



# Duval County Public Schools

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February 24, 2015, Board Workshop - Budget

Ms. Cheryl Grymes, Chairman  
Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Vice-Chairman  
Ms. Becki Couch  
Mr. Jason Fischer  
Dr. Constance S. Hall  
Mr. Scott Shine  
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 Board Member Scott Shine. Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent was also present.

Call Meeting to Order

[Call Meeting to Order](#)

Minutes: The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m.

Administration and Business Services - Budget and Financial

[Budget](#)

Minutes:

Superintendent Nikolai Vitti began the meeting by reviewing the School Allocation Plan. A PowerPoint was presented and is attached to the minutes. Discussion included the following:

- Superintendent Vitti said we are not ready to approve the entire

district budget. He is asking the Board to approve the core of the School Allocation Plan so the schools can move forward with their budgets. If we need to make decisions regarding reductions in personnel we would do it at the district level and hold the schools harmless as much as possible. In the 2013-2014 school year we agreed to a 7% reserve and in the 2014-2015 school year a 5% reserve and that is intact. The 5% does include charter schools. We have \$18 million in one-time dollars. A breakdown was sent to the Board for review.

- Vice - Chairman Ashley Smith Juarez asked for a breakdown of where the funds originated at the last meeting. The Superintendent will follow up.
- Superintendent Vitti stated the district is expecting an increase in the benefit rate by .03%. When we look at the Governor's budget we would see an increase in \$22.5 million to our overall budget.
- The district is recommending an increase in discretionary funding by \$3,000.00 dollars for Baldwin Middle/High, Andrew Jackson, Frank Peterson, Philip Randolph, Raines and Ribault High Schools. These schools are spending more than they are provided. Mainly due to copying cost.
- Schools will not be held harmless regarding projected charter school enrollment stated Dr. Vitti.
- Board Member Paula Wright asked how we plan for a projected increase in enrollment at schools. Dr. Vitti stated the district does an annualization of FTE over the past three to five years. We also take into account any boundary changes.

Board Member Jason Fischer left the meeting at 9:28 a.m.

- Dr. Vitti stated the legislature is considering two or three options concerning the Opportunity Scholarship. One is to carry over the 2014-2015 school statistics, second to suspend Opportunity Scholarships until schools grades are released which would not be until October or November. The third option has been to suspend it all together but there does not seem to be support for this.

Board Member Becki Couch left the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

Board Member Jason Fischer returned at 9:40 a.m.

Board Member Becki Couch returned at 9:39 a.m.

- Board Member Couch asked what the enrollment limit is for schools to receive students from the Opportunity Scholarship. The Superintendent feels the limit would be 100% capacity. He will look into this further and send the information.
- Vice - Chairman Smith Juarez asked for the following information:
  - End of year projections and actuals to date. Dr. Vitti said he will send it for each department as she requested
  - Amount of all staff reduction savings
  - Recommended changes for the 2015-2016 Allocation Plan

- account for the cabinet add-on's
  - How long are positions open and why because of what has been spent on cabinet add-on's
  - A projected budget without the Governor's recommended increase in funds.
- Superintendent Vitti would recommend we add a math coach at every school, reading coach at dedicated magnets, with the exception of Stanton and Paxon High Schools. Graduation coach at non title I schools. These positions could only be added if we have more funds than anticipated.
- Vice- Chairman Smith Juarez said my understanding is health classes are under Physical Education and can be up to 60 students. Dr. Vitti will do an analysis and get back with her.
- Dr. Vitti stated at the core of the Allocation Plan we need to provide guidance on the full Allocation Plan and the additions can be determined later.
- Board Member Couch discussed the conversation from a previous meeting on the Board being uncomfortable using lapse salaries on items that are reoccurring. Michelle Begley, Board Internal Auditor, was asked if this was appropriate to use lapse salaries. She indicated we have had lapse salaries before. It should be monitored so we are not spending money we may not have.
- Board Member Couch would like to see some data on how effective adding the extra hour to our schools has been. Also feedback from principals with what's working and what is not.
- Board Chairman Cheryl Grymes stated the Superintendent is only asking for the Board to agree to the School Allocation Plan.

### [Student Data Presentation](#)

Minutes:

Superintendent Vitti presented a PowerPoint on Student Data. Discussion followed:

- The focus of the presentation is a view of student achievement in the district but also narrowing into the Duval Transformation Office schools as well as a comparison point.
- The percentage of students reaching grade level performance mid - year in math K-5 based on iREADY has improved greatly.
- Numbers presented in the presentation are not clearly predictive of how student will perform at the end of the year. There is too much we don't know about the new testing.
- 28% of Kindergartners are now at grade level and an additional 40% are nearing grade level expectations.

- One advantage to the new testing is that multiple states will be implementing the new test. We can start to norm ourselves versus other districts.
- The Superintendent's recommendations is to do away with Curriculum Guide Assessments (CGA)'s for next year. They do not predict grade level performance at the end of the year. He would like to have a mid -term standard based assessment test that is structured like the end of year Florida Standard Assessment.
- Vice - Chairman Ashley Smith Juarez discussed an article in the National School Board Association magazine. The article talked about Nashville who has a new national teacher recruiting program. Dr. Vitti will look at this article.
- Board Member Becki Couch talked about the new way math is being taught. It is difficult to help students with homework when the parent does not have the skill level to assist their student. How are we working at the school level to help the parents understand why the student is being taught in a different way? She recommends the district has more Public Service Announcements. Dr. Vitti said some schools have parent nights and the use of the parent portal. We will have more on the parent portal to communicate with parents.
- Board Member Hall said teachers should be sending homework with students to extend teaching and learning.

Board Member Jason Fischer left the meeting at 1:25 p.m.

- Dr. Vitti stated as far as recruitment of teachers in other states we are looking at recruiting primary teachers. The greatest opportunity is the new adoption. We will work with Duval Teachers United to try to train every teacher in at least two to three days with the new core before the year starts in addition to the supplemental materials that are being used in the reading interventionist process. The Teacher Academy has been effective but it is voluntary. He believes reading interventionists have more value than a coach. The challenge of training all the content teachers is the funding. He feels the training can be done during common planning. Our focus is more on the actual standards, not literacy.
- Board Member Hall is concerned about professional development. Good quality teaching is valued.

Board Member Fischer returned to the meeting at 1:53 p.m.

- Superintendent Vitti will be recommending a shift in iREADY reading to K-2 or K-3 and ACHIEVE 3000 for 4th and 5th grade.
- Board Member Paula Wright asked what we are doing to teach keyboarding. Dr. Vitti said we do have apps and will incorporate this into the curriculum guide for next year.

## Governance

### Minutes:

- Vice - Chairman Ashley Smith Juarez said she is getting a lot of feedback on Focus and the pilot. She would like to get an update on how it is going and what the thoughts are moving forward. Superintendent Vitti will follow up. She was in Tallahassee earlier in the month to meet with legislators. She did get a request for feedback concerning school grades not being issued. What would we suggest to be communicated to the public? Dr. Vitti replied proficiency would be shared with the public regarding performance. Vice - Chairman Smith Juarez also asked about school recognition funds if there are no school grades. She is recommending the funds be held back. We have talked a lot about creating a report card for each of our schools. She would like to get feedback from the public concerning what the most important issues are to the public.
- Board Member Wright shared her conversation with Michelle Begley, Board Internal Auditor. Ms. Begley will be creating a school report card for district 4. She spoke with the superintendent concerning adding a staff person to create a website for this. This would be a good starting point for other Board Members who would also like to create one.
- Board Member Hall discussed reorganization of the Board Office. We continue to discuss this and nothing happens. She wants to look at two part-time hourly people.
- Vice-Chairman Smith Juarez said we did discuss reorganization of the Board at a previous meeting. Now that we are planning the budget for next year we need to revisit this.
- Superintendent Vitti said it is as simple as building it in the budget and moving forward.
- Vice-Chairman Smith Juarez said we talked about community meetings with school accountability. Dr. Vitti will follow up.
- Board Member Wright said her concern is the item to renew the Superintendent's contract early. She asked the Chairman to be sure we are following the right steps. In Policy 2.13, it says the authority and responsibility of individual School Board Members does not extend to the execution of the policies adopted by the School Board. Individual School Board members have no authority and shall not attempt to act as administrators of the District school system. We have an obligation to our constituents and we have not enough time to review.
- Board Member Couch stated we still have Policy 2.14 that has some items that have still not been completed. A statement of the Superintendent's evaluation has not been shared with us. We also have not done objectives and goals for next year. We did a partial following of that policy and did not complete it.
- Board Member Wright said Florida Statute 2.425 needs to be

addressed. This statute should be workshopped. She does not want the public to see the Board as being divided.

- For The Record: Board Member Becki Couch said I have asked for the fourth time when we get documents that are sent to all board members that Cathy Maycott, Board Secretary and Michelle Begley, Board Internal Auditor receive copies for the minutes. The second item is Board Members are representing the Board at committee meetings, we should take notes and bring this information back to the Board.
- Vice - Chairman Smith Juarez will communicate the Boards request to Chairman Cheryl Grymes.

Adjournment

[Adjournment](#)

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 p.m.

CSM

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Superintendent

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Chairman