

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, OCTOBER 17, 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

Vice Chair: Mr. Pete Gindl, Sr. (not present)

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

Meeting was advertised in the Pensacola News Journal – Legal No.72845 IT September 26, 2008

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

Unauthorized Purchase of Repairs to Electronic Sign (Item V.D.13)

Description of Purchase: Request authorization to issue Purchase Order and payment for fees incurred to repair damages to an electronic sign. Sign was damaged by a lightning strike in January 2008. Risk Management requested that West Florida High School of Advanced Technology obtain quotes for the repair and forward them to their office in order to process their claim. School instead had the sign repaired. Supplier Name: George Markham & Sons Signs, Pensacola, FL Amount of Purchase: \$5,090.20 Funding Source: General Fund (1110) – Min Self-Insured Losses-Property (0610)

Ms. Shenna Payne, Assistant Principal of West Florida High School and Mr. Kevin Windham, Director of Risk Management, addressed the Board on what was referred to a “miscommunication between two departments” that ultimately led the unauthorized purchase of repairs to the school’s electronic sign.

Inventory Adjustment Reports (Item V.G.3)

Missing items for Semmes Elementary School

Mr. Larry Knight, Principal of Semmes Elementary, addressed the Board regarding eleven (11) items reported as missing on the schools’ inventory adjustment report, specifically laptop computers, and the steps that were being taken to prevent the disappearance of such items in the future.

Florida's "Ready to Work" Credentialing Program

Mr. Warren May, project coordinator for Florida Ready to Work, briefly addressed the Board regarding Florida's "Ready to Work" credentialing program which:

- *Provides student/job seekers with a standard credential that certifies their workplace readiness and ability to succeed on the job;*
- *Saves employers time and money by taking the guesswork out of the hiring process;*
- *Helps educators and workforce development partners prepare today's students/jobseekers for tomorrow's jobs; and*
- *Helps attract businesses with high-wage jobs to Florida which will grow Florida's economy.*

The following item was addressed at this point:

Final Order in re: Margaret Benson, Reba Davis, Deborah Elleard, Deborah Gregory, Ida Lanier, Phyllis Malone, Vicki Outzen, and Janet Taylor, Petitioners vs. Escambia County School Board, Respondent, DOAH Case No. 08-1202

Mr. H.B. Stivers, attorney representing the petitioners, and Mr. Joe Hammons, attorney representing the School Board, addressed various aspects of this item. (NOTE: *Ms. Patty Hitchcock, Court Reporter, was present to record this portion of the meeting.*) It was noted that this issue would be further addressed at an Executive Session scheduled for October 21, 2008 at 4:00 p.m., in Room 130, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center.

The Regular Workshop was recessed at 10:35 a.m. and reconvened at 10:50 a.m., with Mrs. Hightower, Mr. Bergosh, Mrs. Brown-Curry, Mr. Boone, the Superintendent and Mrs. Waters present.

A. Open Discussion

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

- Request up-to-date report on the reinstatement of the 2-mile walk zone and courtesy ride [*Claudia Brown-Curry*]

Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, reported that to date, the District had reinstated 45 of the 90 bus routes that were previously eliminated.

- Request status report on Advanced Placement Incentive Program (APIP) [*Gerald Boone*]

Mr. Paul Fetsko, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, reported that the District was not awarded the Advanced Placement Incentive Program (APIP) grant this year, but would certainly try again next year.

- Request status report on implementation of Bus Radio Program [*Gerald Boone*]
"Bus Radio" is a free program designed specifically to improve bus safety while providing students with both age-appropriate content and an entertaining ride to and from school.

Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, reported that installation of the "Bus Radio" transceivers was expected to begin in January 2009.

- Request status report on purchase and installation of GPS System [Gerald Boone]

Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, reported that as of October 9th, approximately 245 of the 300 GPS system units had been installed on District school buses.

Mrs. Brown-Curry requested the estimated cost per year for maintaining the GPS system.

- Schedule of Board Meetings for November 2008

November 14th - Regular Workshop, beginning at 9:00 a.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Center

November 18th - Installation Ceremony & Organizational Meeting, beginning at 4:00 p.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Center; Regular Meeting, beginning at 5:30 p.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Center. *(This schedule was later changed to: Installation Ceremony, beginning at 6:00 p.m., followed by Organizational Meeting, followed by Regular Meeting.)*

- Agreement with Baldwin County, Alabama and Escambia County, Alabama

Mr. Christopher McFarland, Coordinator of School Choice, reported that the school districts of Baldwin County, Alabama and Escambia County, Alabama had decided to rescind their agreement with the school district of Escambia County, Florida which had allowed students to cross state lines to attend school. Any student attending school in Escambia County, Florida would be allowed to complete the highest level of school offered where they were currently enrolled.

- Prevention Programs

Ms. Vickie Mathis, Director of Alternative Education, provided Board Members with spreadsheets outlining the various violence prevention, and alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) prevention programs provided to students through various funding sources or in collaboration with community agencies.

- Five-Star School Award Criteria

The Five Star School Award was created by the Commissioner's Community Involvement Council and is presented annually to those schools that have shown evidence of exemplary community involvement. In order to earn Five Star school recognition, a school must show documentation that it has achieved 100% of the established criteria in the categories of: Business partnerships, Family Involvement, Volunteerism, Student Community Service, and School Advisory Councils.

Mrs. Hightower offered to draft a letter, on behalf of the Board, to the Florida Department of Education, opposing a decision that was made several years ago to require a school to have a grade of "C" or above in order to qualify for the Five-Star School Award. The concern was that a school, such as Hallmark Elementary, that had shown evidence of exemplary community involvement, would be denied Five-Star rating because of a low school grade.

