Mrs. Hightower noted for the record, that the annual review of School Board Rules Chapter 1 had not yet been approved by the Board for this year. She noted that the revisions had appeared on the April 24, 2007 Regular Meeting agenda, but were later deleted.

School Board Rules, Chapter 2

Mrs. Brown-Curry noted that minutes from the November 16, 2007 Regular Workshop indicated that the Superintendent and his Senior Staff were to review School Board Rules Chapter 2, Section 2.11 “Married Personnel” and to consider expanding that section to address other situations involving the supervision of one relative by another (i.e., child supervising a parent, parent supervising a child). Mr. Ross indicated that the Board should expect something on that issue as part of the Chapter 2 Rule revisions which would most likely be presented to the Board in either February or March.

Use of Civic Center for High School Graduation Ceremonies

During the August 17, 2007 Regular Workshop, Board Members discussed the possibility of “bartering” the old Molino Elementary School (District facility) for 10-years free usage of the Civic Center (County facility) to accommodate the District’s high school graduation ceremonies. At the request of Mr. Boone, Mr. Ross indicated that he would provide a status report on this proposal as soon as he was able to follow-up with a representative from the Board of County Commissioners.

Retreat for Board Members, Superintendent, and Senior Staff

Mrs. Brown-Curry asked for the Superintendent to consider hosting a retreat for Board Members and the Superintendent’s Senior Staff to discuss priorities for the School District.

Charter School Quarterly Report (Item 1, under Section III “Time Certain Items”)

Ms. Vickie Mathis, Director of Alternative Education, indicated that she had provided the Board with a quarterly report (December 2007) on charter schools prior to this meeting. Representatives from the following charter schools were in attendance and responded to various questions posed by Board Members regarding information outlined in the quarterly report: Capstone Academy, Pensacola Beach Elementary School; Jacqueline Harris Preparatory Academy; Beulah Academy of Science, Byrneville Elementary, Escambia Charter, Ruby J. Gainer School for Reaching Your Dream; and Life Skills Center. Questions posed by the Board focused primarily on contractual obligations and compliance with various transportation regulations.

II. COMMENTS FROM SUPERINTENDENT

Merit Award Program (MAP)

Mr. Keith Leonard, Director of Human Resource Services, stated that a memorandum had been received from the Department of Education (DOE) regarding deficiencies in the Merit Award Program (MAP) plan that the District had submitted. He felt it important to note that every school district in the State that had submitted a MAP plan received the same memorandum. Mr. Leonard indicated that he would be meeting with Mr. Malcolm Thomas, Director of Evaluation Services, to address those deficiencies and the plan would be resubmitted prior to the January 31st deadline.

Daily Recess – Elementary Schools

Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Mr. Paul Fetsko, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, confirmed that the District was enforcing and schools were adhering to the daily 15-minute recess requirement for elementary students. (NOTE: *The daily 15-minute recess requirement is separate and distinct from the regularly scheduled physical education instructional classes taught by certified physical education teachers.*)

(NOTE: *Mr. Bergosh left the meeting at 11:00 a.m.*)

School Choice and Early NCLB-AYP Notification Timeline

Staff provided a handout to Board Members entitled “School Choice and Early NCLB-AYP Notification Timeline” which outlined the due dates for applications to magnet and choice programs, and applications for NCLB-AYP transfers. Mrs. Hightower asked that this information be posted to the District website.

Schedule of Board Meetings for January 2008

Mr. Ross asked the Board to consider changing the date of the January Regular Workshop from January 11th to January 18th and changing the date of the January Regular Meeting from January 15th to January 22nd. It was noted that this issue would be considered at the December 18, 2007 Regular Meeting.

III. TIME CERTAIN ITEMS

1. Charter School Quarterly Report (9:30 a.m.)

This item was handled earlier in the meeting.

IV. PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES

Revisions to School District Chapter 6 – Student Transportation

Mrs. Waters indicated that corrected backup documentation for this item was forthcoming.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Curriculum and Instruction

1. Agreement between Escambia County School Board and Sacred Heart Health Systems, Inc.
4. Title II, Part D – Enhancing Education Through Technology, Competitive Grant Application
5. Early Career/Early Placement Support Programs for Teachers in High Need Schools and Content Areas – “New Teachers Teach, Students Learn Academy”
9. Agreement – North East Florida Educational Consortium (NEFEC) Dropout Prevention/Credit Recovery Program

Staff members responded to general questions posed by Board Members regarding the items listed above, by referring to information outlined in the backup documentation provided for each. No additional information was required.

B. Finance

No discussion was held.

C. Human Resource Services

1. Instructional/Professional

g. Special Request

5. Amend the 2007-2008 Department Personnel Planning Document to reflect the following change:

Pages 52 & 53 – Subject Area Specialists (4430) – Add one Administrative Secretary II position to be paid from Reading Allocation Project (0723) (note 6).

Mrs. Hightower remarked that should the Reading Allocation Project be reduced, she would prefer that the funding of a school Reading Coach take precedence over the funding of this Administrative Secretary II position. Mr. Ross agreed and noted that such situations are monitored annually when project funds are being budgeted.

D. Purchasing

3. Bid Award: Custodial Supplies, Bid #081302

Mrs. Hightower requested a “data sheet” outlining any decreases in the amount of custodial supplies being purchased due to the school closure and consolidation effort, and as a result of the outsourcing of custodial services to Southern Management, Inc. at several school sites.

6. School Buses for Transportation Department

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Brown-Curry, Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, confirmed that each of the thirty-nine (39) school buses being purchased, did in fact, come equipped with air-conditioning.

17. STARS Suite Software for Middle and High Schools

Mrs. Linker indicated that amended backup documentation for this item was forthcoming.

E. Operations

No discussion was held.

F. Student Transfers

No discussion was held.

G. Internal Auditing

This section was addressed earlier in the meeting.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

-No items submitted

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Items from the Board

-No items submitted

B. Items from the Superintendent

2. Recommend that employee #0000535590 be terminated effective Wednesday, December 19, 2007, for misconduct as more specifically noticed to the employee through separate notice letter.

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Brown-Curry, Dr. Alan Scott, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resource Services, confirmed that the Superintendent had given this employee the opportunity to resubmit a letter of resignation, stating the specific reason he was resigning, and stipulating that the resignation was in lieu of termination. When questioned by Mrs. Brown-Curry as to why such stipulations were necessary, Mr. Ross simply responded that this was the Superintendent’s recommendation, that his recommendation would not change, and that each Board Member could vote accordingly at the January Regular Meeting.

C. Items from the General Counsel

No discussion was held.

ADD VIII. COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS
1. Public Records - Presentation

Mrs. Waters gave a brief presentation regarding the management of public records.

IX. PUBLIC FORUM

Mrs. Hightower called for public hearing; however, there were no speakers.

X. ADJOURNMENT

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

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair