

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
October 4, 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; Sandy Hollinger, deputy superintendent; and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board. Superintendent W. Daniel Boyd, Jr., was absent.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pinkoson, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by the Color Guard from the Eastside High School NJROTC.

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Williams

Moved to approve the minutes of September 20, 2005, as presented.

Mrs. Roy requested that Gunnar Paulson's comments concerning amendments to Policy 6.164, Employment of Substitutes, Temporary, and Part-time, be included in the September 20 minutes.

The question was called on the minutes as amended.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of October 4, 2005, as presented.

The Chairman noted that a replacement for page 4 of Attachment A, Employment of Personnel, had been provided to Board members. This revision was to obtain Board approval for an out-of-field assignment prior to the beginning of the October FTE reporting period.

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

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Roy spoke highly of Challenge Days and provided information to Board members. She thanked KISS 105 and the ACEA for their sponsorship of "Teachers Night Out." Mrs. Roy also applauded a collaborative Head Start program, Marvelous Explorations through Science and Stories (MESS), that introduces Head Start children to the Florida Museum of Natural History and the District Library.

Mrs. Williams commended Ft. Clarke Middle School on the attendance of 97 families at a recent school program and High Springs Community School on their "Coming to America" program, wherein students reenacted events at Ellis Island.

Chairman Pinkoson announced that this is the last Board meeting for Staff Attorney Jim Robinson, who is leaving to take a position in Pinellas County. She also announced the names of the district's National Merit Scholars, a record number this year. The Chair then extended sympathy to Metcalfe principal Felicia Moss, whose father recently passed away.

CITIZEN INPUT

There was no citizen input.

SCHEDULED AGENCIES

CONSERVATION
PROPERTY TAX
PROGRAM

Alachua County Commissioner Mike Byerly addressed the Board, detailing a proposed Conservation Property Tax Program, which would provide a tax incentive for owners of undeveloped property to manage their land for conservation purposes, as an alternative to agriculture or development. Board member and staff comments included concerns regarding payment method, roll-back rate, and tax structure impact. Since the School Board's tax structure differs from that of other local taxing entities, investigation into the potential impact is required.

It was clarified that property with a conservation assessment could later be sold for development.

Commissioner Byerly stated that the County Commission may include the Conservation Property Tax Program as a legislative priority, since the easiest way to accomplish the initiative would be for the state to create a conservation assessment similar to the agriculture assessment. Chairman Pink son suggested the possibility of the issue also being placed on the School Board's list of legislative priorities.

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

AMENDMENTS TO
POLICY 6.164,
EMPLOYMENT OF
SUBSTITUTES,
TEMPORARY, AND
PART-TIME
INSTRUCTIONAL
STAFF

Dr. Joan Longstreth, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, explained that changes are being proposed for Policy 6.164, Employment of Substitutes, Temporary, and Part-Time Instructional Staff, to comply with changes in the law that require a reference to substitutes participating in training that includes classroom skills and instructional strategies. While working with that, it was also reconciled with NEOLA policies.

Dr. Gunnar Paulson, president, ACEA, spoke in favor of reconsidering the removal of item 5, which specifies compensation for long-term substitutes. Mr. Eubank and Mrs. Roy agreed.

Mr. Eubank pointed out that the number of days considered as long-term should be clarified as to consecutive or classroom days.

Mrs. Child's pointed out two items where formatting adjustments should be made. She suggested that the compensation information from item 5 be placed under the Long-Term Substitute Teachers section, just prior to the last sentence.

Along with Mrs. Williams and the Chairman, Mrs. Childs favored reducing the vacancy days from 35 to 30 for hiring a long-term substitute. The Chairman noted that a statement concerning the compensation of regular substitute teachers should also be included.

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

SPECIAL PROGRAMS
AND PROCEDURES FOR
EXCEPTIONAL
STUDENTS DOCUMENT
FOR 2004-2005
THROUGH 2006-2007

The State Department of Education prepared a procedures document to reflect the statutory and rule changes governing the provision of services for exceptional students that were effective last fall. Rule 6a-6.03411, FAC, requires that districts adopt this document in order to receive state and federal funding for specially designed instruction and related services.

FIRST READING

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved to approve the administration's recommendation to schedule a public hearing for 6:30 p.m. on October 18, 2005, to consider the Special Programs and Procedures for Exceptional Students Document 2004-2005 through 2006-2007.

Mrs. Childs expressed appreciation to the ESE Department for preparing this document, a difficult task but one that is required to remain in compliance.

Mrs. Jan Benet, ESE Supervisor, and Mrs. Kathy Black, ESE Executive Director, responded to questions from Mrs. Roy related to high-school gifted, appropriate placement, and testing for auditory processing problems.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CONSENT AGENDA

The administration recommends approval of the Consent agenda as described in items 1-16.

Motion by Mrs. Childs

Seconded by Mrs. Roy

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CITIZEN INPUT

There was no citizen input.

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
REQUESTS

Mr. Eubank read from recent newspaper editorials which disparaged the school system and teachers concerning racism. A more optimistic one was written by a teacher and based on classroom knowledge and experience. While he feels that the writers of the negative editorials have good intentions, Mr. Eubank believes that the Board should provide the necessary facts and opportunity for classroom experience for well-informed articles to be written. To that end, he recommended that the Superintendent consider establishing a mini-internship, whereby any interested citizen might spend three or more days in a classroom and meet privately with an assigned teacher. A briefing by staff and/or a Board member on the state of the district would take place prior to the internship, so questions can be answered.

Mr. Eubank also expressed concern about a school that may fall below the 35% free and reduced lunch level required to be served by Title I. Mrs. Childs suggested that a possible solution would be writing the Title I plan to include a percentage or a specific number of students.

Because of budget ramifications to fuel cost increases, Mr. Eubank made the following requests:

- Examine existing bus routes and busing policies to ensure buses are being used most efficiently.
- Examine use of buses for purposes other than transporting students to and from school.
- Examine mileage charges to be sure reimbursements are adequate.
- Seek cost effective alternative fuels.
- Examine the maintenance department to ensure vehicles are being used effectively, e.g., employees are not driving to the same job in separate vehicles.
- Attempt to cut down on use of electricity.
- Obtain board approval prior to upgrading any positions.
- Require that the superintendent personally sign off on filling non-school-based positions, and show justification. Periodically provide the Board with a listing of unfilled positions.

Mr. Eubank thanked staff for providing technology support staffing information. He clarified a report statistic, stating that the increase shown was not actually in staffing, but was due to the combining of administrative and instructional support into one group. He stated that no field support personnel have been added in the last five years and feels that this area should be considered an exception to the concern of

upgrading and filling positions.

Mr. Eubank reported that the County is soon going to an online agenda and he hopes if this suggestion comes before the School Board, it will be viewed favorably.

Regarding the current project of NEOLA rewriting policies, Mr. Eubank believes the Board needs to more actively participate in policy development and favors delaying the NEOLA process to allow for Board input.

At a question from Mrs. Roy, Staff Attorney Jim Robinson reviewed the background of hiring NEOLA and stated that resulting policy modifications have always been intended for Board review and input.

Mr. Eubank expressed concern that extensive changes may be required because the Board's philosophical views were not sought prior to NEOLA rewrites. That could equate to significant additional expense. He did not feel that a series of workshops with NEOLA would be a satisfactory way to deal with the situation.

Mrs. Roy felt that the original "wholesale" purchase of the Policy manual is one reason for policies not being more suitably tailored to SBAC needs. She commented that many districts include procedures in their policy manuals, while SBAC does not. Mrs. Roy also requested a discussion of policies and procedures relating to the disbursement and allocation of AP and IB state funds. The Chairman responded that this subject could be included in the policy workshop process.

Mrs. Williams has been told that vehicles used for drivers' education are now allocated to other uses, but are not in proper condition. Chairman Pinkoson suggested the matter be referred to Dr. Boyd.

Mr. Eubank will be out of town on October 11, and requested that the informal Board meeting be rescheduled. It was decided to hold it on Monday, October 17, at 9 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mrs. Williams

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to adjourn the meeting.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.