



# Duval County Public Schools

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September 13, 2016, Board Workshop

Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Chairman  
Ms. Paula D. Wright, Vice-Chairman  
Ms. Becki Couch  
Ms. Cheryl Grymes  
Dr. Constance S. Hall  
Mr. Scott Shine  
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: All Board Members were present with the exception of Board Members Cheryl Grymes and Scott Shine. Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent, and Ms. Karen Chastain, Chief Officer of Legal Services, were also present.

Call Meeting To Order

## [CALL MEETING TO ORDER](#)

Minutes: The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m.

Items To Be Discussed

## [GOVERNANCE](#)

Minutes:

### [GCA Employee Pay Increase](#)

Board Member Hall requested an update on employees from GCA that have not received their pay increase. This issue came up at the Regular Board Meeting on September 12, 2016, during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, stated he sent the Board Members an email last night stating the employees who are employed by the district were paid for their raise which was approved by the Board in the Spring. The vendor did not process the additional pay for the custodians that were employed by GCA. He will follow-up with the vendor concerning these contracted employees. They are not employees of the Duval County School Board.

Michelle Begley, Board Internal Auditor, indicated that the District reimburses GCA once they pay out the increase. They have to provide documentation that the increase has been paid out. Staff is waiting for information from GCA to determine if they will go over the amount that was approved by the Board in the contract. The Chairman requested the Board be provided information when the payment goes out.

#### Strategic Abandonment

The Chairman indicated Vice-Chairman Wright will be looking into this and report back to the Board.

#### Literacy

Board Member Hall suggested the Board schedule a workshop centered around literacy. The Superintendent will bring back the components of the Literacy Plan. The only new information would be a deeper analysis of the achievement gap. One of the greatest challenges has been the core curriculum. There are opportunities to think differently versus reading coaches versus teachers at the secondary level. A workshop will be scheduled to discuss literacy.

Vice-Chairman Wright arrived at 9:18 a.m.

#### Leveling of Class Size

The district will still use the same guidelines the Board set three years ago regarding the caps. Leveling of class size started last week. The cap for Prekindergarten and Kindergarten is 18. If the school is at capacity, it does lead to a challenge because the school may not be able to add another teacher. The challenge at John E. Ford Pre-K- 8 is that it is a whole magnet. There is a cap on enrollment which helps to control the flow of additional students. Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, stated the district can explore caps or lower caps in Montessori because of the multiple age groups. Board Member Couch requested the wait list numbers in Montessori for this school year.

#### Recess

At last night's Regular Board Meeting, several parents spoke during the Public Comment portion of the meeting on this topic. How do we ensure we are following Statute? The Superintendent indicated that there is no flexibility when it comes to the 150 minutes. He hopes the parent will speak with the teacher regarding not receiving the 150 minutes. He will address the issue if it continues. A resource like Physical Education is included in the 150 minutes. Every school's schedule should allow for the 150 minutes. Board Member Couch discussed the teachers taking away recess as a punishment. The Superintendent stated he does know it

happens and did address it last year but has not this year. He will reiterate it this year to Regional Superintendent and principals.

#### Responding to Constituents who speak during public comment

When constituents come to the microphone to speak, we need to have a staff member get back with them. They need to know we are concerned. The Superintendent will make sure this happens in the future.

#### Visit to Gwinnett County

The Board will wait until the new Board Members are in place to schedule the visit. Board Member Hall suggested the visit be scheduled no later than December.

#### Update on the Curriculum Audit

The Board will receive a update after Phrase I is finished. This will be after they review the district level documents. The update was scheduled for November 8, 2016.

#### Bomb Threats

The Superintendent indicated that the district sends out messages to parents about the reality of the repercussions. The district also sends letters home and we have had assemblies particularly at Darnell Cookman 6-12. There are new social media tools that we are exploring that can tell us where the student is. We are researching this now.

#### Speakers

Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Chairman  
Ms. Paula Wright, Vice-Chairman  
Ms. Becki Couch, Board Member  
Ms. Constance Hall, Board Member  
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent

## STRATEGIC PLAN

Attachment: [Proposed Strategic Plan Targets.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Projection District and Subgroup Data.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Dr. Vitti, Superintendent, provided a follow-up to the achievement gap. The PowerPoint is attached to the minutes. Discussion included the following:

- Board Member Hall expressed concern with setting achievement

targets. She feels it is a form of tracking and sending the message that there are groups of children who can achieve and those that cannot. It is a form of racism. We must focus on high expectations for all of our children. She is not in support of setting targets.

- The attachments were sent out to the Board as a follow-up not a proposal.
- We should look at the type of offerings we are able to utilize at the Schultz Center. What is the plan to use the data to help determine how the educational process is going to be enhanced? The professional development plan will be released in the Fall. Courses in cultural competency are offered but it can be explored further to expose everyone.
- Vice-Chairman Wright requested the Superintendent explore training for teachers where they can interact with each other.
- Targets do not produce results.
- Teachers cannot learn everything on the job. They need to understand how to use the data. It is not what you are measuring but what you are doing. The professional development has to be enhanced looking at individual learners.
- Chairman Smith Juarez is not in favor of setting targets. Her expectation is that the achievement gap narrow and close. It is important to look at the data and understand it.
- The consensus of the Board is not to set targets but to expect achievement gaps be closed.
- The Board requested at a previous meeting that the Superintendent, make changes in the targeted numbers but, the PowerPoint that was shown today has no changes. The Superintendent stated he and staff need a definition of what "being more aggressive with the number" looks like. The Chairman had asked the Superintendent to go back with staff and his expertise and knowledge of the implementation of the priorities that the Board has set and bring something back to the Board.
- The tools have gotten better and they do allow teachers to disaggregate and look at data. The data can be broken down in many ways and the training has been increased to learn how to use the data.
- We wanted a transformational leader. How are the current recommendations transformational? The Superintendent stated he feels transformational means creating new processes and a new way of work. More work needs to be done. There are areas that have been transformational.
- We must have high expectations. The Superintendent will take the Board's feedback and do what he can to retool. Board Member Couch suggested the Board create their own expectations.

#### Speakers

Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Chairman

Ms. Paula Wright, Vice-Chairman

Ms. Becki Couch, Board Member

Ms. Constance Hall, Board Member

Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

CSM

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Superintendent

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Chairman