

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF  
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, NOVEMBER 15, 2012

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. Bill Slayton Vice Chair: Mr. Jeff Bergosh

Board Members: Mr. Gerald W. Boone  
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 October 26, 2012 - Legal No. 1580872

[General discussion among Board Members, the Superintendent, and staff occurred throughout this workshop.]

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Slayton called the Special Workshop to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. OPEN DISCUSSION

- Organization of the Board & Various Committee Assignments - Bergosh

Mr. Bergosh initiated a discussion regarding the organization of the School Board, which would be decided by formal vote during the November 20, 2012 Organizational Meeting.

*Election of Chairman for 2012-2013* - Mr. Bergosh wanted to know if School Board Members were still agreeable to the succession plan that was previously discussed at the November 9, 2011 Regular Workshop. At that time, the School Board Members had expressed their willingness to informally adhere to a two-year succession plan for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman positions. Mr. Bergosh said he would appreciate the honor of assuming the position of Chairman for 2012-2013. Mr. Boone said it was his intent to nominate Mr. Bergosh to serve as Chairman. Mrs. Hightower said she was willing to support Mr. Bergosh as Chairman but wanted to make sure he understood that as the Chairman, he would need to use "caution" when making remarks about the School District. Mrs. Moultrie was also willing to support Mr. Bergosh as Chairman but said she hoped that he would consider his position as Chairman when making comments about the School District. Mr. Slayton said that when the Chairman was called upon to speak on behalf of the School Board it was important that he/she refrain from making comments that could be perceived as the opinion of the entire Board. Mrs. Hightower asked Mr. Bergosh if he planned to attend the Florida School Board Association's Chairmanship training session to be held on November 27, 2012. Mr. Bergosh said he probably would not be able to attend that particular session but could possibly attend the next one that would be offered in early 2013. Mrs. Hightower said that if Mr. Bergosh did not attend the FSBA's training session, then she would ask that Mrs. Waters conduct a training session for him instead. Mrs. Moultrie said that she planned to attend the FSBA's training session if she was elected as Vice-Chairman and while there, she would pick up materials for Mr. Bergosh. Upon inquiry by Mrs.

Hightower, Mr. Bergosh said that he intended to take a hiatus from writing on his personal blog while serving as the School Board Chairman.

*Election of Vice-Chairman for 2012-2013* - Mr. Bergosh said it was his intent to nominate Mrs. Moultrie to serve as Vice-Chairman. Mrs. Moultrie said she would appreciate the opportunity to serve in that capacity.

Mr. Bergosh initiated a discussion regarding the School Board's various committee assignments, some of which would be decided by formal vote during the November 20, 2012 Organizational Meeting.

*Pensacola Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee* - Mr. Bergosh noted that he had served on this committee for the past six (6) years and would be willing to continue if no other Board Member wished to do so.

*Escambia County Value Adjustment Board* – Mr. Boone said he was willing to continue serving as the School Board's representative on the Value Adjustment Board if no other Board Member wished to do so. Mr. Slayton said Mr. Gerald Adcox had indicated that he was willing to continue serving as the School Board's citizen appointee to the Value Adjustment Board.

*Escambia County Planning Board* – Mrs. Hightower said she was willing to continue serving as the School Board's representative to the Planning Board if no other Board Member wished to do so.

*Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) Legislative Liaison and Alternate* – Mr. Bergosh said he was willing to serve as the legislative liaison to the Florida School Boards Association's legislative committee and Mrs. Hightower said she was willing to serve as the alternate.

- Alignment of Curriculum Advice with Bright Futures Requirements - *Bergosh*

Mr. Bergosh chose to postpone discussion on this topic until the December Special "Open Discussion" Workshop.

- Dual Enrollment - *Hightower*

Mrs. Hightower said that if other School Board Members were interested, she would request that the Superintendent have staff provide a thorough presentation on the topic of dual enrollment process at a future "open discussion" workshop. At the request of the School Board, the Superintendent agreed to have staff present such a presentation at the February Special "Open Discussion" Workshop.

- Update on Nine Week Parent Conference (extended school day plan) - *Hightower*  
[[Handout](#) provided to School Board Members]

At the request of Mrs. Hightower, the Superintendent provided a brief update on conferences attended by parents of first-grade students. The Superintendent said that the School District had hoped that every first-grade parent would have attended the first nine-week conference with their child's teacher so that they could be given a "checklist" and could be informed of the new expectations for reading. The Superintendent said that about 82% of first-grade parents had attended the first nine-week conference. In the six schools with an extended day, about 76% of first-grade parents had attended. The Superintendent said that overall about 29% of the School District's first-graders were currently at-risk of being retained for not reading on grade-level. In the six schools with an extended day, about 35% of the first-grade students were currently at-risk of retention. It was noted that schools would continue to collect this information throughout the school year, but beginning with the second nine-week grading period, the focus of the conferences would shift to the parents of only those students who were in danger of retention. Several Board Members stressed the importance of continuing to reach out to parents to get them involved, especially the ones who did not show up to the conferences.

