



## Duval County Public Schools

April 21, 2011, Special Board Meeting - Intervene

Ms. W. C. Gentry, Chairman  
Ms. Betty Burney, Vice-Chairman  
Ms. Martha Barrett  
Ms. Ms. Becki Couch  
Ms. Mr. Tommy Hazouri  
Mr. Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee  
Mr. Ms. Paula D. Wright  
Mr. Ed Pratt-Dannals, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS SPECIAL MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: All Board Members were present. Mr. Ed Pratt-Dannals, Superintendent, and Ms. Karen Chastain, Assistant General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, were also present.

Call Meeting to Order

### [1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER - SPECIAL MEETING](#)

Minutes:

The Chairman called the Special Meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

### [2. APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 21, 2011, AGENDA](#)

Motions:

That the Duval County School Board approve the April 21, 2011, Agenda as submitted on April 20, 2011, with the following changes:

- PASS

1.

Vote Results

Motion: Paula Wright

Second: Betty Burney

Martha Barrett - Aye

Betty Burney - Nay

Rebecca Couch - Aye

William Gentry - Aye

Thomas Hazouri - Aye

Fred Lee - Aye

Paula Wright - Aye

Academics

[BOARD APPROVAL OF 2011-2012 REVISED INTERVENE SCHOOL OPTIONS AND REVISED INTERVENE SCHOOL STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR ANDREW JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL, NORTH SHORE K-8 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, JEAN RIBAUTL HIGH SCHOOL AND WILLIAM M. RAINES HIGH SCHOOL](#)

Attachment: [EMO Strategic Plan April 21 201.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Intervene Option - RIBAUTL EMO AGENDA.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Intervene Option - JACKSON EMO AGENDA.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Intervene Option - RAINES EMO AGENDA.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Intervene Option - NORTH SHORE EMO AGENDA.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Chairman Gentry explained the purpose of today's meeting and gave a brief overview of what has happened to date.

Speakers from Audience:

- Debra Parsons - Spoke on behalf of Senator Tony Hill. If the schools remain on the Intervene list he would like to see us use a professional EMO and let the community be involved in the selection process.
- Earl Kitchings - He is a graduate of Raines High School and would like for us to close and reopen the school.
- Ahman Lott - He is a sophomore at Raines High School and asked the Board to support the school.
- Tia Simmens - She is a freshman at Raines High School. It is a good school and please support.

- Debra Parsons - Spoke on behalf of Representative Mia Jones. Do what is right and support the community's position to close and reopen the school.
- Brion Eason - Senior at Raines High School and is the 2010-2011 Mr. Raines. He is also a Gates Scholarship winner. Please keep the school open.
- Ayanna Thomas - She is a junior at Raines High School. One test should not hinder the school. Do not close the school.
- Tameka Gaines - Alumni of Raines High School. She is representing herself and her two sisters who also attended the school. Please keep the neighborhood schools and do not approve an EMO option.
- LaWan Spilin - Her family has had several members attend Raines High School. One test should not determine the schools future. Bring back the students who should be attending the school and the scores will improve.
- Jordan Baker - He represents Concerned Citizens in Support of Education. An EMO does not make sense and he supports the Board members who represent the Intervene schools. Do not make a decision on dollars, but on sense.
- Melvin Marshall - Has ties with all four schools and has family at all of the schools. He is concerned with closing the schools.
- Hendy Colado - Represents a group from Andrew Jackson High School. You have an important decision to make. Stand by the students and keep them in mind when making your decision.
- Chris Arab - Please consider options other than the one before you today. She supports closing and reopening the school as the best option. She understands the concerns regarding the potential loss of SIG funds, however, if the schools moved forward then it will not matter, and if they do not move forward then we do not need to continue the funding.
- Eunice Barnum - She is sorry to see that students have to beg for their school. The Board is not doing a good job and the State should withhold funds from the District.
- Jarik Conrad - Closing the school or hiring an EMO will not matter if you do not change the community around the schools. The best option is to close the schools and reopen.
- Jon Heymann - In 1989 the then Mayor recognized the need for change and mentioned Ribault, Raines, and Jackson, in a letter. JCCI will support the schools and students no matter what decision is today. The group you are considering has never done this work before. Perhaps in theory an EMO is best, but he would defer to the two members who represent the areas.

Discussion on the Item:

The Superintendent made a brief statement regarding his recommendation. The intent is not to close the schools. Even the close and reopen option is not a close-closed option. He explained why the Duval Partners group was formed. The one area lacking in our original plan submitted to the State Department of Education was governance and staffing. The State is ready to impose sanctions if we do not submit a compliant plan. Having Duval Partners as an EMO is better than bringing in a Charter school group. We can hold Duval Partners accountable.

Board Vice-Chairman Burney stated that we have four schools placed, labeled, and defined as failing based on one test, the FCAT. She has been involved with the schools

in her District before she was on the Board and back when the Superintendent was in Region I as an administrator. Superintendent Fryer made changes and put Levi McIntosh and Steve Hite over the schools and they made progress. The next Superintendent moved Steve Hite and a new experiment began and the schools eroded. Magnet programs further eroded the schools. Raines, Ribault, and Jackson are the only high schools in the African-American area. An EMO will privatize the schools. We made a commitment to each other to support what each district needed. She mentioned several issues that other Board members had sought support on their districts. She has stated before that she did not support an EMO because of governance. Not once has the Superintendent shared what it will cost for an EMO, and not once has a Board member requested what it would cost. If we close and reopen the schools it will give students a second chance to start over. We can recruit the 50% of new students required. She asked her fellow Board members to give her and Board Member Wright the same respect they had given them. This has nothing to do with the members of Duval Partners, but the fact they are not an EMO and they are not ready to be an EMO. It is about the children. She would like to know the following: how much an EMO will cost; and, something in writing from DOE stating we will lose the SIG dollars. She will not be responsible for tearing up the City.

Board Member Hazouri shared his thoughts, asking how much more we will have to put into the schools. He was concerned that last week the Superintendent had asked them to go into the community and promote closing and reopening the schools, and now is saying we cannot do that. He believes the schools should have the opportunity to see if they can recruit the number of students needed to close and reopen.

Board Member Wright thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. The students deserve to walk into a school that is not labeled F. Starting over would bring opportunities. She also believes we could attract the number of students needed to reopen the schools, especially if we market the schools in the same manner we market Magnet schools. Desegregation took a toll on her community and asked that her fellow Board members support her and the community to get back to educating students and to get rid of the stigma of Intervene.

Chairman Gentry said that the comments made suggest as a Board they should defer to the member from a particular district. A good reason is that they have the closest contact with their community, but inference they are like City Council lollipops is not right. However, each of us must do what is best and he will not make an ill advised decision just to go along. As a lawyer you have to maintain objectivity. It is a huge mistake to make decisions out of emotion. Although we expect the schools to make improvements, we have to have a plan in place that will pass. He indicated that the EMO would be the best choice and Duval Partners the best group. We can specify what we want the relationship to be.

Board Member Hazouri objected to Chairman Gentry's reference to lollipops and indicated this is not what the issue today is about. Vice-Chairman Burney indicated she was not making an emotional decision. If she was to be emotional she would say that we are failing our students under this Superintendent, and we are not talking about lollipops. We did not make decisions just because one Board member said to and she resents the statement.

Board Member Lee thanked everyone for being there today. Charter schools are off the table because staff told them no Charter organization could do this. That leaves two choices - close or EMO. He is concerned with the possible loss of the SIG dollars and is not sure we could satisfy the 50% new students requirement. He is getting mixed signals. We talk against and EMO and then talk about how wonderful this group is but we are not excited about them being involved. The Board has given tremendous support so far to the community. Whatever we do needs to be done quickly and we need DOE's decision in writing so that we know exactly what we need to do. Board Members Burney and Wright have the best interest of your communities and he looks to them for understanding. He asked what would happen if we checked the close the schools box and DOE did not accept. Superintendent Pratt-Dannals indicated he did not know. He does know there are problems with this path and we are up against a deadline. He does not feel we would get approval at this point. Board Member Lee asked how long it would take to get the following questions answered - how quickly can we get a new school number; can we change the name; could we get the 50% new students; if we go down that path could DOE completely shutter the school. The Superintendent responded that it would take 2-3 weeks to get a new school number; we could carry a portion of the old school name and incorporate it into the new name; we have asked and been told that 50% of the students have to be new and there would have to be major changes to the programs or grade level; and the Commissioner said he would leave it up to the Board but we would still have to comply with an approved plan by August 22nd in order to avoid sanctions.

Board Member Barrett indicated that this was a difficult decision. The State has not been very favorable to us and if we close the school she is not confident that the State will approve the plan. She likes the EMO option because it will be supported by the State. She wants what is best for the students, and views this as an option to keep the schools open.

Board Member Couch was concerned about the statement that is we get a new school number we would not have any Opportunity Scholarship students. There is legislation pending that if students are in a feeder pattern that they will be allowed to continue in the feeder pattern. She grew up in Jacksonville and attended school here. Some of the best schools she and her sister attended were in the predominately African-American community. We have to voice our concerns and not continue to allow ourselves to be labeled. We asked Commissioner Eric Smith to define significant progress and he did not do it and still won't. There is a nice bell shaped curve that changes every year. She would like to have a fresh start for the four schools. The EMO would be made up of people we already know.

Board Member Wright indicated that she was not against Duval Partners. It has nothing to do with them. It is about the students. I live in the district where these schools are and I have been in the schools and seen the results. She is not asking anyone to go along with her, but to do what is right for the students. Her angst about an EMO is if we do use an EMO, then why not use one is proven. We are already paying one company, Educational Directions, to transform our schools. Why not let them do it.

Board Vice-Chairman Burney stated that the Superintendent indicated we would be

sanctioned if we wanted to close the schools. She asked how do we know when this plan gets to Eric Smith he won't say we have to do it the real way. And, what will happen to Duval Partners? She stated that the people were her friends, but when it comes to children she has no friends. We talked about them being a CBO (Community Based Organization). Next thing we know, it is an EMO that is not really an EMO. If we close the schools they can't sanction us because it is an option. Broward County was approved. She believes that we can get the 50% new students required for the schools if we advertise and promote the schools in the same manner we advertise and promote Stanton, Paxon, and the other Magnet schools. She stated that we know this is not an EMO, Duval Partners knows they are not an EMO, and the Commissioner might not accept this created version of an EMO.

Chairman Gentry thanked everyone in the community for their support and every Board member doing the best they can to make a difficult decision. His definite opinion is that this Commissioner of Education has wanted to close the schools from the very beginning.

Board Vice-Chairman Burney asked if an alternative motion could be made. The Chairman indicated that we had to vote on the motion that was on the floor first, or offer an amendment. Board Vice-Chairman Burney asked to amend the motion to include that should my fellow Board members decide to go against the community and Board members want, and check the EMO box, that this Board not accept the group listed because they are not an EMO. The Chairman said the amendment was inconsistent with the recommendation. Board Vice-Chairman Burney indicated that she just wanted to get it out there.

The Chairman called for a vote on the recommendation.

Speakers:

Mr. W. C. Gentry, Board Chairman  
Mr. Ed Pratt-Dannals, Superintendent  
Ms. Betty Burney, Board Vice-Chairman  
Mr. Tommy Hazouri, Board Member  
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Board Member  
Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee, Board Member  
Ms. Martha Barrett, Board Member  
Ms. Becki Couch, Board Member

Motions:

1. That the Duval County School Board approve contracting for education management services with Duval Partners for Excellent Education, Inc. as the Intervene School Option and Intervene School Strategic Implementation

- Plan for Andrew Jackson High School for submittal to the Florida Department of Education.
2. That the Duval County School Board approve contracting for education management services with Duval Partners for Excellent Education, Inc. as the Intervene School Option and Intervene School Strategic Implementation Plan for North Shore K-8 Elementary School for submittal to the Florida Department of Education.
  3. That the Duval County School Board approve contracting for education management services with Duval Partners for Excellent Education, Inc. as the Intervene School Option and Intervene School Strategic Implementation Plan for Jean Ribault High School for submittal to the Florida Department of Education. - PASS
  4. That the Duval County School Board approve contracting for education management services with Duval Partners for Excellent Education, Inc. as the Intervene School Option and Intervene School Strategic Implementation Plan for William M. Raines High School for submittal to the Florida Department of Education.

Vote Results

Motion: Martha Barrett

Second: Fred Lee

Martha Barrett	- Aye
Betty Burney	- Nay
Rebecca Couch	- Aye
William Gentry	- Aye
Thomas Hazouri	- Nay
Fred Lee	- Aye

Adjournment

[ADJOURNMENT](#)

Minutes:

The Chairman adjourned the Special Board Meeting at 6:37 p.m.

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Superintendent

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Chairman