

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
December 4, 2001

The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, met in regular session duly called at 7 p.m. in the Boardroom, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida. Present were: Bill Cake, chairman; Jeannine Cawthon, vice-chairman; Bev Carroll, Chester Leathers and Barbara Sharpe, members; Mary L. Chambers, superintendent; and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board.

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Motion by Mrs. Carroll

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to approve the minutes of November 20, 2001, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of December 4, 2001, as presented.

Action Item H. 1., Student Case No. 01-56-X, was deleted. Consent Agenda Items I. 4., Consultant Services—Attachment E; I. 17., Subcontract with University of Florida; and I. 19., Assistance for 10th Grade FCAT Grant, were pulled for discussion and separate vote as Action Items H. 3, 4, and 5, respectively.

The question was called on the agenda as amended.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

Chairman Cake informed the Board that Dr. Gunnar Paulson, president, Alachua County Education Association, would be recognized under Citizen Input rather than the Scheduled Agencies portion of the agenda due to the short notice of his request.

Dr. Paulson expressed concern with the decision to deny him access to the Scheduled Agencies portion of the agenda and noted that he would be filing a grievance.

Staff Attorney Jim Scaggs reviewed the Collective Bargaining Contract language, which states that notice must be received in writing ten days in advance in order to be placed on the agenda, unless the matter is of an emergency nature. Dr. Scaggs pointed out that Dr. Paulson did not identify in his request, dated December 3, 2001, that the issue was of an emergency nature.

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Superintendent Chambers noted that this month's character trait is "Compassion" and acknowledged the Boardroom artwork display.

Mrs. Sharpe thanked Superintendent Chambers for presenting the "Thought for the Day" at the recent Florida School Boards Association Conference in Tampa, Florida. She also thanked the Eastside High School Jr. ROTC and Captain J. A. Prescott and the Eastside High School Choral singers and Choral Director Melanie Harris for their excellent presentations during the opening general session of the conference.

She noted that during the conference the Board was presented with a plaque for completion of the Master Board Reinstatement Certification Program. The plaque will be displayed in the Superintendent's Office.

Mr. Keith Birkett, deputy superintendent, informed the Board that copies of the 2001-02 Budget book would be made available to all schools and public libraries for review.

RECOGNITION/PRESEN-
TATION/REPORT

Character Education Student Artwork

Alphonso Danzy, 2nd grade, Duval Elementary School, and Desiree Cobaris, 5th grade, A. Quinn Jones, were presented certificates for their artwork depicting this month's character trait, "Compassion."

Howard Bishop Middle School Chess Team

Dr. Jeff Charbonnet, principal, Howard Bishop Middle School, introduced Chess Team members Charlie Torbert, Preston Willis, Snir Botshal, and David Muir and commended them for their first place win in the Florida Scholastic Chess League Tournament.

Institute of Culinary Arts Award Winner

Ms. Billie DeNunzio, Eastside High School, introduced Selena Sepulvada as the Grand Prize winner in the National Great Gingerbread Challenge, and commended her on earning a \$12,000 scholarship.

University of Florida Pathways to Teaching

Dr. Mary Kay Dykes, executive director, Curriculum Services, announced that Pathways to Teaching is an exciting new program, which will provide an opportunity for College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) undergraduates to be trained in secondary school teaching in the state of Florida in the critical shortage areas of mathematics, science and foreign languages.

School Improvement Highlights

Representatives from Wiles Elementary, Lincoln Middle and Santa Fe

High schools shared highlights of activities, events and programs in these schools that help contribute to higher student achievement.

Board members thanked schools for their presentations and made the following comments:

Mrs. Sharpe:

- Believes that making learning fun is the key to helping students learn
- Supports a chess program in every school
- Would like to see CPR offered in every school
- Made a presentation in Biloxi, MS, on the problems of grading schools and felt that it is not always important to have a beautiful building, but it is very important on what goes on inside the building and that learning is taking place.

Mrs. Carroll stated that she would be interested in hearing back from Santa Fe High School, at the end of the year, related to the Accelerated Reader Program. She also pointed out that the Board provided extra funding to Santa Fe High School to have AP classes and suggested they contact their legislators and let them know how important these classes are for rural schools.

Comprehensive Curriculum Plan Update

Dr. Bill Cliett, deputy superintendent, Curriculum and Instructional Services, provided the Board with an update on the progress of the Comprehensive Curriculum Plan, which will be used to align the written, taught and test curriculum.

Budgeting/Financial Update

Mr. Keith Birkett, deputy superintendent, Budgeting, provided the Board with a copy of the 1992 Budget Task Force Report and a status update on the 1992 task force recommendations and the 1996 and 1997 Citizens Budget Advisory Council recommendations. He noted that 22 of the 39 recommendations of the 1992 task force were implemented. Five recommendations were still in progress at that time and 12 had not been recommended. One of the items not recommended at that time was the recommendation to save about \$121,000 if administrators were to substitute in the classrooms. During 1996-97 the district implemented the Social Security alternative plan, which resulted in a savings of \$100,000, in lieu of administrators substituting in the classroom and that program is still in place today.

He noted that the district does have committees that provide information, and the district does follow-up and take their recommendations seriously.

The second special session is about to wrap up and the vote on the budget recommendations is Thursday. During the last week he has been in hourly contact with district legislative liaison Joy Frank. There was no flexibility for the half-mill granted in the session, so the district does not have the flexibility to use capital dollars for operating purposes.

Mr. Birkett presented an overview of the results of the session:

- \$3.4 million reduction in the base funding due to the reduction of the BSA by \$114.
- The district's declining enrollment shows a slight increase, but the number will be adjusted again in February.
- The ESE Guarantee is a result of the change and a reduction of \$423,000.
- The Supplemental Academic Instruction categorical was reduced by \$294,000.
- Small adjustment in the safe schools allocation with a prior year adjustment of \$193,680 due to an overpayment.
- State put back into the funding mechanism \$25 million dollars in Lottery proceeds (additional \$501,000).
- Categoricals reduction of \$68,763.
- \$8,500 reduction Value Adjustment Board adjusting tax roll.

He anticipates more up-to-date information after the vote on the final budget December 6. As the district built the budget through the strategic planning process, it will be adjusted through the strategic planning process. The district will discuss short and long-term goals and how to address the funding crisis at the Budget workshop December 11.

It is anticipated that the district will have a 5%-7% reduction over the current year next year. The district's goal continues to be to get through this year with the least amount of impact as possible in the classroom and workforce.

Responding to Dr. Leathers' question related to the Lottery, Mr. Birkett explained that the district should not expect another increase next year.

Career and Technical Education—Tech Prep

Mr. Dave Edwards, director, Career/Technical and Tech-Prep, presented an overview of the many aspects of Tech-Prep, which is a college-bound program that prepares students for high tech careers of the future.

Mrs. Carroll urged *The Gainesville Sun* to write a story informing parents of the many opportunities and programs offered to students through the Tech-Prep Program, such as the Institute of Health

Professions at Gainesville High School.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that the Tech-Prep program is second to none—it encourages higher academics, but also encourages and prepares students that will go straight into the workforce.

SCHEDULED
AGENCIES—CENTER
FOR PERFORMING
ARTS
COLLABORATION

Mr. Michael Blachly, Center for the Performing Arts, requested the Board's support to establish a partnership for an age-appropriate arts outreach program in Alachua County similar to the UCLA model that has been in operation since 1969.

The Performing Arts Center will pay for artists' fees, production costs, programs, and house staff. The district is requested to provide substitute teachers and busing. He informed the Board that there is a 13-member education committee seeking to conceptually take this concept forward.

Superintendent Chambers encouraged the Board to undertake this endeavor this year.

Mr. Blachly indicated that the Performing Arts Center is committed to making this program a success and would like to meet with principals and PTA presidents.

Mrs. Carroll expressed support for the program.

Mrs. Sharpe felt that it is important to participate as much as financially possible.

