



Duval County Public Schools

January 13, 2015, Committee Meeting and 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. 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 1:13 p.m.

Items To Be Discussed

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Minutes:

Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent reviewed the School Allocation Plan with the Board. Discussion included the following.

- Prioritize the budget with Board.
- Work with Michelle Begley, Internal Board Auditor, to verify the

budget numbers.

- Commit to an allocation plan by mid - February if possible.
- Focus on the budget at the school level.
- Earmarked \$22 million in one time dollars last year.
- Comparison of our plan versus the big seven Florida school districts provided to the Board.
- Governor proposed a \$32 million increase in general revenue proposed
- Superintendent recommends adding the following positions:
 - Add one guidance counselor at Mandarin Middle with enrollment over 1300
 - Add 46 part - time paraprofessionals at the elementary level at a cost of \$1 million dollars
 - Add 13 guidance counselors at the elementary schools with enrollment over 900 at a cost of \$800,000 dollars
 - Leave the allocation plan for ELL para's the same at a cost of \$750,000

Vice - Chairman Ashley Smith Juarez, and Board Member Paula Wright arrived at 1:25 p.m.

Board Member Jason Fischer and Board Member Becki Couch arrived at 1:35 p.m.

- Board Member Constance Hall asked if the district had schools with enrollment under 200. Superintendent Vitti stated the district has several in the low 200's but none below. Board Member Hall recommended the district add a media specialist at every school. Her concern is are we being effective. The Superintendent said the district added a reading coach at every school. Reading coaches give a better return if we had to chose. Superintendent Vitti said he would be interested in looking at an analysis for a full time interventionist versus a coach, based on the data.
- Board Member Paula Wright said she would like to see the budget centered on reading. Superintendent Vitti said the lowest performing schools have a reading coach and an interventionist. The bigger question is how do we support schools that are in the middle. They may need an interventionist instead of a reading coach.
- Board Member Wright asked what type of training is provided for paraprofessionals. Superintendent Vitti agreed training for paraprofessionals is needed. Board Member Wright asked how will we know if professional development is working. She requested a schedule of the training. Superintendent Vitti said we continue to rely on surveys at training sessions for feedback. The data has not been aggregated yet. Board Member Wright asked if we are pushing too much too use IREADY at home. How can we open schools for students to have access to use IREADY? Superintendent Vitti said he will create a plan to fill the gap during the school day.
- Vice- Chairman Smith Juarez inquired as to how budget numbers were determined for elementary versus middle. Superintendent Vitti response was we used the same numbers as

in previous years. Vice - Chairman Smith Juarez said we should be able to trace these numbers back. Superintendent Vitti will look at how principals have used the money at elementary and middle schools.

- Board Member Couch recommended we look at the media specialist role in Nashville schools as a model. Superintendent Vitti said we will talk to Duval Teachers Union again concerning the position. Board Member Constance Hall suggested we may need to rename the media specialists position. We do not have many certificated media specialists to fill positions.

Board Member Jason Fischer left the meeting at 1:55 p.m.

- Board Member Couch said she has heard many times from parents that the level of instruction is not the same at all schools. How are we addressing this, like the literary component? Superintendent Vitti said the level of implementation is different at each school. Having the personnel is the key.

Board Member Jason Fischer returned at 2:18 p.m.

- Board Member Hall asked where money is infused in the budget for professional development. Superintendent Vitti said the only funds available at the school level are discretionary funds.
- Board Member Wright asked if looping is effective. Superintendent Vitti replied we have not run data on looping. Principals can use their own discretion when using looping.
- Superintendent Vitti stated we should look at each item in the budget and then decide if we want to continue to fund an item.
- Board Member Scott Shine asked Superintendent Vitti for his recommendations. Superintendent Vitti said each board member needs to look at the budget to decide what makes sense and what doesn't. We also have schools that are under utilized or just old that we are putting a lot of money into.
- Board Member Couch asked when the district will start paying back Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) 1 and 2. Latrell Edwards, Chief Financial Officer said QZAB 1 will be repaid in 17 years and QZAB 2 in 20 years. We may have a small payment for next year. It just depends on when we close. We need to look at the bigger picture when tracking the trends.
- Board Member Wright asked if schools feel funding is sufficient for supplies in general. Superintendent Vitti indicated this did not come up in the focus group meetings. Exceptional Education did have concerns with their allocation. The funding for Exceptional Education was increased last year.
- Board Member Couch indicated the information provided to the Board shows every elementary has a 10-month security guard. This is not correct. The Superintendent indicated this was a typo.
- Board Member Shine asked about teachers using their own money to pay for supplies. Superintendent Vitti will bring information to the

- next meeting concerning funds.
- Chairman Cheryl Grymes stated last year teachers received a \$250.00 dollar debit card from the Legislature. Does the district look at every school to see how the funds are used? Superintendent said no we do not monitor this. It is based on weighted Full Time Equivalent (FTE).
 - Board Member Jason Fischer requested to see one or two recommendations from the Superintendent concerning the budget.
 - Vice - Chairman Smith Juarez would like to see the Board look at the most urgent needs of the district. We had about \$22 million in one time funds last year and in July it was \$38 million . She would like to see a summary to understand our recurring expenses. A comparison of last years allocation to this years allocation with staffing. Also if the Superintendent still has plans to add to his cabinet staff. A projection of charter and Mckay compared to last year.
 - Board Member Hall asked who creates the timeline. Superintendent Vitti stated he will work with the Chairman on the dates for the timeline.
 - Superintendent Vitti would like to align teachers performance pay with the standards.
 - Chairman Grymes asked if the Board was interested in attending the Florida School Board Association Master Board Training. The dates have not been set but they will need to know by January 23, 2015. Board Members Couch, Wright and Hall made a commitment to attend. The training is once a month and the majority of the Board and the Superintendent must attend. Chairman Grymes also reminded all board members to meet with the Superintendent separately concerning his evaluation then we will meet as a Board to go over the evaluation. At that time we will develop a statement for the media. The Superintendent will answer the following questions in his self evaluation:
 - What are his accomplishments?
 - What did he not achieve and what factors prevented him from achieving his goals?
 - What are his goals for next year?
 - Board Member Shine asked what the procedure is if the Board does not follow the policy concerning the timeline. Superintendent Vitti stated he will be able to meet the timeline. The following dates were decided for the evaluation:
 - January 23, 2015 - Superintendents Self Assessment due.
 - February 10, 2015- Special Board Meeting for the Superintendent's formal evaluation.
 - February 10, 2015 - Evaluations to Michelle Begley, Internal Board Auditor, before noon.
 - Board Member Couch said we may need to discuss what the points mean for the evaluation.
 - Chairman Grymes asked the Board members to send questions for the Governance meetings.
 - Vice-Chairman Smith Juarez suggested we should have Dr. Cathy Minberg, Center for Reform of School Systems (CRSS) president and

CEO, come back to finish our training. She does a great job.

Adjournment

[Adjournment](#)

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

CSM

We Agree on this

Superintendent

Chairman