

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, NOVEMBER 16, 2012

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: 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 Regular Workshop to order at 9:00 a.m.

Strategic Plan Presentation

(NOTE: *This presentation was postponed from the November 15, 2012 Special "Open Discussion" Workshop.*) A [draft copy](#) of the Strategic Plan for 2012-2013 was provided to each School Board Member.) Chairpersons from the Strategic Planning Committee reviewed the "key changes" that had been made to each component of the School District's Strategic Plan. Throughout the review, those chairpersons responded to questions posed by School Board Members regarding the various information outlined in the plan. The Superintendent said the Strategic Plan would be presented for the School Board's consideration at their December Regular Meeting. In the meantime, if a School Board Member had any questions, concerns, or comments about the Strategic Plan as presented in draft form, the Superintendent asked that they contact him and he would relay that information to the appropriate Strategic Planning Committee chairperson.

At this time, the following items were handled:

Dixon Charter Report (Item VII.1)

[\[Handout provided to School Board Members prior to this workshop\]](#)

Dr. Wendy Bennett, Principal of Dixon School of the Arts, summarized some of the major points from the written update for November 2012 that she had provided prior to this workshop.

Waiver: Dr. Bennett reported that the state Board of Education had approved Dixon's waiver request on November 6, 2012. Mr. Bergosh congratulated Dixon on receiving the waiver.

Parental Involvement: Dr. Bennett said that the school's "number one concern right now" was increasing parental involvement.

Financial: Mr. Bergosh said one of his biggest concerns with Dixon had always been the school's finances. He noticed that there was nothing related to the school's finances included in the November

2012 report. Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Dr. Bennett confirmed that the school was “on more of a stable footing” in terms of its finances. Ms. Vicki Mathis, Director of Alternative Education, said that Dixon’s financial situation had improved and the school was no longer required to provide monthly financial updates; however, information regarding Dixon’s finances would be included in the Charter School Quarterly Report for December 2012.

School Improvement Plan: It was noted that Dixon’s school improvement plan was included as an item on the School Board’s November 20, 2012 Regular Meeting agenda (*see Item V.A.1*). Mrs. Hightower said she was concerned that Dixon’s plan included goals such as increasing reading proficiency by only 1% for the 2012-2013 school year. Her concern was that the school had not set its goals high enough to achieve a school grade higher than an F for the 2012-2013 school year. Ms. Linda Scott, Assistant Principal of Dixon School of the Arts, said that the 1% increase was Dixon’s minimum goal yet the school would actually work toward achieving a higher percentage; she said the school was actually striving to be a C or above. Mrs. Hightower and Mr. Bergosh believed that Dixon’s goals should be adjusted to indicate that the school was aiming for a grade higher than an F. Dr. Bennett said that Dixon’s school improvement plan would be revised to show that the school’s goal would be to achieve a rate of increase that would increase its school grade.

Newpoint Academy Report (Item VII.2)

[Handout provided to School Board Members prior to this workshop]

Mr. John Graham, Director of Newpoint Academy, reviewed a few major points from the written update for November 2012 that he had provided prior to this workshop. He then responded to questions posed by School Board Members about the information provided. Mrs. Hightower wanted to know the number of teachers at Newpoint Academy and Newpoint High School and each teacher’s years of experience. Mr. Bergosh said he had heard from Newpoint parents who said there is a large turnover in teachers at the school. Mr. Bergosh said the large turnover was a “sign of a problem” and questioned how the school would keep stability with respect to the school’s teachers. Mr. Graham replied that there were only 18 teachers at Newpoint Academy and Newpoint High School combined. He said that some teachers had left due to medical reasons. Mr. Bergosh said he also heard that there had been a significant number of students to withdraw from Newpoint. Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Mr. Graham said that Newpoint Academy’s current student enrollment was 179 and the student enrollment at Newpoint High School was currently 96. Mr. Bergosh asked about Newpoint’s finances. Mr. Graham responded that the Newpoint’s finances were “very stable” and that to his knowledge, they had never had any issues. School Board Members said they would like to see more data included in future updates from Newpoint. Mr. Boone said the reports should also be submitted more timely so that School Board Members would have a chance to review and be prepared to ask questions during the actual update at the Board workshop. It was noted that Newpoint Academy’s school improvement plan would be submitted for the School Board’s consideration at the December Regular Meeting.

The Regular Workshop recessed at 10:20 a.m. and reconvened at 10:30 a.m., with all Board Members, the Superintendent, and Mrs. Waters present.

Minutes from the October 16, 2012 Special Workshop

(Item IV.3 on November 20, 2012 Regular Meeting agenda)

Mr. Bergosh said he intended to support the approval of this set of minutes, however, he wanted to point out that there was a very lengthy discussion that took place at the October 16, 2012 Special Workshop after the presentation from Marathon Health, Inc. He noted that during the discussion each of the School Board Members had posed questions to the representatives of Marathon, yet in the minutes from that workshop, that dialogue had been pared down to a single sentence that simply read, “Marathon’s presentation was followed by a thorough question and answer session with the School Board.” Mr. Bergosh said that because of the limitations of meeting minutes, he was thankful that the School District was now posting on the District’s website, the video recordings of the School Board workshops and meetings, because lengthy discussions and presentations could then be viewed by any interested person.

II. COMMENTS FROM SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent listed the changes that had been made to the November 20, 2012 Regular Meeting since its initial publication.

III. PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES

Notice of Intent to Advertise Amendments to Rules and Procedures of the District School Board: Chapter 2, Human Resource Services

Mr. Bergosh asked for clarification on the proposed changes to Chapter 2 policy in terms of whether the various changes were or were not a result of a statutory mandate. Dr. Alan Scott, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resource Services, noted that a “summary of changes” was included in the backup documentation for this item. He clarified that some changes were due to statutory mandates and other changes were made because staff felt it was appropriate to “clearly delineate” certain information in School Board policy.

The following discussion occurred later in the workshop:

Mrs. Hightower initiated a discussion on the overall process of submitting rule revisions on a School Board agenda. In conversations with the General Counsel’s office, Mrs. Hightower said she had been told that there continued to be various issues each month with regard to the current rule revision process, including the untimely posting of adopted School Board policy to the School District’s website. Mrs. Hightower pointed out that policy “belonged” to the School Board though it was developed in conjunction with the Superintendent and his staff. She suggested that the School Board may want to ask the School Board’s General Counsel, Mrs. Waters, to develop a procedure that would make the entire process more efficient. Mrs. Hightower understood that there was already a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that had been authored a few years ago by Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, but she was concerned that not everyone was “on the same page” regarding the current SOP. Mr. Dennis pointed out that the current SOP had been developed with the input of all individuals who were involved in the rule revision process; he recommended that “rather than reinventing the wheel,” those same individuals could revisit and refine the current SOP to address the inefficiencies. The Superintendent agreed that the current SOP should be revisited by all individuals who were involved in the rule revision process and not just the General Counsel’s Office. After much discussion on this topic, it was decided that the original group of individuals who had helped developed the current SOP would meet again to review and refine that SOP for the purpose of improving the efficiency of the entire rule revision process. Mrs. Hightower said she would like for the School Board to be updated on this issue at the January Regular Workshop.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Curriculum and Instruction

1. School Improvement Plan Dixon School of the Arts, Inc.

This item was discussed earlier in the workshop.

2. Agreement between Pensacola State College and the School Board of Escambia County, Florida for Cisco Academy Support

Mrs. Moultrie said that staff had answered her questions about this item prior to this workshop.

B. Finance

7. Auction Lists I, II, and III for November 2012

Mr. Bergosh noticed that there were several pieces of exercise equipment listed on the auction lists for November 2012. Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent

for Operations, confirmed that the equipment had been offered to but was not wanted by the School District's Wellness Center.

8. Financial Status Report: Employee Benefit Trust Fund

Mr. Bergosh requested a recap of the financial status report for the Employee Benefit Trust Fund. Mr. Terry St. Cyr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Services, gave a brief recap of the information outlined in the financial status report. Mr. St. Cyr said that September had ended with a \$3.5 million fund balance (cumulative actual as of September 30th) which was "much better" than the two previous months. He noted that October was "not as good" with about a \$400,000 increase in claims but overall, he believed the Trust Fund was "heading in the right direction."

9. Investment Portfolio Report

At the request of Mr. Bergosh, Mr. Terry St. Cyr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Services, gave a brief overview of the information outlined in the Investment Portfolio Report. It was noted that this was the first time such a report had been included on the School Board's agenda. Mr. St. Cyr said that this monthly investment summary had been available on the District's Financial Information web page for quite some time, but it would now also be submitted as a recurring agenda item in order to keep the School Board apprised of information related to the School District's various investment accounts.

