

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
MARCH 15, 2005

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; F. Wesley Eubank, vice-chairman; Virginia S. Childs, Eileen F. Roy and Janie S. Williams, 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 Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved to approve the minutes of Special Board Meeting and Regular Board Meeting of March 1, 2005, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Williams

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of March 15, 2005, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER/  
SUPERINTENDENT  
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Pinkoson expressed congratulations to Kayla Stump, senior, selected as one of 30 young entrepreneurs of the year by the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship, and Barbara Martin, one of 16 teachers awarded the Entrepreneurship of the Year.

Also, congratulations to the Howard Bishop MathCounts team, which took second place in state competition, and to team member Michael Banaszek, who took second place in the individual competition and will advance to the national competition in May.

Today, the School Board refunded some of its COP initiatives, saving \$960,000. The Chairman thanked the financial team on its efforts.

RECOGNITION(S)

**Governor's High School All-Star for 2005**

Ms. Megan Elizabeth Foran, Eastside High School, was presented to the Board as Alachua County's Governor's High School All-Star for 2005, which honors high school juniors throughout Florida for academic excellence, leadership and community activism.

CITIZEN INPUT

Santa Fe High School Guidance Counselor presented the Board highlights from the 2004 FCAT/School Grades for Alachua County and thanked staff and the other guidance counselors in the district that have dedicated their time and efforts to coordinate the FCAT at their respective schools.

Citizen referred to the proposed constitutional amendment, “Leave No Legislator Behind,” which would require elected legislators to take the tenth grade FCAT each year until such time they have received the score equivalent to the passing grade for tenth graders. Would like to see each member of the School Board voluntarily agree to take the tenth grade FCAT. Hope is the members will see not only the complexity of the test, but the futility of having the local budget tied to the results of such a test, and will exert pressure on the legislators requesting changes to be made.

Citizen has just learned of local black history that relates back to 1876, Hayes vs Tildon, and suggests that the county include the teaching of local history in its curriculum.

Parent noted that the NCLB act has a provision in it that allows the military recruiters access to personal information of students or districts will risk the loss of federal funding. Let parents know about this and that they have an opt-out if they sign a form or write a letter specifically request that their children’s information not be made available to military recruiters.

Parent expressed concern with being encouraged during orientation to buy school supplies in general. Also, expressed concern with current proposals that may tie some of the Board members hands and may undermine accountability and responsibility as it relates to the Sunshine Law.

SCHEDULED AGENCIES

**March of Dimes—Chain Reaction Youth Leadership Council**

Caitlan Gearan, president of the Council, expressed gratitude to the Board and all school personnel for continued support of activities sponsored by the March of Dimes.

Jane Ray, Health Education Chair, thanked the Board and district staff for sponsoring the sixteenth annual health conference, which is an educational opportunity for middle school students and a great leadership experience for the Chain Reaction members. The Chain Reaction members and advisors have been asked to participate in the development of a national health education curriculum project, which will be made available to chapters of the March of Dimes and schools throughout the nation.

Elizabeth Caudle, Walk America Chair, noted that \$108,000 was raised last year by the schools and School Board. The Board members and staff were challenged to come out for the walk and personally raise \$200 to help save babies.

PRESENTATION(S)/  
REPORT(S)

**Kanapaha Middle School Athletic Boosters**

The boosters thanked the Board and Superintendent Boyd for middle school sports and presented Dr. Boyd with a basketball signed by all the Kanapaha Middle School players to express their gratitude.

Superintendent Boyd pointed out that during 14 regular season games and two playoff games all the players displayed good sportsmanship, attitudes and values.

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

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PUBLIC HEARING—  
AMENDMENTS TO  
POLICY 2.01 AND  
POLICY 6.03

**Policy 2.01, Responsibilities and Authority of the Board**

It was clarified that Board members have absolutely no authority over employees in the district, and the superintendent works collectively for the Board members. Board members are specifically excluded by state statute, as well as Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, from directing the day-to-day operation of the district, which is the responsibility of the superintendent.

It was further clarified that the proposed policy amendment is not in any way intended to prevent access to information by Board members.

The ACEA president expressed concern with negative publicity and feels that the policy could be amended to make it clear the superintendent is in charge of directing staff, and at the same time avoid conflict. Consensus of the Board is not needed for a request of information. Working together takes effort. Too many rules can cause problems. Reconsider this amendment and find common ground.

Former chairman of the district School Advisory Council recommended changes to the text of the policy. Item (4) (j) – proposed the first paragraph be shortened to read, “Recognize the Superintendent’s statutory power and duty to direct the work of staff.” And in subparagraph (4)(i) and (j) following “individual Board members,” add the language “have the right to” and continue as is.

Teacher urged the Board to take more time to see if this change is in the best interest of the school and the children. Look into the sudden need for a change of practice.

Mr. Eubank, referring to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools, Standard 2, noted that in fulfillment of this standard school boards should do three things: (1) Adopt policy and procedures that provide for effective operation of the school; (2) recognize and preserve the executive administrative and leadership prerogatives of the administrative head of the school; and (3) permit the administrative team of the school to implement policies and procedures without interference. The Board must allow the administration to make these decisions without any hindrance from Board members. He would like consideration of this to be included in this particular policy by reference or as an authority.

Mrs. Roy objects to the second paragraph of (4)(j). She feels there is no need for this language, once the Board has agreed that the superintendent has the statutory power to direct the work of staff and all project requests are referred to the superintendent, and the Board members are given their constitutional rights to request information with the superintendent's approval.

Mrs. Childs noted that comments made at the last Board meeting during discussion are to be incorporated in the consideration of the policy.

Mrs. Childs also noted her understanding of the Sunshine Law is that this Board can do nothing in private that will make a decision about how this school district operates. The law also states that any mail received or sent to Board members is open for scrutiny by the public. The Sunshine law does not prohibit one from asking for records or looking at records within the organization. This Board has very few legal duties—the main one is to select a superintendent, another is setting the budget and establishing policy.

She stated that requests for information can be made at Board meetings. There is the perception by staff that there has been Board member interference in the operation of a school/department. Until that perception goes away, the Board will have to deal with it. She does not want to be the cause of anyone being concerned about accreditation, but even beyond that, she does not want a Board member to interfere with the operation of the school and then turn around and expect the Board to hold Dr. Boyd accountable. The Board is going to judge him on his performance as he carries out the mission of this district and the goals of this Board.

No one is being restricted by this policy. It will establish a structure through which the requests should flow so that they can be put into the

timely work process. She doesn't like the negative image and wants the members to work as a team in a way that gets things accomplished. Board members are policy makers, the oversight committee, not the day-to-day operation.

Mrs. Williams stated that she concurred with most of Mrs. Childs' comments. She agrees with the first paragraph of (4)(j), but feels the second paragraph is nebulous. We are adults and understand the first part and can follow direction, knowing that the superintendent has the power to direct staff and requests will be referred to the superintendent.

Board discussion continued on the language requiring consensus of the Board to request documents or information that would require significant staff time or cost.

The attorneys noted, in their opinions, the revised language does not violate any part of the Sunshine Law.

Chairman Pinkoson stated, in review of policies of other districts, it is obvious other districts are experiencing the same problems. She thinks this occurs when board members are not aware of what their duties, responsibilities and limitations are. All through those policies, she found the words – the role of the school board as with any legislative body is to act collectively and not individually, etc.; all personnel of the school district are responsible through the superintendent to the School Board as an entity and not to individual school board members.

She stated that this policy does not limit board members from going to Dr. Boyd with requests or taking concerns to have them fulfilled. It provides for funneling any request through him to keep him abreast of what is going on in this district.

She understands the need to put in place policy for when new board members come in they will know what their responsibilities are and the process. When there are differences of opinions among Board members, it does not mean you cannot work together as a board. It only means a board member is concerned about doing what is best for each and every child in this district and for being fair. We are here to work together as a team, as professionals. She believes in setting this policy, it will provide answers for future Board members that come in and may not know the protocol to use.

**Policy 6.03, Employment of Personnel**

It was noted that the policy amendment submitted during the first reading is being withdrawn.

The superintendent noted that an amendment to Policy 6.03 would be coming back as a first reading at the April 19 Board meeting to consider extending the DROP period beyond the current 60 months for instructional personnel.

SCHEMATIC DESIGN  
DOCUMENTS FOR  
PROJECT SBAC A0332—  
2004 ELEMENTARY  
CLASSROOM  
ADDITIONS

Schematic design documents were presented for classroom additions for Lawton Chiles, C. W. Norton, Hidden Oak, W. S. Talbot and Kimball Wiles Elementary Schools. The project is expected to be completed by mid January or early February 2006, at an estimated cost of \$8,348,109 for an additional 1,056 student stations.

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved to approve the Schematic Design documents for Project SBAC A0332--2004 Elementary Classroom Additions as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Williams

Moved to approve the Consent Agenda as described in items 1-9. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

The chairman commented that the FSBA dues are hefty and would like to be sure the Board is getting its money's worth by attending conferences and utilizing their services.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CITIZEN INPUT (cont'd)

There was no additional citizen input.

BOARD MEMBER/  
SUPERINTENDENT  
REQUESTS

Mrs. Childs announced that a teacher was in serious need of blood transfusions for a liver transplant and donations would be appreciated.

Chairman Pinkoson announced a budget work group meeting, to which Board members are invited, is scheduled in the finance office at 9 a.m., March 17, 2005.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.