Chairman Cake stated that due to funding problems, he hoped that the Center's business patrons would assist with the transportation costs involved.

Mr. Blachly expressed confidence that the Center for the Performing Arts will be able to approach businesses for the support necessary to make the program a success.

Superintendent Chambers reassured the Board she has assigned staff to garner community support to help fund this effort and also secure grant funding.

CITIZEN INPUT

Dr. Gunnar Paulson, president, ACEA, urged the Board to become more politically active and not allow the legislature to continue to destroy public education. He announced that the Florida Education Association has finally agreed to stage a state rally in Tallahassee on February 6, 2002, in support of public education. He requested the

Board's support by allowing employees to join in the rally and allow the ones left behind to supervise students, and ACEA will pay for the buses.

Mrs. Sharpe is aware of a plan that is in the works for school boards across the state of Florida to stage a rally.

Chairman Cake asked if FEA had considered picking a holiday across the state, such as President's Day, February 18.

Dr. Paulson stated that February 6 was selected due to the FCAT.

Mrs. Carroll stated that February 18, being a national holiday, would free up more employees and there would be no public backlash by teachers leaving the classroom.

Chairman Cake stated that it would carry more weight if employees went to the rally during a holiday.

Dr. Leathers urged all the education organizations to join in support of the rally, and he, personally, pledged \$100 towards the cost of the buses.

Dr. Paulson stated that he would check into the flexibility of the date.

Mrs. Cawthon urged ACEA to involve parents to attend the rally.

Mrs. Carroll suggested involving the Alachua County Council of PTAs and placing the item on the December 11 budget workshop agenda.

The following concerns/suggestions/requests were presented:

- A citizen presented a compilation and analysis of school crime based upon the latest published figures in the monthly dean's misconduct reports dating back to school year 1994-95, which indicate an alarming increase in school crime. He suggested allowing citizen participation in the solution of school crime and requested the Board publicize a series of open meetings and solve the school crime problem together.

Chairman Cake requested a discussion item be placed on the agenda for the first meeting in February dealing with school discipline and community college remedial math.

- A citizen suggested that School Board agendas address business items, not curriculum presentations, and that the Board provide full

discussion of all items on the agenda, not only during workshop sessions, specifically policy amendments.

- A teacher expressed concern with some district-level administrators receiving raises. The Board was urged to broaden their policy, which stipulates that school principals and assistant principals do not receive their raises until bargaining is complete. The Board needs to amend the policy by including all personnel, and make sure that money is being spent wisely and that the same set of rules apply to everyone.

Mrs. Carroll requested Superintendent Chambers explain the district's current policy on granting raises and how it was applied this year.

Superintendent Chambers explained that during the district-level reorganization last April and July, several administrative changes took place. Many of the changes meant that people who currently worked at Kirby no longer work here, and several people took on additional responsibilities. Several people who either went into different positions or took on additional responsibilities did get some type of promotion or reclassification change. She pointed out that there have been more than two hundred career service-type promotions/reclassifications over the last year.

Before September 11 the district had continued to take a balanced approach and positions were consolidated as much as possible to save money. If the district can pay a few people, particularly administrators, a little more money and still save \$500,000 dollars, she will recommend it be done again in order for the district to continue to keep teachers in the classroom and provide for employees.

Mrs. Carroll requested Dr. Scaggs explain the policy or practice related to salary adjustments, raises or promotions.

Dr. Scaggs explained that the district was not certain about fiscal responses and was not authorized to offer steps or negotiate salary increases. This did not apply to the people who received promotions or to those who may have received advanced degrees, which carry a salary increase. Salaries for personnel who received a promotion were adjusted. Included in the career service salary schedule there are statements about promotions and demotions and when someone takes a step back, even if it is involuntary, it is imposed. That same language exists in the administrative/technical schedule. In the reorganization there were demotions, job title changes, employees who received additional responsibilities, and the way they were placed on the administrative salary schedule was in the exact same way as career

service employees.

