

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
APPROVED MINUTES OF INFORMAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
May 12, 2009

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: Tina Pinkoson, Chairman; F. Wesley Eubank, Vice-Chairman; Ginger Childs, Eileen Roy, and Barbara Sharpe, members; and W. Daniel Boyd, Jr., Superintendent.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pinkoson.

GENERAL DISCUSSION Mr. Eubank made the following comments/requests:

- Thanked the Superintendent for providing data related to zoning exceptions by school. He is concerned that the District may be doing a disservice to schools by granting zoning exceptions to schools that are under enrolled and having difficulties. He also noted that he would be interested in additional zoning information related to magnet programs and NCLB.
- Referred to a recent lawsuit settlement with an administrator, approved by the Florida School Boards Insurance Trust (FSBIT). He explained the process FSBIT uses for reimbursement, and suggested that as the District moves forward and things get tighter, he feels it is extremely important that procedures for termination be strictly followed.

Mrs. Childs hopes the District learns from this particular case so that it is not repeated.

Mrs. Roy appreciates the information provided, but expressed concern regarding claims against the District. She requested that any potential claims against the District be brought to the attention of the Board, who is responsible to oversee the financial health of the District. She also appreciates the information Mr. Eubank provided related to how FSBIT settles claims and what the District is responsible for.

Mr. Eubank provided a handout related to unweighted FTE indicating a loss of students. He noted that many issues related to loss of students include discipline, disruptive students and inappropriate placement, which in turn makes parents want to move. He wants to be a "School of First Choice" and does not want parents to look at the District as "Schools of Last Resort."

He requested additional data as to where the students are going and suggested principals ask parents why they are leaving.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that many years ago she had requested that the District track students who leave. She noted that all school systems are going to

have discipline problems and urged for stricter classroom management.

Mr. Eubank agrees that discipline is a statewide concern, but his concern is related to classroom/school management and needs to be dealt with.

Mrs. Roy made the following comments/requests:

- Once again suggested a PR promotion insert, included in utility bills citing advantages of the school system.
- Distributed an Article from *The New Yorker*, which she urged Board members to read, regarding the Green Dot Public Schools in Los Angeles, a management organization that has taken over several failing schools.

Mrs. Childs stated that the message that needs to be sent to administrators and teachers is that it is critical that high standards be upheld.

Chairman Pinkoson stated that many good things are happening in the school system and the public needs to be made aware of them.

Board members discussed email procedures and responses.

Mrs. Roy continued her comments/requests:

- Thanked staff members Maria Eunice and Keith Birkett for information related to the use of organic produce in cafeterias. She also commended food service for the flyer that was developed showing the cost savings of purchasing school lunches vs. packed lunches.
- Summer feeding programs—trying to get permission from principals to allow food service to serve breakfast in the classrooms, which is reimbursable.

Responding to a question from Mrs. Childs, Superintendent Boyd explained the status of FCAT results and the progress schools are making. He informed the Board that the District has five (5) elementary schools (Shell/Waldo/Lake Forest/Rawlings and Archer) at the Correct II level. These principals and teachers are receiving assistance in emphasizing academic requirements.

He indicated that a one-hour Board workshop would be scheduled to provide detailed information regarding AYP, FCAT scores, F schools, etc.

Mrs. Roy expressed concern with the closing of the Glen Springs Manor housing development and requested information on how these low socio-

economic status students will impact the school system.

Mr. Eubank noted that effective July 1, 2009, Florida School Boards will be taking a state-mandated pay cut. Alachua County School Board member salaries will drop from \$34,919 to \$32,450 for the 2009-10 school year.

Board members discussed the conduct of students at the Horizon Center graduation ceremonies and the number of students receiving diplomas. Discussion also centered on the maximum amount of time these students should remain at the Horizon Center, rather than returning to their zoned schools.

Superintendent Boyd stated that high school principals strongly support the Horizon Center program. He also informed the Board that he and his staff have met with the Horizon Center principal and teachers. Horizon is scheduled to provide recommendations as to what resources they require to assist their students. He noted that there are also many grant opportunities available and additional counseling services to assist these students.

Mrs. Pinkoson noted that recognition for Mr. Lang will take place at the June 2, 2009, School Board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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