



Duval County Public Schools

February 18, 2014 - Committee Meeting - Board Workshop - Board Audit Committee

Ms. Becki Couch, Chairman
Ms. Cheryl Grymes, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Jason Fischer
Dr. Constance S. Hall
Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez
Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee
Mr. Ms. Paula D. Wright
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: All Board Members were present, with the exception of Mr. Jason Fischer. Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent, and Ms. Karen Chastain, Chief of Legal Services, were also present.

Call Meeting To Order

[CALL MEETING TO ORDER](#)

Minutes:

The Chairman called the Board Meetings to order at 9:05 a.m.

Items To Be Discussed

[1. COMMITTEE MEETING - MARCH 4, 2014, DRAFT AGENDA REVIEW](#)

Minutes:

The Superintendent reviewed the March 4, 2014, Draft Agenda with the Board. Discussion included the following:

- Academics Item 1 - School Safety and Security Best Practices - Board Member

Hall asked about security in the administration building and the need for improvement. The Superintendent shared that Police Chief Coffman had expressed similar concerns, and that security would be upgraded. Board Member Lee asked that we keep in mind public access in the new plan. Board Member Juarez asked about the task force on the Conduct Code. The Superintendent shared that he had met with the group to discuss their recommendations. Those recommendations have been shared with the Southern Policy Law Center. He will discuss the responses with the task force and then engage the Board. Chairman Couch expressed concerns that students not be punished if parents chose not to participate in counseling programs. The Superintendent said that was not the intent. Board Member Hall spoke about the strength of student governments in high schools. Chairman Couch suggested that we look at organizing a district group of high school student representatives from each of the schools and have them select a representative that could come to the monthly board meetings and speak. Chairman Couch asked about uniforms and suggested that the Board have a discussion on allowing schools to do this at the high school level.

- Academics Item 12 - Envision Student Conferences - Item should say 63 and not 70. Chairman Couch asked if we could have some of the students come and speak at the Board meeting or have a short presentation on this program.
- Academics Item 13 - Gallup Agreement - Chairman Couch asked if the results could be a link on our website. The Superintendent will check on this request. Chairman Couch asked that the Board see the questions. The Superintendent said he would have them come and present the findings at a Workshop. Board Member Hall asked about the financial impact and where the dollars were coming from, and what we had to take off the plate in order to pay for this item. The Superintendent said the funding was coming from general revenue - closed purchased orders that were irrelevant and grant dollars not spent. Board Member Lee asked that we add this type of information to the Financial Impact on this and other agenda items, stating that we need acknowledgment that it is tied to a budget item we appropriated at the beginning of the year as part of our budget approval process. Chairman Couch asked that we also say where the dollars are being moved from.
- Academics Item 14 - TFA Agreement - The Superintendent shared that this item was previously funded by RTTT dollars. The grant ends this year. This item reflects 20% of the cost of the program. The other 80% comes from QEA and local efforts. The 20% will come from Title II and not general revenue. Dr. Hall asked what the money is spent on. The Superintendent said that it goes into a pot which provides for recruitment, selection process, training, support, etc. Board Member Wright expressed concerns that the TFA staff separated themselves from the rest of the teachers. They have their training separate from the other teachers and they do not even eat with them at school. She asked how many of the TFA staff are still with us since the inception of the program; how many received professional development by the end of the 2nd year; the percentage each year that stay in Duval and, of that number, how many are still teachers; the number that are moved from one school to another during their first 2 years; how many are elementary certified vs. secondary; what data we have to show they are effective in the classroom; per school - share their results vs. other teachers; and, what are we taking away to pay for this. The Chairman requested information on how much we paid per teacher since the inception of

the agreement. The Superintendent will provide the data by next Thursday. He shared that it would hurt us nationally if we deferred the item to the April agenda. Chairman Couch indicated that the agenda item was not clear on the cost and that it be clarified. She also asked about TFA teachers having priority in the hiring process and that principals are required to look at TFA teachers first. The Superintendent said that it was a simultaneous process. The Chairman asked that in the future, items such as this (those that are hot button items) come to the Board for discussion prior to be placed on the agenda.

- Operations Item 20 - FISH - The Chairman asked that a copy of the report be placed in the Board office. She requested data that covers a span of 3-4 years.
- Operations Item 27 - Custodial Services - Board Member Wright asked for a status on minority participation. The Superintendent will provide the Board with an update on this item.

Speakers:

Ms. Becki Couch, Board Chairman
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Board Member
Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee, Board Member
Dr. Constance S. Hall, Board Member
Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Board Member
Ms. Cheryl Grymes, Board Vice-Chairman

[2. BOARD WORKSHOP - CONSTITUENT SERVICES SYSTEM AND BOARD MEMBER REQUEST SYSTEM](#)

Minutes:

The Superintendent shared information with the Board via a PowerPoint, which is attached to the Minutes. At this point in time, the CS system contains those issues that come to the Board and those that come to the Superintendent.

The Chairman shared that Board members had expressed concerns that they were not being copied on responses to constituents. They would also like to be able to access the system, and requested they be provided with a tutorial. They also would like for Bonnie Cole to be the liaison and have access to the system. She also requested that Board members resume copying Bonnie on all items submitted for the CS system, and that she be copied on responses.

Board Member Juarez shared that she had contacted other school districts on how they handled constituent issues. In Volusia, St. Johns, and Orange counties, Board members submit their issues to the Superintendent and the Chief of Staff. The Chief responds either to the Board member and they respond to the constituent, or if the Board member prefers, the Chief responds to the constituent and copies the Board member. They also say that they are responding on behalf of the Board member in Orange County. In Hillsborough, the Board secretary sends the issues to the Regional

Superintendent and they respond as above. The Board is also provided with a summary of the response if by phone, or a copy if by e-mail. In Volusia, Board members go straight to the staff member. In St. Johns County they go to the Superintendent. Board Member Juarez also expressed concerns with sending issues in and not receiving a copy of the response.

Board Member Wright's concern is that since the Superintendent's office took over management of the system, she does not feel they are receiving all of the information from staff they used to receive. She mentioned a recent item involving the aviation program at Ribault. The Board was not aware ahead of time but was bombarded with questions from constituents. She suggested that the Board might want to define who constituents are.

Chairman Couch shared the term constituent was defined in policy. The Board did receive a copy of the policy, along with protocols which were written for both the CS and BMR systems, for their review, prior to the Workshop. She liked the way the system worked before, and feels that now it is hit or miss because everything goes through one person and waits for them to respond.

Board Member Lee shared that the system was working great for him.

Chairman Couch said that the policy has a protocol in place and calls for a Board Liaison (a staff person in the Board office), and outlines how the system should work.

The Superintendent agreed there was always room for refinement, and that he will make sure Board members are copied on all responses. They can change the format to say the response is being made on behalf of the Board member, but that will create other challenges, but it was up to the Board to decide. Consensus was to say they are responding on behalf of the Board member.

Board Member Hall asked why Bonnie was left of the process. The Chairman asked that she have access to system information.

The Superintendent asked that Board members identify the level of response when submitting issues for the CS system - routine, high, or urgent.

On BMR's, the Superintendent asked if responses should be sent to all Board members or just the Board member who requested the information. Consensus was that all Board members should be copied.

The Chairman summarized the discussions:

- Bonnie will serve as the Board Liaison, and should be copied on CS and BMR's submitted by Board members, as well as responses
- Requests will continue to be sent to the Superintendent and Davala Hunter
- Board members will indicate the response level - routine, high, or urgent
- Reports to the Board should include charts and data showing trends
- Board members will be provided with a link to the systems, as well as with training on how to access the systems

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Ms. Cheryl Grymes, Board Vice-Chairman

[3. AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING - 2012-2013 CAFR](#)

Minutes:

The Superintendent provided a brief overview of the CAFR. Information is attached to the Minutes.

Superintendent Vitti shared that he would like to proceed with QZAB 2 in the amount of \$50 million to use for technology and infrastructure in the schools. Consensus was to proceed. Board Member Juarez asked that we have a plan for maintenance and replacement costs. as well as a rollout plan.

Chairman Couch asked when the Board would be provided with an update on those items cited in the CAFR. The Superintendent said there would be a follow up at the end of March. Board Member Lee stated that he would like to make sure we are not here in six months or a year looking at the same concerns. The Chairman asked that the Board be provided an update at the next Audit Committee Meeting. She also said they would discuss the Operational audit at the next meeting.

Speakers:

Ms. Becki Couch, Board Chairman
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Board Member
Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee, Board Member
Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Board Member

[4. AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING - PROPOSED FUND BALANCE POLICY](#)

Minutes:

This item was not discussed.

5. AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING - BUDGET PRIORITIES

Minutes:

The Superintendent shared information with the Board on school choice for the coming school year. Discussion included the following:

- Provide Board with breakdown on special assignments
- Parents would provide their own transportation under the new plan
- Open enrollment for middle and high schools
- Open seats will be based on capacity
- Staff will visit schools to see what space is available and will not close labs or rooms used for instructional purposes
- Board members Hall and right feel this makes a statement that we do not believe in neighborhood schools
- The Superintendent feels this will help us retain students who would leave for private or charter schools
- Board Member Hall feels that we should give the feeder pattern a chance to work before we open enrollment up in the district
- Board Member Juarez suggested we have exit interviews for those leaving the system for private and charter schools.
- Consensus was to get input from parents and provide the Board with information prior to the April Board meeting.

The Superintendent shared information with the Board regarding expansion of the VPK program. He is proposing to go from 49 schools to 71, and 85 classes to 107. The focus will be on literacy. VPK funds will be used for the morning program and ESE and IDEA funds will be used for the afternoon program and for non Title I schools. Discussion included the following:

- Chairman Couch asked how schools were identified, as some on the list were shown as over capacity. The Superintendent shared that the Principals had asked for the programs and said they could accommodate the classes.
- Board Member Wright asked what we would be giving up to fund this expansion. The Superintendent said we would use \$1.1 million in IDEA and \$1.1 million from Title I, but could not provide information on what would be cut at this time. He will get back to the Board with this information.

Speakers:

Ms. Becki Couch, Board Chairman
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Board Member
Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee, Board Member
Dr. Constance S. Hall, Board Member

Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Board Member
Ms. Cheryl Grymes, Board Vice-Chairman

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

Minutes:

The Chairman adjourned the meetings at 3:34 p.m.

BSC

We Agree on this

Superintendent

Chairman