

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
June 15, 1999

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: Bill Cake, chairman; Barbara Sharpe, vice-chairman; Judy Brashear, Bev Carroll, and Chester Leathers, members; Lawrence L. Marazza, superintendent; and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board.

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

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved to approve the minutes of June 1, 1999, as presented.

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

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of June 15, 1999, as presented.

Add to Action Item B.1.d., the following Students Cases: (3) Student Case No. 99-39-X; and (4) Student Case No. 99-40-X.

Add as Action Item B.1.f., Discuss July 20, 1999, Board meeting.

Delete the following: Action Items B.1.c., Charter Contract with the Alachua Learning Center, Inc.; e., Annual Evaluation of Superintendent; and Consent Agenda Item C. 3., Federal Grant Application for The Alachua Learning Center, Inc., Charter School.

The question was called on the agenda as amended.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER
ANNOUNCEMENTS/
DISCUSSION

Mrs. Brashear made the following announcements:

- Commended everyone involved in the Leadership Academy
- Commended the recent graduates on their participation during in the graduation ceremonies.
- Requested staff evaluate the high school summer school experience and present recommendations to the Board at the beginning of the school year.
- Staff present a new system of filing and storing school board documents and correspondence in a timely manner.

Dr. Leathers congratulated the new graduates and also commended the Leadership Academy graduates.

Mrs. Carroll commended the businesses involved with Project Graduation. She also thanked the Alachua County Sheriff's Office for coordinating the safety patrol trip to Washington, D.C., and Ron Cunningham's for his day-to-day articles on their visit.

Mrs. Sharpe also requested staff examine the current system of filing school board documents to ensure that the system is operating correctly.

Chairman Cake attended the Leadership Academy graduation and commended the participants.

The Board recognized Dr. Dan Boyd, assistant superintendent, Instruction, for his many years of dedicated service and commitment to the students of the Alachua County School system.

CITIZEN INPUT

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

- A citizen provided statistics on the Behavioral Resource Teacher program and urged the Board to schedule a workshop and re-examine the effectiveness of this program.
- A former Board member also requested the Board re-examine the purpose of the Behavioral Resource Teacher program and address the need to reduce the number of student referrals and number of students being expelled.

The Board discussed the need to re-evaluate the Behavioral Resource Teacher program through the strategic planning process and Code of Student Conduct.

- The president of the Alachua County Education Association urged the Board to measure the effectiveness of the Behavioral Resource Program and suggested a survey.
- The Chairman of the Alachua Learning Center, Inc., thanked the Board for their efforts during the recent mediation process.
- A citizen urged the Board to take corrective steps to deal with the lack of leadership at the principal level.

Superintendent Marazza thanked Dr. Boyd for his assistance and

congratulated him on his upcoming retirement.

APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATORS

Superintendent Marazza presented recommendations of administrative appointments for existing district staff vacancies and reviewed the phases of the district’s reorganization.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Brashear

Moved the superintendent’s recommendation to appoint Ms. Faye S. Cake, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources and Development Services; Virginia S. Childs, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Curriculum; Dr. William Cliett, Director, Human Resources (Personnel and Employee Relations); and Ms. Sandra Hollinger, Director, Human Resources Development, effective July 1, 1999.

Superintendent Marazza informed the Board that three of the new appointments create vacancies at J. J. Finley Elementary, Westwood Middle and Gainesville High schools. Site visits will be scheduled to receive input from teachers, parents and community members to provide the best possible match for these schools.

Mr. John Dukes, assistant superintendent, Student Support Services, announced the following times and dates of the site visits:

J. J. Finley Elementary School – Tuesday, June 22, 1999
Employees – 5:00 p.m.
Parents/Community – 7:00 p.m.

Westwood Middle School – Wednesday, June 23, 1999
Employees – 1:00 p.m.
Parents/Community – 7:00 p.m.

Gainesville High School – Thursday, June 24, 1999
Employees – 5:00 p.m.
Parents/Community – 7:00 p.m.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

REVISIONS TO THE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT—FIRST READING

Ms. Kathy Black, director, Student Support Services, reviewed the revisions to the Code of Student Conduct, which are recommended by the discipline committee and provide clarification or specific information to parents and students:

The following changes have been made to the Elementary Code:

1. Include language relating to Board policy, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.

2. Include electronic pagers and telephones to the Misbehaviors and Consequences Chart.
3. Under Prohibition of Weapons provided examples of other weapons and added laser pointers.
4. Clarified Individual Education Planning.
5. Added information on examples of other weapons under Glossary.

The following changes have been made to the Secondary Code:

1. Include amended language under Attendance.
2. Include language relating to Board policy, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.
3. Include electronic pagers and telephones to the Misbehaviors and Consequences Chart.
4. Under Prohibition of Weapons provided examples of other weapons and added laser pointers.
5. Clarified Individual Education Planning.
6. Added information on examples of other weapons under Glossary

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Mrs. Brashear

Moved to schedule a public hearing 7:30 p.m., July 6, 1999, to consider revisions to the Code of Student Conduct.

Mrs. Brashear requested the survey comments on the Behavioral Resource Teacher program from the Discipline Committee.

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

STUDENT CASE
NO. 99-27-X

Mr. Tom Wittmer, staff attorney, reported that the student was charged with defiance, disorderly conduct and battery on school personnel. A request for a hearing has been withdrawn.

Motion by Mrs. Carroll Seconded by Mrs. Brashear

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to expel the student through June 4, 1999.

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

STUDENT CASE
NO. 99-38-X

Mr. Wittmer reported that the student was charged with threatening a teacher.

Motion by Dr. Leathers Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to expel the student through the first semester of the 1999-2000 school year.

STUDENT CASE
NO. 99-39-X

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

Mr. Tom Wittmer, staff attorney, reported that the student was charged with fighting and battery on school personnel.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to extend the student's suspension through July 6, 1999.

STUDENT CASE
NO. 99-40-X

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

Mr. Tom Wittmer, staff attorney, reported that the student was charged with fighting and battery on school personnel.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to extend the student's suspension through July 6, 1999.

CANCEL BOARD
MEETING

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

Mrs. Carroll requested information on school bus referrals and whether or not the student has been dealt with within the school day.

Motion by Mrs. Carroll Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to cancel the July 20, 1999, School Board meeting.

Mrs. Brashear noted that she will be out of town for the August 3 Board meeting, but will electronically participate.

PRESENTATION—
VOCATIONAL AND
APPLIED TECHNOLOGY
EDUCATION

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

Dr. Dave Edwards, director, Vocational Education, and his staff provided an extensive overview of the career/technical education programs available in Alachua County.

Mrs. Carroll suggested a Career Exploration program to allow middle school students to shadow employees in the construction industry at a work site.

The Board commended staff for their efforts.

SCHEDULED
AGENCIES—ALACHUA
COUNTY SHERIFF'S
OFFICE

Sheriff Steve Oelrich addressed the Board on the School Resource Officer Program and provided an overall history of the program. He requested the Board assist in the financial funding of this program, which provides a secure environment for students in addition to

providing role models and mentors.

He reported that currently there are 13 deputies assigned to 14 schools, with two additional deputies assigned to the Deputy Friendly Program. The Board currently contributes \$291,000 to the program, which costs 1.3 million dollars. He made the following requests:

- School Board become a 50/50 (\$650,000) partner with the Sheriff’s Office to continue funding this effective program.
- An additional deputy at Buchholz High School due to enrollment.
- An additional deputy for Spring Hill and Mebane Middle schools.
- An additional Deputy Friendly.

Mrs. Brashear requested, prior to the Budget workshop, an analysis and information on the new categorical funding and if these monies could be used for school safety.

RESCHEDULE BUDGET WORKSHOP

Motion by Mrs. Carroll

Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved to reschedule the Budget workshop from Thursday, July 8, 1999, to 9 a.m., Tuesday, July 6, 1999.

Mrs. Sharpe requested that the TRIM Calendar dates be specifically scheduled with the Board.

Mrs. Carroll requested the traditional work sheet be provided to Board members prior to the workshop.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Carroll

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to approve the Consent Agenda as described in items 1-2, with the deletion of item 3. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

DISCUSSION ITEM— SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Mrs. Sharpe reported that in February 1995 she initiated uniform programs at Prairie View Elementary and Kanapaha Middle schools. The voluntary programs failed and she recommends the Board implement a mandatory school uniform program districtwide. She provided copies of Polk County’s mandatory school uniform policy, which includes an option to not participate, based on religion and reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of wearing school uniforms. She stated that in 1995 she received several letters of support from community leaders and the legislative delegation. She felt it important to review the issue of school uniforms once again to provide a safe

environment for students.

She requested the Superintendent and staff review Polk county's policy and uniform surveys from Prairie View and provide recommendations to the Board.

Dr. Leathers voiced his support based on socio-economic reasons.

Mrs. Carroll stated that school uniforms will return culture and dignity back to the classroom and will also help lower income students. She recommended the Board begin a serious discussion with principals and parents on this issue.

Mrs. Brashear stated that she cannot support voting for a mandatory school uniform policy from the Board level in advance of strategic planning or for the upcoming school year, but would like to hear from the community. She noted that if there are exceptions to a uniform policy staff cannot enforce it and would add additional requirements to school staff, principals and disciplinary teams to deal with and she does not want the School Board to mandate uniforms.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that there is community support and a survey would indicate the support necessary to implement a mandatory uniform program. She requested Superintendent Marazza to place this item on the agenda for a vote and direct staff to do whatever it takes to get it to the community.

Superintendent Marazza stated that he does not have any direct experience with uniforms, but noted that a public school setting implies freedom of choice to a certain extent, but the subject of book bags, clear backpacks and the issue of safety and security is part of school uniforms. He will review Polk county's policy, conduct research and get input from the community and report back to the Board.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that she does not expect the Board to adopt Polk county's policy, but would like for staff to review their policy and tailor it for Alachua County and involve the community and conduct surveys.

Chairman Cake stated he is not ready to mandate uniforms unless a choice is available for students to attend another school where uniforms are not mandated. He expressed his support of school-based initiatives and voluntary uniform programs, or the need to address book bags and lockers, which are not addressed with the uniform policy, but may be bigger problems than the dress code. He noted that he will fully support a mandated school uniform policy if the Board were to vote to support it.

Mrs. Carroll stated that the Board has mandated in the past such items

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as higher academic standards and dress code because it benefits the academic achievement of students and suggested addressing items of concern through the strategic planning process.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that she feels very strongly about mandating uniforms for the safety of students.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 p.m.