

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
November 16, 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: Judy Brashear, Bill Cake, Bev Carroll, Chester Leathers, and Barbara Sharpe, members; Lawrence Marazza, superintendent; and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board.

The meeting was called to order by Superintendent Marazza, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ELECTION OF
CHAIRMAN

Superintendent Marazza opened the floor for nominations for Chairman of the School Board of Alachua County, Florida.

Motion by Mrs. Brashear Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved to nominate Mrs. Sharpe as Chairman of The School Board of Alachua County, Florida.

There being no other nominations, Mrs. Sharpe was unanimously elected as Chairman of The School Board of Alachua County, Florida.

ELECTION OF VICE-
CHAIRMAN

Superintendent Marazza opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairman of The School Board of Alachua County, Florida.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved to nominate Mrs. Brashear as Vice-Chairman of The School Board of Alachua County, Florida.

There being no other nominations, Mrs. Brashear was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman of The School Board of Alachua County, Florida.

ESTABLISHMENT OF
BOARD MEETING
DATES AND TIMES

Superintendent Marazza recommended the Board schedule its meeting dates the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7 p.m. He also recommended the Board continue to hold its business meeting the first Tuesday of the month and on the third Tuesday of each month to focus on student achievement and any emergency issues, etc., as needed. If the first meeting of the month should be cancelled, the business meeting would be held at this time.

Mrs. Brashear suggested experimenting with the idea of Board members sitting facing each other.

scholarships for students and urged the public to become mentors to these students.

- Attended the opera at Performing Arts Center in which teachers are invited to learn about the opera and how they can use art productions in their classrooms.
- Visited Gainesville High school’s advanced TV production class and congratulated the class on their one-minute video production, which will be submitted in the state competition and presented the video for the Board’s viewing.

The Board extended their condolences to the family and friends of former Buchholz High School student Chet Rodgers.

Superintendent Marazza made the following announcements:

- Updated the Board on the strategic planning action teams and reported that over 600 citizens, parents and community members are involved and are working toward a March completion date.
- The “School Block Talks” will begin at Rawlings Elementary School on January 22, 2000, in order to interact with parents and community members.
- Encouraged everyone to visit schools and get involved in their child’s education by participating in American Education Week (November 14 – 20, 1999).
- Reported that under the direction of Anne Bishop’s leadership, Project PASS (Parents and Students Succeeding) is well underway.

CITIZEN INPUT

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

- A resident read a Proclamation signed by Mayor Paula DeLaney proclaiming the week of November 21-27, 1999, as Christian Heritage Week in the city of Gainesville and encouraged the community to celebrate their heritage.
- An education consultant urged the Board not to take away electives from students by requiring four years of science and math.

REPORT/PRESENTATION—PUPIL PROGRESSION PLAN

Mrs. Ginger Childs, assistant superintendent, Instructional Curriculum, highlighted the changes to the 1999-2000 Pupil Progression Plan, which include the following:

Modifies the plan to reflect legislative changes; clarifies language; revises the format of the plan and requires an additional credit in math and science for graduation from high school, beginning with the graduating class of 2004.

Mrs. Brashear expressed the following concerns:

- Technology benchmarks. School advisory councils are requiring their students to have certain proficiencies in technology, but are not doing it for all of them. Feels strongly that students are graduating without a minimum knowledge of technology and requested staff consider making some kind of a provision for the class of 2004.
- Referred to the provision on page ii, Item E, related to notifying parents when students are achieving below the expected level, and suggested staff also consider notifying parents at the end of the student’s sophomore year that their child is not college ready and needs to meet requirements.
- Referred to the provision on page iii, Item J., related to “regular education programs” and suggested staff be aware of the implications and how it will be interpreted.

Mr. Cake expressed the following concerns:

- Drop-out rate will increase with the additional math and science requirements and how the state is grading school systems on the drop-out rate. Requested staff address these issues and create innovative programs to deal with the dropout problem.
- Difficulty in recruiting additional math and science teachers and what impact this change will have on the current elective programs.
- Suggested developing substitute courses for math and science that are in the vocational areas to count for these requirements.
- Include a requirement for 8th-graders to have keyboard and computer skills.

Dr. Leathers referred to Item M-4, Grading System for Grades 6-8, and suggested using the same scale as high schools.

Mrs. Brashear stated that the district’s grading scale limits Alachua County students from national competition, and she understands that the law cannot be changed, but something can be done to have the district’s students competitive in a global society.

PUPIL PROGRESSION
PLAN—FIRST READING

Motion by Mrs. Brashear

Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved to schedule a public hearing 7:30 p.m., December 7, 1999, to consider revisions to the Pupil Progression Plan.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

AGREEMENT WITH
FLORIDA STATE
UNIVERSITY

Dr. Donna Omer, supervisor, Project Development, reported that an agreement has been prepared in conjunction with the Florida Learning Alliance and the Center for Professional Development, Florida State University, to develop and implement a system for the delivery of

distance learning-based staff development. Grant funds are provided specifically for this purpose.

Motion by Mrs. Carroll Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved to approve the agreement with the Florida Learning Alliance and the center for Professional Development, Florida State University to develop and implement a system for the delivery of distance learning-based staff development.

Dr. Leathers stated that distance learning is an ideal way to expand offerings to the outlying high schools.

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

STUDENT CASE
NO. 99-54-X

Mr. Tom Wittmer, staff attorney, reported that the student was charged with battery on another student and possession of a weapon (knife) while on campus. A hearing was held on November 9, 1999.

Motion by Dr. Leathers Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to extend the student's suspension through December 7, 1999.

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

STUDENT CASE
NO. 99-55-HC

Mr. Wittmer reported that the student was reassigned to the alternative center as a result of the student having committed a Level IV violation of the Code of Student Conduct; possession and display of a weapon (knife) while on school board property. The parent objected to the assignment. A hearing was held on November 16, 1999.

Motion by Mrs. Carroll Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved the hearing agent's recommendation to confirm the assignment of the student to the alternative center.

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

STUDENT CASE
NO. 99-56-HC

Mr. Wittmer reported that the student was reassigned to the alternative center as a result of the student's history of disruptive behavior. The parent objected to the assignment. A hearing was held November 16, 1999.

Motion by Mrs. Carroll Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved the hearing agent's recommendation to confirm the assignment

of the student to the alternative center.

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

STUDENTCASE
NO. 99-57-SB

Mr. Wittmer reported that the student is charged with a Level IV violation of the Code of Student Conduct while riding the school bus.

Motion by Mr. Cake Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved that the student be suspended from riding the school bus through June 2000.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Carroll Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved to approve the Consent Agenda as described in item 1. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

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

TIMES FOR
COMMUNITY
INPUT

Superintendent Marazza provided the Board with suggested options for community input on agenda items:

Option 1: Provide an opportunity for community input on agenda items only at the beginning of the agenda under "Citizen Input" and provide an opportunity for community input on general items at the end of the agenda.

Option 2: Provide an opportunity for community input from 6:00-6:45 p.m. on general items; and provide for community input on agenda items only at the beginning of the agenda under "Citizen Input."

Following Board discussion, Chairman Sharpe requested Board members provide Superintendent Marazza with their suggestions or concerns for citizen input.

BOARD MEMBER
CONCERNS/REQUESTS

There were no Board member concerns or requests.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.