C. Human Resource Services

Mrs. Hightower said that Dr. Alan Scott, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resource Services, had answered her questions about items under this section prior to this workshop.

1. Instructional/Professional

g. Special Requests

1. Approve the following amended job description on the Administrative Salary Schedule, effective November 21, 2012: Coordinator II – EEOC

Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Dr. Alan Scott, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resource Services, said that Coordinator II – EEOC job description was being revised so that it would accurately reflect the duties, responsibilities, and expectations of the position. He said that as part of the revision, all references to an Affirmative Action Plan had been replaced with references to a Diversity Action Plan; the revision also included the elimination of any reference to the obsolete Human Resources Management Development Plan (HRMD). Dr. Scott mentioned that the current Coordinator II – EEOC, Mr. Horace Jones, would be retiring soon and it was necessary to have a job description for that position that accurately reflected the current terms, policies, and procedures that would "fall under the umbrella" of the EEOC office. Mrs. Moultrie said that she too had some questions about this item but Dr. Scott had answered those questions prior to this workshop. Upon inquiry by Mrs. Hightower, Mrs. Waters suggested that for consistency, Section V.C.5 of the School Board's regular monthly meeting agenda should probably be revised from Affirmative Action to Diversity Action.

D. Purchasing

5. Bid Award: School District Employee Health Clinic(s), RFP #130803

Mrs. Hightower said she had discussed this item with Mr. John Dombroskie, Director of Purchasing, prior to this workshop. She referred to the following statements listed on the "executive summary sheet" for this item: *Marathon Health, Inc. was identified as the firm best able to meet the District's needs. Request permission to negotiate a final agreement.* Mrs. Hightower also referenced the following statement from the minutes of the October 16, 2012 Special Workshop which indicated that the School Board had already granted permission for negotiations with Marathon Health, Inc.:

After hearing support from each School Board Member, the Superintendent said that staff would proceed with negotiating a contract with Marathon Health, Inc. that would be presented for the School Board's consideration in the near future. The Superintendent clarified that the School Board had "informally" agreed to negotiations with Marathon Health, Inc. during the October 16, 2012 Special Workshop; however, the School Board's approval of this bid award would indicate "formal" acceptance of Marathon Health, Inc. as the vendor that the School District would negotiate a contract with for the establishment and operation of an employee health clinic. It was noted that the School Board's acceptance of this bid award would also "close" the RFI/RFP process for all other vendors that had applied. The Superintendent said a contract with Marathon Health, Inc. would be presented for the School Board's consideration at the December Regular Meeting.

E. Operations

1. Facilities Planning

B. Miscellaneous

3. A.K. Suter Elementary School Replacement
4. Ernest Ward Middle School Replacement

Mr. Bergosh questioned why the "Architect/Engineer Presentations/Interviews Final Tally Form" had been included in the backup documentation for both of these items. Mr. Shawn Dennis, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, said that for "all major projects" that information was typically provided as part of the School Board's agenda backup materials. Upon inquiry by Mr. Bergosh, Mr. Dennis said a typical interview committee would be comprised of a level director (i.e., elementary, middle, high), the Director of Facilities Planning, a mechanical engineer, the Director of Maintenance, a One-Half Cent Sales Tax Watchdog Committee representative, the school principal or designee, and the construction project manager.

F. Student Transfers

-No items discussed

G. Internal Auditing

-No items submitted

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

-None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Items from the Board

1. Selection of Florida School Boards Association Legislative Liaison and Alternate
2. Selection of Board Appointee to Escambia County Planning Board
3. Selection of Board Appointee to Escambia County Value Adjustment Board
4. Selection of Gerald Adcox as the School Board's Citizen Appointee to Escambia County Value Adjustment Board

These items were addressed during the November 15, 2012 Special Workshop.

B. Items from the Superintendent

1. Student Recommendations

Mr. Bergosh wanted to know, "what is the threshold that has to be reached" in determining when a student discipline matter is brought to the School Board for consideration as opposed to simply being handled by the school. The Superintendent said that there was no "automatic" threshold for determining student discipline; he said the school principals are expected to use their best judgment because for each situation there were so many factors that had to be considered when determining the appropriate punishment for a student.

C. Items from the General Counsel

-No items submitted

VII. COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

1. Dixon Charter Report

This item was handled earlier in the workshop.

2. Newpoint Academy Report

This item was handled earlier in the workshop.

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM

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

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Regular Workshop adjourned at 12:37 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair