

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
May 16, 2000

The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, met in regular session duly called at 7 p.m. in the Boardroom, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida. Present were: Barbara Sharpe, chairman; Judy Brashear, vice-chairman; Bill Cake, Bev Carroll, Chester Leathers, members; Lawrence L. Marazza, superintendent; and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board.

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

APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Cake

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to approve the minutes of May 2, 2000, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Cake

Seconded by Mrs. Brashear

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of May 16, 2000, as amended.

The following items were deleted from the agenda: Action Item B.1., Curriculum Presentation—Update on Mebane Middle School Connections; B.2.(4), Student Case No. 00-25 HC. Add as Action Item B.2.a.(5), Student Case No. 00-32-X.

The question was called on the agenda as amended.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER  
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Cake recognized the Teacher Recognition program committee and staff members for their efforts in coordinating the annual Teacher of the Year Program and corporate sponsors BellSouth and Cox Communications.

Mrs. Brashear made the following announcements:

- Attended the Education Standards Commission meeting and noted that distribution of the publication on competencies and skills will be available in the near future.
- Received a call for action from the Florida Relations Network to sign a petition to get Congress to fully fund IDEA as was originally promised at 40%.
- The Expo Children's Museum will hold a fundraiser and auction.

- Received a letter from Eastside High School teachers Gary Blaskowki and Rob Horter announcing that EHS students participated for the first time in a Robotics contest.

Mrs. Carroll made the following announcements:

- Commended staff on the Teacher Recognition program.
- Attended the Mebane Middle School Outdoor art and project night.
- Attended Ft. Clarke Middle School Spirit Night.
- Attended the quarterly Chamber of Commerce meeting at which the district's magnet students made presentations on the various magnet programs available.
- Attended Newberry High School's play "School House Rock."
- Commended ESE teachers for their efforts in working with disabled students.
- The School Readiness Coalition will be sending letters to parents announcing they will now pay on a sliding scale for Pre-K services and care for four year-olds in the public school system.

Dr. Leathers attended the quarterly Chamber of Commerce program at the new UF Conference Center and commended the district's students on their presentations of the district's magnet programs.

Chairman Sharpe announced that the Alachua County Public Schools Foundation presented a reception prior to the Board meeting and awarded 52 college scholarships.

She also received a memo from the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) related to franchise fees on electric bills and the development of a strategy to recover those fees. She referred the letter to Superintendent Marazza and requested he research this program and report back to the Board in a timely manner on whether or not the district can benefit from such a program, or if the district is currently participating in such a program.

RECOGNITION—  
HIGH SCHOOL  
BASKETBALL

Dr. Charles Hall, principal, Gainesville High School, recognized the GHS basketball team and coaches on their first place ranking in the state, and also noted the team's academic accomplishments.

GAINESVILLE HIGH  
SCHOOL TELEVISION  
PRODUCTION CLASS

Dr. Hall recognized the students from Gainesville High school's video production class for taking second place in the statewide high school video competition, which was held at Universal Studios in Orlando. The school will receive a \$2,000 grant for the students' public service announcement titled "Making the Right Choice." The video warns teenagers against drinking on prom night.

EASTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL—BOYS TENNIS TEAM

Mr. Bill Herschleb, principal, Eastside High School, recognized the EHS boys tennis team on its first place title in the Class 3A state championship.

ALACHUA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

Mr. Brent Williams and Ms. Mary Chance, Alachua County Public Schools Foundation, announced that 52 college scholarships totaling \$75,000 were presented to deserving students.

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION BUSINESS PARTNERS/COMMUNITY BASED TRAINING PROGRAM

Ms. Renee Speisman, director, ESE, and Ms. Rosalind Hall, coordinator, Community-based Training program, recognized business partners and schools for their outstanding commitment and dedication to the vocational training of students at various job sites in the community.

EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR

Ms. Grace White, supervisor, Community Involvement, recognized 43 outstanding school-related employees of the year. The recipient of the Alachua County School-Related Employee of the Year was Shelly Whitfield, school secretary/bookkeeper at Chiles Elementary School.

