



## Duval County Public Schools

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May 30, 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 8:05 a.m.

Items To Be Discussed

### [1. GOVERNANCE](#)

Minutes:

The following Governance items were discussed:

- The Chairman thanked those Board members who attended last night's Gifted

meeting in the Board Room, and for sharing notes from the meeting.

- The Chairman and Board Member Fischer attended the Marine Science Center graduation held at Fletcher High School. There were 57 students who graduated. This is a very positive program.
- The Superintendent, at the request of the Chairman, provided the Board yesterday with information on FCAT data received to date. He reviewed this information with the Board.
- A Special Meeting to hear the remaining expulsion cases was set for June 7, 2013, at 9:00 a.m.

#### Speakers:

Mr. Fred "Fel" Lee, Board Chairman

Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent

## 2. BUDGET

Minutes:

Discussion included the following:

- Staff Allocation
  - Media Specialists
    - The Chairman asked about Media Specialists and a meeting held this past Friday with Principals. The Superintendent indicated that to begin with there was to be a Media Specialist at each school, but he had to scale back the plan. The current recommendation would be to keep at the same level as last year for elementary schools. For the secondary level, there was no allocation last year - schools used a basic allocation for this. Principals have indicated that they would rather have a 12 month Test Chair position than a Media Specialist.
    - Board Member Hall shared that she is hearing from Principals that there is no flexibility in the Staff Allocation plan. She used Security Guards as an example. One school may not need the 3 allocated, while another school could use more. The Superintendent indicated that he would open it up more, but the concern is that we could have a surplus of non-instructional staff.
    - Board Member Juarez asked why the choice between a Media Specialist and Test Chair. The Superintendent indicated that it was because of the demand on schools for increased testing. Secondary schooled do not have the same number of Assistant Principals. Board Member Juarez shared that there was a need for Media Specialist at schools. The Superintendent indicated that if we put a Media Specialist at each school, something will have to be eliminated. It would take \$6 million to fund one at each school.
    - Board Member Wright asked how many at 3rd grade are reading on level. The Superintendent indicated that it was about half. Board

Member Wright believes that Media Specialists help in this area and that if reading is important to the District, we need to set a priority as a Board. The Superintendent believes a Reading Coach would be of more benefit. He understands the benefit and value of Media Specialist, and no one currently in those positions will be surplus.

- The Superintendent shared that it would cost \$3.5 million for full time Media Specialist at the elementary level, and \$3.2 million at the secondary level.
- The Board asked about options for funding. The Superintendent indicated that some used Title I, but you have to be careful how you use these dollars. Some schools use a clerk for the role. He also indicated that schools could have a volunteer work the Media Centers. The Superintendent shared that there were more positions than there were Media Specialists to fill the positions.
- Elementary Principals will be given flexibility in this area.
- Final discussion on this topic, per the Superintendent, is that he will allocate a test coordinator at middle and high schools; Title I schools can purchase a Media Specialist; and, he will e-mail the Board tomorrow with additional options. Another option would be to let middle and high schools, through basic non-Title I, purchase a Media Specialist instead of a teacher. The consensus of the Board was to give the option to the Principal.
- Art, Music, and PE
  - Board Member Hall asked where the dollars will come from. The Superintendent shared that the dollars would come from Title II, General Revenue, and that \$8 million was earmarked for insurance, and he could move \$4 million from that fund into the Staff Allocation plan to assist with the 8th period day and class size as well.
- Surplus Personnel
  - Board Member Hall indicated that she had requested a list and had not received to date. She understands that the list was sent to Principals. The Superintendent indicated the list had been shared with Principals so that they could reference for filing vacancies. The list is fluid at this time and he did not feel comfortable in sharing with the Board at this time because of employee privacy.
  - Board Member Wright shared her concern with a Board member making a request for information and not receiving a response. If the Superintendent has a concern with a request, he should call the Board member who made the request, and not just decide not to honor the request.
  - The Chairman indicated that members should be able to make a request and receive the information.
  - Board Member Grymes did not see the need for the information to contain names, and that it moved into the management area.
- Deans
  - The role of Deans will be exclusive to discipline, however, the Assistant Principals roles will not.
  - Board Member Juarez asked what data went into the staffing of Deans. The Superintendent indicated that it did not fluctuate this

- year. This would be reviewed as part of Budget 2 - based on data and need on a school by school basis. Some schools may need more Assistant Principals also, while some schools would need less. A conversation would also occur at the end of the year on whether a Dean would be more effective than an Assistant Principal.
- The position will be advertised at the District level and people will be screened. Principals can then pick from a pool. They would report directly to the Principals. The same process will be used for the ISSP teachers.
  - There was consensus on moving forward with the concept for the Deans.
- Other Areas
- Vice-Chairman Couch asked if budgets were being put in Bud Prep at this time instead of spread sheets. The Superintendent indicated that the initial budgets had been put in Bud Prep, but now they are making changes and using the spread sheets at this time. There are two Bud Prep systems at this time.
  - Vice-Chairman Couch asked if the average used for teacher salaries had been lowered, and asked that the Board be provided with an analysis of this information.
  - Board Member Wright asked about Math and Reading Coaches. The Superintendent indicated that they are part of the allocation but not part of the General Revenue function. All schools would have Reading Coaches except for dedicated Magnets. All D and F schools would have Math Coaches, as well as those schools below 50% in Math. This would be about 76 schools.
  - Vice-Chairman Couch asked Michelle Begley, Board Auditor, to explain the supplanting issue with use of Title I dollars. Ms. Begley explained the concerns. She indicated that the main thing is to be able to document you have met class size before using funds at Title I schools.
  - The Superintendent indicated that our class size penalty should be between \$500 thousand and \$1 million. We are currently at 87% meeting class size. He would like to work toward 95% compliance. The majority of the Board indicated they were in agreement.
  - Board Member Wright asked about reducing and/or removing layered programs. The Superintendent shared that this was mainly a function at the academic level. He does not see any wrap around services being taken off at this time. Some are being added through City Year. On the ESE front, we are contracting for a lot of counseling and other services. Staff is working toward providing services in-house and having less contractors.
  - Vice-Chairman Couch asked about Security Guards and clerical, asking if surplussed clerical staff would be eligible for Security Guard positions. The Superintendent indicated that there were no plans at this time to move district clerical staff into the schools, and that there was no Staff Allocation Plan for the district at this time. For those at schools who have been surplussed, there will be an opportunity for them to apply for Security Guard positions. In the end, there will be

no clerical staff at the schools or district level that will be surplussed or RIF'd.

- Vice-Chairman Couch asked for clerical on the list of positions being cut. The Superintendent said that some positions are being eliminated, some staff members are not being asked to come back into their positions, and some could land somewhere. The numbers are not exact at this time. The plan is to not fund about \$7 million in positions
  - Vice-Chairman Couch stated that she believed at the elementary schools, principals would rather have more Paras instead of Security Guards. The Superintendent will go back and offer that option, however, all schools will have at least 1 Security Guard.
  - Board Member Juarez indicated that there was a change in Guidance positions from the original plan. There are now 14 fewer positions for the coming school year at the middle school level. The Superintendent indicated that middle school principals wanted a Reading Coach, and that is why the difference in the allocation for Guidance. Board Member Juarez indicated that she had asked for school graduation rates and has not received this information yet. She would like to know if we are looking at student needs to drive the budget and staffing, and how we are doing that. The Superintendent will send the graduation rate information to the Board.
  - Board Member Juarez asked about non salary and discretionary funding. The Superintendent shared that it was less than before, but we are not buying curriculum this year, so the need has decreased.
- ESE
    - Board Member Hall asked for status of ESE. The Superintendent shared that the proposal had been to move Gifted services for those schools where there was a limited number of students. He had heard questions on if there was a way for students to not leave their home schools. After parental push back, the decision was made to not make any changes this year. A big concern was the virtual concept. Parents felt it would not be as good as time with a teacher, and that teachers at their home schools would not be as good as the ones at the schools to which their students were being bussed. He then decided to not move forward with the changes to EBD and review for future changes.
    - Board Member Wright told the Superintendent she appreciated his willingness to listen to the parents and make changes.
  - Technology
    - Vice-Chairman Couch asked about technology needs and purchasing devices. The Superintendent indicated that they had scaled back the purchase of devices. Funding will come from reserves, QZAB, IDEA, and SIG dollars for current SIG schools.
    - Vice-Chairman Couch asked if we had staff to make sure the devices were ready to use by students. The Superintendent shared that they would be readying the devices over the summer. They are discussing whether to outsource or own this work.
    - The Superintendent will share information with the Board on technology before the end of June.

- Summary by Chairman Lee of the previous discussions:
  - Media Specialists - at elementary, middle, and high schools
  - Guidance Counselors - at middle schools
  - Reserve percentages needs to be discussed
  - Requested that the Superintendent provide information on the Legislature and hangs that could impact class size and schools of choice
  - Technology - provide update to Board before the end of June
- Reserve Percentages
  - Board Member Fischer indicated that we had discussed having the 3% that we can never touch, and adding up to 6% of usable reserve funds. The numbers presented today only brings the reserve up to 4%.
  - Board Member Grymes has concerns with going over 7% total.
  - Chairman Lee would be comfortable with 7% non-restricted surplus dollars that we can use.
  - Ms. Michelle Begley, Board Auditor, said that she took the Superintendent's one page handout and put it in a format where she could see where the budget would leave us at the end of next year. They are calling a lot of categories surplus, and that is misleading. It should say fund balance. Surplus means that the dollars are free to spend. Funds should be categorized in the proper areas. There are specific rules for this - i.e., if it is categorical, you cannot call it restricted. After taking all of the required items out, you are left with \$85.5 million. Then you take out the restricted categoricals and you are left with your unassigned fund balance, which would be \$47.2 million. From the information provided, at the end of next year we would have a fund balance of between \$44 - \$53 million.
  - Board Member Fischer would like to have more clarity on the budget.
  - Chairman Lee asked that the Superintendent provide the Board with a classic budget summary as soon as possible.
  - Board Member Grymes likes the one page budget information sheet. It is more simple and better for her.
  - The majority of the Board agreed on a 7% (\$61 million) reserve, with Board Member Fischer indicating that he would like it to be higher.
  - The Chairman asked what, if any, policies were in place to guarantee that the Superintendent would have to come back to the Board if he wants to use any of the reserve funds. Ms. Karen Chastain, Legal Services, indicated that there were no policies at this time. The Superintendent said that he would create a line item on the Budget Resolutions agenda item each month that would serve to monitor the reserve fund.
- Guidance Counselors
  - Chairman Lee asked about the differences at middle schools. The Superintendent indicated that some schools have Achievers for Life. Board Member Grymes stated that Achievers for Life did provide support, but felt it was important to have guidance counselors. Board Members asked if there could be some flexibility in this area for schools to have full time Guidance Counselors. The Superintendent said they could convert a basic teacher position. They can also look at Title I and Cabinet add ons. Consensus was that we are now OK on Guidance Counselors.
- Security Guards
  - Will shift some positions from elementary to middle schools.

- Full Day Early Childhood Program Fee
  - The Superintendent will bring an agenda item to the next Board meeting for the Board to approve the fee. We will front the cost of the program and collect money during the year. The funds will be put back into VPK. It will not be cost neutral. Board Member Fischer asked if the funds would be taken from K-12, and the Superintendent indicated that it would. He will provide the Board with a spreadsheet.

Speakers:

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

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

Minutes:

The Chairman adjourned the Board Workshop at 4:38 p.m.

BSC

We Agree on this

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Superintendent

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Chairman