



Duval County Public Schools

February 11, 2014, 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, 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 Board Workshop to order at 9:00 a.m.

Items To Be Discussed

[1. GOVERNANCE](#)

Minutes:

The following topics were discussed during Governance.

- Community Meeting Dates - Board members would like to have their community meetings during March and April. The topic for this set of meetings will be the budget. The presentation, which should be about 20 minutes, will cover the changes made last year with key changes to the budget - what we are doing differently; offerings for students; rationale for changes; student achievement results data (what is available); class size, etc. Staff will distribute the blue speaker cards and questions can be grouped together for responses from the Board, Superintendent, and staff. If there is any time left, additional questions can be taken from the audience. A one page handout will be prepared which contains explanations of budget terms and information - i.e., FEFP, FTE, budget cycle dates, etc. Information should also be handed out to the attendees regarding the upcoming legislative session and what they can do to help convey our priorities to their representatives. The information should include the legislators contact information and dates of the session. Board members will provide suggested dates for the meetings in their Districts. The Superintendent will look at middle and high schools throughout the District and make suggestions for locations.
- Expulsion Hearing Date - The date of February 27, 2014, at 10:00 a.m., was selected for the Expulsion Hearing.
- Policy Review - Chairman Couch asked for an update on the plan which was to be provided to the Board from staff regarding the upcoming Policy review. The Superintendent will provide an update.
- Technology Policies - Board Member Juarez asked about BYOD and other technology related policies. The Superintendent indicated that he is bringing an update to the Board in April.
- Graduation Coaches - Board Member Wright requested information on how we are monitoring students and providing them with guidance in a timely manner if they are in danger of not graduating, beginning at the end of the first nine weeks. The Superintendent indicated that the Coaches should be communicating with students the entire time, but sometimes it is not evident until the end of the first semester that a student may be in danger of not graduating. Board Member Wright will submit a BMR with information on specific students who failed the first nine weeks and had no contact made by the Coaches. She would like to make certain that we have processes in place to make sure the Graduation Coaches are reaching out to students if they see D's and F's the first nine weeks.
- FCAT Preparation - Board Member Wright asked where we are from the technology standpoint. The Superintendent indicated that we do not anticipate any concerns, and that the bandwidth issues from last year will not be a problem this year.
- Student Achievement - Board Member Hall asked when the next quarterly update would be available. Dr. Vitti shared that CGA 2 data should be available by this Friday. Dr. Hall asked if this would achievement gap information. The Superintendent said he thought staff could include that information.
- Accreditation - Board Member Hall asked if we are on target for the upcoming Accreditation visit in April. Dr. Vitti said that staff had received a list of the team members, but no information on sites selected for the visit. He shared that Fred Heid was meeting with the various community stakeholder groups. The Superintendent will provide the Board with an update.
- Writing Results - Board Member Hall asked the Superintendent to talk to them

about the writing results. He shared that this area continues to be a challenge. The rubric changed three years ago. Elementary is still a challenge, while middle and high has seen improvement. Students are now being provided with a journal in Kindergarten and this has shown positive results.

- Title I Funding - Board Member Lee shared that the Florida Times-Union Point of View article in today's paper contained misinformation. The Superintendent spoke to the article and explained what happens with the funding.
- Board Members - Letters to Editor - Chairman Couch asked that all Board members remember that when reaching out to the media and writing letters to the editor, that it is important to give their fellow Board members and the Superintendent a heads up on their submissions, as a professional courtesy. This is different than a member of the media calling and asking for a quote for an article they are writing. The Board member should also be clear in their letter or article that it is their personal opinion, and not that of the Board as a whole.

Speakers:

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

2. QEA

Minutes:

The Superintendent made a presentation to the Board on QEA - Quality Education for All. A copy of the presentation is attached to the Minutes. Discussion included the following:

- Chairman Couch asked about the person who will be over the 36 schools involved, and whether it would be an existing position or new position. The Superintendent said that it would be a new position, however, there may not be as many Regional Chiefs next year as we have now. Board Member Wright asked if he planned a national search, and Board Member Fischer asked if he would do a state search. Dr. Vitti is open to both suggestions, but sees value in looking within the system for someone who is familiar with the schools and their issues. He would like to have someone who had been the principal of a turnaround school with experience in moving a school forward.
- TFA will bring approximately 200 teachers for these schools. They will be placed mainly at the middle and high schools next year instead of concentrating on Title I schools.
- A Jacksonville Teacher Residency program is being developed with a local college in order to provide incentives for becoming a teacher in our school system.