- Paper-Less (Electronic) Agenda for School Board Meetings/Workshops

Mrs. Hightower and Mr. Bergosh requested that the Superintendent look into the feasibility of a paper-less (electronic) agenda for School Board meetings/workshops.

II. COMMENTS FROM SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent listed the additions, deletions, amendments and/or corrections to the October 21, 2008 Regular Meeting agenda.

III. TIME CERTAIN ITEMS

1. Florida's "Ready to Work" Credentialing Program (9:30 a.m.)

This item was addressed earlier in the meeting.

IV. PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES

Revisions to School District Chapter 1, Administration of the District School System

1.11 Legal Services

(1) General Counsel

- (7) *Send written reports to the Board on a quarterly basis, or more frequently if directed by the Board, as to the progress status of litigation and other matters under her direction;*

It was decided that that "under her direction" should be changed to "under the direction of General Counsel" as no gender-specific pronouns were to be used in policy.

Revisions to School District Chapter 2, Human Resource Services

2.03 Non-Certificated Instructional Personnel

(9) Denial, Revocation or Non-Renewal of Local Certificates

- (c) *In exercising its discretion to deny issuance of a local certificate, to revoke an existing local certificate, or to deny renewal, the School Board may consider the following:*
- (3) *Whether the applicant or certificate holder has been guilty of a Level 2 Offense crime of moral turpitude as defined by the Escambia County School District, Sections 435.04 and 1012.315, Fla. Stat., or gross immorality or an act involving moral turpitude;*

Ellen Lawrence requested to address the Board regarding Section 2.03(9)(c)(3); she questioned why the District would be defining crimes of moral turpitude, ("crime of moral turpitude as defined by the Escambia County School District") when such crimes were already defined in Florida Statute. It was suggested that this section be revised for clarity.

2.36 Political Activities of Personnel

Discussion took place regarding this particular section of policy; yet, no changes were requested.

Revisions to School District Chapter 3, School Operating Procedures

3.02 Office of School Choice

(5) Student Transfer Procedure

(e) Transfer Limitations

~~(2) Diversity~~

~~*All transfer requests recommended for approval by the Student Transfer Committee shall be consistent with achieving and maintaining an enrollment that includes a minority (Black) enrollment of 15% plus or minus the district's minority (Black) enrollment of 35%. Recommended transfers that are inconsistent with this effort shall be limited to hardships which cannot be reasonably addressed by an alternative solution.*~~

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Brown-Curry, Mrs. Waters advised that this section of policy had been deleted in order to comply with the Supreme Court's ruling on Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1. Et Al.

3.07 *Safety Regulations and Procedures*
(13) *Water Activities*

Discussion took place regarding this particular section of policy; yet, no changes were requested.

NOTE: *Mr. Bergosh left the meeting at 12:30 p.m.*

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Curriculum and Instruction

No discussion was held.

B. Finance

No discussion was held.

C. Human Resource Services

1. Instructional/Professional

g. Special Requests

14. Approve for Pam Saxton, teacher to instruct the Fall Reading Endorsement Program Competency Six, Demonstration of Accomplishments from October 28 through December 6, 2008 for a total of 80 hours and to be paid at her regular hourly rate of pay from Title Two funds.

Mrs. Brown-Curry wanted to know how the Fall Reading Endorsement Program had been handled during the previous year. Mrs. Carolyn Spooner, Director of Secondary Education, indicated that she would provide that information.

D. Purchasing

4. Annual Agreement: Educational Mentoring Program

Mr. Boone referred to the “executive summary sheet” which indicated that the amount of purchase was \$26,308; however, he questioned the accuracy of that amount because page 3 of the actual agreement, read “*Twenty six thousand, three hundred eight dollars (\$26,308) to be paid quarterly, upon approval, through June 2009.*” He asked for clarification as to whether the total sum to be paid to the Boys and Girls Club would be \$26,308 or \$105,232 (\$26,308 multiplied by 4). Mrs. Laura Shaud, Director of Budgeting, stated that she would confirm the correct total amount. She also noted that the District simply served as a “pass-through” for funds provided from the State to the Boys & Girls Clubs.

13. Unauthorized Purchase of Repairs to Electronic Sign

This item was addressed at the beginning of the meeting.

15. Modular Classrooms for Hellen Caro Elementary School

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Hightower, Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, confirmed that these modular classrooms for Hellen Caro Elementary were, in fact, a function of Class Size Reduction and were designed to replace several portables currently located on the school grounds.

- E. Operations
 - 2. Information Technology
 - A. Miscellaneous
 - 1. Sprint Consent and Release

Upon inquiry by Mrs. Hightower, Mrs. Waters advised that this was a simple general consent and release form that was inadvertently left out of the District's contract with Sprint.

F. Student Transfers

No discussion was held.

G. Internal Auditing

- 3. Inventory Adjustment Reports

This item 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

No discussion was held.

- C. Items from the General Counsel

- 1. Final Order in re: Margaret Benson, Reba Davis, Deborah Elleard, Deborah Gregory, Ida Lanier, Phyllis Malone, Vicki Outzen, and Janet Taylor, Petitioners vs. Escambia County School Board, Respondent, DOAH Case No. 08-1202

This item was addressed earlier in the meeting.

- 3. Truancy Prosecutions Request from Judge Ross Goodman

Mrs. Waters advised that Judge Ross Goodman had requested her attendance at truancy court and her representation of the School District in contempt hearings on truancy orders. For various reasons, including the amount of time that would be required for her attendance, the Board decided that this would not be a viable assignment for Mrs. Waters.

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 1:33 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair