



E-AGENDA MANAGER

## Duval County Public Schools

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August 11, 2015, Board Workshop

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 Vice-Chairman Ashley Smith Juarez and Board Members Jason Fischer and Paula Wright. 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 meeting was called to order at 9:13 a.m.

Items To Be Discussed

[LEGISLATIVE OUTCOMES AND AGENDA FOR 2015-16](#)

Minutes:

Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, presented a PowerPoint which is attached to the minutes on the Legislative Platform along with John Sullivan, Lobbyist for Duval County Public Schools. Discussion included the following:

- A major accomplishment is the change from a Special Diploma for Exceptional Education Students (ESE) to a Regular Diploma through a different program. Now these students will not count as non-graduates.
- Expected Trends
  - Movement again on sharing our millage with Charter Schools. The legislature is looking at an increase in the millage rate but not expecting this to happen since it is an election year.
  - A literacy bill has come up several times but has not passed. It will come up again.
  - Charter Schools that have been in operation for at least three years receive Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funds. If a charter school closes, the funds do not go back to the tax payer.

Board Member Couch voiced her concern for Charter Schools and utilization. Charter Schools have a lot of flexibility to build new schools or use existing buildings but we have many restrictions. We need to keep this on our Legislative Platform.

The Superintendent will create a one pager for the Legislative Platform and engage the community.

John Sullivan recommended the sharing of millage with Charter Schools as a platform item. October or November would be the best time for Board Members to come to Tallahassee to lobby.

Board Member Couch requested a workshop on Charter Schools.

Board Member Couch requested that if a bill comes forward concerning Dyslexia as a disability we need to lobby for this item including the need to fund it. She also requested the Board draft something that can be given to Legislators when they go to Tallahassee.

The Board discussed the need for an additional lobbyist. The Superintendent said he will work through the bid process and bring it back to the Board. Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, feels this can be done in about a month. We do need a stronger presence with City Council.

## [HUMAN RESOURCE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES](#)

Minutes:

Sonita Young, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, provided an overview of employee conduct. A PowerPoint is attached to the minutes. Discussion included the following:

- These guidelines were developed in order to ensure consistency throughout the district.
- Three types of violations:
  - Minor.
  - Significant.
  - Major.
- Step I- A verbal reprimand, Step II- Written reprimand, Step III- Suspension without pay and Step IV- Termination. Before any formal discipline is taken, the Supervisor will communicate with the employee.
- Only Step III and IV come to the Board for review. Only the Board has the authority to terminate or suspend an employee. The majority of discipline is at Step I and II which is at the school level.
- A Step can be skipped in some circumstances.
- All schools are now required to send in the Misconduct Reporting form. This was not the case previously.
- If it is determined that an investigation is needed, we may also contact other agencies, if needed.
- We have on-going meetings with Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) which we did not have before. The district also refers employees to Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for additional assistance.
- The employee can appeal once a decision is made. They have 15 days from their notice of discipline. We are represented by the Office of General Counsel. It is a full hearing. The Administrative Judge issues a Recommended Order but the employee can appeal the Final Order within 30 days.
- We are required to report to Professional Practices in Tallahassee anything that could impact the health and welfare of our students. This would be all of our Step III and IV's.
- Training is provided to employees and administrators concerning disciplinary procedures.
- Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, indicated that we need to create more modern language concerning a policy on social media.
- The Superintendent said he is also concerned with the Office Of General Counsel (OGC). The work today is very specialized and the large turnover rate leads to problems. He would like to look at what other large districts are doing and not contract the work. He will follow up with the Board.

## LITERACY PLAN

Minutes:

Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, reviewed the Literacy Plan in the PowerPoint which is attached to the minutes. The Literacy Plan was based on last year's plan along with what worked and what did not work and best practices. This plan is written for the public to understand.

- Reading-the core is stronger and directly aligned to the curriculum.
- 80% of teachers attended the Teacher Academy. Any teachers who did not attend the Teacher Academy will be able to attend training during preplanning.
- We now have the capability to do grade-level planning and not just in the Duval Transformation (DTO) schools.
- The District now provides support in PreK-2 which we did not have before.
- The Guiding, Remediating, and Accelerating Student Performance (GRASP) data indicated in the PowerPoint far surpasses the District average. The same curriculum is now being used in Tier III intervention for reading.
- The District now has a comprehensive tool to track students in how far they are behind and in what areas.

Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, explained that since teachers teach to the grade level it is difficult to teach students at different levels in the same classroom. What is being lost is the schools with a higher concentration of lower performing students because students are being taught at the grade level or to the average student.

Board Member Wright requested a schedule for Professional Development so Board members can drop in and see the training. The Superintendent will provide a one pager to the Board.

Board Member Hall requested a presentation on Read It Forward Jax. She also recommended the book Educating Students in Poverty be read by the Board and staff.

Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, indicated that we are in need of an enrichment plan that goes beyond gifted. He will come back to the Board with a broader plan.

Board Member Hall asked the Superintendent to survey teachers on classes they would like to see. The Superintendent said the challenge is who will provide the training and the cost. He is not opposed but most teachers have asked for classroom management classes.

## [GOVERNANCE](#)

Minutes:

Presentations - Board Member Hall invited all Board Members to attend the meeting on August 12, 2015. Vendors from iREADY and ACHIEVE 3000 will discuss their program. She would also like to see department reports at the Regular Board Meetings. It was decided that Department Reports need to be aligned to the topics on the agenda each month.

Focus - Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, stated that Focus is up and running seamlessly. Focus has replaced Genesis for student information. Board Member Hall asked if the District had a backup plan if problems occur with Focus. The Superintendent indicated that there is no back up plan.

Theory Of Action - Board Member Couch discussed the Policy Handbook Subcommittee conversation concerning the need to update the Theory Of Action. The subcommittee would like to engage stakeholders through a survey. We could define each Theory Of Action and ask stakeholders what they think we should do for the Theory Of Action. Chairman Grymes will contact Cathy Minberg, President and CEO, of the Center for Reform Of School Systems to work with the Board to revise the Theory Of Action.

Data Dashboard- Board Member Couch asked about a Data Dashboard now that we are moving to Focus. Dr. Vitti, Superintendent explained that the access is still there through Performance Matters. The staff has created profiles for each school which is how we define a Dashboard. Additional information can be added to the Dashboard. He will send out school profiles to the Board.

Texting and Driving - Board Member Wright asked the Board to invite Wayne Hogan, Personal Injury Attorney & Civil Trial Specialist to present at the Board Workshop and Committee Meeting on August 18, 2015.

Oversight Calendar - Board Member Wright requested the Board review the Oversight Calendar. Her concern is when the Accreditation Team review was done they were told they had too many initiatives.

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Suspension Numbers - Board Member Wright asked that we have a workshop on Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten suspension numbers.

Audit Committee Meeting- The Audit Committee Meeting will be on August 18, 2015.

Reception for City Council- Chairman Grymes discussed having a reception since there are so many new Council Members. She suggested the reception take place at the new Big Brother Big Sister site. Board Member Hall suggested we create a way to exchange ideas that we can follow up on. Board Member Shine discussed his concern over violating the Sunshine Law if Board Members are together at the reception speaking with City Council Members on Board issues.

Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) - Board Member Hall indicated that FSBA requested we select our legislative representative. My recommendation is that we keep Board Member Couch as our Legislative

Representative. The Board agreed with her recommendation.

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

CSM

We Agree on this

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Superintendent

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Chairman