

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
October 5, 1999

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; Barbara Sharpe, vice-chairman; Judy Brashear, Bev Carroll, and Chester Leathers, members; Lawrence L. Marazza, superintendent; and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Cake, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Brashear

Moved to approve the minutes of September 21, 1999, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of October 5, 1999, as presented.

Move Action Item 1.e., School Improvement Plan Process, to Reports, 2.c.

The question was called on the agenda as amended.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER  
ANNOUNCEMENTS/  
DISCUSSION

Mrs. Carroll announced several upcoming activities, which included the Chamber Pro Ed Classic, the Conference for Entrepreneurship, the forum for teachers on the State of the Union. She also thanked and commended Eastside High School and staff for their efforts during Hurricane Floyd.

Dr. Leathers attended an Action Team meeting and was impressed with the commitment from the community and encouraged continued participation in the strategic planning process.

Mrs. Brashear requested staff inform the public of the October 15 deadline to join a strategic planning action team. She also informed the Board that she has been invited to Commissioner Gallagher's Reading Summit. She announced that she will continue to be a member of the Florida Relations Network and suggested that another Board member be the contact for Census 2000.

Mrs. Sharpe thanked everyone involved for the donation of the new scoreboard at Citizens Field and also announced that she attended the Back to School Conference.

Dr. Leathers viewed the National Education Summit conference on television over the weekend and was extremely impressed with the number of states that are doing so much with the legislature. He expressed hope that through the legislative process the district can begin to move in the direction as some other states and welcomed input.

#### CITIZEN INPUT

The following suggestions/recommendations were presented to the Board for consideration:

- A citizen expressed concern with the increase of graduating seniors requiring remedial courses at Santa Fe Community College and provided statistics on the 2% increase in the number of students who fail to pass the entrance exams. The Board was urged to declare their intentions on this situation and mount a major drive to ensure that seniors pass exams to junior colleges.

Mrs. Carroll responded that since 1993 there has been a 15% drop in the number of graduating seniors requiring remedial courses, but recently there has been an upturn of 2% with the FCAT, which has been addressed through overall achievement and school improvement plans.

Dr. Leathers expressed concern with Santa Fe Community College's testing process because they require a test the district does not require.

Mrs. Brashear stated that she has spoken with the Accountability Commission and this issue was discussed three years ago. She pointed out that a high school diploma was never intended to be the same thing as college ready. The question is does a student take high enough level courses to prepare them for the college level when neither the state nor the district requires these courses. She pointed out that the district may want to require more courses to ensure students are ready, but the downside would be that the school year may need to be extended, and possibly the number of years to graduate. This will require additional dollars and may raise the dropout rate. She recommended further discussion by the Board and staff.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that the bar is being raised statewide and locally and everyone is concerned with the academic achievement for all students and noted that the strategic planning process may help to improve this situation.

- A representative with the Southwest Alliance for Planning read a Proclamation proclaiming October 6 as Walk our Children to

School Day in Alachua County and encouraged all citizens to observe this day.

Superintendent Marazza shared information on the recent Back to School Conference and recommended the Board schedule a workshop to discuss how best to engage in quality decision-making.

RESOLUTION—  
EXCEPTIONAL  
STUDENT EDUCATION  
WEEK OCTOBER 17-23,  
1999

Mrs. Ginger Childs, assistant superintendent, Instruction, announced that the State of Florida has declared the week of October 17-23 as Exceptional Student Education Week. The purpose is to focus citizens' attention on the educational programs and services being provided for exceptions students, which includes both disabled and gifted.

Motion by Mrs. Brashear                      Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to approve the Resolution supporting the declaration of the week of October 17-23, 1999, as Exceptional Student Education Week.

The question was called.                      Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

The regular Board meeting was recessed and a Public Hearing convened.

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AMENDMENT TO  
POLICY 3.41, CHARTER  
SCHOOLS

Mrs. Childs stated that the amendment to Policy 3.41, Charter Schools, involves a change in the date for charter schools to submit their applications by November 15<sup>th</sup>, which will allow staff additional time to process applications.

There was no public input.

Mrs. Sharpe inquired if a lapse in insurance coverage is grounds for closing a charter school.

Mr. Tom Wittmer, staff attorney, responded that there is a provision in the contract, which provides that failure to have the proper insurance will be grounds to terminate a contract with a charter school.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Superintendent Marazza reviewed the strategic planning process and urged public input into the process.

There was no public input.

The Public Hearing was adjourned and the regular board meeting reconvened.

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PROCLAMATION—RED

Motion by Dr. Leathers                      Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

RIBBON WEEK  
OCTOBER 24-31, 1999

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to approve the Proclamation proclaiming October 24-31, 1999, as Red Ribbon Week.

The question was called. Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BID AWARD FOR  
PROJECT SBAC CA836—  
PRAIRIE VIEW  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
HVAC REPLACEMENT

Mr. Ed Gable, director, Facilities, reported that bids for the construction of this project were received September 28, 1999, and all bids exceeded the established construction budget.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Mrs. Brashear

Moved the superintendent's recommendation that the School Board reject all bids and authorize staff to re-evaluate and revise the bid to accommodate budget parameters and schedule a rebid.

The question was called. Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

STUDENT CASE  
NO. 99-47-HC

Mr. Tom Wittmer, staff attorney, reported that the student was reassigned to the alternative center.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the hearing officer's recommendation and confirm the reassignment of the student to the alternative center, effective August 23, 1999.

Mrs. Carroll expressed concern with the number of referrals (17) this student received and how long it took to come to the Board.

Dr. Leathers suggested that prevention is the key in these types of cases, which are likely candidates for the juvenile justice system.

The question was called. Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

STUDENT CASE  
NO. 99-49-NP

Mr. Wittmer reported that the student was reassigned to the alternative center.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved the hearing agent's recommendation to confirm the student's reassignment to the alternative center, effective August 23, 1999.

The question was called. Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

DECMEBER &  
JANUARY SCHOOL  
BOARD MEETINGS

Motion by Mrs. Carroll Seconded by Mrs. Brashear

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to cancel the second

meeting in December (12/21/99) and the first meeting in January (1/4/00) due to the winter holidays.

The question was called. Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

REPORTS—Y2K  
REPORT

Mr. Dan Cromer, director, Information Resources, presented a brief report on Y2K readiness and reported that local businesses have given the district assurance that business will be conducted as usual, effective January 1, 2000. Technical staff is working diligently on all systems to ensure a smooth transition.

The Board was assured that staff will be available to resolve any emergencies or problems that may arise in an efficient and effective manner.

TECHNOLOGY AUDIT  
UPDATE

Mr. Jim Moffett, director, Instructional Technology, reported that a variety of computers were tested over the summer and only a small percentage posed any problems. The Board has entered into a contract with Edu Tech Support Services, Inc., to audit technology devices in the school district and make recommendations regarding outdated equipment. The audit information will be the basis for an inventory system that the district will be able to update continuously. The information will be an asset to the strategic planning process, as well as Y2K planning and a final report will be submitted to the Board at the end of October.

Superintendent Marazza assured the Board that the technology audit will serve the strategic planning process in making decisions based on allocation.

SCHOOL  
IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
PROCESS

Mrs. Sue Griffith, director, School Improvement, reported that a committee of school-based and district personnel have been working on the changes that need to be made to the school improvement plan process and the initiatives that need to be integrated through the strategic planning process.

Mrs. Brashear requested the Board schedule a workshop as soon as possible to discuss policy, the Board's goals and expectations, and summer school. She also requested staff notify school advisory councils that changes in rules are forthcoming during the year.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved to approve the consent agenda as described in items 1.-19. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

The question was called. Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER  
CONCERNS/REQUESTS

Chairman Cake reminded the Board of the upcoming Master Board Program, Leadership Team Forum, October 7-8.

Mrs. Sharpe requested Superintendent Marazza and Mrs. Childs update the Board at the next meeting on the status of school uniforms. She also requested Dr. Mel Lucas conduct a short survey at the principals' meetings and include a link on the district's website for input on school uniforms.

Mrs. Brashear requested an update, review and possible action on current changes in the law on the attendance policy and suggested a review of the Board's policy. She stated that it is wrong for the Board to tell parents and students that there are no valid reasons for being out of school except for funerals or sickness. She noted that families go on educational field trips, college trips or family trips and a test is given the day the student is out and the student is not allowed to retake the test unless the parent writes a false statement.

Mrs. Carroll requested a report on the crisis plan, which includes a report on telephone access for students after school hours and information on whether this option can be implemented.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.