

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
MAX D. WALKER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
35 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.
QUINCY, FLORIDA

October 9, 2012

4:00 P.M.

This meeting was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Judge B. Helms, Chairman; Mr. Eric F. Hinson; Mr. Charlie D. Frost; and Mr. Isaac Simmons. Also present were Mr. Reginald C. James, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board; Mr. Dylan Rivers, Attorney Representative for the Board; and others.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Judge B. Helms, at 4:05 p.m.

2. FLORIDA RURAL TURNAROUND LEADERSHIP PROJECT PRESENTATION

Mrs. Rosalyn Smith introduced Dr. Evan Lefsky, Project Director for the Florida Rural Turnaround Leadership Project, and Ms. Shirley Eikeland with PAEC. She stated that the Florida Rural Turnaround Leadership Project assist districts with turning around low performing schools.

Dr. Lefsky shared with the Board a power-point presentation. He stated that the Florida Rural Turnaround Leadership Project was funded by Race-To-The-Top for eighteen months beginning January 2012 to June 2013. He stated that the following ten districts were eligible for the program: Bradford, Columbia, Franklin, Gadsden, Washington, Levy, Flagler, Hendry, Jefferson, and Madison. He stated that the project adapts and delivers leadership modules and coaching targeted at improving the capacity of the superintendent, school board, principals, and senior staff to support low-achieving schools. He stated that the project guide districts in establishing strategic plans and evaluation systems specifically designed to improve low-achieving schools. He stated that the project serves as a model for small, rural districts in the development of capacity to strategically plan among numerous stakeholders. He stated that project activities include the following: 1) development and approval of module content (January – February 2012); 2) two day kick off meeting with all ten districts (March 7 - 8, 2012); 3) three additional two day meetings with all ten districts (2012: June and August; January 2013); 4) twelve consortia-level meetings (2012: March, April, May, July, September, October, November, December; 2013: February, March, April, May); 5) Monthly coaching within each of the ten districts (March 2012 – June 2013); and 6) two two-day consortia level meetings for superintendents and school board members (December 2012 and March 2013) – scenario-based sessions focused on governance, politics, and whole system change. He stated that the leadership action areas included:

Clarify Expectations – academic optimism, resiliency, reinforcing vision and clarifying expectations and available supports; Align Curriculum – calibration and leadership responsibilities related to professional development, materials and resources; Focus Instruction and Intervention – scheduling, classroom observation and teacher coaching, clarity of expectations, alignment with teacher evaluation; Ensure Program Coherence – vertical and horizontal alignment, common language, assessment and instruction alignment, transition planning, feeder patterns; Establish Culture of Data Use – culture of data use for making decisions throughout the district and use of data to monitor program effectiveness and making mid-course adjustments; Increase Parent Engagement – working with parents as partners, increasing collaboration and communication, youth development, urgency; Improve Community Engagement and Support – youth development, internships and apprenticeships, communication, stakeholder involvement, tutoring, sponsorship; and Maximize District Capacity – Retention and recruitment, pipeline/mentoring for teacher leaders and administrators, professional development. He stated that the Turnaround Leadership Responsibilities included: Strategic Planning – developing and implementing the strategic plan with stakeholders, then monitoring implementation and progress toward measureable goals aligned with the vision; Change Management – understanding and managing change at all levels of the district to accomplish the action steps and meet the goals of the Strategic Plan; Resource & Policy Alignment – aligning resources and policies at all levels of the district to support actions described in the strategic plan; and Communication & Messaging – informing all stakeholders of the district’s vision, goals, actions and progress, and how everyone can be involved in supporting the work.

Board members asked questions, shared their concerns and made comments during the Florida Rural Turnaround Leadership Project presentation. They thanked Dr. Lefsky and Ms. Eikeland for sharing information.

3. PERSONNEL MATTERS (resignations, retirements, recommendations, leaves of absence, terminations of services, volunteers, and job descriptions)

a. Personnel 2012 – 2013

Mr. Helms stated that the Board needed to act differently on the personnel recommendation in order to afford the employee due process.

Following discussion, Mr. James withdrew his recommendation to terminate the employee in order to afford the employee due process. He stated that he will make another recommendation at the October 23rd Board meeting.

Following discussion, Mr. Isaac Simmons made a motion to suspend the employee without pay effective October 9th. The motion was seconded by Mr. Roger P. Milton.

