



Duval County Public Schools

January 31, 2011, Special Board Meeting

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

ATTENDANCE AT THIS SPECIAL MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD with Mr. Ed Pratt-Dannals, Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Karen Chastain, Office of General Counsel, Mr. W. C. Gentry, Board Chairman, Ms. Betty Burney, Board Vice Chair and Board members: Ms. Martha Barrett, Ms. Becki Couch, Mr. Tommy Hazouri, Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee and Ms. Paula D. Wright, present.

Call Meeting to Order

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

Minutes:

The Chairman called the Special meeting to order at 6:18 p.m.

[2. INVOCATION](#)

Minutes:

Pastor Ted Corley
Ortega Baptist Church

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. INTERVENE PRESENTATION

Minutes:

The Chairman said, "Tonight, we have before us consideration of the Superintendent's recommendation for our four Intervene Schools. I know that many of you are here to speak to that issue. Some of you were here earlier for the workshop. The workshop is where we discuss issues and try to determine what our thoughts are collectively so that we can enter these Board meetings better informed. For those of you who were here during the workshop, I hope you have a sense as to where the Board is going. At this point in time, I would like the Superintendent, before we have public comments so you would have the benefit of his thoughts, to give you a little bit of the background on this issue and tell you his recommendations. I ask that you please listen to what he says that is being recommended. I know there's been a lot of talk in the community so I think it's important for you to hear what is being recommended because it may affect your comments. So, Mr. Superintendent, if you would bring everyone up to date as this has been kind of a moving target with a lot of input and a lot of thought."

Recommendation by Superintendent Ed Pratt-Dannals:

"Thank you, Mr. Gentry, and it might help if I give a fairly brief history lesson in terms of what's been happening over the last 2-3 months. We knew from the beginning when the schools entered into Intervene status about 1 1/2 years ago that we would have to select one of four options and that we would have to demonstrate that we were able to move the schools forward with one of those options and if we were not doing so, then we would have to move to one of the other three. So, 1 1/2 years ago, we continued our work in the Turnaround work which is led by Ms. Willis, our Deputy Superintendent and Mr. Tony Bellamy and Ms. Jackie Byrd at the School Chief level. We replaced the principals with the exception of one who had only been there for a year and had demonstrated very strong leadership. We replaced the majority of the faculty over the last two years. We've added instructional time, professional development - much more targeted and focused. Our district staff along with the Commissioner's staff have been doing regular walk-through to look at instructional practice and to improve it. We've looked at the data to find out at the teacher and student level, who is moving forward and who wasn't and how we could move that process faster and that's currently, a work in progress.

We did see all four schools move forward if you look at the overall points. On the FCAT portion of the school grade, two moved forward a little bit; two moved forward dramatically and yet we still had continuing issues in terms of increasing our reading performance. The climate culture is much more positive than it was and the schools are much more focused. There is a greater sense of urgency in terms of moving the schools forward. Many of the people in the community have stepped forward to provide assistance and help, whether that is mentoring, tutoring, providing food for

students during Saturday School and a host of other ways in which the community has stepped forward and yet, that is still a work in progress. I don't think we'll ever have enough people assisting and helping. While there's still work to be done, none of those four schools are perfect and there's much more work to be done instructionally but we do believe the schools are making progress and moving forward.

What we were supposed to do by November 1st was to provide the Commissioner in writing that if we don't make sufficient progress with the Turnaround Plan, which of the other three options we would choose and then by February 1, 2011, which is tomorrow, to submit a plan as to how to implement that. Again, if and only if, we didn't make significant progress using the Turnaround process. At the time, we had three new Board members coming on board and one of which is Ms. Paula D. Wright who has three of the schools that are in her district so I wrote the Commissioner and I said for two reasons we wanted to spend some more time thinking about and discussing it because of the change in Board members and, also, indicating that at this point, we have not been able to find any specific organization that appears to meet the criteria in the statute. The criteria in the statute...let me say what the other three options are:

- (1) Close the school;
- (2) Have the school managed by a charter organization; or
- (3) Managed by an EMO (Educational Management Organization).

Both of those are fairly similar but the difference is that one has the charter application and the other has a contract. In both cases, they have a major responsibility to run the school. Many of them hire their own teachers and in some cases, nationally. They use district teachers but, perhaps, on a different contract so there's a lot of variety in terms of those organizations. Particularly, when we look at "high needs" high schools and looking at a conversion. A conversion is when you take an existing attendance zone and existing students as opposed to the vast majority of charter schools that have opened that move the attendance boundaries and attracted students to the school usually after it's been closed. It was a strong opinion of myself and the Board members that we wanted a school that was still connected to the community, viewed as a neighborhood school and that was very important. So, we looked at the high school's high need, conversion, strong track record of success, which is required in the statute, and had the capacity to come here and open up this coming August, I've still yet to find an organization to meet that criteria.

So, in discussion with the Commissioner, I said, 'Can we look at some individual schools that have been successful and copy those models?' That was the point in which we engaged the community in the community meetings, further discussion with the Board, and through that process, came up with a model focusing on smaller schools within a school. Now, the way those were originally envisioned would be truly a distinct school, separate school grade, separate budget, etc., but that was only when we were trying to model that small schools model. We've moved from that now to viewing that as a single school with a single overall leader, a single school grade but still looking at the small school concept and that still has further work to do with the Board. We have listed that to explore in our document to the Commissioner. In each of those cases, we looked at what was existing in the school to try and maximize the

kinds of positive things that were going on and based on some of the research we've done over a number of years in terms of what kinds of programs attract and retain students. Part of the focus of that was to create a focus for every student and attract back to the school's students that have left for other choices over the years and there is a significant number of students who have done that.

In further discussion with the Commissioner, I shared with him what we did and the Commissioner had three concerns:

- (1) He wanted us to be more specific about what we're doing in the academic programs, particularly reading, and that was a fair request. We knew some of the things we were doing but we had not put it in the documents, so the documents now include it;
- (2) He wanted to know what type of flexibility we would have with the Union contract and particularly in terms of making sure we could attract and retain the best and those that aren't working out, that we had some process finding another location for them; differentiated pay and performance pay - many of the things we were doing over the years, to be very specific and concrete in the plan as to how we would do that - so we added that section;
- (3) Governance - who has responsibility and authority for the school? So, if you look at either the charter or the EMO plan, they turn over major functions of a school to a another entity and then hold them accountable for results. If they don't produce results, then the Board would either modify or potentially remove that contract and potentially have someone do it. So, there is accountability and performance in those models.

First of all, we couldn't find an organization, at this point, that would meet the criteria of what I mentioned and particularly, a strong track record of success and conversion high school. The other problem is if we went with that, then we would be required to do a total upending of the staff, again and we did that 1 1/2 years ago and this past year, we looked at who was at the school to see if we moved students forward academically or not, and made some selective changes. It doesn't mean that we wouldn't do some selective changes if we continue to have the district primarily responsible, but if we went with the EMO or charter, it would require a change in the principal, assistant principal, coaches, reading and math teachers, English/Language Arts teachers who couldn't demonstrate that they had moved students forward, academically. So, you have brought in another organization that would have a total churning of the staff and they would have one year to establish strong academic progress. Again, not seeing any organizations who have been able to do that, you would be back at it the year after that. So, if you chose the EMO the first time and it didn't work, you'd only have two choices left - charter and closure. Part of the problem is the way the statute is written and I know the Commissioner has to follow that, however, the statute is almost written in such that it is a death spiral. If you follow its logical conclusion, we would potentially end up 3-4 years down the road closing a significant number of schools. The Board, community and everyone I've spoken with said the number one thing is that we need to keep these schools open and they need to serve the community and "yes", we want them to be high performing schools. So, nothing in this should be construed as satisfaction on my part or the Board's part in

terms of the progress today. Again, I think we have some strong roots built in each of the schools. Each of the schools still have work to do as it is not a completed process. The question is: 'Which of these plans has the best chance of success over the next 3-4 years?' What I did to respond to the Commissioner's request for what we had before was an Advisory Committee was to make sure it was clearly outlined, what the role and responsibility of this group would be, and they would have major input into what was happening at the schools and provide direct information to me as to how to improve the process. We have changed that section of Governance to be:

The Superintendent will establish a partnership with a community-based organization composed of members who have expertise in improving low performing schools and effectively engaged community stakeholders including families, businesses, faith-based organizations and non-profit organizations to work with _____ (fill in the school and we have four of these).

The role of the community-based organization will be to provide oversight, recommend any changes in curriculum, instruction, professional development, staffing and monitoring to provide direct input to the Superintendent. (So, it's stronger than before in terms of it being an advisory group, but it is not a group who manages the school like an EMO. Again, they would have significant input and oversight but it still would be a district-run school with me, the Superintendent, being responsible and I'm responsible to the Board to show progress.)

Now, we still have a lot of work to do instructionally in these schools and they are better than they were. However, it is still a work in progress but I'm confident that the best plan to make the most progress at this point is to stay with that and keep working at it and make it better as opposed to one of these other options. So, that is what the Board will be voting on tonight. Also, the document includes exploring these small schools I described earlier and there will be more follow up discussion with the Board to look at wrap-around services, provide additional emotional/social support for students and more professional development, more focus on reading; and that we exercise more extensive efforts to attract and retain the highest quality teachers. Once we decide on what these small schools and the roll-out look like, a strong marketing plan to attract students back to the four schools, and if we had flexibility in the Union contract in terms of being able to make sure that we would be able to make the kinds of decisions we need to make.

So, those are the key areas of the plan as outlined and there are two documents for each school. The other document in addition to the plan is the initial Intervene Option which is due tomorrow and I'm citing Andrew Jackson's and the others are the same. If Andrew Jackson should not meet the requirements for Exit Intervene Status by improving to a "C" or higher, then the district expects it will be able to demonstrate that the school will likely move from the lowest performing category, if additional time is provided, to implement the district's plan. We would submit this to the Commissioner tomorrow and, hopefully, receive back from him either a "yes" or modifications and move from there pending on what the response is. We have a meeting with him on Friday, February 4, at 2:00 p.m., face-to-face and, hopefully, if

we can get a response by then, we'll be able to have a discussion as to where we are...the Board and I are simply trying to find the best solution that can create the most progress for our students and still comply with the statutory requirements which are very limiting and defined, quite frankly."

5. COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE

Minutes:

State Representative Mia Jones said thank you to the Board members and Superintendent for your recommendation that you will be sending forward to the Commissioner of Education. You required me to change what I had planned to say tonight and that being the case, I do want to put it on the record that we need to make sure that the Commissioner is reminded of the history in Duval County...what we have gone through, the changes that have been made, the negative impact that has taken place on our schools and the fact that if we continue in this direction, it's not going to do anyone any good. When I look over the numbers, I asked his office to send some things to me, prior to his talking with you today, his office spoke with each of the representatives from the Delegation that these schools are in, and I will tell you that the information they sent was scripted, just as his speech to you was scripted. It would put me into a position to say that we have a responsibility and he stated to you all that the Department of Education had a responsibility. I say to you that from 1999 when the FCAT was implemented until 2007-2008 when they decided to do DA that they had a responsibility; that the district had a responsibility and that they saw where these schools were going and not being successful, but they wanted to make sure that they got to a point of "no return". Once they got to that point, they could put in place a plan to move forward on what they ultimately wanted to do. I hate to think that way but sometimes we have to be realistic. So, tonight, I commend you for the work that you are doing. I tell you that we do have a long way to go. I recognize that our young people in these schools, individually, have needs that need to be met. We need to meet the needs of the total child and as we meet the needs of the total child, looking at where those I's and II's are, put in a plan in place for each one of them and holding the school, guidance department, parents and everyone accountable for making sure that they're successful, we can move them, but we can't do that unless we look at that total child. I will close by telling you that around the country where everyone saw the movie "*Superman*" and everyone heard the story, I went to Harlem and a Children's Zone to see what they were doing there. Now, what they don't tell you in the movie is that there's a whole lot more to it than just hiring teachers that are not union; more to it than having longer school days, but they look at the total child. They look at the total child if that child is sick, they get them to a doctor. If that child has a tooth ache, they get them to a dentist. If a family has a problem and someone in the family needs a job, they help to get that done. We know that all of these things impact us as adults...imagine what it does to children. Tonight, we have with us the cheerleaders from Raines High School and a number of other young people who are here and I want to thank them for coming out for this civics lesson. They need to understand that when you all sit here and when I sit in Tallahassee, decisions are being made that will impact their lives for the rest of their life. So, I commend them for taking the time out to be here and to be a part of this process, but I go back to what they're doing in the

Harlem Children's Zone because what we will continue to hear from the Legislature and political candidates across this country is that, "*Oh, charter is the answer.*" Well, charter is the answer when you put a whole lot of other things behind it. We can do a lot of the things that are being done in charters but we have to make sure that we're doing what's in the best interest of the kids and the way that it needs to be done. So, as we move forward, we have done it and as Board Member Wright said that we did it with Stanton. We put a plan in place and we were successful it was implemented properly and we did it with Paxon. We can put a plan in place if we are committed to doing it and make sure it is implemented properly for these challenged students. I'm not going to say "challenged schools" but for these "challenged students" to ensure that when they leave these schools, they will be a productive part of this community and go on to higher education or into the work force but to make sure that we, as a community can be proud. I stand with you. If we have to sue the state, I'm ready to sue. Whatever we have to do, I'm committed to doing that and standing with you and know that this community is committed to doing that, as well. Thank you so much.