On the teacher salary schedule you do not move by getting an increase in responsibilities, except for supplements and teachers who receive promotions. They went from being a classroom teacher to an assistant principal or a degree change. If there was a difference in the salary earned as an assistant principal from what was earned as a teacher, then the salary was adjusted. We tend to think of those as salary adjustments as opposed to raises. A raise is a raise if you get more money for the same job, but when there are changes in your job, they are considered promotions. The footnotes in the salary schedule so closely parallel the career service for administrators they are virtually the same.

- An itemized list at the December 11 workshop of the reorganization at Kirby-Smith to see the differences in employee salaries and duties was requested.
- Dr. Paulson noted that the insensitivity comes from top-level administrators receiving enormous raises, while teachers and career service employees are frozen.

Superintendent Chambers stated that the district had five assistant superintendents last year and now there are three deputy superintendents. By moving from five to three positions, the district saved close to \$200,000.

She stated that when she came here ten years ago the superintendent at the time asked why the district did not pay its teachers more. Consultants have reiterated that over the last couple of years it is due to the fact that the district has more teachers than other districts. Staff is looking at how we allocate teachers and custodians to make certain that staffing is in line with what a rationale, reasonable staffing level should be so that we can live within our means and still be able to provide increases.

Chairman Cake requested a discussion item on Black history in the schools be placed on the agenda for the first meeting in March.

- A citizen addressed the infusion of African-American and African history into the curriculum.

Dr. Cliett informed the Board that multi-cultural education is not being neglected but is being addressed and is part of the comprehensive curriculum plan.

- A citizen requested assistance with her nephew who is classified

ESE and expressed concern with the inability to reach staff.

SCHEDULE WORKSHOP
ON TEAM BUILDING

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to schedule a workshop 9 a.m., Wednesday, January 9, 2002, at the Matheson Center on Team Building.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CONSULTANT
SERVICES—
ATTACHMENT E

Dr. Paulson questioned the funding for the consultants listed on Attachment E:

Mr. Wayne Hackett, director, Purchasing, explained that the fee for the Extended Day Enrichment Spanish Language Training Consultant is being paid out of after-school funds.

Dr. Leila Pratt, director, Human Resources, explained that due to staff cuts and lack of administrative staff support the district would like to enter into a contract to provide comprehensive program design and implementation for 2nd and 3rd year induction teachers. The funds will come from staff development funds, which are categorical funds.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to approve Consultant Services—Attachment E as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

SUBCONTRACT WITH
UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA

Dr. Donna Omer, director, Project Development, stated that an agreement has been prepared with the University of Florida to conduct work related to the research project entitled "University of Florida Teaching and Technology Institute." Under the terms of the agreement, a maximum of \$53,658 will be provided to employ a public school liaison. A grant will pay for the services.

Motion by Dr. Leathers

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to approve the agreement with the University of Florida Teaching and Technology Institute.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ASSISTANCE FOR 10th
GRADE FCAT GRANT

Dr. Omer stated that a proposal has been prepared for submission to the Florida Department of Education for implementation of the READ 180 reading program at Buchholz, Eastside, Gainesville, Hawthorne,

Newberry, and Santa Fe High Schools. The program will be used for remediation of students who have not passed the 10 grade FCAT. A total of \$150,000 is requested for the six high schools.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Cawthon

Moved to approve the proposed implementation of the READ 180 reading program.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to approve the consent agenda as described in items 1-22 with the removal of items 4, 17 and 19 for separate vote. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
REQUESTS

Mrs. Carroll attended the ESE Tour on Wheels School Bus event at which Santa Fe High School requested that the Superintendent address their concern that ESE students, who are mostly learning disabled, have not been retested in their last three years of school by a school psychologist or their records updated are ineligible to receive services at the college-level.

Mrs. Cawthon thanked Dr. Omer for her efforts in acquiring grants for the district. She also expressed concern that other counties are not fully utilizing grant monies and are paying for items out of the general fund and wanted assurance that the district is closely monitoring grant funds.

Dr. Omer assured Mrs. Cawthon that a bookkeeper is assigned to monitor grant monies on a monthly basis and correct any mistakes that may occur and charge accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.