

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
February 3, 2009

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: Tina Pinkoson, Chairman; Wes Eubank, Vice-Chairman; Ginger Childs, Barbara Sharpe, 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 Pinkoson, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

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

Moved to approve the following minutes, as presented.

- Informal Board Meeting, January 13, 2009
- School Board Meeting, Tuesday, January 20, 2009
- Budget Workshop, Tuesday, January 27, 2009

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA Motion by Mrs. Childs Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to adopt the February 3, 2009, meeting agenda as amended.

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

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Childs commended the students who recently took part in the District Spelling Bee and thanked all those involved in the event.

Mrs. Sharpe noted that she attended the ceremony commemorating the opening of the new Williams Elementary media center and commented on what an inviting place it is for students.

RECOGNITION –

INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS
WEEK

The Board recognized winners of the Inclusive Teacher awards, Susan Finnerty and Monica Schechtman, Westwood Middle School; the Inclusive Paraprofessional Award, Kim McLeod, High Springs; and the Student Essay Contest, *Together We Learn Better*, Kyle Staton and Gabriela Acevedo, Fort Clarke; Charvonne Hepburn and Jala' Canady, Oak View.

CITIZEN INPUT

Dr. Gunnar Paulson, ACEA President, reminded the Board of their upcoming Legislative Barbeque, which is the lead off to the February 28 Rally in Ocala and the March 18 Rally in Tallahassee, all in response to the lack of state funding.

Mrs. Childs commended the joint effort of the District Administration and the ACEA.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved the Superintendent’s recommendation to approve the Consent Agenda as described in items 1–5.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

AMENDMENTS TO
POLICIES 1600, 3600,
AND 4600, JOB
DESCRIPTIONS, AND TO
POLICY 8405, SCHOOL
SAFETY AND SECURITY
-- FIRST READING

The proposed amendments to Policies 1600, 3600, and 4600, *Job Descriptions*, delete redundant language and provide for the Superintendent to revise the person to whom the position reports.

The proposed amendment to Policy 8405, *School Safety and Security*, provides as an option that the School Board may employ a District Security Chief and that that person may be a law enforcement officer.

Superintendent Boyd reviewed the proposed changes.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved the Superintendent’s recommendation to approve the proposed amendments to Policies 1600, 3600, and 4600, *Job Descriptions*, and to Policy 8405, *School Safety and Security*, for advertising, as presented.

Mr. Eubank noted that F.S. 1012.22 should be referenced in the Policies and suggested deleting performance responsibilities and other items that are within the purview of the Superintendent, rather than the Board.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

RECOGNITION

A winner of the student essay contest for Inclusive Schools Week arrived in the Boardroom and was presented with her award.

CITIZEN INPUT

There was no citizen input.

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
REQUESTS

Mr. Eubank:

- Reviewed some input he received regarding his proposal to implement a student uniform policy. His intent was to involve parents in a dialogue, particularly regarding safety in the learning environment. He cited data supportive of a uniform policy, which he garnered from various sources, including the U.S. Department of Education. He suggested that a policy could more appropriately be called a modified dress code. Input from schools will be discussed next week.
- Noted that three charter schools have been closed by the District in the last few years, and a financial problem has been found with each one. He believes the Board’s charter contract should be modified to avoid this in the future. His suggestions included:
- Charter Board members should be held to the same ethical standards and requirements as are District School Board members.

- Charter schools must meet Florida Sunshine requirements, such as advertising meetings with appropriate notice and providing meeting minutes.
- District approval should be required for a student to return to public school from a charter, so the charter is prevented from collecting FTE funds and then not providing the education.
- When staff has serious concerns, require the District to hire an auditor.

Mrs. Pinkoson expressed agreement with strengthening Charter contracts.

Mrs. Roy:

- Agrees that more needs to be known about charter school finances. In response to Mrs. Roy's questions, Chief Financial Officer Scott Ward reported that auditors are generally relied upon for oversight, with District spot-checking. In the case of Hoggetowne, certain expenditures were previously noted as 'insignificant' by the auditors.
- Regarding the recycling program, Mrs. Roy read the policy on conservation and natural material resources. She inquired about immediate and long-range plans.
- Has received reports that recyclable material is not being separated and collected at some schools. She requested a response to several questions:
 - When did the Districtwide program begin?
 - What solid waste materials are being picked up?
 - Do all schools recycle?
 - Could we work with GRU to have separate containers at every school and have GRU pick up?
 - Can recycling be made a top-down mandatory practice for schools, since policy says mandatory.
- Fort Clarke Middle School heating system is wasting energy. Wants to see energy bills for last six months for Fort Clarke. What can be done?
- Requested a status report on the school utility report card.

Mr. Ed Gable, Executive Director, Facilities, stated that utility report card is up and a link will be placed on the Website. He explained series of malfunctions with Ft. Clarke's unique hybrid system, which is quite complicated electronically. Schools have recycling for cardboard and paper. No vendor has been found to pick up glass and aluminum cans without cost, so an RFP is planned.

Mrs. Sharpe:

- Need to develop a policy pertaining to leaves of absence for charter schools, if one is not in place.

- Would like an update on the Board's authority in governing charters, or discuss at informal board meeting.
- Understands Mr. Eubanks' concerns about a uniform policy. She believes if one is adopted, it must be mandatory. The purpose is safety, discipline, and keeping students focused on classwork. Uniforms help to remove competition and instill school pride. Students may well be required to wear uniforms on their future jobs. She also feels strongly that the prison-inspired practice of wearing sagging pants must be stopped.

Ms. Childs:

- Agrees with Mr. Eubank that 'tightening the present dress code' is the most effective way to approach the issue.
- Regarding Charter schools, she suggested the following be required:
- Current and future charters submit their board member certifications annually.
 - A minimum number of board meetings per year.
 - Contract provision that FTE for any student returning to public school must be prorated and returned to Alachua County Public Schools.
 - Financial policies should require the charter board's approval.
 - A financial certification form should be developed for the principal to sign every month.
 - Leave of absence policies should be reviewed for both charters and the district.

Mrs. Sharpe inquired whether a format could be used that would compare SBAC charter policies with government requirements.

The Superintendent stated that the charter issue will be discussed at the next informal meeting. He cautioned that the Board has to abide by present contracts as written, but future contracts must be strengthened to protect the public interest.

Mr. Eubank requested an update on options for the Love to Learn situation.

Mrs. Pinkoson stated that the Board has lobbied for stronger charter school control for several years. At least a million dollars in start-up funds has been wasted because of charter school improprieties.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.