Mr. Isaiah Rumlin said I serve as the President of the Jacksonville Branch of the NAACP. I was going to read from a statement prior to the Superintendent stating his recommendation. I come to you tonight with critical concerns for the children in our school district and an overwhelming disappointment in the decision that may be made tonight that will affect Raines, Ribault, Jackson and NorthShore. This school district has promoted a culture of haves and have nots and pockets of success and pockets of failure. Each and every day, you have students coming to school to get an education and many parents doing the best that they can, teachers and principals working hard and making personal sacrifices, community stakeholders that are eager to get involved and support education but a leadership that is willing to give away public schools that are now short in progress in student gains. It is time to take a stand and make brave decisions based on what is best for our children. In the 1970's, the African American communities were devastated by the closing and reconfiguration of these high schools. These schools and neighborhoods were further impacted by the creation of magnet schools that resulted in hundreds of the neighborhood's high performing students each year abandoning their neighborhood schools. This flight, over years of creating a neighborhood with a number of students performing at a low level on the FCAT and as we stated earlier today, the Jacksonville Branch of the NAACP and the community, as evidence, by coalition partners here, tonight, that this community will not tolerate any of the four Intervene Schools to be taken over by an Education Management Organization. We already know what your decision is going to be tonight more than likely, but these schools that are in our community, that we are sick and tired of our children continuously being left behind because of the actions of this Board and the Superintendent. We are informing you that we will not tolerate any kind of any type of Education Management Organization to be associated with our schools. We also intend to meet with the Commissioner on Friday and we have over 3,000 signed petitions that we will present to him on Friday morning outlining our position as it relates to EMOs. We don't want it; we won't tolerate it and as Ms. Jones has already said, although it may be a state statute, if we have to go to court, we are prepared to take this issue on. Thank you very much.

Mr. Reggie Fullwood said much like Representative Jones, I came here at 3:00 o'clock not knowing what to expect and I must say I was very pleased to hear that every single

School Board member embraced the fact that we must fight for our schools; fight for our children and community. That means a lot to these folks here and, again, we hear rumors so it was great to see each School Board member say that our children are much more important and we are willing to fight for them. Pastor Corley said in his prayer that in the middle of crisis is opportunity and I think this is an opportunity for us to turn our schools around to great model schools not just for this state, but for the country to follow. I'm very thankful that the School Board is on Board with the community and willing to fight. If my pastor were here, he'd probably talk about the story of David vs. the Lion...you have this big state agency and with all of the resources and you have the School Board....I think that the rocks that you have in your hands are the children in this community and where here, today, to tell you that we will fight with you with our children in mind. So, again, I just thank you for your support and it means a lot that you didn't say, "OK, Mr. Commissioner, we'll accept one of these three options." You said, "No, Option 4 is the best one for us so we'll create our own option and we'll fight for it." So, again, thank you and thanks to all the members in this community for coming out and letting it be known that we care about our children and will fight for them. Thank you.

Honorable Audrey Gibson said I am the former and recently termed representative for District 15 and I am not running for mayor. Let's make sure we have that clear...those are not my billboards. I wanted to share with you a little bit of history first that I think will help a little to your proposal that I certainly support and I have a couple of things I'd like to give to you and will consider including, as well. You talked earlier about the way the statute is written - written in a "death spiral". I will tell you that that is intentional. House Bill 991, I was a member at the time, was written to kill schools. OK, let's just put it on the table so that private entities could take them over and make a profit. We need to understand that. We also need to understand that the legislation passed pretty much down party lines in the House and not one of the people who represent the schools that are under consideration here tonight to be turned around, not one of those members voted for that bill. So, we have a piece of legislation that we are requiring schools to live under that the folks who represented the schools did not support to begin with. I think that is a travesty. The Commissioner, obviously, doesn't care that and so as you mentioned earlier, briefly, you talked about wrap-around services and I think it is critical that social services be incorporated into whatever plan goes forth because we have grandparents raising kids in these particular neighborhoods; we have kids going home to parents that can't help them do the homework so we need to increase our counseling at the schools as well as social services so that we know what is going on within a particular family that maybe we can help so that the child becomes more successful in school. Additionally, I was wondering what our substitution rate is those particular schools...I'm not sure if we have that number; we may look at that to see if that is impactful at all. We have moved forward and because we have made the gains, the Commissioner is obligated to consider that and it takes longer than a year; he's been in his job for more than a year; I'm sure he understands that it takes longer than a year to get accustomed to it. The last point I will make to you is you talked about the community-based organization that will make recommendations. The way I understand what the Commission is looking for and we still have to sue regardless because I think he's not going to accept it, is the governance piece. The CBO will have to do, I think, more than recommendations. There's going to have to be a piece in there where those recommendations become policy of some sort in order to get that governance piece in there and I thank you so

much for allowing me to go over my time.

