

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, APRIL 14, 2011

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. Gerald W. Boone Vice Chair: Mr. Bill Slayton

Board Members: Mr. Jeff Bergosh
Mrs. Linda Moultrie
Mrs. Patricia Hightower

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

Meeting was advertised in the Pensacola News Journal on March 24, 2011 - Legal No. 1516041

[General discussion took place among Board Members, the Superintendent, and staff throughout this meeting.]

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Boone called the Special Workshop to order at 3:04 p.m.

II. OPEN DISCUSSION

- Request for Status of School Board Members' Website and Page – Jeff Bergosh
(NOTE: *At the April 15, 2010 Special Workshop, Mr. Bergosh requested that a webpage be established for the School Board. This topic was last addressed at the December 9, 2010 Special Workshop.*) The Superintendent advised that a demonstration of the School Board's Website would be provided at the May 12, 2011 Special Workshop.
- Core Classes: Bright Futures vs. Class Size – Jeff Bergosh
Mr. Bergosh said he had discussed this issue with the Superintendent prior to this meeting.
- Posting of Videos of School Board Workshops and Meetings – Jeff Bergosh
Mr. Bergosh said he had discussed this issue with the Superintendent prior to this meeting.
- How much has District budget been trimmed in last 5 years and are we looking at gap? – Gerald Boone
Mr. Terry St. Cyr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Services, advised Mr. Boone that this question would be answered during the "budget update" that would occur at the April 15, 2011 Regular Workshop.
- Update on Oil Spill Litigation – Gerald Boone
(NOTE: *This topic was previously addressed at the February 10, 2011 Special Workshop.*)
Mrs. Waters advised that on April 26, 2011 she would participate in Escambia County's review of proposals for attorney services in the BP Oil Spill matter. Following that meeting, she would finalize her recommendation as to which firm should be hired to represent the School District's interests in the BP Oil Spill litigation.

- Update on Joint Meeting with County Commissioners – *Gerald Boone*
 (NOTE: *This topic was previously addressed at the March 10, 2011 Special Workshop.*) Mrs. Linda West, Coordinator of Board Affairs, advised that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) would host the joint meeting with the School Board on May 26, 2011, beginning at 9:00 a.m., in the BOCC chambers. The BOCC was to handle all arrangements, including advertisement of the public notice.
- Update from March Legislative Conference held in Tallahassee – *Patricia Hightower*
 Mrs. Hightower chose not to provide an update from the March Legislative Conference since much of the information had changed since that time.
- Information on Lawsuit regarding Class Size – *Patricia Hightower*
 Mrs. Hightower reported that the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) Board of Directors would reassess its decision to proceed with the Class Size Reduction lawsuit after the end of the legislative session.
- Update on District Budget Process – *Patricia Hightower*
 Mr. Terry St. Cyr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Services, advised Mrs. Hightower that this topic would be addressed during the “budget update” that would occur at the April 15, 2011 Regular Workshop.
- School Calendar and Spring Break for 2011-2012 – *Bill Slayton*
 Mr. Slayton initiated a discussion regarding two issues related to the school calendar: [1] the desire of parents that the School District continues to provide a multi-year calendar (regardless of whether or not actual FCAT testing dates have been released); and [2] the need for an earlier Spring Break next school year. Mr. Slayton noted that this year’s Spring Break occurred too late for both teachers and students.
- Evaluation Process for School Resource Officers – *Bill Slayton*
 Mr. Slayton suggested that a process be established whereby a principal could conduct a performance evaluation of the School Resource Officer assigned to his/her school. He noted that there were some issues that only a principal might be aware of because of their day-to-day contact with the School Resource Officer and therefore, he believed that it was important to have the performance evaluation documented from the perspective of the principal.
- Public Forum Format at Board Meetings – *Bill Slayton*
 Mr. Slayton initiated a discussion regarding the procedures for Public Forum, specifically with regard to the two-minute time limit for presentations. He noted that several speakers at the last Regular Board Meeting, one of which was a School District employee, had continued their presentations well after the two-minute time limit. There was brief discussion about the possibility of extending the two-minute time limit, but ultimately Board Members agreed that two-minutes for each speaker was sufficient. The Superintendent said that he would remind staff that the two-minute limit during Public Forum also applied to their presentations.
- SESIR Presentation – *Superintendent*
 Ms. Julie Collins, from the Office of Safe Schools, Florida Department of Education, gave a PowerPoint® presentation regarding SESIR (School Environment Safety Incident Reporting) and Discipline Data Reporting. The presentation outlined the various SESIR codes and definitions and the basic SESIR reporting process. Ms. Collins clarified that SESIR was essentially a data collection system whereby individual schools report data to their school districts, those school districts report to the State, and the State then reports to the Federal Government. Mr. Bergosh asked what type of consequences a school district might face if they were intentionally not reporting SESIR incidents. In response, Ms. Collins clarified that the Office of Safe Schools was not an enforcement agency and therefore, had little control over the SESIR reporting by school districts. Mr. Bergosh questioned

whether it was accurate for the public to judge a school district by the percentage of incidents reported to SESIR. Ms. Collins said not necessarily because a low percentage of incidents reported on SESIR could mean that “everything is great” in a school district or it could mean that a school district was not reporting properly; whereas, a high percentage of incidents reported on SESIR could mean “everything is law-and-order” in a school district with all incidents being reported or it could mean that there were real problems.

- Establishing Safe Bus Stops – Superintendent

Mr. Robert Doss, Director of Transportation, narrated a brief PowerPoint® presentation regarding the issue of school bus stop safety as it related to the presence of sexual predators and offenders in the community. Staff had discovered there were more than 700 registered sexual offenders and predators living in Escambia County and that almost half of all Escambia County students live within 1,000 feet of a registered sexual offender or predator. In plotting the residences of those offenders and predators in the School District’s bus routing software with 1,000 feet-radius icons to reflect the reach of existing policy, staff confirmed that there was such a substantial and wide-spread distribution of offenders and predators in Escambia County’s neighborhoods, that placing bus stops 1,000 feet from each of them was isolating students from the safety and security of their homes and neighborhoods. Staff’s alarm over this was accentuated by the realization that, other than the curfews that offenders on probation were serving, there was nothing tying the remainder of the offenders to their homes and thus, their 1,000 feet halos. As a result of this realization, Mr. Doss said staff was proposing changes to the current School Board policy (see: *Item III.B.2, April 19, 2011 Regular Meeting agenda*) that were considerably more restrictive than Florida Statutes, but not so restrictive as to force bus stops far from students’ home and neighborhoods unnecessarily.

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Mr. Boone called for public forum; however, there were no speakers.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the Special Workshop adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair