

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APPROVED MINUTES OF BUDGET WORK GROUP
March 20, 2007

The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, met in work group session duly called at 9:00 a.m. in Conference Room E, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida. Present were: Virginia S. Childs, chairman; Janie S. Williams, vice-chairman; F. Wesley Eubank, Tina Pinkoson, and Eileen Roy, members; W. Daniel Boyd, Jr., superintendent; and staff members.

The meeting was called to order by Superintendent Boyd.

The purpose of this workshop is for discussion on the 2007-2008 budget.

INTRODUCTION
AND OPENING
REMARKS

Dr. Boyd thanked the Board, staff, and principal representatives for the opportunity to present preliminary budget information and introduced Mr. Keith Birkett, assistant superintendent for Planning, Budgeting and Systems Accountability.

Dr. Boyd turned the meeting over to Mr. Birkett. Mr. Birkett stated this meeting was established as an informal “work group,” with no formal agenda. Mr. Birkett reiterated the purpose of the workshop was to provide information, obtain Board priorities, and move forward with the budget process for 2007-2008. Mr. Birkett posed an option to the Board as to which publication, the Annual Budget or Executive Summary, they would like available to the public. Mr. Eubank indicated the Executive Summary document would be sufficient via the School Board’s website, with specific links available to individual budgets.

2007-2008 BUDGET

Mr. Birkett provided an overview of the following:

- *Updated Planning and Budget 2007 Critical Dates Calendar:* Mr. Birkett reviewed the first draft of this document as presented.
- *Governor’s/House Budgets:* Mr. Birkett provided a recap of the Governor’s Budget vs. CALC 3, as well as a comparison of Governor’s Budget to the House first run. At this time, we are unable to analyze without details.
- *2006-2007 Staffing and Class Size:* Mr. Birkett briefly reviewed the handouts, noting that we will continue to distribute additional units, which will result in smaller class sizes.
- *Staff Priorities:* Mr. Birkett reviewed the 2007-2008 budget priorities which included:
[1] class size ratios of K-3=19/1, 4-8=22/1, and 9-12=24/1

- (60 more teachers and approximately 20 units in reserve);
- [2] 20% increase in school supply/allocations;
 - [3] Increase Early Retirement Contribution to .40%;
 - [4] Sweetwater Branch Charter School opening;
 - [5] Cost increase for Athletic Trainers; and
 - [6] Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB), Potential Liability.

Mr. Ward provided information regarding the OPEB cost. This would allow us to take proactive measures required to offer retirees the same rate without impacting our credit rating. A question was asked specific to what are we going to do to reduce increase in benefit costs.

The 2007-2008 Inflationary Items of Health Insurance, Property/Casualty Insurance, Utilities, and Fuel were briefly discussed.

BOARD INPUT/ DISCUSSION

For 2007-2008, could we look at the possibility of 18.5/1 ratio and reducing our reserve balance from 20 to 10? The Board requested information regarding our actual class size numbers, without ESE included. Utilizing a 19/1 ratio, we can make school average; however, a request was made to run numbers again at 18.5/1, high schools at 24/1, and keep others the same.

The question was asked whether Extended School Year (2 weeks) can become part of the actual school year for a particular school. Mrs. Sandy Hollinger, deputy superintendent, curriculum/instructional services, will check with the Department of Education for an answer.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.