Mr. Kenneth Reddick said I wanted to say thus far from the comments that I've heard, I pretty much echo everything that I've heard. There are a couple of things that I would like to comment on an one is if we continue to move forward the increased number of magnet schools, I think we will perpetuate the problem that we're standing here talking about tonight. I really don't feel that those schools are going to help us; it's going to continue siphon off students from their neighborhood schools and the irony of this whole thing to me is that many years ago, most people in Jacksonville were talking about maintaining neighborhood schools. They wanted their kids to go to the school in their neighborhood. Now, because we have made it so convenient by affording transportation and/or buying cars for our kids to go to the magnet schools and before, we complained about the costs associated with the busing, that's no longer an issue because we want to make it convenient for the students. The second thing is, I don't know if we really give consideration to the fact that many of the feeder schools that go into some of these schools that we're talking about, the students come ill-prepared for those schools, to begin with. Yet, we are penalizing them for the faults or shortcomings of others. We really need to look at that because they're not given a fair shake when we look at that situation. I don't know how much of this has been addressed but if we are sincere about helping the students at these schools and if we are sincere about what we are capable of doing, then, to me, it would be a shame to have to bring in folk from outside the Duval County area to show us how to run and manage our schools and get our students to do better than what they are doing. I think we're paying each person here that is supposed to be qualified to produce and if they can't, then that needs to be addressed. We shouldn't have to go outside as we should be the model for others. When you look at the makeup of those students at Stanton and Paxon who have family members, for the most part, have degrees, income, more amenities than most of these students, they don't face the same challenges and why I'm not saying that I'm not proud of those schools, we can't hide behind what they're doing and taking all of the credit for what those students are doing because they are gifted students. They are supposed to produce at the level that they do. We should be focusing our attention on our underachievers. Thank you very much.

Mr. George Young, first Vice President of the Jacksonville Branch of the NAACP, and I'm here tonight to speak and Mr. Rumlin did cover most of my points, and the ones he didn't cover the legislator did cover, but I just wanted to speak to this body as I believe we're on television, the fact of the matter is, if you had magnet schools when I came along, I wouldn't be standing here talking with you but the fact that there were people in the school that were a little bit smarter than I was, it made me work a little bit harder...not to be as good as they were but to be better than I was. When you take all of the good students out of our schools...if I had been the smartest kid in my school, it would have been a ruined school...I wasn't a dummy but I wasn't a genius, either. The fact of the matter is, I had someone to look up. When you take the better students out of the school, the other kids don't have anybody to chase. You can't tell me that I can't read if you don't allow me to read. When I was in school, we had groups and I wasn't always in Group 1 but math, I was in Group 1 and some of the other subjects, I was in the lower group. It's not a joke but I never wanted to be in Group 3. I had to be in either Group 1 or 2 and it was just the idea of working at it and I was able to get out of

a bad neighborhood. I'm a retired firefighter so I know a little bit about people and when I travel around this city and when I look at these young people at Northwestern or Raines, Ribault...people in my area around 3rd and Fairfax area, it's a different world from when I lived in Key Biscayne Estates...people are entirely and totally different. If I had nothing to look forward to then I have nothing to work for. I would have no reason to try and do better. If I lived in poverty and that's all I see, then it doesn't make a difference. If we would take some of these children out of these areas for just a short time to let them see greater things and let them know those things obtainable, we would do them a lot of good. Thank you.

Ms. Pervalia Gaines said good evening and I've been an advocate for kids, especially Ribault Senior High School, for the past five years. I've been on the frontline since 2002 and I've gone through 4 Superintendents, John Fryer, Nancy Snyder, Joseph Wise and our current Superintendent, Mr. Pratt-Dannals. At Ribault, we've gone through 4 principals, Lawrence Dennis, Stephen Schick, Royce Turner and current principal, Dr. James Young. In any organization, one general rule of thumb to make significant changes, is that it takes at least four years to implement something. The first year is to deploy the change; the second year is to accept the change; and the third and fourth year is to embrace the change. So, if it takes four years to effectively change an organization, my question for you tonight is if there can't be consistency in the administration at both the district and school levels, then how do we expect these schools to be able to make progress if they don't have time to change the coach for positive changes? Mr. Superintendent, I've listened to your plan but it's hard as a community member to trust the district. We've been saying the same thing for the last 9 years and that's consistency and you've been saying the same thing and that is community input and community stakeholders, but the community never really has a voice. This matter is too, too serious for us to play with so as a community, we're asking for guarantees, and as a community, we're asking for consistency. Thank you.

