

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
January 15, 2008

The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, met in regular session duly called at 6 p.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, and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Williams, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Motion by Mrs. Childs Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to approve the minutes of the Board meeting of December 18, 2007, as presented.

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

ADOPTION
OF AGENDA

Mrs. Williams announced the following changes to the agenda:

Delete Items E, Recognition; and H.5., Employee Case No. E-0708-03
Add Item G.5.(d), Student Case.

Motion by Mrs. Pinkoson Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to adopt the January 15, 2008, meeting agenda as amended.

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

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Condolences were expressed to the family and colleagues of Nick Nickelson, long-time valued employee who recently passed away.

Dr. Boyd presented four recommendations in response to the January 8 Informal Board Meeting discussion on Buchholz High School capacity issues:

Recommendation I:

- Implement a procedure whereby all zoning exemption requests to BHS are routed directly to the Zoning Appeals Committee, whose membership consists of the Superintendent and his designees. Those students, currently on zoning exemptions, may remain at BHS, within the guidelines of ACPS Policy 5120.

Recommendation II: Entrepreneurship and Finance Magnet Academies
(Refers only to entering ninth graders)

- Under a District lottery procedure*, admit out-of-zone, *qualified* ninth grade students to the Magnet programs, if the scheduled class section(s) has an enrollment number at 80% or above, filled by Buchholz students. The enrollment number for a class section for the Entrepreneurship and Finance programs is 35 students. (80% = 28 students)

** District lottery is defined as a computer random selection process for all qualified (meet criteria of Magnet application) out-of-zone students. The lottery date will be set by BHS administration and District staff and must occur after District Magnet deadline.*

Example One: Twenty-nine (29) BHS ninth grade students choose to enroll in the first course of the Entrepreneurship and/or Finance programs. No other Buchholz students wish to enter this class. The class enrollment figure of 29 students is above 80%. Thus, a maximum of six out-of-zone students may be admitted to fill the section to 35 students.

NOTE: Course completion criteria for the Entrepreneurship and/or Finance programs are one course a year. This is the student's elective course. It is standard protocol to schedule elective courses based on program enrollment numbers. Thus, students are always asked to select several elective choices.

Recommendation III:

- Allow out-of-zone students who are currently in the Magnet programs to remain, with transportation provided.

Recommendation IV:

- The administration will recommend that any new development (defined as a development platted after January of 2008) be zoned to a high school other than Buchholz High School, due to capacity issues. (Some developments that have already been platted but which have not yet begun construction may also be affected by this action.) This recommendation is in accordance with School Board Policy 5120.

Dr. Boyd also presented Data Analysis concerning enrollment in the Buchholz Entrepreneurship and Finance Academies. He also expressed appreciation for public input.

Mr. Eubank suggested a change so that school districts are not assigned when a new development is platted, but rather closer to the time of the actual property development.

At a question from Mrs. Pinkoson, it was clarified that these recommendations are within the Superintendent's purview and in accordance with Board Policy.

Mrs. Childs clarified that the Buchholz Magnet programs will take eligible Buchholz students first [*minimum 80% BHS enrollment*], with students from out-of-zone being allowed any remaining slots [*after review by the District Zoning Appeals Committee*]. She also clarified that the Board is not going to take any action at this time on zoning proposals that were discussed in the recent public meetings.

At a question from Mrs. Roy, the Superintendent stated that, with some additional training for business teachers, these 1-credit Finance and Entrepreneurship courses could be taught at other high schools.

CITIZEN INPUT

Citizens addressed the Board with comments including:

Believes the BHS Magnet programs are in the top five nationwide and cannot be replicated at other schools. Wants no changes to be made.

Does not believe the program will survive if it requires 80% of students to come from Buchholz. Wants no changes to be made.

An enlightened county that is home to the State's top University should protect Florida's reputation by passing a resolution that Intelligent Design and/or Creationism should not be taught in a science classroom.

