



Duval County Public Schools

November 8, 2016, Board Workshop

Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Chairman
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Vice-Chairman
Ms. Becki Couch
Ms. Cheryl Grymes
Dr. Constance S. Hall
Mr. Scott Shine
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: All Board Members were present. Board Member Constance Hall participated via telephone. Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent, and Ms. Karen Chastain, Chief Officer of Legal Services, were also present.

Call Meeting To Order

[CALL MEETING TO ORDER](#)

Minutes: The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m.

Items To Be Discussed

[LEGISLATIVE AGENDA](#)

Attachment: [Draft 2017 Legislative Agenda.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Carol Bracy, Legislative Lobbyist, provided a broad overview of what may be discussed during the legislative session in Tallahassee. She will need direction from the Board as to how best to devote her time. Discussion followed:

Board Member Grymes arrived at 9:08 a.m.

- The organizational session starts November 22, 2016.
- In December, interim Committee Meetings will begin to meet.
- In January the session will start.
- The big issue will be what the budget will look like. Each year the Legislature puts together a three year fiscal outlook. We are looking at a very modest revenue growth for the State, about seven and a half million dollars.
- The District is looking at a deficit in the coming year.
- The Duval Delegation committee will be meeting on November 30, 2016. The Superintendent may wish to speak.
- There are two areas in the funding arena that are flagged which are the millage rate issue, providing flexibility to the districts to help fund capital needs. This would give the district the ability to increase the millage by a quarter of a percentage. With the capital needs and aging of buildings it may be a challenge. It is worth discussing. Technology needs are also an issue for funding.
- The other major issue is school grades for Charter Schools versus Public Schools. Our district needs to be prepared to defend this issue.
- Carol Bracy recommended the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) be adopted again as part of the legislative package.
- Virtual Education was suggested by staff as part of the legislative package to provide more flexibility with homeschool students who are looking at virtual education as an option, instead of having them participate in a district program before being eligible for public education. This may be, a funding issue for the State.
- Maintaining the Districts ability to define capacity as it relates to open enrollment.
- Facilities usage item - to clarify for the State, the definition of facilities.
- Local "J" Bill to adopt legislation pertaining to a tie vote. It may be on the January agenda.

Dr. Vitti, Superintendent discussed the Best and Brightest Scholarship.

- The Best and Brightest Scholarship is not on this legislative platform. It appears that it is not the perfect program, but there is still intention to try to recruit undergrads that are higher performing to go into teaching. The opportunity might exist to move this funding to focus on teachers current Value Added Model (VAM) scores rather than looking at American College Testing (ACT) and Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT). The forty million dollars could help us with recruiting and retaining of teachers at the lower performing schools. The Superintendent could run data to look at how many teachers are also eligible for the QEA to see if there is a connection. Board Member Smith Juarez stated we need to think about whether it would apply to all teachers. Best and Brightest Scholarship now applies to everyone who has a record of their SAT scores from the College Board. Carol Bracy will need to find out if the State is collecting any

data on performance and if it is on the legislative agenda.

Board Member Shine left the meeting at 9:42 a.m.

- Board Member Couch recommended cleaning up the item on OSP. The cost of providing busing is costly. This item will be taken off the legislative platform with more conversation on open enrollment.
- Add language concerning funding for Technology to the legislative platform.

Carol Bracy will send the legislative platform items to the Board for review tomorrow. After the information goes out to the Board Members, Nena Sparrow, Administrative Assistant, will compile any feedback.

Motion: That the Duval County School Board allow Board Member Constance Hall to participate via telephone.

Moved - Becki Couch
Second- Paula Wright

Vote - Passed 5 - 0

Board Member Hall called into the meeting at 10:13 a.m.

QUARTERLY ACADEMIC UPDATES

Attachment: [Quarterly Academic Update.pdf](#)

Minutes:

The Superintendent provided an overview of the Quarterly Academic updates. The presentation focuses on Reading and Math, baseline data. PowerPoint attached to the minutes. Discussion following:

- Targets were not in individually for 3rd, 4th and 5th grade math.
- The gap is mainly in Algebra 2 and Geometry.
- Need to take a closer look at curriculum and professional development.
- The District still hears from parents that iREADY is not necessarily aligned to the curriculum guide.
- Students who do not have internet access at home can use the Media Center before and after school. Some teachers print the materials for students. The District also gives schools hourly money to offer before or after school and Saturday tutoring. Vice-Chairman Wright requested the names of the schools that are offering tutoring. The Superintendent will identify a school in a feeder pattern for students to have access to computers. He could also identify an elementary or

middle school to have access to their lab.

- The District does not use iREADY for struggling readers because it does not move students fast enough. It is not mature enough for secondary students. iREADY is not used for 4th grade and higher.

Board Member Hall suggested using reading experts. The Superintendent would like to wait until the Curriculum Audit is completed. The Board will not receive an update on the audit until December. The Superintendent will put together an equivalent of an Request For Proposal (RFP).

Board Member Couch requested the Superintendent include all students that were not included in the presentation today.

- There has been a decline in grade level performance. The decline is mainly linked to phonics.
- The next steps are happening now. Small group instruction has continued to move Tier 1 and 2 interventions. We have made improvements regarding the use of interventionists at the K - 2 level to work with struggling students.

Board Member Hall suggested using classroom management - we need to provide more strategies. The Superintendent will include this in the conversation about literacy, classroom vacancies and the achievement gap.

Board Member Couch indicated that in 2014 we cut professional development. We need to have something in place when moving so many coaches to the classroom. The goal is to build the capacity of our teachers. The Superintendent indicated that we can move into the Master Teacher program. We need this structure for our higher performing teachers. He feels support is still being provided. Students will have stronger instruction with a coach compared to a new teacher.

[GOVERNANCE](#)

Attachment: [QEA Report 2016-17.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Updated QEA Performance Data2.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Quality Education for All (QEA) Report

Board Member Couch asked if the Board would have a chance to discuss the QEA report which was provided by the Superintendent. The Board should be taking the lead on what we view as next steps. Now proposals have been given to other groups of people who will start debating what

they want. As Board Members, we will then hear from the public concerning proposals we have not discussed yet. The problem is respecting this office enough to inform us as the process is going along.

The Superintendent's stated his role is to make recommendations to the Board through agenda items. He indicated the same information that was provided to the QEA Board was provided to the Board. All this is a set of best thinking regarding QEA initiatives. The QEA Board requested information. He was very clear at the meeting that any recommendation is subject to Board approval and is subject to collective bargaining. Board Member Couch indicated this puts the Chairman in an awkward position when the conversation hasn't happened with the Board.

Chairman Smith Juarez was previously unaware until now, what was discussed in an executive session concerning their response to the recommendations. This may lead to fundraising. She will let Wayne Weaver, Chairman of QEA, know the Board wants to be cautious about any assurance since the Board has not yet made any determinations. The Chairman spoke to the Superintendent a week ago about the timeline in order to get this information to the Board. There were opportunities for the Superintendent to receive feedback from the Board but twelve hours before the meeting is not sufficient.

Board Member Hall indicated the bottom line is the lack of communication.

Board Member Shine asked the Board the following questions: Can we do something different in how we communicate with QEA, the Superintendent and Board? Some Board Members want to know up front.

Vice-Chairman Wright indicated that she is not sensing a collaborative effort or desire. The Superintendent does not want to be put in a position that he cannot articulate a vision of what could be before a workshop or meeting. Fiduciary responsibility rests with Board. Based on today's conversation, the Superintendent stated he will not make any financial strategy conversations, to the QEA Board as it relates to the budget process moving forward until there is a public meeting with the School Board.

Attendance

Board Member Couch will be meeting with Mike McAuley, Executive Director, Student Discipline, to discuss absenteeism. She is very concerned with the amount of absences. She will get back to the Board once she meets with Mike McAuley.

Visioning

Board Member Shine would like invite Bill Killingsworth, Director of Planning and Development for the City of Jacksonville and Kristen Reed, Chief of Community Planning Division, to discuss a Visioning Plan with the Board.

Salaries

Vice-Chairman Wright would like the Board to look at salaries as they look at the budget. She suggested the Superintendent begin looking at this.

News Article - Duval County School District most dangerous in Florida

Board Member Wright was very disturbed about this article. What can we change with the Student Code of Code so that even suspensions are met earlier before it leads to more fights? The Superintendent indicated that the Student Code of Code was changed last year to reflect that any fight can lead to suspension. We are dealing with a group of students that are continually moving in the wrong direction. These students will have to be dealt with differently. Board Member Wright asked what support mechanisms we have. Which ones are helping? If some are not working, we need to take them off the table.

Board Member Couch indicated we need to focus more on Positive Behavior like we once did, especially in secondary schools. The Superintendent stated this is part of the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports process.

State Investigation

Board Member Hall requested an update on the State Investigation. The Superintendent indicated that he has not received any new information from the State. They were concerned about the number of students who remained in "D" and "F" schools despite the reassignment process. There were two concerns. On the one hand he was told it was a concern by Department Of Education staff and the other was that it was an alleged complaint. The Superintendent expressed concern that he has not received clarification. He is confident the District followed the procedure and procedures required by the State.

Board Member Hall disconnected at 2:47 p.m.

OZAB III

Chairman Smith Juarez requested the Superintendent send the Board information if he is looking to pursue this further.

J. Allen Axson Elementary

Chairman Smith Juarez discussed a continuity issue brought up by constituents. The Prekindergarten students pay to attend J. Allen Axson Elementary and they receive continuity to Kindergarten. Chairman Smith Juarez stated if we are not having a free and open lottery we are barring some families. She would like to see the Board do something about this.

Impasse Hearing Training

Karen Chastain, Chief of Legal Services, will be contacting each Board Member to schedule training for the Impasse Hearing.

Curriculum Audit

Curriculum Audit staff are on site this week and next week doing school visits. The Chairman will send a brief note on behalf of the Board to those principals to let them know this is an initiative of the Board.

Grievance Concerning a Board Member

Chairman Smith Juarez has provided information to the Office of General Counsel since we do not have policy or precedents to guide us in this proceeding.

Virtue and Valor Charter Schools

The Superintendent stated Virtue and Valor Charter Schools have not submitted reports concerning their financial status as requested. Multiple letters have been sent to request information.

Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports

The Superintendent indicated that historically the District has requested an extension. Michelle Begley, Board Internal Auditor, may be able to assist. The Chairman asked Ms. Begley to not assist too much because we as a Board rely on her as our auditor to review materials and bring them to our attention.

Cease and Desist Letter

The Board discussed at a previous meeting that the Cease and Desist Letter should be revised to reflect that the Letter would come from the District and not the Board. The Superintendent sent an email to the Board indicating that he was pulling the item from the November agenda. He was aware at the time of the meeting that additional information may be coming forward. Karen Chastain, Chief of Legal Services was not aware of additional information which was provided to her by the Chairman. She then asked that the revised letter be held until the information could be reviewed. The Superintendent indicated the Cease and Desist Letter has nothing to do with the new information that had to be reviewed. The consensus of the Board was to not send a revised Cease and Desist Letter.

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

CSM

Superintendent

Chairman