- Board Member Lee asked about TFA and placing inexperienced teachers in the hardest scenarios. The Superintendent stated that it would be a multi-tiered approach to human capital.
- Board Member Hall asked about the longevity of this program. The Superintendent shared that he had no plans on going anywhere and that the program funding is for several years.
- Board Member Hall suggested that we develop a plan to recruit and entice those retiring from the Navy to come into our system.
- Board Member Hall asked about the Lastinger Center. Dr. Vitti shared that participation has declined in the last couple of years, but we still have an agreement with them.
- Board Member Fischer asked if there were minimum proficiency ratings or fact checks of data. The Superintendent said no, that the school grade was used.
- Chairman Couch asked about the principals selected for these 36 schools building their leadership team. The concern is that they could wipe out the school they are leaving. The Superintendent acknowledged this will be a challenge, and that it is natural to want to have people with you that you trust. The principals replacing them will have the ability to select their team as well.
- Dr. Vitti shared that he was looking at applying for another QZAB to address technology needs for these schools and that they may be able to use some of the QEA dollars for this purpose. He said that Montgomery County in Alabama, and Miami-Dade in Florida, has the best portal systems that he has seen.
- Board Member Wright asked about E-Rate dollars. The Superintendent said that Florida has not received the E-Rate funding for this year, but hoped that it would be received soon.
- Board Member Wright asked that the Superintendent look at Edward Waters College and the JWW Act Center as a pipeline for African-American male teachers. The Superintendent agreed.

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[3. MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 3 - APPENDIX B & FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN UPDATE](#)

Minutes:

The Superintendent made a presentation to the Board on the Five Year Capital Plan. A copy of the presentation is attached to the Minutes. Discussion included the following:

- The Superintendent will provide the Board with a breakdown of the Capital transfers from the past several years.
- Water Meter issue - Chairman Couch asked who they should speak to about this issue. Staff will provide information and Board Member Lee will approach Mike Hightower who is Chairman of the JEA Board, and Chairman Couch will approach the CEO.
- Superintendent Vitti asked the Board to consider revising the targets because of the impact funding. After discussion, it was decided to keep the targets where they are and acknowledge that the anticipated rise in FTE due to military deployment did not occur in time and had an impact on dollars received. In the future, the target can be adjusted to account for the timing of the families arrival.

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[4. MICROSOFT CONTRACT & ONCOURSE FOCUS SOFTWARE UPDATE](#)

Minutes:

The Superintendent made a presentation to the Board on the proposed Portal. A copy of the presentation is attached to the Minutes. Discussion included the following:

- Guidelines have been created for schools to use when preparing PowerPoints. The guidelines include the use of the new logo.
- Board Member Wright asked about access for parents without technology in their homes. The Superintendent shared that there will still be phone calls and parent contacts for items such as referrals, absences, etc. The portal will also work on phones.
- Chairman Couch asked about security of information on the portal. Dr. Vitti indicated that no personal information would be available to any unauthorized individuals and that controls would be in place.
- The Superintendent is recommending use of one time dollars for one time expenses connected to this project. He would also like to use reserve funding, and will also look at using QEA dollars.
- The portal should be operational for the 2015-2016 school year.
- Board Member Lee asked if they would do a test of the system using a few schools prior to full roll out. The Superintendent said yes.
- Board Member Lee also asked about teachers putting information into the system in a timely manner. Dr. Vitti shared that hopefully this more streamlined process would encourage teachers to be more timely in this area.

- Chairman Couch asked about OnCourse and the 120 day written notice on continuing or canceling their contract, and how the Focus software fits. The Superintendent said it captures student achievement data and that it will transfer to the portal.

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Adjournment

[ADJOURNMENT](#)

Minutes:

The Chairman adjourned the Board Workshop at 2:39 p.m.

BSC

We Agree on this

Superintendent

Chairman