

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, MAY 15, 2009

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: Mrs. Patricia Hightower Vice Chair: Mr. Gerald Boone

Board Members: Mr. Jeff Bergosh
Mrs. Linda Moultrie
Mr. Bill Slayton

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

Meeting was advertised in the Pensacola News Journal on April 25, 2009 - Legal No. 1398553 IT

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Hightower called the Regular Workshop to order at 9:00 a.m. It was decided that the topics of discussion that were deferred from the "open discussion" portion of the May 14, 2009 Special Workshop would be addressed at the end of this session.

Schedule for Board Workshops for the Months of June and July – Patty Hightower

-June 11, 2009 Special Workshop was canceled. It was decided that the "open discussion" session that would have occurred during that meeting would be added to the end of the agenda for the June 15, 2009 Regular Workshop instead.

-June 12, 2009 Regular Workshop was rescheduled to June 15, 2009, at 2:00 p.m., in the Board Room, at the Dr. Vernon McDaniel Building. It was noted that an update on the budget would be given prior to the "open discussion" session.

-July 11, 2009 Special Workshop was canceled. It was decided that the "open discussion" session that would have occurred during that meeting would be added to the end of the agenda for the July 15, 2009 Regular Workshop instead.

-July 12, 2009 Regular Workshop was rescheduled to July 15, 2009, at 2:00 p.m., in the Board Room, at the Dr. Vernon McDaniel Building.

The following meetings were also scheduled:

-Special Meeting, May 27, 2009, at 3:00 p.m., in the Board Room, at the Dr. Vernon McDaniel Building. The primary purpose of this meeting would be for the Board to consider the Superintendent's plan for the use of "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)" stimulus funds.

-Special Meeting, July 23, 2009, at 3:00 p.m., in the Board Room, at the Dr. Vernon McDaniel Building. The primary purpose of this meeting would be for the Board to consider advertisement of the 2009-2010 tentative millage and tentative budget.

-Special Meeting, July 30, 2009, at 5:30 p.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center. The primary purpose of this meeting would be for the Board to consider adoption of the 2009-2010 tentative millage and tentative budget.

-Special Meeting, September 11, 2009, at 8:30 a.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center. The primary purpose of this meeting would be for the Board to consider approval of the Superintendent's Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2009.

-Special Meeting, September 15, 2009, at 5:30 p.m. (prior to the Regular Meeting), in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center. The primary purpose of this meeting would be for the Board to consider final adoption of the 2009-2010 millage and budget.

II. COMMENTS FROM SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent listed the additions, deletions, amendments and/or corrections to the May 19, 2009 Regular Meeting agenda.

III. PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES

-No items submitted

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Curriculum and Instruction

No items were discussed.

B. Finance

No items were discussed.

C. Human Resource Services

1. Instructional/Professional

g. Special Requests

11. Memorandum of Understanding between the Escambia County School District and the Escambia Education Association to implement a four day work week for the summer of 2009.
12. Memorandum of Understanding Between The Escambia County School District and the Union of Escambia Education Staff Professionals to implement a four day work week for the summer of 2009.

The Superintendent and Dr. Alan Scott, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resource Services, responded to questions posed by Mr. Bergosh by explaining that the four day work week during the summer would reduce the number of days that employees would work, but the total hours worked would be the same as during the standard five day work week. They also noted that administrators would be permitted to work with individual employees on adjusting the start and end time of the work day in order to accommodate circumstances where the change in work hours created a legitimate hardship for the employee.

2. Educational Support Personnel

f. Special Requests

- Request employee number 5521-9620-11 be paid back pay retroactive to February 20, 2008 through January 9, 2009. This action is being requested due to previous charges

being dropped by the State Attorney's Office. Employee returned to work on January 12, 2009.

NOTE: At the February 19, 2008 Regular Meeting, the Board approved the Superintendent's recommendation that employee #5221-9620-11 be suspended without pay (non-disciplinary) beginning Wednesday, February 20, 2008, pending the outcome of criminal charges and the District investigation regarding misconduct as more specifically noticed to the employee through separate letter.

Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Dr. Alan Scott, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resource Services, confirmed that the State Attorney's Office had dropped the charges against this employee due to insufficient evidence and that the investigation conducted by the School District did not generate evidence sufficient enough to justify disciplinary action against this employee. [Employee was suspended without pay (non-disciplinary) from February 20, 2008 through January 9, 2009.] Mr. Bergosh stated that he would vote against the Superintendent's recommendation based upon his knowledge of what this employee allegedly did to another employee and based upon what this employee allegedly stole from the School District.

D. Purchasing

6. Lease Payments for Dell Computers at West Florida High School of Advanced Technology

Much discussion occurred with regard to the acquisition of current technology for schools/programs other than West Florida High School.

