

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
MINUTES OF INFORMAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
September 12, 2006

The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, met in informal session duly called at 9 a.m. in the Boardroom, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida. Present were: Wesley F. Eubank, chairman; Virginia S. Childs, vice-chairman; Tina Pinkoson, Eileen Roy, and Janie S. Williams, members; and W. Daniel Boyd, Jr., superintendent.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Eubank.

APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES

Motion by Tina Pinkoson

Seconded by Janie Williams

Moved to approve the minutes of August 8, 2006, Informal School Board meeting; August 3, 2006, Policy Workshop; June 27, 2006, Budget Work Group; and May 25, 2006, Budget Work Group.

The question was called.

Upon vote: Motion passed 5-0

GENERAL  
DISCUSSION

Mrs. Childs made the following comments:

- Thanked staff for the excellent presentation of the high school curriculum workshop on September 11, 2006. Felt it was very informative and productive. Sees the need to begin training teachers and administrators on the use of the new technology to focus on struggling students.
- Requested the Superintendent schedule a workshop for the Board to set their priorities at the Matheson Museum.
- Urged the Board to pursue the STAR program and would like the Board to have the opportunity to review the plan prior to vote.
- Concern with the issues in the Transportation department during the opening of school. Suggested several changes that can be done internally to alleviate some problems.

Mrs. Pinkoson made the following comments:

- Requested information on the impact of an issue that was previously discussed at a summer workshop relating to lowering the criteria for substitutes to a two-year degree vs. a four-year degree.
- Attended a Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) meeting last week and several issues were discussed:
  - Special Teachers are Rewarded (STAR)
  - Constitutional Challenge to the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission

- Majority/Minority States included Alachua
- Student Projections
- E-Agenda
- High School graduation rates
- Announced that a Growth Management Workshop has been scheduled in Dayton Beach on October 12.

Mrs. Williams made the following comments:

- Expressed concern with the Tutorial Program for remedial students and the low number of providers this year (13) compared to last year (35) due to more stringent guidelines. Also noted that Wiles Elementary hosted the first tutorial and suggested other locations to reach out to needy students. Also felt the need to help those students who do not meet the criteria to receive the services, but still have a need for the service.
- Suggested extending a special invitation to members of the League of Women Voters to visit schools and get a first-hand look of how civics education is being taught in the schools.
- Requested a status report on the Oasis Enrichment Academy. (It was noted that this issue will be placed on the September 19, 2006, School Board agenda.)
- Expressed the need to move forward with the STAR Program and submit the district's plan to bring in teachers to help low-performing schools.
- Suggested changes to the Transportation department to improve service.

Mr. Eubank made the following comments:

- Expressed concern with transportation being provided to magnet students living outside the busing area and the need to review this issue at some point. Suggested students walk to one neighborhood stop rather than door-to-door service.
- Responded by letter to a concern from a citizen regarding the district's proposed Wellness Policy. Informed the Board that the staff attorney is researching and will clarify whether additional input can be taken at the next Board meeting on the proposed Wellness Policy under Citizen Input.
- Consensus of the Board was to continue scheduling Informal School Board meetings. Mrs. Roy noted that it is reasonable to have disagreements between Board members on issues.

Mrs. Roy made the following comments:

*Approved October 10, 2006*

- Congratulated Mrs. Childs and Mrs. Pinkoson on their election victories.
- Expressed concern with the lack of civics education being taught in the schools and encouraged schools to hold mock elections so student can gain voting experience, especially in the national election.
- Concern with School Bus #9908 in the Town of Tioga, which transports magnet students.
- Received a parental concern related to the weight of textbooks that students carry, especially when they ride their bikes to and from school. Asked if there were enough textbooks for students to be able to leave one textbook home, and have access to another textbook in the classroom. Noted that the district recently saved money by reorganizing the textbook purchasing process.

Superintendent Boyd informed the Board that he is working with the Transportation department to make them more effective and to improve the image. He also noted that due to the high cost of transporting magnet students, the district may need to look at geographic regions rather than the entire county and limit the choices to parents.

The following Board workshops were scheduled:

10/2/06 – 1:30 p.m. – Diamond Sports Park Workshop  
10/3/06 – 2 p.m. – Administrative Salary Workshop  
10/10/06 – 8 a.m. – Chimera Tech. Arts Charter School Workshop  
10/10/06 – 10 a.m. – Time Change for Informal Board Meeting  
11/7/06 – 9:30 a.m. – Board Priorities Workshop

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.