



Duval County Public Schools

March 4, 2010, Board Workshop

Ms. Brenda Priestly Jackson, Chairman
Ms. Nancy Broner, Vice-Chairman
Ms. Martha Barrett
Ms. Betty Burney
Ms. Vicki Drake
Mr. W. C. Gentry
Mr. Tommy Hazouri
Mr. Ed Pratt-Dannals, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS WORKSHOP OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: All Board Members were present. Mr. Ed Pratt-Dannals, Superintendent, and Ms. Karen Chastain, Assistant General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, were also present.

Call Meeting To Order

[CALL MEETING TO ORDER](#)

Minutes: The Chairman called the Board Workshop to order at 1:20 p.m.

Items To Be Discussed

[1. CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS](#)

Minutes:

Board Members discussed the recommendations of the Charter Revision Commission as they relate to the way School Board members are selected. The CRC will be making the following recommendations to the City Council at their meeting on March 9, 2010.

1. Change the governance structure of the School Board so that the Board is appointed by the Mayor, subject to City Council confirmation. The Board shall serve at the pleasure of the Mayor and without salary.
2. Change the governance structure of the school board such that the Mayor appoints not less than a majority of a school board composed of both mayoral appointees and elected members. Mayoral appointees shall be subject to City Council confirmation and serve at the pleasure of the Mayor. Elected school board members shall be elected from at-large residency areas determined by the City Council or as defined by law. All school board members, whether elected or appointed, shall serve without salary.
3. Change the electoral composition of the School Board so that members are elected from at-large residency areas determined by the City Council or as defined by law rather than single member districts.
4. Establish charter schools or an appropriate charter school district under the sponsorship and governance of the City of Jacksonville.
5. That the Council and School Board pursue such remedial legislative action as will further empower school principals with more autonomy in the selection of staff, the improvement of educational instruction, and increased accountability and enhance and reward student performance at the school level.

Points made by the Board were:

- We live in a democracy - 93% of school board throughout the country are elected. The 7% that are appointed are usually due to a financial crisis.
- The Florida Constitution calls for the School Board members to be elected.
- If appointed, the politics would only reflect the position of one person - the Mayor.
- An elected Board allows for the will of the majority of the people.
- An appointed Board does not allow for the voice of the community.
- CRC only invited speakers who were in favor of appointed boards.
- The CRC did not look at data or student achievement as they relate to the governance structure.
- The CRC did not invite anyone from the school system to speak, nor have they visited any of our schools, or attended any of our Board meetings.
- Data shows that the 2 lowest performing school districts in the nation have appointed boards, whereas the 2 best performing school districts have elected boards.
- Look at the JTA and JEA for how out of touch appointed boards are and the lack of access for the community to those members.
- The School Board needs to hire an outside counsel to assist in providing direction if the City Council goes forward with the recommendations of the CRC.
- One accusation is that our Board crosses over from governance into management. This Board is Broad & CRSS (Council for Reform of School Systems) trained and two of our Board members now serve as trainers for CRSS, which stresses governance.
- Rod Paige has praised our Board.
- The data cited by speakers to the CRC cite Chicago, Washington, DC, and New York as examples of systems with appointed Boards. New York is now being investigated for their poor student performance; mismanagement of data; and,

- they only have a 29% graduation rate for African-American male students.
- KIPP Charter Schools have been experiencing problems for fiscal and academic mismanagement. The KIPP school in California is now being closed for these reasons.
 - At-large board members will eliminate minority voices from being heard.
 - We are currently a "B" district - that is not failing.
 - No one person should have total authority over the school systems budget.

After discussions, it was the consensus of the Board to pursue obtaining outside counsel to represent the Board in this matter. It was also decided to invite the Board to a joint meeting to discuss this issue on March 30, 2010, at 5:00 p.m., at the Schultz Center. The meeting will be followed by a presentation by Don McAdams, Director of the Center for Reform of School Systems, who will speak to this issue.

Board members acknowledge that not all members of the CRC voted for this recommendation. There were 6 members who voted against the recommendations. Board members also thanked Commission Member Gary Oliveras for his support of the current structure of the School Board.

Adjournment

[ADJOURNMENT](#)

Minutes:

The Chairman adjourned the Board Workshop at 3:09 p.m.

BSC

We Agree on this

Superintendent

Chairman