Dr. Eugene Diamond said let me commend you and I thank you for fighting to keep the schools open. My issue is more with what is being done to address what appears to be the systemic problem. By the time children reach high school, if they get to high school and their equivalency levels are below sixth grade, you're asking the high schools to perform a miracle and so the problem can't be solved in high school. It must be fixed at the lower levels and so my suggestion is that we must focus on the lower levels so by the time the child gets to high school, and I understand that the magnet schools have pulled off some of the *cream of the crop*...not all...a lot of stuff has happened because we have allowed children to be passed on and what we now face...let's admit, high school is it...that's the final stop and once you have passed children on for 12-14 years, it becomes a dumping ground and then we're scrambling to fix a problem that does not start in high school. It started way before high school. The challenge to the Board members is how do we address our systemic problem which is germane to our community - from our elementary to middle to high school? There's some work that must seriously be done on those levels. I agree that there must be a partnership between school and community but at the same time, we must feel confident that we are not getting the left overs. I haven't seen too many new schools built in our community but I've seen a lot of renovations and patchwork and it's not fair in a computer age to insist that our children continue to go to schools that were built in the 1960's. So, let's build partnerships and address the issue before high school. Thank you.

Ms. Carol Sittema said thank you for the opportunity to speak. I represent the Southside and Mandarin and my husband is a pastor and our church has been mentoring children on the Northside because we've come to the realization that we have responsibility for all of the children in this city, not just those in the Southside and I came to the Board because I did an independent research of charter schools and EMO's and I will tell you...I limited my research to the last 1 1/2 years and I was hard pressed to find any good news about EMO's or charter schools. So, the fact that we would even consider that or told we must consider it, I don't think is an option and apparently, you've come to the same decision. But, for the record and for the state, I want them to be aware that it's not just the Northside that is opposed. There are many of us on the Southside that do not feel that it would be acceptable for the children of our city. I will also say that I am delighted by your decision but I also want to acknowledge that what I've heard here tonight about the inconsistencies with this School Board and just watching from someone on the other side, watching the turnover when someone gets really good at a school, you pull them and send them to another school, it's hard for me to understand that. I just want to encourage you to press on and do what is right for these children. Please know that many of us, even if we're not on the Northside, are concerned. As part of the record, here's the research, the RAND Study, 2009 -it's so voluminous that this is not the way to do it. Thank you, again.

Mr. Delaney Holly, Jr. said I am a William Raines graduate, Class of 1986. I had a long speech prepared but in hearing the Superintendent, I've changed that to just say I applaud you for the decision you've made and I do agree with many of the comments made that we do need to do more than say we're going to do this thing. We do need to put this forward and look at it from every measure possible because the legacies of these schools are much richer than anything I've heard thrown around as far as what will fix them and enrich them more than what the community is saying needs to be done. I'd also like us to consider many of these things that are being proposed by our legislators. This has to be...the RAND Study came up earlier...something that we need to look at more seriously. This is student brokering and we all know that. These people are trying to buy our students in Duval County and we can't allow that. We need our students and we need our children...I need Raines High School. It's the school my father attended, my uncles and the school my sons want to attend and I tell you, these legacies of Raines, Jackson and Ribault...we can't sell them away to this brokering process that the state is trying to implement and force on us. Thank you and have a nice night.

Miss Laila L. Moffett said I am a 4th grader at S.A. Hull Elementary and one of my dreams is to go to Ribault in my mother's and three aunts' footsteps and become Ribault's Student Body President. I am a good student and I'm on the A/B Honor Roll. Last year in third grade, I made IV's on the FCAT. I believe in the students at Ribault, Raines, NorthShore and Jackson and want you all to believe in them, too. Thank you for listening to me tonight and thank you, Ms. Burney, for your support of kids.

Ms. Tamika L. Gaines said that's my daughter. To the Chairman of the Board, fellow Board members, Superintendent, special guests, students, teachers, alumni and community members who have been in this fight for a long time, I say good evening.

I am a community supporter and a proud graduate of Jean Ribault High School. You must have heard my speech last night in your dreams because I was here tonight to oppose the proposed changes but I would like to state today to remind you all of the rich tradition that exists between these four schools. It's over 100 years of rich tradition that exists between Jean Ribault High School, William M. Raines, Andrew Jackson and North Shore and this became a culture. Please be reminded that this culture has developed city and state officials, Board members, doctors, lawyers and yes, a Director of Programs for a community-based organization. This could only be done with assistance and support from a community that has become a family like the family you see here today. So, I thank you for removing those heinous and unconscionable options off the floor and making a wiser and more courageous recommendation but just in case you forget what happened here tonight, we all can come back and make sure that we bring it to your remembrance on how we feel our schools need to be in our community. I thank you for your time and have a wonderful evening.

