

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, AUGUST 15, 2008

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 (*not present*) 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. Jim Paul

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Gindl called the Regular Workshop to order at 9:03 a.m.

A. Open Discussion

The following items were briefly addressed at some point during the meeting:
(*Items are not necessarily in chronological order*)

Eligibility for Transportation

[NOTE: *The following discussion refers to a decision made in July (by way of a revision to School District policy) that eliminated unfunded courtesy bus stops for middle and high school students who live within two (2) miles of their school.*]

*Revisions to School District Rule 6Gx17-6.02(2) – Eligibility for Transportation
(approved for advertising at June 2, 2008 Special Meeting; adopted at July 15, 2008 Regular Meeting)*

(2) For the purpose of determining eligibility for transportation, a reasonable walking distance for students to school is one (1) mile for elementary, ~~one and one-half (1-1/2)~~ two (2) miles for middle, two (2) miles for high schools; and to a school bus route, is one-half (1/2) mile for elementary and one (1) miles for middle and high schools.

The following speakers expressed their opposition to the recent policy revision as it related to the two-mile walking distance for middle school students: Tara Richburg and J.C. Cobb.

As requested at the August 6, 2008 Special Meeting, the Superintendent stated that he and his staff had re-evaluated the “eligibility for transportation” issue and came up with the following options for the Board to consider: (1) uphold the recent policy revision, which modified the walking distance for middle school students from one and one-half miles to two miles; or (2) revert back to the previous policy provision, whereby the walking distance for middle school students was one and one-half miles (this option would require the reinstatement of bus routes/stops that were in effect during the 2007-2008 school year).

It was clarified that the recent policy revision had only modified the reasonable walking distance for middle school students. No revision had been made to the policy with regard to the reasonable walking distance for high school students; as such, it remained at two miles, as it had been in the past.

However, until the current school year, the District had actually been providing unfunded courtesy service for many high school students living within two miles of a school.

Mr. Bergosh agreed with the restoration of the middle school walking limit to one and one-half miles; he believed that such action would address some of the safety concerns expressed by families who had been affected by the recent modification.

Mrs. Brown-Curry also agreed with the restoration of the middle school walking limit to one and one-half miles; yet she also wanted the courtesy bus stops for high school students reinstated as well.

Board Members indicated that they would entertain a formal recommendation from the Superintendent at the August 19, 2008 Regular Meeting.

Florida's Differentiated Accountability Pilot Program

Mr. Paul Fetsko, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, gave a brief overview of the U.S. Department of Education's Differentiated Accountability program.

Update on Pensacola Beach Property Taxation Lawsuit* (Specific to the lawsuit filed on behalf of Portofino Tower leaseholders)

It was noted that the First District Court of Appeals had upheld Escambia County Circuit Judge Frank Bell's decision that Portofino leaseholders must pay property taxes; with interest, the School District's share of those back-taxes would be approximately \$9 million.

**(Lawsuit filed by Pensacola Beach leaseholders against the County, contesting the right of the County to assess property taxes on their leasehold.)*

SuccessMaker Program (Pearson Learning Group)

In response to an inquiry made by Mrs. Brown-Curry regarding the effectiveness of the SuccessMaker program, Mr. Paul Fetsko, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, offered to have a representative from Pearson Learning Group address the Board at the September Regular Workshop.

II. COMMENTS FROM SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent listed the additions, deletions, amendments and/or corrections to the August 19, 2008 Regular Meeting agenda.

III. TIME CERTAIN ITEMS

-No items submitted

IV. PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES

Addition, School District Rule 6Gx17-1.23 - School Board Appointees to the Escambia County, Florida Value Adjustment Board

Mrs. Waters indicated that she would provide a corrected version of the application that was included in the backup documentation, as several errors had been identified.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Curriculum and Instruction

5. Florida Department of Education Title I Part A: Basic Project Application for 2008-2009

Mrs. Brown-Curry cited several errors in the backup documentation. Mrs. Marcia Nowlin, Director of Title I, explained that since the backup documentation was initially provided to Board

Members, edits had been made to correct several typographical errors and to provide for adjustments as directed by the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE). She indicated that she would provide the Board with the revised documentation.

Item 5 - Record ID: 1343

(1) Identified need/required focus and target population:

- *7.0 percent of teachers did not participate in high quality professional development activities.*

Mrs. Brown-Curry requested the specific reason(s) as to why 7.0 percent of teachers did not participate in high quality professional development activities during 2007-2008.

11. “Bigs in Schools and Sites” Grant Interagency Agreement

Mrs. Brown-Curry noted that the “executive summary sheet” included in the backup documentation, listed six participating schools, yet the actual agreement listed only five. Staff indicated that corrected documentation would be provided.

B. Finance

No discussion was held.

C. Human Resource Services

1. Instructional/Professional
3. 4th Year Annual

Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Dr. Alan Scott, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resource Services, gave examples of situations when an employee may be offered a 4th year annual contract rather than a professional services contract (*see School Board Rule 2.06, Contracts and Conditions.*)

3. Risk Management
 - f. Adoption of 403B/457 Investment Providers

The following speaker addressed the Board regarding this item: Rick Bowman (representing Ameriprise Financial). Mr. Bowman took issue with several of the reasons offered to him, as to why Ameriprise Financial had not been selected as one of the 403(b)/457 investment providers.

D. Purchasing

7. Plugged-In To Reading Materials for Various Schools

Mr. Bergosh was not convinced that the purchase of Plugged-In to Reading materials would be an affective purchase for teaching reading; he was also concerned with the expense of \$165,900, in that it was to be funded by the District’s General Fund. Mrs. Barbara Linker, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Business Services, clarified that the funding source for this particular purchase was actually the Summer Reading Allocation portion of the General Fund; and that the funds in the Summer Reading Allocation portion were actually “categorical-type” funds that could only be used for purchases specific to the District’s reading program. Ms. Kelly Aepli-Campbell, Reading Specialist, addressed the effectiveness of Plugged-In to Reading, citing Escambia High School’s successful use of the program as an example. She also offered to provide Board Members with the data collected from Escambia High School to illustrate the effectiveness of the program.

AMENDED

10. Architectural/Engineering Services for Scenic Heights Elementary School

Upon inquiry by Mr. Boone, Mr. Ron Peacock, Director of Facilities Planning, confirmed that the prototype used at Ensley and Cordova Park elementary schools, would also be used for the recreation building project at Scenic Heights.

24. Architectural/Engineering Services for Sid Nelson Pre-K Center

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Brown-Curry, Mr. Ron Peacock, Director of Facilities Planning, clarified that the general renovations referred to in the backup documentation, were those that were planned for the main building at the Sid Nelson Pre-K Center, which housed the CYESIS program.

E. Operations

No discussion was held.

F. Student Transfers

No discussion was held.

G. Internal Auditing

No discussion was held.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

-No items submitted

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Items from the Board

-No items submitted

B. Items from the Superintendent

5. Closure of Carver-Century School

Superintendent's recommendation: Charge the School Attendance Zone Advisory Council to redraw attendance zone lines for the students of Carver-Century to be rezoned in existing northend schools.

Should the Board, at the August 19, 2008 Regular Meeting, accept the Superintendent's recommendation regarding the closure of Carver-Century, Mrs. Waters stated that she would immediately thereafter, ask that the Board also approve a "Notice of Policy Development and Policy Development Workshops" with regard to the amendment of Carver-Century attendance zones.

C. Items from the General Counsel

-No items submitted

VIII. COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

-No items submitted

IX. PUBLIC FORUM

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

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Regular Workshop adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair