

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
July 6, 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 Mrs. Carroll

Moved to approve the minutes of June 15, 1999, as presented.

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

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Dr. Leathers Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of July 6, 1999, as presented.

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

BOARD MEMBER
ANNOUNCEMENTS/
DISCUSSION

Mrs. Brashear requested Superintendent Marazza and staff provide an explanation to the public via *The Gainesville Sun* related to the Governor's new A+ Plan and grading system for schools and its impact on the Alachua County school system.

The Board and Superintendent Marazza extended their condolences to Chairman Cake on the recent loss of his father and presented a donation in his memory.

Dr. Leathers requested Superintendent Marazza and staff carefully review the Governor's A+ Plan during the upcoming year.

Mrs. Carroll referred to the school grading system and requested principals prepare and present an Action Plan to the Board to move their schools to the next grade level.

Mrs. Sharpe referred to Project PASS (Parents and Students Succeeding) the new initiative, which will address six of the nine "D" schools.

The Board discussed the impact of the A+ Plan on school improvement plans.

GAINESVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT—MOCK SCHOOL VIOLENCE DRILL

Interim Police Chief Daryl Johnston informed the School Board of upcoming mock school violence drills to be held at Buchholz and Gainesville High schools on Tuesday, August 17. The drills will assist law enforcement officials and school personnel to be prepared for any volatile issues that may occur on campuses in the near future.

The Board thanked Chief Johnston for his cooperation and commitment.

CITIZEN INPUT

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

- A citizen provided information on possible funding sources for the school resource officer program.
- A citizen expressed his feelings that the Behavioral Resource Teacher program is a failure and urged the Board to identify schools with ineffective principals and replace them.

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

REVISIONS TO THE 1999-2000 CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

There was no public comment.

Mrs. Carroll made the following suggestions:

- Move toward solid consequences for students for their actions.
- Connect the fonehome system to dean referrals in order to alert parents of the first sign of trouble.
- Teach students to have remorse when an employee is injured and add an additional penalty or punishment.
- Communicate with parents before misbehavior escalates.

Mrs. Brashear referred to the Secondary Code section which prohibits electronic items, and suggested additional clarification that cell phones left in a student's car on campus should not be prohibited.

Mrs. Sharpe stated she is opposed to expelling students and suggested a site on campus be designated to deal with these students rather than expelling them to the streets.

Dr. Leathers urged the Board to keep students involved in the academic process.

Mrs. Carroll requested a future discussion on the in-school and out-of-school suspension issue and the need for students to spend their time in

a productive way, i.e., cleaning the campus, etc.

Dr. Leathers felt there was a need to focus more on prevention and identifying problem students as early as possible.

A citizen urged the Board to include students in the decision-making process beginning at the elementary level by discussing prevention and problem-solving techniques.

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

PRESENTATION—
LEADERSHIP
ACADEMY

The first inaugural Leadership Academy participants presented an overview of their experiences with the Leadership Academy along with their project presentations, which included: Project Involvement, Staff Development and the Superintendent’s Ball for Education.

REPORTS—UPDATE
ON BEHAVIORAL
RESOURCE TEACHER
PROGRAM

Ms. Kathy Black, director, Student and Community Services, provided the Board with information on the Behavioral Resource Teacher (BRT) program and reported that the Discipline Committee once again recommends continuation of the BRT program for the 1999-2000 school year. The recommendation was the number one priority at the elementary level and ranked as one of the top priorities by the entire Discipline Committee. The ranking was attributed to the functions of the BRT within the school community, which contributes to a safe and orderly school environment.

EVALUATION OF
SUMMER SCHOOL

Ms. Ginger Childs, assistant superintendent, Instructional Curriculum, presented preliminary information and the process for evaluating the summer high school session. The preliminary information indicates that fewer students were enrolled this year as compared to last year; however, it does not indicate whether it was due to the 20-day program being reduced to a 15-day program. A group of principals will be meeting to help design a plan that will be the best for next year. She informed the Board that a plan must be submitted to the Department of Education, which states that the district intends to offer supplemental academic instruction next year. Additional information will be provided to the Board on the plan and additional data will be provided based on the results of the grades.

Mrs. Brashear suggested that in planning for next year School Advisory Councils become involved by beginning discussion on the opportunities available and the possibility of offering a variety of additional enrichment courses for students at different locations throughout the county and charging students.

Mrs. Carroll suggested reviewing the feedback from incoming Algebra students and also urged the Board to consider socio-economic students

in order to provide the same opportunities for all students.

APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATORS—
RAWLINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Motion by Mrs. Brashear

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the superintendent’s recommendation to appoint Mr. Vicente Perez as principal of Rawlings Elementary School, effective July 7, 1999.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

J. J. FINLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the superintendent’s recommendation to appoint Ms. Donna Jones as principal of J. J. Finley Elementary School, effective July 7, 1999.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

WESTWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved the superintendent’s recommendation to appoint Mr. James TenBieg as principal of Westwood Middle School, effective July 7, 1999.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

GAINESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the superintendent’s recommendation to appoint Dr. Charles Hall principal of Gainesville High School, effective July 7, 1999.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

The Board was informed that a site visit is scheduled for Fort Clarke Middle School on Monday, July 12, 1999—one session is scheduled at 1:30 p.m. for employees and one at 6 p.m. for parents.

Mrs. Carroll requested a fonehome to all parents of new incoming sixth graders.

NEW/REVISED JOB DESCRIPTIONS—FIRST READING

Ms. Faye Cake, assistant superintendent, Human Resources, reported that the job descriptions are needed to support Superintendent Marazza’s reorganization plan. The job descriptions reflect the deployment of duties for eight existing positions and five new positions. The job descriptions are as follows:

- Secretary to Superintendent in Charge of Board Relations and

Governance

- Secretary to Superintendent in Charge of Administrative Relations
- Supervisor, Community Involvement
- Coordinator of Communications
- Director, Grants Procurement/Project Fund Management
- Director, Safety, Risk Management, & Employee Benefits
- Director, Business Services and Budgeting
- Director, Financial Services
- District Security Chief
- Director, State Standards Compliance & Charter Schools
- Director, Elementary Curriculum and Cluster Schools
- Director, Secondary Curriculum and Strategic Planning
- Human Resources & Development Services Specialist

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to approve the proposed new/revised job descriptions for advertising as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

STUDENT CASE
NO. 99-39-X

Mr. Tom Wittmer, staff attorney, reported that the student is charged with fighting with another student and battery on school personnel. The parents did not request a hearing.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Brashear

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

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

STUDENT CASE
NO. 99-40-X

Mr. Wittmer stated that this student case has been deleted and does not require Board action.

CHARTER CONTRACT
WITH THE ALACHUA
LEARNING CENTER,
INC.

Chairman Cake provided the following background information on the Charter Contract with the Alachua Learning Center, Inc.:

March 2, 1999 – The Board approved (5-0) the Alachua Learning Center, Inc., Contract in concept.

May 18, 1999 – The Board defeated a motion (4 to 1) to approve the contract for the Alachua Learning Center, Inc., as recommended by the Superintendent.

June 3, 1999 – The Board participated in a mediation hearing, held by an outside mediator, and by a 3-2 vote agreed to proceed with approval of the contract and agreed to place on a future Board agenda for official

approval.

June 15, 1999 – Prior to the Board meeting there were some last-minute significant changes in what was agreed to at the mediation session. The chairman pulled this item from the agenda pending a meeting of the Board attorney and the Alachua Learning Center attorney.

July 6, 1999 – Board Attorney Lang has reviewed those changes in the contract, which were made since the mediation session. Mr. Cake reminded the Board that Superintendent Marazza's recommendation is for the Board to approve the contract with The Alachua Learning Center, Inc., as presented.

Board Attorney Lang informed the Board that he and Mr. Wittmer have reviewed the contract and have collaborated with Mr. Coffey, attorney for the charter school, and have come to an agreement. The proposed new Article IX, which would be added to the Charter contract is what was discussed and agreed upon at the mediation session.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Dr. Leathers

Moved the superintendent's recommendation that the charter contract with the Alachua Learning Center, Inc., be approved as presented.

Mrs. Brashear stated she will continue to vote against this proposal for the reasons she has stated in the past:

- It is a mistake to allow a charter school to exist on a private communal living facility.
- There is a fence around the property and there is a private housing commune on this property.
- Additional language was added to the contract following the mediation hearing by the Alachua Learning Center, Inc.

She noted that the DOE has agreed to assist the district with an official monitoring team and the Alachua Learning Center, Inc., has agreed to the monitoring.

She requested Board Attorney Lang follow-up with a letter to the DOE with a copy of the charter contract and request they inform the Board of the monitoring process on a regular basis.

Dr. Leathers referred to Florida Statutes 228.05688 relating to no religious services during school hours. He pointed out that during the mediation session the leadership of the Alachua Learning Center Inc., agreed to ten statements of accommodations or negotiated amendments,

and in the best interest of the school system he has no reason to deny the contract and has no reason not to support it.

Mrs. Carroll stated she will vote against approval of the contract as she did during mediation. She pointed out several concerns, which were discussed during the mediation session and that were included in the contract:

- Provisions there would be no religious symbols in the school during the school day.
- Measurement of goals FCAT could not cover.
- Relationship between the Charter and the private school would be defined (no members of the board of directors of the private school would serve on the charter).
- Facilities or assets of the private school could not be used for any of its operations.
- Agreed to change the entry road.
- Monitoring has been discussed.
- Sponsor agrees that it is not a conversion of an existing private or public school to a charter school.
- Many of the students are coming from the same value systems or the teachers come from the same value systems and common sense dictates that parents would like their children to attend a free charter school as opposed to a private school and eventually the private school will close.

She feels the mediation hearing provided for an understanding and made the contract stronger, but she still has an issue with the charter schools being next door to a private school with similar grade levels.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that it is her duty to vote according to the intent of the law and how the law is stated. If there is a weakness in the contract, then it is up to the Florida Legislature and the Department of Education to get it straightened out. She believes that the contract presented to the Board and that has been approved by both attorneys is a certificate of assurance that the charter will be operated as nonsectarian. If that is not the case, then whoever is responsible for monitoring this charter can provide the Board with a report and according to the law the charter school will have to close down. She stated she is voting for this charter in good faith and will vote yes for the charter.

Chairman Cake stated that even though he originally voted against this charter his concerns were all addressed during the mediation hearing, and there is language that requires The Alachua Learning Center, Inc., to abide by the requirements of the contract.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 3-2

Yes: Mr. Cake

Dr. Leathers
Mrs. Sharpe
No: Mrs. Brashear
Mrs. Carroll

PERFORMANCE
EVALUATION/PAY FOR
THE SUPERINTENDENT

Chairman Cake reviewed the process and stated that last year the Board negotiated a contract with Superintendent Marazza, which allowed up to a \$30,000 performance pay package. This spring, after a lengthy workshop, the Board agreed to a simplified evaluation form, which included four main categories and agreed on a three-step rating system, which included: Not meeting expectations, Meets Expectations, or Exceeds Expectations.

The Board agreed that each Board member would recommend performance pay when Superintendent Marazza was rated as Exceeding Expectations in any particular area of their evaluation. Lastly, Superintendent Marazza and the Chairman would come to an agreement for performance pay after reviewing each member's recommendation.

Mr. Cake stated he worked under the assumption that each evaluation was personal and was shared with the superintendent prior to presenting the chairman with a copy. Working with each of the Board's performance pay recommendations, which appeared on the second page of the evaluations, the superintendent and Chairman arrived at the following conclusions:

1. A Board majority recommends performance pay.
2. One member recommends \$20,000
3. One member recommends \$10,000-\$15,000 range
4. One member recommends \$10,000-\$15,000 range, but for annuity purposes (did not agree with performance pay philosophy). The Chairman discussed this issue with the Board member and asked for agreement on this being used for performance pay, and the Board member agreed.
5. Two Board members rated the Superintendent as Meeting Expectations but did not recommend performance pay at this time.

Mr. Cake stated that using the top end of the \$10,000-\$15,000 range (which two Board members recommended), it was agreed to the \$15,000 rather than split for a \$10,000 performance pay average.

Mr. Cake informed Board members that they could either approve the \$10,000 performance pay or approve any amount of performance pay up to \$30,000.

Mr. Cake stated that he felt it would be appropriate to open contract talks and if there were a pay increase, it would be retroactive to the first of July pending successful teacher negotiations, to which the contract is

tied.

Motion by Mrs. Brashear

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to approve a \$10,000 performance pay for the first year and request the Chairman to prepare for upcoming contract discussions as required by the contract.

Dr. Leathers stated that when he was first elected he did not agree to incentive pay and the reason was that unless all staff can participate in incentive pay he did not want to see the Superintendent be the only one to receive it. He noted that in order to evaluate the Superintendent, he agreed to make his recommendation in terms of an annuity in the package. He feels Dr. Marazza is moving the system to the next level and has demonstrated effective leadership.

Mrs. Brashear provided a summary of the new initiatives Superintendent Marazza is implementing, such as the Leadership Academy; a proposal endorsed by the DOE to become a regional Microsoft Training Center; an endorsement from UF President John Lombardi to become a site-based teacher intern training center; and management reorganization after only ten months.

Mrs. Carroll noted that the issue of performance pay will be an issue in the year 2002 legislature for all administrators. She reviewed her evaluation of the superintendent and noted other programs initiated such as Project PASS, a program to increase student achievement and improve parental involvement in several elementary schools; and the Alachua County Education Business Alliance, an alliance that opens new doors for partnerships with the business community.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that the overall evaluation of the Superintendent is unfair after only 10 months on the job. She believes he is working hard to take a great school district to an even higher level of excellence, and, hopefully, it will result in even higher academic achievement for all students, strong recruitment of all minority groups and increased morale within all departments by enhanced positive responses and communication to all employees. She noted that at the present time the Superintendent has plans for a number of wonderful initiatives, including strategic planning, but pointed out that evaluations are based on measurable significant accomplishments and identifiable results and not on initiatives. She believes that those accomplishments will be significant and that an evaluation of him at this time is unfair, but believes as time progresses and the results of his initiatives prove successful and significant she could then possibly be able to justify a pay increase of some kind.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 4-1

Yes: Mrs. Brashear

Mr. Cake

Mrs. Carroll

Dr. Leathers

No: Mrs. Sharpe

MASTER PLAN
PRESENTATION FOR
PROJECT SBAC CA734—
EASTSIDE HIGH
SCHOOL

Motion by Mrs. Brashear

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to approve the master plan prepared by Karl Thorne Associates, Inc. Gainesville, Florida, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to approve the consent agenda as described in items 1.-30. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

INFORMATION ITEM—
SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Ms. Childs informed the Board that she has distributed surveys to principals for use by their School Advisory Councils (SAC) relating to the use of school uniforms and has requested that each SAC study and survey their parent groups and return the surveys to the curriculum division. She will report back to the Board at a later date on the outcome of the SAC surveys.

The Alachua County Council of PTAs informed the Board that the state and national PTA support the use of school uniforms and offered their assistance and will work to distribute information.

Mrs. Carroll announced she will not be present at the July 29 Board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.