Ms. Erica Hansberry said I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Board for allowing me to say a few words on behalf of Jean Ribault Senior High School. I graduated from Ribault in 2006. I participated in many extracurricular activities such as Student Government, Volleyball, Basketball, Flag Football, the National Honor Society as well as serving as the Senior Class President. I graduated number 13 in a class of approximately 206 students and I went on to attend the University of North Florida on an academic scholarship. I'm here today to express my concern with you and your voting and provide some points that will, hopefully, sway you to come up with alternative solutions to this issue. I don't want politics to prove to be more important than the students receiving a good education or taking away opportunities that will allow them to pursue post-secondary education. These schools are struggling and it is the School Board, the district, the Superintendent and the Commissioner's job to figure out why that is. These schools are low on funding which takes away from the resources needed to help the students prepare for the FCAT. There is a great lack in understanding how a decision like this can be made based solely on FCAT scores. Why our public schools attain grades on the basis of a test that is receiving criticism? However, until the powers that be reverse their methods, schools across the state of Florida will continue this battle. Meanwhile, solutions like the ones that were being proposed today are implemented with unstable faculties, administration, mismanagement, lack of funding and as a result, they fail and become empty reminders such as Horizons Unlimited Academy, Creative Kids, Daniel Payne Academy, Empowering Young Minds and Destiny Education Academy of Excellence, to name a few. The students should be measured in a way that proves that they are prepared to go on to the next level of education or at least have received the necessary amount of support that proves they are ready to exit the level that they are on. I propose that decisions be made to figure out how to get out of the situations like this and how they can be prevented instead of making a decision that puts the students in a situation that could potentially take away opportunities to allow them to go on to the next level and reach a higher education. Again, this should not be about politics and it can't be stressed enough. I mentioned some of my credentials earlier because I want you to understand that positive things have come from Jean Ribault, William M. Raines and Andrew Jackson, alike, before and after the year of 2006 and we've all gone on to be positive in society. I respectfully ask that you make a sincere effort in trying to figure out the cause of the problem and the alternative solution and communicate those

findings with the community. I appreciate the fact that you recognize the schools are progressing and that your recommendation is to keep the schools open to be run by the district. Thank you for your time.

Ms. Roslyn Mixon-Phillips said many of the things that I wanted to say have been said by others here but I want to thank you for what you are doing. I'm glad you're not on television tonight but I'd like to say a few things: reclaiming young black males, Project Break Through, Learning to Finish, Learning to Succeed and the list goes on and on of the number of programs, projects, interested and concerned organizations and initiatives that are looking to help come up with solutions to our schools and children, in particular. I told someone recently that I should be on the School Board's payroll with all of the meetings that I attend around these issues and it's because of our interest and concern that we do it. One thing that concerns me is the drain that it has on your limited resources of the school. Every one of these programs and initiatives have to be supported - we have questions, data need...so if there is a way to get our arms around it as you are the professionals and you are the ones who have been elected along with the people employed to run our schools and to make our schools successful. I think that your time is well spent in those schools doing what you have been paid or have been elected to do. I'm very much concerned about the numbers in these Intervene Schools and what has happened as a result of magnet over the years. We need to find a way to bring our students and families back to their neighborhood schools. It would make a big difference so we're here. I pledge along with all of these other people as many of us could be elsewhere instead of here and going to meetings. We need to be about making the change that is necessary for children to be able to succeed. I am a proud 1973 graduate of William M. Raines High School.

Ms. Vicki Scott said I am a 1977 graduate from Ribault High School and I remember the days when Alvin White was there and he instituted such great morale there at Ribault and the competition between Raines was great. We won that football game that year! It was exciting and he was such a positive and strong leader. For us to lose Raines, Ribault, Jackson and NorthShore, that would not look very good for Jacksonville, at all. Can you think about us being all over the news of letting these four schools close because we couldn't get it together? I have two businesses: Sling Blade Lawn Care and Victory Cleaning Service & More and I started this business just last year but what I did was take school supplies to Sallye B. Mathis Elementary School, Ribault Middle and Ribault and I started at the elementary school trying to do something positive for the school. It does start at the elementary level and feeds to the Ribault Middle and then to Ribault High, as Dr. Diamond was saying. We must start where the problem begins and it's very early on in the elementary setting. I applaud the Board for fighting for Raines, Ribault, Jackson and NorthShore...fight on! You don't want to lose this tradition that we have as it is a fantastic and wonderful tradition. I encourage this Board plus business leaders, communities, churches from all areas to help us as we know that the Northside has been slighted over too many years and now it's time to fight. Let's pick up the banner as we love our schools and most of all, we love our kids! Thank you.

