



Duval County Public Schools

March 13, 2014, Committee Meeting

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 COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: All Board Members were present, with the exception of Ms. Cheryl Grymes. 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 Committee Meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

Items To Be Discussed

[1. APRIL 1, 2014, DRAFT AGENDA REVIEW](#)

Minutes:

The Superintendent reviewed the April 1, 2014, Draft Agenda with the Board. Discussion included the following:

- Academics Item 1- District Bandwidth - Board Member Juarez asked how this would be funded since it is not in the budget. The Superintendent indicated that it would come from lapsed salaries and dollars left from other projects.
- Academics Item 2 - Tier III Elementary Reading Intervention - Board Member Hall asked about commitments for next year's budget and the fact that we are just starting the budget process. She would like to know the process on what is coming forward and not just see the items piecemeal. Dr. Vitti said that we will use IDEA roll over funds, which are one time funds, for this item. Most of the expenses will be one time expenses, since we can duplicate most of the materials ourselves. He would like to have everything in place by late Spring or early Summer. After discussion, it was decided that we would discuss this topic at the March 26, 2014, Workshop, and move the budget to the first Workshop in April. We will also discuss the ACE transportation process and curriculum materials at the March 26th meeting. Board Member Wright has what we would lose from using the IDEA funds for this item. The Superintendent said there were several ESE contracts which have been discontinued and others would be modified, with staff picking up some of the services.
- School Choice Item 4 - Renaissance Charter School - Chairman Couch asked about the zoning issue and the community not wanting this school in their neighborhood. Ms. Karen Chastain, Chief of Legal Services, indicated that the zoning issue was a City Council issue and not a School Board issue. Board Member Juarez asked what would happen if the zoning application was denied. Ms. Chastain indicated that the new location would have to be within 2 miles of the current proposed location, otherwise, the contract would have to come back to the Board, since the address of the school is part of the contract. Chairman Couch suggested that Board Member Fischer reach out to the City Council representative since the proposed school will be in his area, and let them know there may be opposition from his constituents. Board Member Fischer said he would, and that he was in favor of the zoning application.
- School Choice Item 5 - Student Assignment Policy 5.20 Revision - discussion included the following:
 - Revisions include open enrollment options.
 - Superintendent would like to add option for Charter school and private school students to transfer back at the end of Spring.
 - Board Member Lee expressed concerns for schools currently at 85% or 90% capacity taking additional students through this process, who would have the expectation of continuing at the school for the following year, and then we have an influx of students which could mean the school would be over capacity. He asked if we had a plan in place if this should happen. The Superintendent does not think this would happen.
 - Board Member Lee does not oppose the addition of the language for Charter school and private school students to transfer back at the end of Spring, however, he would like language added to say that if a school was not available for our students during the open enrollment period, and seats open up before Spring, those schools would not be available. The Superintendent agreed to this suggestion.
 - Board Member Hall said she was hesitant to move forward with this policy change at this time because we have not allowed the strategies put in place this year to have time to see if they worked. We need to fix what is not

working and have fair competition at all schools. Open enrollment does not support diversity. The Superintendent thinks that this does support diversity and is a way to modernize our district. Dr. Hall does not think we have had fidelity of implementation in all schools, and asked if we had a plan to recapture students. Dr. Vitti said principals had received a list of students this year that were zoned for their schools, but did not attend, and that the principals had been reaching out to those students.

- Board Member Fischer said he had sent an e-mail expressing his thoughts on this item. He asked about having open enrollment at the same time we have school choice enrollment. The Superintendent said that could be done for future years, but the recommendation for the coming year was to have open enrollment after the school choice enrollment, due to timing of the policy change. Mr. Fischer would like to see transportation provided, but understands that cost may not permit doing this now. Mr. Paul Soares, Chief of Operations, shared that they had looked at JTA options in the past, but have not done so for this recommendation.
- Board Member Wright shared that schools were central to neighborhoods, and we did have an increase of 2,000 students this year. She would like to see the Board tour neighborhoods and not just visit schools, for a better understanding of how a school impacts a neighborhood. She feels that low enrollment will lead to closing of schools.
- Board Member Fischer left the meeting at 10:25 a.m.
- The Superintendent vowed not to recommend closure of any schools for the 2014-2015 school year or the 2015-2016 school year.
- Board Member Juarez asked about capacity numbers to be used. The Superintendent said they will use FISH numbers and not what schools are reporting.
- Board Member Juarez, and Chairman Couch, both expressed concerns with using conduct as a reason to revoke enrollment.
- Board Member Juarez suggested we have parents tour their neighborhood schools, similar to how we have it set up for the Magnet program, prior to applying for open enrollment, or make it an option that would provide some type of priority if done. There could be a form that the neighborhood school principal would sign off on.
- Chairman Couch asked about plans to prevent recruiting for sports at middle and high schools. The Superintendent shared that they will work the FHSAA (Florida High School Athletic Association). If this happens there would be sanctions.
- Chairman Couch also asked how this would impact the Magnet process. Dr. Vitti indicated that the Magnet wait list would have to be exhausted first.
- Chairman Couch asked that staff just not look at FISH numbers, but also visit the schools, when deciding on how many seats would be available. There are labs and ESE student issues to consider.
- Operations Item 17 - Pre-Qualifications - Board Member Wright asked about disparity study. Mr. Paul Soares, Chief of Operations, indicated that they will accept anyone for this list that qualifies. Board Member Wright asked that we have an update on the MBE program at a future workshop.

Speakers:

Ms. Becki Couch, Board Chairman
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Board Member
Mr. Jason Fischer, Board Member
Ms. Karen Chastain, Chief of Legal Services
Ms. Pearl Roziers, Director of School Choice
Dr. Constance S. Hall, Board Member
Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Board Member
Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee, Board Member
Mr. Paul Soares, Chief of Operations

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

Minutes:

The Chairman adjourned the Committee Meeting at 11:58 a.m.

BSC

We Agree on this

Superintendent

Chairman