SCHEDULED AGENCIES—MARCH OF DIMES WALK AMERICA AWARDS

Ms. Judy Boles, chair, March of Dimes and Walk America, presented trophies to the top fundraisers at the elementary, middle and high school levels. The top fundraisers included Chiles Elementary School, over \$6,000; Howard Bishop Middle School, over \$5,000; and Eastside High School over \$6,800. It was noted that over \$93,000 was raised by the district's schools. The Board was invited to attend the next Walk America scheduled for March 24, 2001.

CITIZEN INPUT

The following suggestions/recommendations/requests were presented to the Board for consideration:

- Ms. Barbara Gallant provided the Board with information related to a visit to Shanghai and presented photographs of students at an after school program for talented kids and noted that students in Thailand do not wear uniforms. Concern was expressed over the cost of the Kirby-Smith renovations totaling over \$204,000 and the creation of new positions. Requested information on the number of new positions that have been added at the district level for the past two years.
- The Mebane Middle School band director expressed concern with the dwindling substitute pool and urged the Board to quickly address this issue and suggested training for substitutes prior to the next school year.
- A citizen and member of the Sidney Lanier School Advisory Council (SAC) requested input into the budgeting process and

capital outlay program. The Board was urged to make funding capital outlay needs at Sidney Lanier a priority in order to complete the first phase of the master plan. Informed the Board that a year ago the Lanier master plan (three phases) was presented, but unfortunately, the money was never received. Expressed concern that Lanier has been a forgotten school for too long and the district has taken a band aid approach to repairs, which is unfair to the children and families. Reminded the Board that Lanier has special needs children and they require safe fire exits, safe concrete ramps and a safe environment. Expect the school system to provide the 125 children and families with an accessible and safe environment.

Superintendent Marazza stated that he welcomes the opportunity to discuss capital outlay needs and the status of master planning with the Lanier faculty and SAC members. Dr. Marazza reported that he has met with teachers at Lanier and the playground request is being expedited.

Chairman Sharpe stated she requested three Board meetings ago that Superintendent Marazza make a site visit to Lanier to check out what needed to be done. She requested that whenever a Board member makes a request, a status report of the request needs to be presented to the Board. She expressed concern that she had no prior knowledge of the Lanier visit and stated that it is the law to have Lanier up to ADA requirements. The district must seriously refocus on what needs to be done at Lanier. She again requested Superintendent Marazza schedule a site visit and report back to the entire Board on how the issue is being handled.

Superintendent Marazza reported that he visited Lanier last week and had lunch with the faculty and learned about their needs. There are two schools in need of immediate assistance--Sidney Lanier Center and Shell Elementary School. These two schools need to be moved up in priority and the people affected must have input into the master planning process.

Dr. Leathers informed the Board that he has been involved in master planning meetings related to Lanier's needs, but he will withdraw from his role on the committee since there is now an open house approach.

- Dr. Kirby Stewart, a retired employee, thanked the Board on behalf of the Veterans organization for its endorsement of the Milton Lewis Stadium at Citizens Field. It was noted that the City of Gainesville officially passed a resolution in support of naming the stadium the Milton Lewis Stadium. The Board and public was

invited to attend the official dedication on Memorial Day, May 29 at 2 p.m. at the stadium.

- Mr. Perry McGriff, a former graduate of Gainesville High School (1955) noted that he has property with a contract for \$65,000 that he would like to give as feeder money to the School Board to be specifically earmarked for Gainesville High School. He offered a quarter of a million dollar pledge with the majority specifically for the coaches and teachers at Gainesville High School in the form of a supplement on top of their salaries and coaching supplements. He noted the remainder to be designated as a cheerleading supplement.

Dr. Leathers noted he had requested Superintendent Marazza to explore methods of private funding and sees this as an excellent opportunity.

Chairman Sharpe requested Board attorney Jim Lang meet with the superintendent and staff and address Mr. McGriff's request as soon as possible and determine how this can be done.

Mr. McGriff expressed an urgency for this issue to be addressed as a contract has been signed.

Mrs. Carroll requested Superintendent Marazza meet with Board Attorney Lang as soon as possible and work out possible union issues and present a recommendation at a Board meeting.

Superintendent Marazza noted that with the Board's permission, the district will accept the money and will find a way that it will be legal to use the money as specified, and a meeting will be scheduled with Mr. McGriff, staff and the attorney to review how to accomplish this.

Chairman Sharpe requested that the money be specifically designated for coaching, teaching and cheerleading supplements as requested.

Mr. McGriff stated that he hoped that the School Board could grow this money so that there would be enough money in the agreement for the principal to also make decisions to help supplement other individuals, including facilities.

- Dr. Gunnar Paulson, president, Alachua County Education Association (ACEA), informed the Board that ACEA has now merged with FEA United and will now be called Florida Education Association.
- Mr. Roger Brower, citizen, reported that he has communicated with

Board members by email requesting the Board take action by placing Superintendent Marazza on administrative leave in light of recent reports in *The Gainesville Sun*. He noted that it is his understanding that the Board cannot place the Superintendent on administrative leave and asked the Board attorney whether or not this is the case, and where would a citizen go to get action on what is felt to be an inappropriate situation occurring with an elected body and its hired employee.

Board Attorney Lang reported that he does not feel that it is appropriate to comment on this matter at this time or any personnel matter as to what can or cannot be done. He further indicated that his allegiance is to the School Board, and he is not in attendance to give citizens legal advice.

Mr. Brower stated that he will pursue this issue and will send the Superintendent a letter requesting that he place himself on administrative leave until the investigation into the complaint has been resolved. He pointed out examples at Buchholz and Eastside High School where individuals were immediately placed on administrative leave pending conclusion of an investigation and recommended the Board should dispense equal justice.

STUDENT CASE  
NO. 00-14-X

Mr. Tom Wittmer, staff attorney, reported that the student was charged with fighting while at school. A hearing was held on April 11, 2000.

Motion by Mrs. Brashear

Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved the hearing agent's recommendation to expel the student through the 2000-2001 school year.

Responding to Dr. Leathers concern about a need for early prevention, Mr. Cake stated that elementary principals have no other alternatives and are limited to a ten-day suspension. He noted that he has strongly suggested that this Board establish an alternative setting away from the school for those students that require the earliest assistance. This would be a costly program, but he supports an alternative center with low pupil-teacher ratio and super teachers in lieu of elementary suspensions.

Mrs. Carroll stated she fully supports counseling services for elementary students, particularly 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, and suggested contracting with other agencies.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

STUDENT CASE  
NO. 00-18-SB

Mr. Wittmer reported that the student was charged with persistent misconduct while riding the school bus. A hearing was held on March 29, 2000.

Motion by Dr. Leathers                      Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the hearing agent's recommendation to suspend the student's bus riding privileges through April 30, 2000.

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

STUDENT CASE  
NO. 00-21-X

Mr. Wittmer reported that the student was charged with possession of a controlled substance while at school. A hearing was held on April 5, 2000.

Motion by Mrs. Carroll                      Seconded by Mrs. Brashear

Moved the hearing agent's recommendation to expel the student through June 4, 2000, but that the student be allowed to attend the alternative center on probation.

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

STUDENT CASE  
NO. 00-32-X

Mr. Wittmer reported that the student is charged with a Level IV breach of conduct, extreme defiance toward a teacher.

Motion by Mrs. Brashear                      Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to extend the student's suspension through June 6, 2000.

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

REAPPOINTMENT OF  
ADMINISTRATORS FOR  
2000-2001—  
ATTACHMENT C

Motion by Mrs. Carroll                      Seconded by Mrs. Brashear

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to approve the reappointment of administrators for 2000-2001 as presented on Attachment C.

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

REAPPOINTMENT OF  
INSTRUCTIONAL PER-  
SONNEL (ANNUAL AND  
PROFESSIONAL  
SERVICES CON-  
TRACTS) FOR 2000-  
2001--ATTACHMENT D

Motion by Mrs. Carroll                      Seconded by Mr. Cake

Moved the superintendent recommendation to approve the reappointment of instructional personnel (Annual and Professional Services Contracts) for 2000-2001 as presented on Attachment D.

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

INDEPENDENT  
AUDITOR'S REPORT ON  
GENERAL PURPOSE  
FINANCIAL  
STATEMENTS FOR THE  
YEAR ENDED JUNE 30,  
1999

Dr. Mary Chambers, assistant superintendent, Business Services, reported that this is the first time someone other than the Auditor General's office has audited the district's financial statements. She commended James Moore and Co., P.L., Certified Public Accountants, for professionalism and hard work on the audit.

It was a very clean audit with only two findings reported:

Compensated absences—This has to do with the number of years an employee has in the retirement system. In the future, this information will be accessible.

Electronic data processing operations--A districtwide technology audit has been done to give direction on the most efficient ways to work on some of those areas.

Motion by Mr. Cake

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved that the Independent Auditor's Report on General Purpose Financial Statements for the Year Ended June 30, 1999, by James Moore and Co., P.L., Certified Public Accountants, be filed as a part of the public records of the Board.

Mrs. Brashear asked for a report on the processes being put in place to safe guard and protect school system data.

Mr. Dan Cromer director, Information Resources, assured the Board that the issue of security has been discussed extensively, and a private audit of access was held just prior to this audit. A consultant was hired to attack the system to expose any vulnerability and a detailed report will be presented to the Board.

It was noted that charter schools are required to provide their own audits.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

AMENDMENT TO THE  
1999-2000 CAREER  
SERVICE  
(BARGAINING) AND  
SUPPORT/TECHNICAL  
(NON-BARGAINING)  
SALARY SCHEDULES

Motion by Mr. Cake

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the superintendent's recommendation that the 1999-2000 Career Service and Support/Technical Salary Schedules be amended to include language that employees whose 1999-2000 salary falls below the market mid point for their respective jobs will receive a one time payment during the 1999-2000 school year.

Dr. Chambers reported that the money is currently budgeted in salary accounts and will not be taken out of any other funds, and will average \$40/person.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Carroll

Seconded by Mr. Cake

Moved to approve the Consent Agenda as described in items 1-3. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

Mr. Terry Tougaw, assistant superintendent, Facilities/Transportation, called the Board’s attention to the replacement of the Terwilliger Elementary School playground and thanked everyone involved in the process.

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

DISCUSSION ITEMS—  
PROPERTY ADJACENT  
TO WILLIAMS  
ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL

Mrs. Brashear reported that the Board has previously discussed the property adjacent to Williams Elementary School and reported that the problems with the store seem to be getting worse. She requested the Board allow her to form a committee of community representatives to review the matter and present recommendations to the Board.

Chairman Sharpe stated that this issue has been discussed on numerous occasions, and district staff and the city of Gainesville have researched the possibility of purchasing the property and the store. She expressed concern over the use of alcohol and code violations that continue to occur.

Following Board discussion, the Board agreed to allow Mrs. Brashear to form a committee and present a recommendation to the Board on this issue.

BOARD MEMBER  
REQUESTS

Mr. Cake requested Chairman Sharpe determine if the Board may schedule an Executive Session as soon as possible to discuss possible legal action against the Board.

Responding to Mrs. Brashear’s question, Mrs. Ginger Childs, assistant superintendent, Instructional Administration, reported that summer school money is earmarked for students that are failing. In the past students have been able to take two half credit sessions (morning and afternoon), but this year it has been restricted to an early morning session.

Mrs. Brashear made the following requests:

- Notify community groups as early as possible regarding the use of school facilities to offer creative summer enrichment programs.
- Superintendent Marazza provide a report on the substitute shortage, and if necessary, discuss this issue during negotiations.
- Question why graduates of Horizon/New Pathways Center receive a diploma from their zoned school and not from Horizon/New Pathways.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.