



E-AGENDA MANAGER

Duval County Public Schools

November 17, 2015, Board Workshop and Committee Meeting

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

Call Meeting To Order

[CALL MEETING TO ORDER](#)

Minutes: The meeting was called to order at 9:11 a.m.

Public Comment

Items To Be Discussed

[DECEMBER 7, 2015 - DRAFT AGENDA](#)

Minutes:

The Superintendent reviewed the December 7, 2015, Draft Agenda with the Board. Discussion included the following:

- Approval of 2015-16 District School Advisory Councils (SAC) – The

Superintendent stated this is a requirement of statute that comes to the Board annually. The district can take ownership in promoting and serving more on the SAC. There has been training for the SAC requirements such as minutes and the Sunshine requirements linked to SAC. Board Member Couch inquired about the changes being visible in the handbook. Ms. Karen Chastain, Chief of Legal Services, stated her staff will make the changes noticeable. Board Member Couch had concerns regarding the recent awareness of not allowing people to sign in to public meetings and has this been conveyed to the schools. How do we balance when a meeting is being held at the school and children are present? Ms. Chastain stated a weekly briefing is sent out and her staff has prepared a laminate for the front desk that covers sizeable information. Her staff will also attend the Principal's meetings and it is one of the topics that will be covered.

- Approval of Revisions to the Duval County Public Schools Instructional Materials Plan – The plan outlines updates at the state level regarding the adoption cycle and gives the Board perspective on when we plan to go through the adoption process with upcoming materials. The plan for this year is to adopt new materials for secondary English Language Arts/Reading grades 6-12, Social Studies for K-12 with the exception of World and US History. Those two grades have been refreshed with updated materials. Health, possibly Music and Art, may be updated depending on where we stand with the actual cost of the adoption process subject areas. Once the year has concluded, there will have been significant strides to make sure the curriculum materials are aligned with the new Florida standards and have addressed every subject area where materials are completely outdated to a point where old materials are not obtainable because they are no longer printed. This currently only exists in Health and certain Social Studies areas. They are only functioning with class sets but after this year we will be completely up to date. The thought is from a budgetary point of view, we will roughly have the same amount of dollars as last year for instructional materials. This is categorical, and the number will not change much depending on the budget allocation. The specifics of the dollar amount will come to the Board once the adoption processes are done. Board Member Couch wanted to verify if the proposal is voted down, nothing would change what is currently being done. The Superintendent stated that is correct, it is a matter of being in compliance. The State requires us to have an instructional materials plan. It does provide a timeline to the Board of a long-term view going out to 2020. No curriculum decision has been made for those adoptions.

Vice-Chairman Smith Juarez left at 9:21 a.m.

- Approval of the Agreement between Duval County Public Schools and Jacksonville University (JU) for Speech and Language Services – The agreement is long-and short-term. JU will offer training to speech pathologists which will enable them to work for DCPS directly in the

Guiding, Remediating, and Accelerating Student Performance (GRASP) program. The JU program is a Master's program and will take 2 years. There is a shortage of 15 speech pathologists districtwide with the hope not to have any shortages by winter break. Some students have not received services because of the shortages but they would still be offered services and compensation for what they have not received. Additional services would be provided to meet some of the needs. Board Member Couch suggested looking into having a private provider for services if we are not able to provide the services. Non-public schools have this option. The Superintendent will follow up on translating the equivalent of services to the private sector but there may be challenges with cost. Currently at the secondary level some schools have been using online Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) as a resource and the feedback has been positive. The plan is to be in a better position next year by growing the program with JU and the increase in salaries. Board Member Couch also commended Superintendent Vitti on starting the process.

Board Member Wright arrived at 9:25 a.m.

Board Member Hall made a suggestion regarding current speech pathologists working after normal hours and receiving a stipend to service the student instead of going private. The Superintendent will research. The only issues could be getting enough people to agree without the burnout factor, the parent willing to have the child to stay after school and the transportation. The Superintendent will also look into partnering with other local universities.

- Charter School Expectations and Improvements – Board Member Couch indicated this has been an ongoing topic the last two years regarding the expectations and improvements of charter schools. The expectation to be proficient is not consistent and what is the target range to get out of a “D” and “F” school. Once this is established, it should be the target the charter schools put in their School Improvement Plan (SIP). The Superintendent agreed there has been previous discussion and there are limitations on what they can tell them to do but recommendations can be made at the will of the Board and it is a compliance-based issue. Some of the targets were below 50% and that is low. The State should have more clarity with the expectations of the plans. It does not need to come from us. This may be an issue to discuss with State Law Makers and State Board Members. There is uncertainty with how far the Board can go from a policy standpoint but the Board can be more explicit with their expectations on the application process. Board Member Couch asked if recommendations or guidance can be given. Ms. Karen Chastain, Chief of Legal Services, stated it may be difficult because of the contractual relationship. Ms. Chastain felt it was effective to pull some of the charter applications and ask questions. This would allow the charter school representative to explain their SIP and the rationale. There is a statute about, not just the submission of the SIP, but the Charter School has to present it to the Board as the

sponsor. Chairman Grymes inquired whether the schools receive any training or guidance on the SIP's. Ms. Chastain stated the district does not provide any training but there are consortiums and resources at the State level for charter school operators and believes this is where they may rely on getting advice on addressing things in general with respect to compliance and operating within the requirements of the law.

- Charter Application for Seaside School Consortium, Inc. to open Seaside Charter School – The recommendation is for denial for the Seaside Charter application for a K-8 based on numerous violations of the Sunshine Law regarding the publishing of meetings and taking of the minutes at meetings. Board Member Shine inquired if they remedy their situation, will you recommend approval. The Superintendent stated yes, if they remedy and are consistent with Sunshine requirements, that issue would not be considered with the next application cycle.

Board Member Shine wanted clarification if parents have any access to surrounding schools' scores and reports like the GAP analysis. Parents do not have access but the Board could ask for more explanation and expectations about how the GAP analysis is completed. Charter schools cannot be held accountable because it is not what the State defines as an approved section. It could go into the approval or disapproval of the charter school to hold them accountable of what is expected of them but it could not be used as a criteria to deny or accept a charter application but it could provide more insight. The charter school statute provides for State Board rules, there is a uniform application process, uniform evaluation and a standard contract which is a starting point for negotiations. The statutory basis provides if there is a double "F" within the first five years of operation the contract can be terminated. The charter school can apply to the State for a waiver and the standard is lower, because there is a standard contract the statute also provides for negotiations if you reach an impasse. There can be request for mediation facilitated by the DOE or either party can file litigation with the Division of Administrative Hearings. Boundaries have been set legislatively with what can be done.

Vice-Chairman Smith Juarez inquired on the target population and student body of the charters in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Ms. Chastain stated this is the charter schools statute and it gives information on how it limits enrollment, she is unaware if this is an issue. If the charter is approved for a K-5, additional grades can be added with a new application and not a contract amendment. There are enrollment caps in the contract. The agenda item was deferred on the October agenda. The charter operator had a conversation with Ms. Pearl Rozier, Assistant Superintendent of School Choice, to discuss the reasons for denial but did not indicate they wanted to withdraw the agenda item. Chairman Grymes met with Board Member Dan Connell, from Seaside Charter, and stated he was unaware of the Sunshine violation. Their Board is local and they are using the

Waldorf curriculum, which is not aligned with standards. The Superintendent stated it is an exciting curriculum but does not meet the standards. It could be used as a supplement.

Vice-Chairman Smith Juarez asked if the district provides information on trainings that are available knowing it is not our responsibility. Because of the importance of the Governance issues, is there a resource list that is provided to all the partners who would be subject to Sunshine? The consortium for charter school operators is a resource used to gain training. A statutory requirement for Board Members, the Principal and Chief Financial Officer is to participate in a four-hour training and receive a certificate. A refresher course has to be completed every three years. This is by statute and in our contract they have to participate in the training.

Board Member Fischer arrived at 9:58 a.m.

Board Member Wright questioned how parents receive information on the School Improvement Plan. The SIP's are all listed on the DOE website. The charter schools also have to list certain things on their website.

- Approval of Salary Schedule for AE and AP – Dr. Vitti's recommendation is to create salaries based on size of school and below grade level performance in reading and math. Principals and Assistant Principals are offered higher pay to work in larger schools with the most challenges based on student performance and not demographics. This has been vetted during focus groups at the elementary, middle and high school level. Principals are supportive of the change. Believing it is more in line with the challenge of the work from a size point of view and students being below grade level. If an improvement percentage is made with the students below grade average, pay would not be lost. Based on where principals stand at this point, none would be negatively impacted by this change. There is not a factor for experience. There is an opportunity to receive performance pay in other schools when they move schools. ESE, Alternative and Virtual schools do receive only base salaries which was increased from \$76,000.00 to \$97,000.00, the schools were not adversely effected.

Board Member Hall stated we need to look into more ways to incentivize administrative salaries in those environments based on the uniqueness. Metrics were created that are linked to students not returning for them to receive performance pay as well as violations at Levels three and four. Board Member Wright inquired about a schedule being based on experience. The Superintendent stated there is a higher supplement of \$3,000. It is embedded and would be a grandfathered aspect.

Board Member Shine left at 10:19 a.m.

Board Member Wright asked the Superintendent to look at what is

happening at the alternative schools that allow our students to act more positive when returning to their home school. Is this something that can be replicated in traditional schools? The Superintendent stated there has been discussion on strengthening the transitional services from the alternative school to the traditional school. There is a social worker at the district level that focuses on this but can be done on a greater scale.

Board Member Shine returned at 10:25 a.m.

Vice-Chairman Smith Juarez had a few concerns with the AE & AP pay scales. They are being based on input and not outcomes, it is not showing the movement and reward as an incentive-based system we have attempted to reflect. Staff should go back and rethink the current plan so we can do better. There is no supplement for the first 749 students in elementary but there is a supplement for the middle school. There is value in the calibration for the work in each school but an elementary principal should not feel the value of their students are any less than the value of a middle or high school principal. An elementary principal will be paid significantly less than those in high school with similar population and academic issues. She would suggest a better calibration of value or a deeper explanation.

Board Member Hall left at 10:30 a.m.

The Superintendent stated the number of activities, responsibilities and after school functions far exceed that of an elementary. We are trying to be intentional regarding the differentiation based on size of school. There was not a conversation regarding size as it relates to elementary and high school because the assumption has been you would make a higher salary at a high school level than you would at an elementary, because of the challenges at a secondary over an elementary.

Vice-Chairman Smith Juarez would like more feedback in looking at the FTE, maybe taking a three-year average, because you can be three under or over on any given day. The Superintendent believes our principals would push back on a three-year average, they would rather see the most updated FTE. For some, the average would work out fine but others there may be a big difference. We can run it and see what it looks like.

Board Member Fischer stated the performance piece has to be a bigger component in order to earn his support. He has concerns on how the Board will pay for this with the financial impact at approximately a million dollars. The Superintendent explained that \$1,500,000, including the assistant principals, would come out of the \$5,000,000 to \$7,000,000 from a combination of three components: what has been put aside at the school allocation level, increase or decrease with the anticipated enrollment with charter schools, and the flexibility with the lowest 300 going into next year. Board Member Fischer does not think it sends a good message to take

monies from lower expectant teacher salaries to give to administrators. He understands principals do deserve better compensation but this is not the solution. The Superintendent indicated a salary increase for teachers has been negotiated over the next three years and budgeted. Administrators are asking when is it their turn, they know the teachers are the core. They tend not to lobby because they do not have the collective bargaining group.

Board Member Couch inquired as to how the percent below grade level in reading and math is calculated. The Superintendent stated it's in isolation: in elementary 3, 4, 5; middle school 6, 7, 8; and 9, 10 for high school all in reading. The chart could be clearer with a chart showing reading, math and FTE.

The Superintendent wanted to know if it was the will of the Board, with regards to performance pay, to implement now or stay with the \$1,000 for this budget cycle and commit to increase that number for the 2016 – 2017 budget cycle. After much discussion Board Member Couch suggested a solution is to go back to the working group of principals and present the Board with a recommendation on performance pay. Chairman Grymes suggested pulling the item.

- Approval of Non-Bargaining Unit Salary Schedules and Salary Increases – The 1.3% increase would include everyone not in a collective bargaining group, including exempt employees, nurses, job coaches and the internal auditor. The financial impact would be \$326,000 and does not include the Superintendent's salary.

Board Member Wright inquired whether this was the group of administrators who had not received an increase. The Superintendent was uncertain of the administrators. Board Member Wright will follow up with the Superintendent for the list of administrators.

Board Member Couch wanted clarification on the 1.3%. Ms. Sonita Young, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, stated the 1.3% was the average. This and the 3% last year was because they moved to different salaries.

- Volunteer Background Screening – A provider was selected through the Invitation to Bid (ITB) process. There has been a protest from other providers that applied for the contract. The contract could not be issued and it caused a delay in services. Board policy was exercised which allows for an emergency contract to be issued based on the safety and welfare of children.

Board Member Couch had concerns on completing the back log that was created with the protest and process. Mr. Paul Soares, Assistant Superintendent of Operations, stated once the backlog was created, the process was moved to go through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) which is more labor intensive. Once the contract is awarded, the backlog will clear up.

- Surplus Property Retirement Report – Board Member Couch had

concerns about a news story referencing missing inventory. The news story was misleading and compared Duval to another district with missing inventory. Mr. Mark Sherwood, Assistant Superintendent of Communications, stated the \$1,300,000 the news was reporting was \$53,000 which is .00004% of surplus material. Mr. Sherwood spoke with Mr. Soares and the district knows where 99.9996% of the inventory is located.

Board Member Couch asked if the Board could receive correct information on inaccurate stories reported by the media. The Superintendent stated an analysis has been done and it will be provided to the Board.

- District Operations Plan – The Superintendent presented a PowerPoint presentation which is attached to the minutes.

Board Member Couch inquired about the \$16,600,000 and what the funds consist of. Mr. Soares explained the average funding per year has been \$20,700,000 from the regular maintenance fund. The \$16,600,000 was added for life safety. The Board approved one-time money and also approved COPS of \$5,000,000. Once it is all added together and divided by the number of years there is \$20,700,000. The backlog and the needs of things being replaced and repaired is an average of \$9,600,000.

Board Member Fischer left at 11:14 a.m.

Board Member Couch would like to know the savings on closing a school. Mr. Soares stated it could be \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000 coming off the backlog. There is a savings of \$1 to \$2 a square foot on a building which could save a couple hundred thousand dollars in operating cost. The Superintendent mentioned there is a savings of \$300,000 - \$500,000 with salaries and benefits. There could be an operations savings of a few hundred thousand depending on the school.

Board Member Couch has received complaints about the buses not being air conditioned and the cost to have air conditioned buses. Mr. Soares stated the cost per bus would be \$10,000. The ESE buses are air conditioned and the contracted companies are starting to order new buses with air conditioning. Moving forward we can request that any new buses bought have air conditioning. The Superintendent stated we can do a cost estimate and present it to the Board. Board Member Couch would like the data on incidents with air conditioned buses versus non-air conditioned buses, heat does have an impact on behavior. The Superintendent stated he would look into the data requested.

Board Member Fischer returned at 11:22 a.m.

Board Member Wright inquired about providing free lunches to students and the impact it will have on students receiving waivers for

ACT, SAT or college admissions due to it being based on free and reduced lunches. The Superintendent stated it has been a challenge but they are working on plans to overcome the identifying factor. Mr. Soares stated the data is provided by the state when a school goes through the Community Eligibility Provisions (CEP). Once the data is received and the families receive a direct certification, per law, free and reduced information can only be used for free and reduced lunch eligibility. The data cannot be used for multiple purposes without parental consent. The Superintendent mentioned the Department of Agriculture moved forward with the initiative but all the other indicators linked to the ACT, SAT or college admissions look at the poverty rate to use as an indicator for additional resources. There are some strategies that can be shared with the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Minutes: There were no public comments.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT - BASELINE DATA

Minutes:

The Superintendent reviewed the District Baseline Data with the Board Members. Profiles were sent to each Board Member according to their district. Data will continue to be reviewed as it becomes available. A PowerPoint on the 2015-2016 District Baseline Data is attached to the minutes.

- Since students were tested earlier this year than last year, the Baseline Data reflects about a month of additional instruction based on last year's timeline.
- District-wide data was the same as last year or one percentage point below last year.
- Middle School Baseline Data was taken mid-year last year because we shifted to iREADY mathematics. This year it was taken at the beginning of the year.

Board Member Couch asked about last year's end-of-year data. The Superintendent indicated that we do have it as part of last year's targets. Board Member Couch would like to see how iREADY correlates with last year's results. The Superintendent indicated this information is not currently available. The review today is Baseline to Baseline Data only.

- The district is using iREADY in K-2, 3, 4 and 5 for students who are significantly below grade level.
- Grade 6-10 Language Arts data reflects about a month more of instruction than last year.
- End of course data shows a decline in Algebra, Geometry and Algebra II.
- Science and Social Studies show some increase. Biology, Civics, and US History stayed the same.

We have eliminated the Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) with the exception of the mid-year scrimmage. The scrimmage will be taken before winter break. This will be a full test with all the benchmarks. We have developed assessments that are like FSA. Updated data for iReady and ACHIEVE 3000 will be available in January.

By the end of January, we will be able to see this year's data, mid-year data and scrimmage data. Teachers are using iREADY data and ACHIEVE 3000 data at the individual student level to define what interventions are needed.

Board Member Couch asked about schools with the extra hour in the school day. Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, indicated that they have already received hourly funding for after school tutoring or part-time interventions. We will know which schools will receive the additional dollars with the decision on the Lowest 300. Ms. Couch would like to see some type of report on interventionists in the future.