- Florida School Boards Association Resolution on Sequestration - Hightower  
[[Handout](#) provided to School Board Members]

Mrs. Hightower noted that each School Board Member should have received a copy of the Florida School Boards Association's *Resolution on Sequestration*. She said the FSBA was asking each school board in Florida to adopt a similar resolution that would include information from its school district's perspective including the number of students, the programs, and the services that would be negatively impacted by sequestration. Mr. Bergosh understood that the school districts in Florida needed the money, but said that funds coming from the federal government had "strings attached" and he was somewhat "torn" on the issue because he would like to see less federal control of local education decisions. Mrs. Hightower suggested that a resolution could be added to the agenda or the School Board could simply direct the Chairman to write a letter to Florida's Congressional leaders outlining the local impact of sequestration. After further discussion, the Board accepted the Superintendent's offer to write a letter to Congressman Jeff Miller and have it co-signed by the Chairman.

- November and December Calendar - Slayton

There were no changes to the School Board's schedule of workshops and meetings for November or December.

- Use of Travel Agency to Secure Airline Tickets for District Travel - Slayton

Mr. Slayton chose to postpone discussion on this topic to the December Special "Open Discussion" Workshop.

- Computer Upgrades - Why Windows 7 instead of Windows 8 - Slayton

Mr. Slayton was curious as to when the School District would upgrade to the recently released Windows® 8 operating system. The Superintendent said the School District would never want to "jump out there and adopt an operating system the day it's released" noting that there were many devices connected to the School Districts computers and the availability of drivers for newly released operating system could pose quite a problem. Mr. Tom Ingram, Director of Information Technology, said the problem with upgrading a Windows® operating system was three-fold: compatibility of the existing software with the new operating system; workstation imaging; and desktop management. Mr. Ingram said the School District had been purchasing Windows® 7 for about three years; and for hardware that was 3 to 4 years old, there would be no cost to upgrade to Windows® 7. He said he would not recommend that the School District upgrade any workstations for which a Windows® 7 license had not been purchased. Mr. Ingram said the School District was a "ways off" from an upgrade to Windows® 8 but would begin immediately testing this latest operating system.

- Nine Week District Middle School Math and Science Test - Slayton

Mr. Slayton was concerned that School Board Members were not aware of the recent science and math exams given to middle school students district-wide. Mrs. Carolyn Spooner, Director of High School Education, confirmed that middle school students had been given departmental exams in the areas of science and math at the end of the first nine week grading period. Mrs. Spooner said similar exams had been given in the past for the areas of Algebra and Biology. Mr. Slayton said he was not opposed to district-wide tests; his main concern was that he was "blindsided" with questions from parents about exams that he had no idea the School District had given. The Superintendent said that staff could create a chart for the School Board outlining the schedule for the various district-wide assessments.

- Timeliness of Insurance Enrollment Notice Letter to Retirees - Slayton

Upon inquiry by Mr. Slayton, Mr. Kevin Windham, Director of Risk Management, confirmed that there had been a delay in the mailing of the enrollment notice letter to retirees. Mr. Windham explained that the delay was due to a miscommunication between the local Post Office and the company that the School District had contracted with for bulk rate mailing services. Mr. Windham said that although his office had included retirees in the same three-week open enrollment period as active employees, retirees could still make changes to their medical plan until mid-December because they did not have the same restrictions as active employee under a Section 125 plan.

- Strategic Plan Presentation – Superintendent

The Superintendent chose to postpone discussion on this topic until the November 16, 2012 Regular Workshop.

- Escambia Leader Assessment Presentation – Superintendent

Dr. Karen Owen, Director of Staff Development, narrated a brief PowerPoint® [presentation](#) on the Escambia Leader Assessment system. Dr. Owen then responded to questions posed by School Board Members regarding the various information outlined in the presentation.

- Plan for Spencer Bibbs Elementary – Superintendent

(NOTE: *This topic was previously addressed at the October 9, 2012 Regular Workshop.*) Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, reported that each of the School Board Members had been given an opportunity to walk-through the building that formerly housed the Spencer Bibbs Elementary School. He said each School Board Member had reviewed the “existing layout” and had been advised of the plan to renovate the facility for use as a professional development center for training and staff development. It was noted that the following departments currently located at the Hall Center would be relocated to the Spencer Bibbs facility: Staff Development, Title I, and Media Services/Professional Library. Mr. Dennis said he was pleased to inform the School Board that the funding that had been set aside as the result of real estate sales would be sufficient to cover the entire renovation.

The Superintendent and Mrs. Moultrie exited the Special Workshop at 5:00 p.m.

- Computer Equipment Disposal and Transfer Standard Operating Procedure – Superintendent  
[Handout provided to School Board Members]

Mr. Tom Ingram, Director of Instructional Technology, gave a brief review of the proposed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for computer equipment disposal and transfer. He noted that Mr. Boone’s request from the May 10, 2012 Special Workshop had been incorporated into this proposed SOP so that computer equipment that was still functional but obsolete and not of much use to a school could be made available to organizations in need of such equipment. Mr. Ingram then responded to questions posed by School Board Members with regard to various aspects of this procedure. Mr. Ingram said the new procedure would be implemented immediately.

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Mr. Slayton called for Public Forum; however, there were no speakers.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Workshop was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

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Superintendent

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Chair

PENDING BOARD APPROVAL