Upon the advice of the Attorney to adhere to the communication letter sent to the employee which stated a suspension date through October 23rd, Mr. Simmons withdrew his motion, and Mr. Milton withdrew his second.

Mr. James encouraged Board members to review the tape of the incident between the employee and student. He stated that Board members could contact the Sheriff’s Department to view the tape.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

4. BUDGET/FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

a. Revised Taxable Value Resolutions

Fund Source: General Fund and Capital Improvements Funds

Amount: Additional Revenue for General Fund = \$81,904

Additional Revenue for Capital Improvements Fund = \$19,755

Mrs. Wood stated that the resolutions determining revenues and millages levied were approved at the final budget hearing on September 4th. She stated that the Department of Revenue notified the district that the additional taxable value needed to be included in the official revenue estimates for the year. She stated that during the initial budget process, the district utilized an estimated assessed value of \$1,377,106,053. She stated that the final approved assessed value is \$1,390,824,761. She stated that the millages do not change, only the assessed valuation. She stated that the additional revenue will be incorporated in budget amendments that will adjust the general fund revenue based on actual student FTE.

Following discussion, Mr. Roger P. Milton made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #4a. The motion was seconded by Mr. Isaac Simmons and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

5. AGREEMENTS/PROJECT/GRANT APPLICATIONS

a. Agreement for Services with DES of Florida, LLC through Contract No. DESF030928-PAEC

Fund Source: General Fund

Amount: Dependent upon the individual Purchase Orders that would be issued through the master agreement Contract No. DESF030928-PAEC

Mr. Milton thanked his colleagues for finding ways to retain employees in critical needed positions. He requested the DES of Florida employees stay at the beginning salary the first and second year.

Mr. Frost expressed his dismay with the DES of Florida Contract. He stated that he did not agree with the contract.

Following discussion, Mr. Roger P. Milton made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #5a with the change to item B #2 to have employees paid at the beginning salary the first year. The motion died for lack of a second.

Mr. Eric F. Hinson made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #5a. The motion was seconded by Mr. Isaac Simmons.

Mr. James requested that the Superintendent be deleted from the list of employees not apart of the bargaining unit. He stated that elected officials are not included.

Mr. Simmons stated that the DES of Florida Contract was designed for employees to not have a break in service. He stated that employees should return with the same salaries.

Mr. James stated that the district need have the same options as other districts when retaining employees for critical needed positions.

Mr. Helms, Mr. Simmons, and Mr. Hinson voted “aye.” Mr. Frost and Mr. Milton voted “nay.”

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

b. Supplemental Educational Services

Fund Source: Title I Part A, Supplemental Educational Services

Amount: N/A

Mr. Simmons stated that he wanted to know the determining factor that would show SES Providers are providing a quality education.

Mr. James stated that the district has an evaluation tool for all SES Providers.

Ms. Raynak stated that the Department of Education has an evaluation tool and site visits are done periodically. She stated that the district staff do site visits and monitor services for SES Providers. She stated that DOE posts online the status of the evaluations for SES Providers.

Mr. Milton stated that the administrator has a portion on the evaluation tool to rate the SES Providers.

Mr. Frost stated that he was concerned about the SES Providers curriculum rates for service.

Ms. Raynak stated that the SES Providers use State curriculum guidelines. She stated that the student learning plans have benchmarks that have State mandates.

Mrs. Smith stated that the SES Providers work with the principals to develop a blended curriculum.

Following discussion, Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to accept the Superintendent’s recommendation to approve agenda item #5b. The motion was seconded by Mr. Eric F. Hinson and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

6. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. James stated that the Board needed to schedule a workshop to discuss the Midway Arts and Sciences Academy of Excellence Charter School Application.

The Board agreed to schedule a workshop on Tuesday, October 16th at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the Midway Arts and Sciences Academy of Excellence Charter School Application.

7. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Hinson stated that the drainage system at Havana Elementary School needed to be repaired. He announced that the following events: 1) Havana Kiwanis Club Banquet was scheduled for Thursday, October 11th at 7:00 p.m.; 2) East Gadsden High School Junior Varsity Football Team vs. Havana Middle School Game Thursday, October 11th at 6:30 p.m.; 3) Havana Pumpkin fest, Saturday, October 13th at 8:00 a.m. (free pancakes for breakfast); and 4) New Jerusalem Family & Friends Day Celebration Sunday, October 14th at 11:00 a.m. He stated that he was the keynote speaker for New Bethel A.M.E. Church Service.

8. The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.