The new president of A-Tiger (the Political Action Committee of ACEA), Chris Ott, introduced himself and commented on state budget issues.

BHS Math Team teacher feels changes will destroy the program.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Pinkoson

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to approve the amended Consent Agenda as described in items 1-11, with Item 8, Professional Services Ranking and Fee for Project SBAC A0701, Westwood Middle School Student Services Addition and Renovations, being pulled for questions.

Concerning a question from Mrs. Roy about the varying amounts of project negotiated fees, Mr. Gable explained that they vary from project to project, based on the scale of the project, the amount of money involved, and the complexity of the project. Guidelines from the Department of Management Services are used. Mrs. Roy expressed a desire to see the protocol concerning such decisions.

The question was called on the Consent Agenda as amended.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

AMENDMENT TO THE
2007-2008 TEACHER
SALARY SCHEDULE

This reflects the addition of schools/programs that are eligible to receive mileage supplements: A. Quinn Jones, Character Counts and Horizon (including Detention Center).

Motion by Mrs. Pinkoson

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the amendment to Footnote 24, Differentiated Pay, of the 2007-2008 Teacher Salary schedule as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

NAMING OF THE NEW
LOFTEN CLASSROOM
AND MULTIPURPOSE
BUILDING

The Loften High School Advisory Council voted unanimously to name the new facility after former administrator, Director of Vocational Education and instructor, Dr. Dan McKinnon.

Motion by Mrs. Childs

Seconded by Mrs. Pinkoson

Moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the naming of the new Loften Classroom Building and Multipurpose Building after former administrator, Director of Vocational Education and instructor, Dr. Dan McKinnon.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

APPLICATION FOR
CHARTER SCHOOL—
GAINESVILLE ARTS
AND TECHNOLOGY
ACADEMY, INC.

The Gainesville Arts and Technology Academy, Inc., would have a K-5 grade configuration, increasing one grade level per year until achieving K-8.

It was pointed out that this is the second meeting at which no representative of the out-of-state company or its local Board members have been in attendance.

Mr. Eubank agrees with the concept of the school, but feels there is a lack of interest by both its Board and the outside company that will make a 12.5% profit from the school. As a result, Mrs. Pinkoson felt the matter should be tabled.

Motion by Mrs. Pinkoson

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to table the recommendation to approve the charter application for the Gainesville Arts and Technology Academy, Inc., in concept, and authorize staff to develop a proposed charter contract.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

AMENDMENTS OF
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
ZONE LINES—
FIRST READING

The recommendation is to move the area bordered on the west by NW 43rd Street; on the north by NW 68th Avenue; on the east by Highway 441; and on the south by NW 53rd Avenue, from Ft. Clarke Middle School to Westwood Middle School, effective beginning the 2008-09 school year.

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Pinkoson

Moved to approve the amendments to the school attendance zone lines as presented for advertising, and schedule a Public Hearing for Tuesday, February 5, 2008, at 6:30 p.m., to consider the proposed amendments to the student attendance lines.

Mr. Eubank requested that the same data be provided for middle schools that he requested for high schools.

Mrs. Roy made a recommendation that the Phoenix area be rezoned from Eastside High School to Buchholz High School, if space permits, per

previous Board discussion. She feels it would go partway toward addressing the Superintendent's concerns about socioeconomic balance, and Phoenix is closer to Buchholz than Eastside.

Mrs. Childs prefers not to single out just one neighborhood for rezoning at this time. She suggested that the Board first evaluate the small steps taken this year.

Dr. Boyd stated that he had not included the Phoenix recommendation because of the Magnet changes he is proposing. He prefers to hold off on possible rezoning of the Phoenix neighborhood students until next year when the impact of Buchholz changes can be evaluated. Mr. Eubank concurred.

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

PROPERTY TAX
AMENDMENT LETTER

A draft of a letter concerning the proposed Property Tax Amendment was presented to the Board and their input welcomed. The letter will be sent to The Gainesville Sun.