Ms. LaShonda Holloway said I am a product of William M. Raines High School. I am a stakeholder and I take stock in children in this community. I concur with many of the statements that were made this evening but I would also encourage and admonish you

to share with the Commissioner that we are advocating for smaller classroom sizes to assess and accommodate student deficiencies. We're also asking for an effective marketing plan to attract and retain talent. More importantly, is the cost benefit analysis that is associated with charter schools and EMOs as much of the research I've done and it suggest they do not work. It would be much better for the community for us to be best in our schools. More importantly, one year, essentially, 180 days of a school year is not sufficient to implement and improve a failing school. We need comprehensive schools to cater to students who have challenges. Again, my name is LaShonda Holloway and I am a community stakeholder and I take stock in children in this community. Thank you for your time.

Ms. Tia M. Leathers said protocol already being established, I first want to let you know that I did not stand here to be redundant. I think I have a little patience but I could not just sit down without getting up because I do feel there is something in us taking all this time to be sure to say our piece so that you know how important this is because I wouldn't have rested well tonight when I got home when I could have kept them there 3 more minutes. One thing I want to say is that I graduated in 1999 and we took the FCAT that year as a test. I don't know if you guys knew this but for myself, I didn't take that test very seriously because I needed the HSCT to graduate. I passed that but the FCAT I played with having no clue that that test would then become something that would ultimately ruin my school. I just wanted to put that out there in case you didn't know it. My final thought if by chance the Commissioner gives you a hard time, you know we're in numbers and our emotions are charged and we're right here behind you. If by chance, it's not looking good, please think about it as if these were your own students and your own alma mater. I am proud in my red and gray today - give me more years to beat Ribault! Thank you.

Ms. Schanna Speight said "greetings" and I come to you tonight as a mother of a 3 year old who will attend Ribault just like his Mom and I also wanted to thank you for restoring my faith in your word because my faith in your word was shaken when I read the paper and it said that regardless of what we do in June, the consensus is to go forward with some type of dramatic change. So, if that in fact is not the case, then I would greatly appreciate it if you could either refute that or clarify exactly what that consensus is agreeing on because it's kind of hard to "fight the fight" when you think your legs have been cut off from under you. With that, Ribault did win. Thank you.

Chairman Gentry said, "I believe that concludes all the public comments and we do greatly appreciate it and you expressed alot of thoughts that will be further considered by this Board, many of which we have already been looking at but we'll give it further consideration. Before we start and let me just say this while all of you are here and I know I'm preaching to the choir, but we need to take this energy and enthusiasm, Ms. Burney and the rest of the Board, and we need mentors, tutors, everyone in the community engaged so everyone in this room needs to go out and let's use this as a catharsis to really get the help we need. This Board is ready to assist you in any way we can and it's not just Ms. Burney and Ms. Wright; it's all of us here."

[6. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 31, 2011, AGENDA](#)

Minutes:

Motions:

That the Duval County School Board approve the January 31, 2011, Agenda as submitted on January 28, 2011, with the following changes:

1. General - Item 1 - Page 7 - Board Approval of 2011-2012 Intervene School Options and Intervene School Strategic Implementation Plan for Andrew Jackson High School, North Shore K-8 School, Jean Ribault High School, and William M. Raines High School - Revised Attachment; Attachments Added - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Thomas Hazouri

Second: Betty Burney

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

General

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

Attachment: [Intervene Schools Strategic Plan Jackson North Shore Ribault Raines.pdf](#)

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

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

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

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

Minutes:

Speakers:

Ms. Betty Burney, Board Vice Chair
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Board Member
Mr. W. C. Gentry, Board Chairman

Motions:

1. That the Duval County School Board approve 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 the Intervene School Option and Intervene School Strategic Implementation Plan for North Shore K-8 for submittal to the Florida Department of Education.

- PASS

3. That the Duval County School Board approve the Intervene School Option and Intervene School Strategic Implementation Plan for Jean Ribault High School for submittal to the Florida Department of Education.

4. That the Duval County School Board approve 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: Thomas Hazouri

Second: Betty Burney

Martha Barrett - Aye

Betty Burney - Aye

Rebecca Couch	- Aye
William Gentry	- Aye
Thomas Hazouri	- Aye
Fred Lee	- Aye
Paula Wright	- Aye

Adjournment

[ADJOURNMENT](#)

Minutes:

The Special Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Isd

Superintendent

Chairman