

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 5, 2004

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: Barbara J. Sharpe, chairman; Tina Pinkoson, vice-chairman; Jeannine M. Cawthon, Virginia S. Childs and F. Wesley Eubank, members; W. Daniel Boyd, Jr., 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 Mrs. Childs

Seconded by Mrs. Cawthon

Moved to approve the minutes of Board Meeting of September 21, 2004, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Sharpe stated that regarding Action Item #1, amendment of the school calendar to make up days lost as a result of recent hurricanes, a public hearing was held on September 21, 2004, to consider adoption of an emergency rule modifying the school calendar to accommodate lost days resulting from recent hurricanes.

Members of the public who wish to be heard on this item should address their comments to the Board during Citizen Input.

Motion by Mrs. Pinkoson

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of October 5, 2004, as presented.

Delete Item E., Recognition, and Action Item 3., Annual Contract with SunGuard Bi-Tech.

The question was called on adoption of the agenda as amended.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Cawthon shared an informative article, which appeared in *UF Today* magazine, covering the progress made at Duval Elementary. Professor Elizabeth "Buffy" Bondy, a UF education professor, has been working for more than five years with Duval Elementary School's staff as part of the Lastinger Center's Florida Flagship School network.

This program pairs a UF faculty member with an underachieving elementary school to address specific issues. Dr. Bondy and Dr. Lea McNealy, Duval Elementary School principal, recently received the Scholarship of Engagement Award from UF's College of Education for the work they've done to study and improve teaching and learning at Duval. One of the center's programs, the Teacher Fellows program, strives to bring area teachers together to share knowledge and ideas on improving student learning.

Chairman Sharpe read a letter she received from Westwood Middle School 7th grader Jonathon Copeland thanking the Board for allowing the "Teen Zone" after school program to be a pilot at Westwood.

She also presented the Superintendent with a \$100 gift certificate she won through the National School Boards Association (NSBA) as a prize winner at a Trade Show contest.

The Board extended their condolences to the family and friends of Mrs. Barbara Gans Gallant. Mrs. Gallant, a former teacher and board member, community activist was recognized for her many years of untiring service and devotion to the school system. As a tribute, the Board unanimously agreed to rename the Kirby-Smith History Room, the "Barbara Gans Gallant History Room."

CITIZEN INPUT

The following Citizen Input was provided to the Board:

- Representatives from the Veterans Memorial Committee urged the Board to continue to honor Veterans Days as a holiday in the schools and allow students to recognize the many contributions of veterans.
- A citizen referred to Florida Statute 1003.42, Required Instruction. Feels that the district continues to disregard this statute, which requires school districts to integrate African American history, culture and experiences into classroom activities, and noted that a lawsuit would be filed against the Board.

Chairman Sharpe noted that the Board received a response letter from the State of Florida Task Force on African American History, Florida A&M University, commending the Board and district for being among one of the leading counties across the State of Florida in facilitating the compliance of classroom teachers to infuse African American history, culture and experience into classroom activities and adhering to Florida Statute 1003.42(g).

- An ACEA representative provided the Board with the results of the survey responses from Career Service and Instructional

employees regarding the Hurricane Make-up days (Sept. 7-10) as follows:

- 599 – 10/22 Pupil holiday/Teacher work day
- 202 – 11/11 & 11/12 Veterans Day and UF Homecoming
- 217 – 11/24 Wednesday before Thanksgiving
- 547 – 1/14 Pupil Holiday/Teacher work day
- 141 – 1/17 Martin Luther King’s Birthday
- 210 – Extend the school day
- 19 – Attend school on some Saturdays

377 Yes – 541 No County petition the state to delay the FCAT
980 Yes – 57 No In favor of the School Board waiving one or more of the missed days

105 Yes – 867 No Believe the four days of instruction would make a difference in the FCAT scores

ACEA also received many suggestions, including building Hurricane Days into the calendar.

- A teacher stated that taking away holidays and teacher work days cause many conflicts due to non-refundable trips that have been planned in advance. No one holiday is more important than another and suggested the Board extend the day and have all students read daily for that extended period.
- The County Manager updated the Board on the Better Parks Better Roads Two Half-Cent Local Sales Tax Options, which is a seven-year commitment. Schools play a very important role in this initiative because many of the eligible projects include improvements at many of the county’s schools, i.e., playground equipment, lighting and gym renovations. Presentations are available to interested schools and employees.

The regular Board meeting was recessed and a Public Hearing convened.

PUBLIC HEARING—
 2004-2005 Pupil
 Progression Plan

2004-2005 Pupil Progression Plan

Mrs. Sandy Hollinger, deputy superintendent, stated that the proposed revisions reflect changes in current law.

There was no public input on the revisions to the 2004-2005 Pupil Progression Plan.

Healthy Learning Academy, Inc. Charter School

Mr. Don Lewis, director of Charter Schools, reported that at the last meeting the Board approved the application from Healthy Learning Academy, Inc. Charter School in concept and directed staff to develop a contract as provided to the Board.

Mr. Eubank referred to page 17, paragraph 5.7, Transportation, and requested that middle school be changed to elementary school. He also stated that it wasn't a major concern, but noted that in section 7.2, Governing Body, the Healthy Learning Academy Board is made up of Girls Club Board members and he did not want the two boards to be intermingled.

- Dr. Gunnar Paulson, ACEA, urged the Board not to allow Healthy Learning Academy to become a charter school. He does not believe that it is in the spirit of community togetherness and is being created only to obtain funding and expand the Girls Club facilities.

Mrs. Childs referred to page 16, paragraph 5.6.3, Qualifications Disclosure, and requested an annual report.

Chairman Sharpe was concerned that there was a conflict of interest with the Healthy Learning Academy being housed at the Girls Club, and requested Mr. Lang research this issue and provide the Board with written information at the next meeting.

Mr. Lang indicated that he would also research additional issues dealing with fixed assets and mortgages and report back to the Board.

- A citizen requested information and reasons or ways Healthy Learning Academy is going to do a better job than public schools. Also questioned whether the requirements for distribution of funds to Healthy Learning Academy, Inc., pursuant to paragraph 4.1.1, Revenue, is the same for non-charter public schools, or would the charter school be receiving special treatment.
- Ms. Bettianne Ford, President of the Healthy Learning Academy addressed the Board and clarified that their intent is to offer families the choice of a smaller school with a total of 54 students in grades K-2 with 18 students per class. They realize that these students will return to other educational settings in the community, but they will meet Sunshine State Standards and also broaden the focus of the curriculum on areas of obesity. The Healthy Learning Academy Charter Board is determined to build on children's natural drive toward daily physical activity. They will require families to sign contracts and families will also be involved in school activities through a progressive curriculum.

Mr. Eubank asked if Healthy Learning Academy intends to expand and apply to the Board for a 3rd through 5th grade charter school.

Ms. Ford stated that it is not their intention to expand and they will strictly be a K-2 charter school, which will give families a choice to enroll their children in a healthy learning environment.

Mr. Eubank expressed concern if the charter school puts capital dollars into the facility and if the school were to close, how would the School Board regain those capital improvements.

Ms. Ford stated that it is their intention to lease the facility from the Girls Club and use it the way it exists, which includes existing partitions between the classrooms and a fully equipped gymnasium.

Mr. Lewis stated that by law the only capital improvements Healthy Learning Academy could make would be maintenance and wiring.

Chairman Sharpe noted that the Girls Club receives funding from the United Way in donations, and she asked if the Healthy Learning Academy intends to pay rent and utilities.

Ms. Ford stated that they would be paying their rent and utilities to the Girls Club.

The Public Hearing was adjourned and the regular board meeting reconvened.

PRESENTATION(S)/
REPORT(S)

Budgeting/Financial Update

Mr. Keith Birkett, deputy superintendent, informed the Board the bargaining has been completed and staff plans to bring a recommendation to the Board November 2, 2004, with increases likely to be included in the December paychecks prior to Christmas break.

Mr. Birkett presented the following information:

- FTE Count Week, October 11-15, 2004 and 2nd FTE Count Week, February 7-11, 2004
- Class Size Amendment Requirements
- Class Size Reduction

Oasis Charter School Update

Mr. Birkett provided monthly (August 2004) income information on the Oasis Enrichment Academy and informed the Board that staff will continue to monitor this charter school, and district staff will continue to be consistent with communication.

