



Duval County Public Schools

April 15, 2014, Committee Meeting & Board Workshop

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 WORKSHOP OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: All Board Members were present. 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 meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Items To Be Discussed

[1. COMMITTEE MEETING - MAY 6, 2014, DRAFT AGENDA REVIEW](#)

Minutes:

The Superintendent reviewed the May 6, 2014, Draft Agenda with the Board. Discussion included the following:

- Academics Item 7 - Novels for grades 6-12 - talked about the need for all schools and students to have access to books they can take home and read; Chairman Couch noted that the Teacher Supply Depot had books, but only Title I schools could take them. The Superintendent talked about schools being able to use Title I funds and non Title I school funding for purchase of books also.
- Board Member Fischer arrived at 9:42 a.m.
- Academics Item 9 - Achieve 3000 - Board Member Hall asked about Wi Fi access for students; Board Member Wright reminded the Board that CISCO had been willing to help us in the past, and may still be willing to help if contacted.
- Academics Items 11 & 12 - Textbook Adoptions & Professional Development - Board Member Wright asked that staff provide the Board with the dates for the professional development in the agenda item.
- Academics Item 13 - iReady - Chairman Couch asked about professional development for this item.
- Academics Item 14 - Destiny - Board members discussed the possibility of language in textbook agreements that would impose a penalty if delivery was late, or if we incur costs due to the delivery date being missed. Board Member Hall suggested that we could add language that the vendor would cover any costs we incurred due to textbooks not arriving on time. Ms. Karen Chastain, Chief of Legal Services, noted that there is not always a contract, and the Purchase Order serves as the contract. Board Member Lee suggested that as an alternative, we could discuss offer an incentive for early and on time delivery. Chairman Couch asked about the Flawless Opening document. The Superintendent will provide updates to the Board.
- School Choice Item 15 - Tiger Academy - Discussed length of contract and adding language that agreement could be 3 or 5 years, based on the grade received this year. This would be done for all schools. If the schools receive a C or better the agreement would be for 5 years. If they receive a D or F, it would be for 3 years.
- Vice-Chairman Grymes left the meeting at 11:00 a.m.
- Board Member Juarez left the meeting at 11:25 a.m.
- School Choice Item 17 - SOS - The Superintendent has deep concerns about the academic status of this school, however, he is reluctant to recommend non-renewal pending the receipt of their school grade for this year. Parents and students are happy with this school. This school will be recommended for a 1 year renewal. Consensus was to change recommendation on grade to a D.
- Vice-Chairman Grymes returned to the meeting at 11:35 a.m.
- Board Member Fischer left at the lunch break at 11:55 a.m.

Speakers:

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

2. BOARD WORKSHOP - BOARD OFFICE STAFF

Minutes:

Board Members discussed the Board Office staff positions. There are currently two Board Secretaries (Secretary IV's). Ms. Linda DeAbreu will be leaving at the end of June 2014, and Human Resource Services is currently looking to fill her position. Ms. Bonnie Susan Cole will be leaving in March/April 2015. A list of duties for both positions was previously shared with the Board. A copy is attached to the Minutes.

Chairman Couch asked for suggestions and/or comments from the Board on filling Bonnie's position.

Ms. Sonita Young, Chief of Human Resource Services, asked if the Board wanted to consider a job position which was available entitled Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent. There is currently not a job description for this position, so the Board could craft one to fit their needs.

Discussion included the following:

- Chairman Couch suggested breaking the position into two people.
- Chairman Couch indicated that typing skills were important.
- Board Member Hall suggested we define the organizational structure first, and then see what fits into that structure. She sees a need for a community outreach coordinator, as the Board members interaction with their communities has grown over the years. She also asked that the Superintendent consider making Room 639, which is a small conference room next to the Board office, part of the office configuration for Board member use.
- Board Member Lee asked if breaking the position into two would be enough, using the City Council staffing as an example.
- Chairman Couch pointed out that part of the job involved an understanding of technology, as Bonnie also keeps track of the Board Member's page on the website, as well as the SharePoint page, E-Agenda, etc.
- Chairman Couch is also concerned with the loss of connections and relationships with various organizations and people throughout the City. The person replacing Bonnie will need to be a relationship builder, as well as being outgoing, and can follow through and get things done.
- Board Member Wright thinks we need more than two people for the office. She also agreed with Dr. Hall regarding the conference room for Board member use.
- Board Member Lee suggested that Bonnie and Linda provide input on this matter. There may also be duties they currently perform that could either be discontinued or moved to another office.
- Board Member Lee said the person should also have a great disposition and thick skin, especially when dealing with the public, as well as strong administrative skills. He also listed the following skills - professional approach with interactions, both e-mail and telephone, as well as in person; some semblance of legal

knowledge of the Florida Statutes that relate to Board members; knowledge of laws and rules relating to posting of the Agenda, meetings, notices, and the Sunshine Law; and, be mindful this person is our voice when dealing with the public and staff.

- Board Member Hall listed confidentiality as another issue.
- Chairman Couch listed the following - knowledge of Board policies; Board members calendars; SharePoint; and, scheduling events.
- Board Member Lee also listed the following - administrative skills; typing; recording; correspondence; letter writing; and a variety of support services which may vary by Board member; and, someone who is mature.

Ms. Young will meet with Bonnie, Linda, Michelle Begley, and Wendy LeHockey, and prepare a document for the Board's review regarding the position(s). This will be done in the next couple of weeks and shared with the Board.

The Superintendent suggested that since these positions work for the Board members, that they report directly to the Board, and that their evaluations be done by the Board. Currently the positions report to the Chief of Staff, who also would prepare their evaluations. All were in agreement with this, and the positions and evaluation process will be moved to the Board.

Speakers:

Ms. Becki Couch, Board Chairman
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent
Dr. Constance S. Hall, Board Member
Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee, Board Member
Ms. Bonnie Susan Cole, Board Secretary
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Board Member
Ms. Cheryl Grymes, Board Vice-Chairman

[3. BOARD WORKSHOP - COMMUNITY BUDGET MEETING FEEDBACK UPDATE](#)

Minutes:

Chairman Couch asked the Board to refer to the list of questions compiled from the Community meetings to date. Discussion included the following:

- Since the meetings were held in middle and high schools, some elementary parents did not think the meetings were for them also. A suggestion was made to consider hosting an additional meeting at an elementary school.
- Categories included charter schools, accelerated programs, reserve funds, and open enrollment.
- Board Member Fischer returned to the meeting at 1:16 p.m.
- Chairman Couch asked the Superintendent if he planned to reduce Assistant Principal positions, to which he replied yes.
- Chairman Couch asked about the student survey form. The Superintendent

indicated that they were asked to list their top 5 priorities, as well as the 5 things they would cut, in priority order as well.

- Board Member Juarez returned to the meeting at 1:27 p.m.
- Class size was discussed. Dr. Vitti explained what was considered a core class Board Member Hall spoke to the need to market the district. She also indicated that everyone needs to have a deeper understanding of class size.

Speakers:

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

Adjournment

[ADJOURNMENT](#)

Minutes:

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 1:51 p.m.

BSC

We Agree on this

Superintendent

Chairman