CITIZEN INPUT

Citizens addressed the Board in support of retaining the BHS Academies as they are, with comments including:

Changes to the BHS Magnet programs will destroy the Math Team's worldwide acclaim.

It takes a long time to develop entrepreneurial programs and the Board may now be stopping something that has a great future for Alachua County.

BHS Academy of Entrepreneurship student – Excluding out-of-zone students would be inappropriate for the program's future.

Questioning legal ramifications of limiting out-of-zone students, since it is a 'Magnet' program.

Students apply to Buchholz for a superior education; GHS has a commitment to mediocrity. Fix overcrowding by making other high schools excellent.

Offering a class at other schools will not be the same. It is the 'experience' at Buchholz. Address the bigger zoning picture; don't deprive students of the BHS Magnet opportunity.

BHS-zoned students are not as appreciative of the Academy opportunity as some out-of zone students from different neighborhoods. Please don't take opportunity away from those that recognize the value.

There should not be a lottery system. Keep the present procedure.

A student petition has been circulated and will be presented to the Board.

It's wrong to in any way limit out-of-zone students from the BHS Magnets. If out-of zone students can't be accepted there, it's not fair for other schools to be able to accept out-of-zone students to their Magnets.

The Board's legacy will be that they took the best programs and tore them apart.

Limitations and lotteries may cause the programs to fail over time. Be innovative and figure a way to continue as is.

Prediction that a decision to limit out-of-zone students will cause the Academies to lose half their students over several years, effectively bringing the programs to an end. The Board should slow down; overcapacity is a problem that requires a long-term solution.

BHS students who don't want to be in the Academies should bus to EHS to make room for out-of-zone Academy students. Predicts end of program if limitations are instituted.

Students well below the eighth grade level, who have believed they will have choices, will be affected by this decision.

Mrs. Sandy Hollinger, Deputy Superintendent, made a recommendation to out-of-zone parents interested in Magnets: Apply to all Magnets your child is interested in, and go to all orientations. If your child is accepted to a BHS Academy when the lottery is conducted, you will then make the decision as to which Magnet program to accept.

Mrs. Childs noted that some Buchholz students have not been able to get into the BHS Magnet programs, so there may be more enrollees than might be presently expected. Out-of-Zone students also have the opportunity to enroll in the Lofton Academy of Entrepreneurship. She favors exploring the idea of GHS and EHS offering the coursework of the BHS Academies and would like to see them grow and also have credit union facilities. Mrs. Childs apologized to the EHS and GHS staff, students and parents for some inappropriate and untruthful comments that have been made during this process.

Mrs. Childs requested that Mr. Gable and Mrs. Jackie Johnson collaborate on a statement for the SBAC Web page that provides basic information that will inform the public about the considerations involved in building a new school.

Mr. Eubank commented on some of the student emails he has received concerning the Buchholz issue, and their lack of understanding of the issues. He emphasized the excellence of all the high schools.

Mrs. Pinkoson addressed the issue of students using the Magnet programs as a means to get a zoning exception to Buchholz, as in the previous discussion about the Math Team. She pointed out that this is not allowed in sports and neither is it an acceptable method in academics. She believes there are abundant opportunities in every high school. She also assured the audience that the BHS Academics will not be allowed to fail.

Mrs. Williams agreed with her colleague's statements and stated that the Board and Superintendent are attempting to do the best they can in a difficult circumstance.

Dr. Boyd thanked the parents, teachers and business people for coming to the meeting and reiterated that the issue is overcrowded schools. He stated that he and the Board have great concern for the students, and the BHS program will continue to prosper under the leadership of Principal Vince Perez. Dr. Boyd expressed admiration for Board members, stating that they are serving the community with courage and distinction. He expressed that he is sorry for any public disappointment, but there is no other choice until money can be raised for additional schools.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.