



## Duval County Public Schools

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March 12, 2013, Duval County School Board - City Council Joint Meeting

Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee, Chairman  
Ms. Becki Couch, Vice-Chairman  
Mr. Jacon Fischer  
Ms. Cheryl Grymes  
Dr. Constance S. Hall  
Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez  
Mr. Ms. Paula D. Wright  
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS JOINT MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD AND THE CITY COUNCIL: Duval County School Board Members: Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee, Board Chairman Ms. Becki Couch, Vice-Chairman Ms. Cheryl Grymes, Member Dr. Constance S. Hall, Member Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Member Ms. Paula D. Wright, Member Jacksonville City Council Members: Mr. William Bishop, President Mr. Bill Gulliford, Vice-President Ms. Lori Boyer, Member Mr. Reginald Brown, Member Mr. Doyle Carter, Member Mr. Richard Clark, Member Mr. John Crescrambeni, Member Dr. Johnny Gaffney, Member Mr. Warren Jones, Member Mr. Jim Love, Member Mr. Don Redman, Member Mr. Clay Yarborough, Member

Call Meeting To Order

### [CALL MEETING TO ORDER](#)

Minutes:

Council President Bishop called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m., and he and Chairman Lee welcomed everyone present.

Items To Be Discussed

### [1. OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL SYSTEM](#)

Minutes:

Board Member Hall provided a brief overview of the school system. A copy of the presentation is attached to the Minutes.

## [2. STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW](#)

Minutes:

Chairman Lee provided an overview of the proposed Strategic Plan. A copy of the draft plan is attached to the Minutes. The Superintendent shared that the Board would vote to finalize the plan at their April 2, 2013, Board Meeting. Data from the 2011-12 academic year released in summer 2013 will be used as the baseline for future analysis and reporting.

Council Member Brown suggested the need for more effective after-school programs and use of school facilities for academic enrichment outside of the normal school day. Council Member Gulliford asked about the perception that St. Johns County schools are superior to Jacksonville schools and how the schools in Jacksonville actually compare to those in St. Johns County. Superintendent Vitti noted that Jacksonville educates many students who are very different, by reason of ethnicity, family income, English language status, and other factors, from the typical student in surrounding counties. The goal of the Duval schools is to do an excellent job educating students whatever their initial condition or circumstances.

President Bishop expressed his feeling that the connections between parents, neighborhoods and schools have broken down over the past 20-30 years as more and more students attend magnet schools far from their homes and as parental involvement at those schools falls because of distance and time constraints. He does not see the same deep connection that used to exist between neighborhoods and their public schools, which were a centerpiece of the community. Council Member Carter echoed that concern from the perspective of a long-time athletic coach. He sees less active participation on the part of parents whose children are bused long distances to magnet schools than among parents of students from the immediate area of the school.

The group discussed the fact that non-county students attend some of Jacksonville's magnet schools, particularly Douglas Anderson School of the Arts. Superintendent Vitti said that perhaps 100 non-county students attend Douglas Anderson, and the district receives the state's FTE allocation for those students. Council members expressed strong reservations about out-of-county students occupying competitive spaces that aren't going to students of families that live and pay taxes in Jacksonville to support the school system. Superintendent Vitti noted that some students are the children of Duval district employees, and that the interest of people in other counties in attending Jacksonville's outstanding magnet programs helps to spread the word about the quality of Duval's magnet offerings.

### 3. LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Minutes:

Vice-Chairman Couch presented an overview of the district's 2013 state legislative agenda which contained 6 priorities:

- Restore an appropriate share of PECO funds for non-charter public schools to make needed capital improvements without raising local property taxes.
- Allow 100% of textbook funding to be used to purchase digital content and materials.
- Allow the class size amendment to be calculated at the school level rather than the classroom level.
- Allow the End of Course exams to constitute 50% rather than 100% of the of the final course grade that determines whether a student is awarded graduation credit for the course.
- Revise the middle school acceleration denominator to include only students who achieved a Level 4 or 5 on the Grade 7 math FCAT exam.
- Revise state graduation regulations to include special diploma students as graduates in the 4-year rate.

The Council Members expressed their support for the agenda and agreed to draft a resolution for introduction at that evening's Council meeting in support of the legislative positions, assuming the school district could provide sufficient information in the next few hours about specific bills pending in the Florida Legislature that could be cited in the resolution.

### 4. PARKS & COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL PLAYGROUNDS

Minutes:

Council Member Boyer initiated a discussion of how the City's land development process does not interact with the school district's long range planning. She is concerned that the concurrency requirement for public school capacity is calculated on a citywide level, meaning that if there is classroom capacity anywhere within the district, further development can be permitted as complying with level of service standards. The practical effect of new development in some areas is to force the school district to re-draw attendance lines to shift students from schools already at capacity in that area to schools with available space elsewhere to make room for the students arriving with the new development. As the Chair of the Land Use and Zoning Committee, she has seen no mention of land use impacts on schools in the work of either the Planning Commission or the LUZ Committee. School Board member Cheryl Grymes advocated for connecting the City's planning staff with the school district's staff to discuss development issues and effects. More advance notice of impending development that will affect the schools would be very helpful.

The group discussed joint use of school and City playgrounds and other recreational facilities. In the past a joint City Council/School Board coordinating committee has met sporadically to discuss shared use, but that has not occurred in some time. Council Member Clark said that his experience in providing district bond funds to school recreational facilities has varied widely from school to school depending on the attitude of the principal. He advocated for standardizing the process of making such agreements and for sharing costs for capital and maintenance expenditures so that the process is less arbitrary and dependent on particular personalities. Superintendent Vitti offered the concept of community compacts from his time in Miami. Council Member Carter accepted the President's assignment of this issue to the RCD Committee for study.

Council Member Gulliford advocated for better use and leveraging of the district's Marine Science Center in Mayport, which could be a bigger asset for Mayport and for the city than it currently is. Perhaps connections could be forged with the JU Marine Science Research Institute and the Scripps Institute, and perhaps an aquarium attraction could be considered.

## 5. NEXT STEPS

Minutes:

The Board and Council agreed that we should have these type of meetings more often, and work together on initiatives. Board Member Wright is our liaison with the City Council, and she will work with her counterpart on the Council in coordinating efforts and initiatives.

Adjournment

## ADJOURNMENT

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

BSC

We Agree on this

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Superintendent

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Chairman