Mrs. Childs felt it was very important to continue to stay on top of this issue.

AMENDMENT TO THE
2004-2005 SCHOOL
CALENDAR

Chairman Sharpe stated that the Board's action this evening will take effect immediately and will be in effect for 90 days.

Pursuant to applicable law, the Board is required to commence the normal rulemaking process right away to adopt the emergency action taken this evening. This may be confusing to the public, but is a requirement of the Administrative Procedure Act.

Superintendent Boyd informed the Board that the Department of Education has issued a memo requiring districts to make up the five days lost from the hurricanes. They also stated that there is no change in the FCAT schedule.

The following days are recommended for make up days:

Thursday, November 11, 2004 – Veterans Day

Wednesday, November 24, 2004 – Wednesday before Thanksgiving

Monday, January 17, 2005 – Martin Luther King Day

Monday, February 21, 2005 – Presidents Day

Friday, March 25, 2005 – Teacher Workday

He also provided the Board with three options:

Option A – Add 30 minutes to the end of the school day, beginning 1/3/05 and ending the week of 3/2/05. Work the Teacher Workday on March 21.

Option B – Add 30 minutes to the end of the school day, beginning 1/3/05 and ending the week of 3/2/05. Work on Wednesday, November 24.

Option C – Any 10-day increments combined with holidays and/or teacher workdays. Example: Add 30 minutes to December 1, 2004 – January 11. Extended time is 20 days, which equals two make up days.

Work two Teacher Workdays, January 14 and March 25.

Work one holiday – February 21, Presidents Day

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Cawthon

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to approve November 11 and 24, 2004, January 17, February 21, and March 25, 2005 as make up days due to hurricanes.

Mrs. Pinkoson expressed deep concern with being in session on November 24, the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, since so many emails have been received in support of having that particular day off.

She also noted that many teachers and staff have already made holiday plans for that day and she doesn't believe that it will be an academically beneficial day, and felt it would be easier to make changes at the end of the year.

Mr. Eubank stated that he has received a large amount of input and he is not convinced that adding 30 minutes to every school day over the course of several weeks would add educational value to students. Students, especially at middle and high school, it would benefit them more when you add full days. He also was concerned with making up as many of the days in the first semester as possible.

High school students who have semester-long courses would not benefit if the makeup days were pushed toward the end of the year.

He agrees with Superintendent Boyd regarding holding activities in schools to recognize the contributions of war veterans on November 11.

Mr. Eubank noted that the issue of non-refundable tickets could be solved by parents working with their child's teacher to make up for the time missed. He was also supportive of adding bad weather days.

He noted that it is difficult to put a value on a holiday, especially Homecoming (11/12), but it is significant and many students are involved in the parade.

Mrs. Childs stated that she was not supportive of giving up Veterans Day (11/11/04) or Martin Luther King Day (1/17/05). She is also concerned with making up as many of the days in the first semester as possible. She suggested extending the first semester by a week and because of that change, the Board could use the January 14 teacher work day as a makeup day and keep January 17 Martin Luther King Day, as a holiday. Also suggested working March 25 to accommodate IB and AP exams, and also work on November 24.

Chairman Sharpe urged the public to keep in mind that this is an act of God and some school districts have been wiped out, and Alachua County is fortunate to only have five days to make up. The law requires Florida districts to make up five or less days and she encouraged staff to be prepared for the next time.

Mrs. Cawthon was informed that districts did not need to comply with federal holidays.

Mrs. Pinkoson stated that she is not convinced that by adding five minutes per period in middle and high will make a difference or impact

on the students, and feels it would not be beneficial to students at any age.

She thanked the public for their input, but noted that she is disappointed in the state leaders for not delaying FCAT and placing the burden on districts. She stated that later in the year the state will look to districts for lost revenue. She holds firm that the FCAT dictates too much of what is done in education. If the curriculum is not rigorous enough that five days keeps a child from passing the FCAT, then districts need to reinvent what is being done in the classroom. If teachers are doing their job, it will not make a big impact on a daily basis--the make up days are not the issue, cooperation and working together is. The question should be: Is making up the days beneficial to our students? She supports a plan that would include the Wednesday before Thanksgiving Day rather than extending the day an extra five minutes per period.

Following discussion Chairman Sharpe suggested the Board continue with the other action items in order for Mrs. Childs to have the opportunity to review her suggested change to the original motion.

BID AWARD FOR
PROJECT SBAC A0031—
KANAPAHA MIDDLE
SCHOOL CLASSROOM
BUILDING/PHYSI-
CALLY IMPAIRED UNIT

Bids for the construction of this project were received on September 16, 2004. All bids exceeded the established construction budget.

Motion by Mrs. Cawthon

Seconded by Mrs. Pinkoson

Moved the administration's recommendation to reject all bids and authorize staff to re-evaluate the project and revise as required to accommodate budget parameters.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

STUDENT CASE
NO. 0405-02-X

The student has committed a violation of the Code of Student Conduct, namely possession of marijuana, prescribed pills, drug paraphernalia and two lighters. A hearing was held on September 23, 2004.

Motion by Mrs. Cawthon

Seconded by Mrs. Pinkoson

Moved to enter a Final Order adopting and approving the Hearing Officer's Recommended Order dated September 23, 2004, which reassigns the student to the Horizon Center at least until January 2005, the end of the first semester of the 2004-05 school year, or until such time as the staff at the Center determines that the student is ready to return to the traditional school setting.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

STUDENT CASE
NO. 0405-03-X

The student has committed a violation of the Code of Student Conduct, namely possession of cannabis with the intent to distribute. A hearing was held on September 28, 2004.

Motion by Mrs. Cawthon

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to enter a Final Order adopting and approving the Hearing Officer's Recommended Order dated September 29, 2004, which reassigns the student to the Horizon Center at least until January 2005, the end of the first semester of the 2004-05 school year, or until such time as the staff at the Center determines that the student is ready to return to the traditional school setting.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

STUDENT CASE
NO. 0405-04-X

The student has committed a violation of the Code of Student Conduct, namely using a non-weapon as a weapon to pop another student in the face. A hearing was held on September 28, 2004.

Motion by Mrs. Pinkoson

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to enter a Final Order adopting and approving the Hearing Officer's Recommended Order dated September 29, 2004, which reassigns the student to the Horizon Center as least until January 2005, the end of the first semester of the 2004-05 school year, or until such time as the staff at the Center determines that the student is ready to return to the traditional school setting.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

STUDENT CASE
NO. 04050-05-X

The student has committed a violation of the Code of Student Conduct, namely repeatedly stabbing another student in the arm with the shell of a mechanical pen or pencil. A hearing was held on September 28, 2004.

Motion by Mrs. Cawthon

Seconded by Mrs. Pinkoson

Moved to enter a Final Order adopting and approving the Hearing Officer's Recommended Order dated September 29, 2004, which reassigns the student to the Horizon Center at least until January 2005, the end of the first semester of the 2004-05 school year, or until such time as the staff at the Center determines that the student is ready to return to the traditional school setting.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

Mrs. Pinkoson expressed her appreciation to the Horizon Center and

staff for accepting these special students and providing them with extra help.

The Board expressed their appreciation to Mrs. Childs for serving as the Board's Hearing Officer and doing a great job.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Cawthon

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved to approve the Consent Agenda as described in items 1-14.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

AMENDMENT TO THE
2004-2005 SCHOOL
CALENDAR (cont'd)

Motion by Mrs. Childs

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to amend the motion to include the following days as hurricane make up days: November 11 (Veterans Day), and 24 (Wednesday before Thanksgiving) 2004, January 14 (Teacher Workday), February 21 (President's Day) and March 25 (Teacher Workday), 2005. Request that staff extend the first semester to approximately one week later in January.

The question was called on the amendment.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 4-1

Yes: Mrs. Cawthon
Mrs. Childs
Mr. Eubank
Mrs. Sharpe

No: Mrs. Pinkoson

Motion by Mrs. Childs

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved the original motion as amended.

The question was called on the original motion as amended.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 4-1

Yes: Mrs. Cawthon
Mrs. Childs
Mr. Eubank
Mrs. Sharpe

No: Mrs. Pinkoson

CITIZEN INPUT (cont'd)

There was no additional citizen input.

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
REQUESTS

There were no Board requests.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.