



## Duval County Public Schools

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March 6, 2013, Board Workshop

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 WORKSHOP 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 Chairman called the Board Workshop to order at 8:04 a.m.

Items To Be Discussed

### [1. GOVERNANCE](#)

Minutes:

The following items were discussed during Governance:

- Protocol

- The Superintendent shared a Draft of the Protocol Plan with the Board. This plan was developed to address concerns expressed by Board members regarding this area. Staff reviewed plans from other Districts in Florida as a guideline while developing the Duval plan. The Superintendent plans to share this with the Principals at a meeting tomorrow, March 7, 2013. A copy of the plan is attached to the Minutes.
- Board Member Hall expressed concern about timeliness of approvals if all school functions are to be approved by the Superintendent in advance, and if the process will be electronic. Dr. Vitti indicated that this should not be a problem, and would address any concerns in that area. Some of the forms will be electronic.
- Board Member Juarez cautioned that we take care in how we message this process, so as to make sure people still feel welcome in our schools.
- Board Member Wright asked that the Board have a few days to review the plan and provide feedback before it is finalized. She also asked that Principals be provided an opportunity to review the plan and provide feedback.
- The Superintendent said that he would make it clear to Principals at the March 7th meeting that, effective immediately, all major events to be held at schools have to be approved by him.
- Vice-Chairman Couch asked that the list on page 4 which addresses the type of events that do not need prior approval be emphasized, so that Principals do not feel that they can no longer invite Board members to their schools for various routine functions.
- General consensus was to have a policy to address the plan.
- Board members will provide feedback to the Superintendent within a week and this will come back to a meeting in April.
- Magnet Grant
  - Board Member Wright expressed concerns about the grant application process. She felt that while the Superintendent did meet with individual Board members, a grant that impacts the entire District should be discussed with the Board as a whole. Board Member Wright requested a copy of the application along with an explanation so that the Board could understand where we are in the process. The Superintendent shared that the application was received in late January and that the District had a very short period of time in which to respond. He indicated that he thought the Board was comfortable with this grant after the individual conversations. If awarded, the grant will have to go before the Board for approval, and certain aspects will have to be negotiated with Duval Teachers United. The Superintendent agreed to bring these before the Board as a whole when they are of this magnitude. Board Member Fischer shared some of the same concerns about the way the Magnet grant was handled, and he is glad to hear that the Superintendent will handle differently in the future.
- Communications
  - Concerns were expressed regarding staff being able to communicate with Board Members. The Chairman asked the Superintendent if staff had been instructed not to speak with Board members. The Superintendent said no, he had not. The Chairman asked where this idea is coming from. The Superintendent responded that he believes it is because of the changes in

the organization. He has been in organizations where he as a staff member had been told not to speak with the Board, and he believes that is unhealthy. However, he does not believe it is the role of an employee to lobby Board members for their jobs or to protect their positions. It goes back to the line of governance. The employees report to the Superintendent and not the Board. Vice-Chairman Couch asked the Superintendent if he had instructed staff to provide him with a summary of conversations with Board members. Dr. Vitti responded that he had not, however, as an example, if Ms. Chastain spoke to a member about an issue that impacts the system, he would expect her to provide him with a brief, so that we are not contradicting each other. He reiterated that he had not told Cabinet members not to speak to Board members, and he will explain this at the next Principals meeting.

Speakers:

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

[2. CHARTER SCHOOLS](#)

Minutes:

The Superintendent provided the Board with a briefing on Charter Schools and the process for reviewing applications. He also shared that Dr. Sally Hague's job is being advertised, as she will be retiring soon. A copy of the briefing is attached to the Minutes. Discussion included:

- The new plan will bring consistency to the process.
- Individual help sessions will be eliminated and replaced by an addendum process. That way, everyone receives the same information.
- The number of copies of the application has been reduced/
- The major change is in the scoring. Staff will now stick more closely to the State level requirements.
- Discussion was had on how we hold charter schools accountable to the requirement that they be innovation and different from what is offered in the public schools. We need to do a better job at marketing our public schools and share that the charter schools are using our curriculum.
- The scoring rubric will be shared with the Board when completed.

Speakers:

Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee, Board Chairman  
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent  
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Board Member  
Mr. Fred Heid, Chief Academic Officer  
Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Board Member  
Ms. Becki Couch, Board Vice-Chairman  
Mr. Jason Fischer, Board Member  
Dr. Constance S. Hall, Board Member

### 3. CAPITAL PLAN

Minutes:

The Superintendent shared information with the Board regarding the Capital Plan. A copy is attached to the Minutes. Discussion included the following:

- Board Member Hall asked that the Superintendent provide the Board with a copy of the QZAB plan.
- The Superintendent is working on a technology plan also, and will send a project outline to the Board. Board Member Hall asked that he include how we will manage devices.
- Provide Board with information on how and when certain types of funding kicks in on this timeline.
- Chairman Lee asked about transferring Capital dollars into Operating, and what was allowed by the Legislature. Chief Operating Officer, Doug Ayars, shared that the historical average was \$36 million. Chairman Lee expressed concern about continuing this practice, as our buildings and technology are suffering. The funds are used for minor maintenance, transportation, white fleet,, security, work orders, personnel, and property insurance. The Superintendent stated that it was the goal to reduce.
- The Douglas Anderson project will be discussed at a future Workshop.
- Hot spots in schools were discussed - in some schools they do not work and have not been activated. The Superintendent shared that there were holes in the refresh initiatives, and we need a true analysis of where we stand in regards to technology in our schools. He indicated that Mr. Heid, Chief Academic Officer, was surveying principals now on what their school needs were in the area of technology. He is also finalizing a contract with EMTECH to provide a formal walkthrough. It was suggested that since EMTECH worked so closely with the district, it might be good to have someone from outside perform the walkthrough that would have fresh perspective. CISCO had offered to help us in the past, and the Chamber IT committee had offered to do this for no cost. The Superintendent is working on a network of people in the IT industry to help and advise the District.
- The District is moving towards a standard of iPads and E-Readers this Spring.
- The new IT plan will be part of the budget development process.
- Vice-Chairman Couch asked about PBF, which was a new budget prep system approved by the Board a couple of years ago. She asked why it was never

implemented. Ms. Latrell Edwards, Chief Financial Officer, indicated that it was actually an add-on to the SAP system, and had not been fully implemented.

- Douglas Anderson project - Vice-Chairman Couch asked if we use value engineering and who is responsible to see we get the best possible at the best possible price. Mr. Doug Ayars, Chief Operating Officer, responded that the key is the design and that the architect and project manager play a big part in this area. Ms. Couch's concern is that we have in the plan to do the design, but no start date for the project. What happens if there are changes in the construction plan and building code by the time we get ready to build? Chairman Lee said the real question is do we want to task the Superintendent to provide us with what we think our Capital needs are, then decide which of those we fund. The Superintendent will provide the Board with information on how we can fund this project.

Speakers:

Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee, Board Chairman  
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent  
Mr. Fred Heid, Chief Academic Officer  
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Board Member  
Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Board Member  
Ms. Becki Couch, Board Vice-Chairman  
Ms. Latrell Edwards, Chief Financial Officer  
Mr. Jason Fischer, Board Member  
Mr. Doug Ayars, Chief Operating Officer  
Dr. Constance S. Hall, Board Member

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

Minutes:

The Chairman adjourned the Board Workshop at 12:26 p.m.

BSC

We Agree on this

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Superintendent

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Chairman