

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
MINUTES OF INFORMAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
June 10, 2008

The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, met in informal session duly called at 9:40 a.m. in the Boardroom, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida. Present were: Janie S. Williams, Chairman; Tina Pinkoson, Vice-Chairman; Virginia S. Childs, F. Wesley Eubank, and Eileen Roy, members; and W. Daniel Boyd, Jr., Superintendent.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Williams.

CROP PRESENTATION Superintendent Dan Boyd noted that due to concerns expressed at the last Board meeting related to the CROP program, staff has prepared a presentation to address those concerns.

Staff informed the Board that CROP offers more controlled rigorous courses, with teachers certified in their subject areas.

Staff members from Buchholz and Eastside High schools provided information regarding their respective CROP programs and expressed their confidence in the programs that are currently running.

Mrs. Pinkoson felt comfortable moving the CROP program to middle schools.

Mrs. Childs suggested that negative rumors regarding the CROP program should be reported to those involved with the program, in order to address their concerns.

Mr. Eubank noted that if HB7067-Florida Virtual School is passed, the district will be required to make many provisions.

Superintendent Boyd stated that he is confident that the interests of the school district are protected by implementing this program, and expressed his gratitude to staff for an excellent presentation.

GENERAL DISCUSSION Board members made the following comments/requests:

Mrs. Roy inquired on the status of why the School Board did not renegotiate the contract, after one year, with the City of Newberry regarding the Diamond Sports Park, as was indicated by the Superintendent.

Superintendent Boyd responded that a comprehensive presentation will be made to the Board before the end of the summer.

Mrs. Childs noted that graduation programs went very well with little to

no disruption, and thanked staff for their efforts.

Superintendent Boyd stated that principals took charge of their graduation programs by informing the audience and graduates of their expectations.

Mrs. Roy inquired on the status of the Prairie View Elementary School configuration and the four-day work week for schools. Dr. Boyd responded that additional information will be presented in the near future.

Mrs. Childs suggested as an intermediate step to changing the start times for buses rather than going to a four-day week.

Mr. Eubank suggested that an analysis should be quickly conducted to determine whether to move forward with a four-day week, in case the millage does not pass, and the public should be made aware that the Board is considering a four-day work week for the 2009-10 school year. He believes it would be worthwhile to gather information and figures to move forward and let the public know.

Mrs. Roy informed the Board that at a recent gathering on poverty, County Commissioner Rodney Long addressed the group and distributed a handout on the entrepreneurial charter school that the Board of County Commissioners collaborated to design and implement at Lofton. The future goal is to establish the same entrepreneurial program at the Reichert House, which is planning to become a charter school.

Superintendent Boyd informed the Board that he is aware of the Reichert House's desire to apply to become a charter school, and district staff has met with them to discuss the charter school process. The Reichert House has been informed that the district will monitor the charter school, but is not the grant writer. Dr. Boyd does not know where this will lead, but he will keep the Board informed and keep communication open.

Mrs. Roy received a letter from GRU regarding the First Annual Green Symposium July 9-11, 2008, and hoped a district staff member would attend to take advantage of their expertise and collaborate with GRU.

She also received an email regarding a FLDEP grant for a Utility Report Card program, which is an energy tracking/conservation program which measures reducing energy consumption. She felt it would be an excellent educational tool as well as a way to save money, and urged the district to pursue applying for the grant.

Mr. Eubank noted that it may be a duplication of efforts due to the fact that the facilities staff is already working on it.

Mrs. Roy noted that she has previously suggested implementing a program/campaign to convince kids that it is cool to stay in school.

Mr. Eubank expressed concern with the low third grade FCAT scores.

Related to the DES Consultant, he also noted that the district should pursue local vendors to provide proposals for the same service at a lower rate. He also feels that professional-technical employees are not treated the same as administrators, and should receive the same time off as administrators, and suggested including ESP's, with the same conditions.

Mrs. Pinkoson shared information from the NSBA conference regarding the purchase of Smart Boards at a lower cost.

She also suggested that the district begin to identify people to promote the one mill increase initiative.

ADJOURNMENT

The Informal School Board meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.