16. Bid Award: Multi-Year Contract for HVAC Direct Digital Controls (DDC) Systems

Mr. Bergosh stated that he did intend to vote for this item, however, he took issue with granting any contract for an initial term of five (5) years; instead, he believed that the initial contract with any company should be for a one year term only, until satisfactory performance was established. Mr. Ron Peacock, Director of Facilities Planning, noted that for this particular service, the District had utilized five (5) year contracts for the past fifteen (15) years with Systems Specialists, Inc. (primary contract) having been the successful bidder for each of those three contracts.

E. Operations

1. Facilities Planning

A. Final Payments

3. Track Improvements & Repaving at Northview, Pine Forest and Washington High Schools

Mr. Slayton asked that the Superintendent consider, for at least one school site in the District, the installation of a rubber track. He noted that rubber was the type of track surface that student-athletes most often competed on at District, Regional, and State track competitions.

F. Student Transfers

At the request of Mrs. Hightower, Mr. Christopher McFarland, Coordinator of School Choice, agreed to specify the academy or program of each high school transfer on the backup documentation for future agenda items.

G. Internal Auditing

-No items submitted

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

-No items submitted

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Items from the Board

1. Appointment to Escambia County Consolidation Study Commission

Mrs. Hightower noted that Mr. Bergosh had previously indicated that he would like to serve as the Board's appointee to the Escambia County Consolidation Study Commission; however, Mr. Jason Crawford, Co-Chair of Escambia All-For-One, had recently suggested to her that elected officials should not be appointed to serve on the Commission. Mr. Bergosh did not believe that the legislation that created the Commission (*House Bill 1431, City of Pensacola, Town of Century, and Escambia County*) specifically precluded elected officials from serving on the Commission; however, he agreed to remove his name from consideration if the other Board Members felt it prudent to do so. Mrs. Hightower suggested the appointment of a District staff member instead, to which the Superintendent responded by recommending Mr. Norm Ross, Deputy Superintendent.

B. Items from the Superintendent

No items were discussed.

C. Items from the General Counsel

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Moultrie, Mrs. Waters explained that this item was a request to add six attorneys to the current list of School District Hearing Officers, for the purpose of ensuring (per School Board Policy 7.19) that there was a list of qualified hearing officers from which to assign to oversee requests for formal hearing from students recommended for expulsion.

The remainder of this session was spent discussing the following topics that were deferred from the "open discussion" portion of the May 14, 2009 Special Workshop:

Discussion of Utilization of ARRA Stimulus Funds – Jeff Bergosh

Mr. Bergosh pointed out that he had initially submitted this topic as an "open discussion" item for the May 14, 2009 Special Workshop; however, due to time constraints, he was never given the opportunity to speak on the issue. Since he had to leave this meeting for another appointment, he stated his intent to defer discussion on this topic until the May 19, 2009 Regular Meeting (topic would be added as an item under the section entitled, "Items from the Board").

The Regular Workshop recessed at 11:10 a.m. and reconvened at 11:20 a.m., with Mrs. Hightower, Mr. Boone, Mr. Slayton, Mrs. Moultrie, the Superintendent and Mrs. Waters present. Mr. Bergosh left the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

Florida High School Activities Association Rules to Limit Number of Games for All Sports except Football – Bill Slayton

The Florida High School Athletic Association Board of Directors approved the revision of Policy 6, "Sports Season Guidelines", which put a limit on the number of contests a team could schedule for the next two school years. The Policy, which was approved 9-6 by the Board, would cut the maximum number of contests to be scheduled on the varsity level by 20 percent (except football), and by 40 percent on the sub-varsity level (except football). Stated in the Policy is that the reduction in the maximum number of contests is for two years only and would conclude with the 2010-11 school year. According to the FHSAA, the Policy was designed to help reduce costs of operating high school athletic departments in strained economic times. One of the goals was to reduce the number of contests in all sports so that districts would not be faced with total elimination of some sports all together.

There was brief discussion with regard to the Florida High School Activities Association's recent decision to limit the number of contests a team could schedule for the next two school years. According to the FHSAA, the decision was intended to help reduce costs of operating high school athletic departments in strained economic times. It was decided a letter should be written to the FHSAA expressing the Board's opposition to this reduction.

Cancellation of District Activities/Events – Bill Slayton

Discussion took place regarding the procedure followed by the Superintendent and his staff in determining the need for "weather-related" cancellations of District activities/events and the process for notifying students and parents of such cancellations (specifically with regard to utilizing the Connect-Ed® Phone Messaging System).

Middle School Bands – Bill Slayton

Mr. Slayton commented on the benefits of music education with regard to student learning. He specifically requested that the Superintendent ask principals to find ways to encourage student participation in middle school band programs.

Additional Three Modules for Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) Master Board Training – Patty Hightower

Mrs. Hightower reminded the leadership team (Board Members and the Superintendent) that they would need to select three topics for onsite workshops from the list of approved Master Board training modules..

VII. COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

-No items submitted

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM

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

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Regular Workshop adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair