

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
WORKSHOP MINUTES  
**LONG-RANGE PLANNING**  
March 19, 2008

The Board met in workshop session duly called at 9 a.m. in the Boardroom, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida. Present were: Janie Williams, Chairman; Tina Pinkoson, Vice-Chairman; Ginger Childs, F. Wesley Eubank, and Eileen F. Roy, members; W. Daniel Boyd, Jr., Superintendent. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Williams.

**INTRODUCTION** Superintendent Dan Boyd gave a brief introduction.

Mrs. Pinkoson noted that her original request to develop a long-range plan was made because she feels that this District can be taken to a level 'above and beyond.' However, she does not want the process to be like the last similar endeavor.

**DEPUTY SUP'T. PRESENTATION** Deputy Superintendent Sandra Hollinger addressed the Board stating that staff can take the more informal processes that are in place and mold them into a formal Long-Range Plan with measurable outcomes. She reported that she researched the planning methods of some other districts and has developed some potential steps, which she presented to the Board.

Mrs. Hollinger stated that two new systems have great potential for being incorporated into the long-range planning process: (1) the Formative Assessment developed by Mr. Steven Stark, Director, Research and Evaluation, and his staff, which provides a means of significant new data analysis and (2) the UF College of Education's new interview system, which has a high rate of accuracy in identifying new teachers who have all the indicators to work with at-risk students.

Mrs. Hollinger requested further input from the Board on what they would like to see as goals or benchmarks.

**BOARD DISCUSSION** Mrs. Childs suggested that Board members each state their priorities, with the understanding that staff may recognize additional areas that need to be included. Priorities are not necessarily in a significant order.

Mrs. Childs:

- Student Achievement (not focusing on FCAT)
- Student Attendance
- Equitable Resources by school (teachers, staff, programs and finances)
- Equitable Demographics (e.g., accommodate for volunteer imbalance)
- Economics of Operation (best use of school facilities—realign purpose/consolidate as appropriate)
- Recruitment and Training – Best Staff (perks in lieu of increased salaries)
- Graduation Rate
- Employee Performance (working environment, rewards, high expectations)
- World Class Curriculum
- Technology
- Balance School Autonomy with District Needs

Mrs. Williams:

- Prairie View – Focus on Early Childhood (pre-school to third grade)
- Rawlings/Metcalf (concerned with demographics--51% of males are African American)
- Technology
- Teacher Recruitment and Incentives (Possibly partner with banks and developers to offer incentives to teachers, e.g., low rate mortgages, tuition reimbursement)
- Graduation Rate/Dropout Rate
- Attendance Rates—possibly collaborate with the Housing Authority to mandate school attendance as a requirement of family housing. [Added to this list from Mrs. Williams' suggestion made later in the meeting.]

Mrs. Pinkoson:

- Technology (include ratio of computers to students, as a measure of access)
- Longer instructional day in elementary (perhaps use Title 1 funds)
- Eliminate early dismissal Wednesdays
- Recruitment/Retention (“Welcome Package” for teachers; local business might hold a reception for teachers)
- Increase Beginning Teacher Salary to \$35,000 by 2010
- Academic Excellence - implement parent communication software (assess parent use of Infinite Campus)
- Implement a comprehensive program for Public Access Stations to promote positive programs—inform the public of the good news
- Eliminate portables
- Performing Arts Magnet for middle/high school students
- Boardroom renovation--\$25,000

Mrs. Roy:

- Student Achievement
- Increase Career Tech Program Budget (directly benefits students; incorporate somehow with remedial reading)
- Establish a systematic approach to Best Practices
- Hiring/Retention (reward experienced eastside teachers)
- Develop and strengthen peer-mentoring programs beyond first year
- Principals should meet regularly with each teacher regarding learning gains. Need strong principals.
- Principals must know data and disaggregate it down to individual students
- Student Attendance—Home/School Liaisons are more effective than phone calls from school. Pursue grant applications to help fund.
- Supports a single gender classroom pilot, originally suggested by Mrs. Williams. Begin with Metcalfe kindergarten. [Added to this list from Mrs. Roy's comments made later in the meeting.]

Mr. Eubank:

- Student Achievement and Student Attendance will not significantly change until they are tied to Accountability.
- Components of a report on computers in the schools need to be carefully developed to result in useful information.

- Public Access to Board information—Purchase inexpensive software used by the City and County so that all Board meetings are video-streamed and can be viewed at any time.
- Supports Boardroom renovations -- \$25,000
- Eliminate Early Release
- With the expected status of state funding next year, there can be no extra programs.
- Accountability—review employee efficiency across the District. Consider bringing in a consultant who would more easily recognize inefficiencies. Perhaps consolidate services or contract out.
- Employee Suggestion Program—reward employees for money-saving suggestions.

As a means of getting children to school every day, Mrs. Williams suggested possibly collaborating with the Housing Authority to mandate school attendance as a requirement of family housing.

Mrs. Roy cited an additional reason that she feels the Career Technical Education budget loss should be reversed. The FCAT grading formula that was passed unanimously by the Senate includes an Industry Certification requirement, which would be factored into a school's grade.

Mrs. Roy stated that she supports Mrs. Williams' suggestion of piloting a single-gender classroom, possibly at Metcalfe. Mrs. Williams stated that the challenge is to find a male teacher for kindergarten or pre-school.

Mrs. Childs stated that she intended items on her priority list to be done within the new budget, with no additional funds. Mrs. Pinkoson thought items needing additional funding should still be placed in the long-range plan, even if they cannot immediately be initiated.

Mrs. Hollinger stated that a goal she believes should be included in the plan is Parent Involvement and Community Partnerships.

Brief discussion was held on development of the Long-Range Plan, including the capabilities of the Infinite Campus system.

Mrs. Childs remarked that a goal of hers when she came on the Board nearly six years ago was to restore public confidence in the District. Since then, she stated, that ceased to be an issue, and she credits Dr. Boyd.

Dr. Boyd stated that he takes great pride in the leaders of this District and is confident in their ability to meet the budget challenge. Staff will work on the Long-Range Planning document, according to today's direction from the Board, and another workshop will be held in approximately month.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.