Board Member Paula Wright suggested in the future the Superintendent meet with Board Members before presenting to the Board so that they can have a better opportunity to understand what is going on in the schools. Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, will meet individually with Board Members who wish to go deeper.

[CHARTER PRESENTATION](#)

Minutes:

The Superintendent reviewed the data factors related to Charter Schools with an overview of strategies to work better with Charter Schools.

- Projected Charter enrollment was 13,000. Actual enrollment was about 11,500. Dr. Vitti indicated that we try to project at or over which allows for flexibility.
- Since 2011-2012, 30 Charter School applications were approved and 30 were withdrawn or were denied.

Board Member Grymes asked for the number of Charter School applications

that were overturned. The Superintendent indicated that none were overturned.

Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, stated all schools are participating in the Customer Service training and all have the secret shopper. David Pinter, Director, School Choice, has brought back 109 students to the school system from private schools, Charter Schools and new students to the district. The feedback has been great concerning his work. We are also trying to pitch stronger stories.

Board Member Grymes asked if our front line staff are trained in Customer Service. The Superintendent indicated that training has been provided.

Board Member Wright inquired about more choices at our non-magnet schools. She would like to see how we can offer the same courses at all the middle schools.

Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, indicated that the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) interviewed the School Choice staff and a few Board Members about what they are doing well and what could be done better. We are not required to implement it. They recommended that we commit to regularly talking about Charter School performance at public meetings. There is also a proposal for a revised application process. If this were not adopted, we would consider adding some sections.

Board Member Couch asked if the Board would receive financial statements from the Charter Schools. The Superintendent stated they will be sent out quarterly.

Chairman Smith Juarez stated she would like the applicant to consider the overall need for the school as part of the application. Karen Chastain, Chief of Legal Services, asked everyone to look at the agenda item concerning Charter Schools which lists some questions and answers but answering the questions is optional.

[BENEFITS RFP](#)

Minutes:

Sonita Young, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resource Services, introduced Crystal Wright, Supervisor of Employee Benefits, and John Robertson with Robertson and Bush. The following is a brief overview of the current plan and the plan of action:

- Our current plan is bundled which includes the medical plan, prescription services and the employee assistance program.
- We are one of the few districts in the state that provides coverage at no cost to the employee.
- The plan is self-funded.

- The most underutilized health service is the Employee Assistance Program.
- The district needs to do a better job of letting employees know services that are available to employees.
- The Insurance Committee meets monthly to solicit input and has a representative from each department.

Chairman Smith Juarez asked if we have enough time in terms of budgeting for the July budget. Sonita Young indicated that the cost comes from the plan itself since we are self-funded. She is not aware of any cost outside of the fund balance.

Board Member Shine asked if we know the trend pertaining to utilization. John Robertson indicated it has been good over the last several years and better than the national trend. The reserve is being built up over time so we do expect an increase in the cost of the plan for next year.

Board Member Couch inquired about the Risk Management position previously held by David Ford. Sonita Young indicated that the position was advertised and a candidate was found but he did not accept the position.

Other Topics

Community Meetings

Board Member Couch stated Board Members Hall and Wright would like to go out to the community and notice it. We discussed starting this process by going out to different parts of the community and picking a broad topic. The meetings will begin on January 21, 2016 at The Potter's House. The same format and same questions will be used at all meetings. We would like to have a community meeting in all Board districts.

Evaluation Tool

Vice-Chairman Smith Juarez discussed finding a new evaluation tool and doing more of a report card so we can have a more comprehensive tool. She is working with Dana Kriznar, Assistant Superintendent of Strategic Planning, and Kelly Coker-Daniels, Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Assessment, to create a tool. It is still in template form at this time to get more feedback from different groups.

GRASP Article

Board Member Wright discussed the GRASP article written by Rhema Thompson, reporter for the Florida Times-Union newspaper. She sent a letter to the Florida Times-Union editor concerning this article. Ms. Thompson used an old e-mail in a current article as if she had just spoken with Vice-Chairman Wright that was not truthful.

Chairman, Vice-Chairman

Board Member Couch asked if anyone would decline the nomination of Chair or Vice-Chairman if asked. Vice-Chairman Ashley Smith Juarez

indicated that she would take the position of Chairman very seriously. Board Member Wright stated she would not decline the nomination for Vice-Chairman.

LEGISLATIVE CONSULTING FIRM RECOMMENDATION

Minutes:

This topic was not discussed.

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

Minutes:

Meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

NS and CSM

We Agree on this

Superintendent

Chairman