



Duval County Public Schools

July 27, 2016, Board Workshop

Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Chairman
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Vice-Chairman
Ms. Becki Couch
Ms. Cheryl Grymes
Dr. Constance S. Hall
Mr. Scott Shine
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 Officer of Legal Services, were also present.

Call Meeting To Order

[CALL MEETING TO ORDER](#)

Minutes: The meeting was called to order at 2:06 p.m.

Items To Be Discussed

[SCHOOL TURNAROUND PLANS](#)

Attachment: [Next Steps for Oak Hill and Hyde Grove Turnaround Plans.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, provided the Board with a copy of the Next Steps for Oak Hill and Hyde Grove Elementaries Turnaround Plans. Since the State Board of Education Meeting, Dr. Vitti spoke with the Hershel Lyons, Chancellor, and Board Chairman Ashley Smith Juarez spoke with Florida Department of Education Pam Stewart, Florida Department of

Education Commissioner. Their guidance to the district regarding Hyde Grove and Oak Hill Elementary are captured in the handout under Option "A" which is attached to the minutes. Discussion followed:

- Assignments will be in effect for one year since the Turnaround Plans are required for one year. The district has been asked to draft a letter that would go to parents. The State would then review the letter before it is sent to parents and the State will schedule a conference call or a Board Meeting through a conference call recommending the approval for Oak Hill and Hyde Grove Elementary plans.
- Other options but not recommended by the Superintendent would be to send an Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP)-like letter. They would have the opportunity to transfer to the same schools as the priority schools. It would be a way for us to continue to show a good faith effort on choice for students who were transferred to a school that was graded a "C" or below after school grades came out.
- Option B - Challenge the Florida Department Of Education (FDOE) legally regarding the lack of authority to require these next steps due to no definition for "higher performing" in statute or rule when closing a school. Higher performing is not defined. It also does not define the year in which the school was higher performing.
- Chairman Smith Juarez recommended giving the students that will be reassigned continuity the following year.
- About 30 students were assigned to Gregory Drive Elementary from Oak Hill Elementary but chose Gregory Drive Elementary.
- About 170 students from Hyde Grove Elementary elected to remain. An additional 60 students from Hyde Grove Elementary left and went to Hyde Park Elementary. The students who chose to remain at Hyde Park, Hyde Grove and Gregory Drive Elementary will also receive a choice letter.
- By Monday, August 1, 2016, the parents of students who attended Hyde Park and Hyde Grove Elementary will be receiving an OSP letter. They will be offered Westview K-8, Pinedale or Ramona Elementary. A similar type of letter will be sent by next week for students assigned to Hyde Park and Hyde Grove Elementary. The district will be recommending to the State that only one letter be sent out.
- The Board would like to see a copy of the draft letter that the State will review before being sent to parents.
- The district has provided additional funds for Jacksonville Heights and Cedar Hills Elementary in anticipation of more students enrolling there. District staff will be at these schools to provide additional assistance the first few days of school.

Board Member Shine left the meeting at 2:25 p.m. and did not return.

- Board Members also recommended the district contact parents concerning these changes with a personal phone call, send out a Duval Connect message and have a question and answer sheet for volunteers to provide better assistance at the schools during those first few days. The Superintendent agreed.

- Board Member Couch requested the cost of transportation. The Superintendent will provide the cost. She suggested the Superintendent consider another option other than Westview K-8 because of receiving a "D" last year. The Superintendent indicated that the surrounding schools do not have space but he will look at it again. Board Member Couch asked the Superintendent to provide the number of students enrolled at Hyde Grove and Hyde Park Elementary last year versus the number of students projected for this coming year.

Incentives for Teachers

- The district has committed to continue a bonus for teachers beyond Quality Education for All (QEA) at Hyde Grove Elementary for their teachers. The bonus would be \$10,000 for Hyde Park Elementary but the district has not had a complete commitment from Duval Teachers Union (DTU) yet. The funds would probably come from Title 2 funds. Board Member Couch requested the amount of funds that would be used from Title 2 funds.
- Vice-Chairman Paula Wright asked the Superintendent to provide a visual for the Board to include the following: attendance, cost, number of teachers and the number of students moving from one school to another with the boundary changes. Her concern is, if the Board made a commitment and teachers were recruited based on the bonus, we should know if the commitment was made. The Superintendent stated it was a challenge to recruit teachers to Hyde Park Elementary, so the district decided to create a QEA- like incentive at Hyde Park Elementary to help staff a stronger core of teachers. There was resistance from the DTU, so the Superintendent does not believe it was formally agreed to. Teachers who were recruited were promised the incentive if their data matched the QEA data required regarding the Value Added Model (VAM) data being over 25%. Teachers were also offered the opportunity to transfer to another school because of the boundary changes. Chairman Smith Juarez asked which teachers transfer from Hyde Park and Hyde Grove Elementary. The Superintendent did not have this information.
- The consensus of the Board was to move forward with option "A" to send letters informing students who have been reassigned to an equal or lower performing school than last year, that they have been reassigned to a school that is a "C" or higher. The Board also asked the Superintendent to do everything possible to combine an OSP letter with the priority letter we are being asked to send out by the State. The priority letters will project the students to another school.
- Board Member Hall voiced concern over what happened at the State Board Meeting. She felt we should not have been in this position.
- The State Board did not deny the Turnaround Plans but agreed to defer on the issue of students being transferred to a school with a "C" or higher.

Board Member Grymes left the meeting at 3:22 p.m. and did not return.

- Board Member Couch questioned the Superintendent concerning having data to determine whether a school would receive a "C" or not. The Board was not included in the process or the discussion concerning the Turnaround Plans. The Superintendent stated he would have no way of knowing until the data came back. We cannot predict a school grade and base decisions solely on what the school grade may look like. The Chairman stated we need to have as much clarity as we can moving into the process. Learning all this at the State Board Meeting rather than when staff started to have some inkling that there might be an issue is unacceptable. If concerns are raised, it needs to be communicated to the Board.

Curriculum

- Board Member Couch discussed the use of a different curriculum at three of the middle schools. These three middle schools will be using Expeditionary Learning. This was taken out of the agenda item and changed to Houghton Mifflin as the core for middle school Language Arts and Digits for middle school Math. The Superintendent indicated that the State required the district to do something different at Ribault, Northwestern and Matthew Gilbert Middle Schools. This was a way to demonstrate to the State that we were doing something differently. This was included in the plans submitted to State and shared with the Board regarding why we picked The New Teacher Project as the external partner. Board Member Couch asked why the Board did not approve this curriculum. The Superintendent stated he is not adopting a curriculum. Karen Chastain, Chief of Legal Services, will research the language in State Statute regarding adding this curriculum at three middle schools.

Speakers

Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Chairman
Ms. Paula Wright, Vice-Chairman
Ms. Becki Couch, Board Member
Ms. Cheryl Grymes, Board Member
Dr. Constance Hall, Board Member
Mr. Scott Shine, Board Member
Dr. Nickolai Vitti, Superintendent
Ms. Karen Chastain, Chief of Legal Services

Adjournment

[ADJOURNMENT](#)

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:59 p.m.

CSM

Superintendent

Chairman