

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 4-1
Yes: Mrs. Childs
Mr. Eubank
Mrs. Roy
Mrs. Williams
No: Mrs. Pinkoson

AMENDMENT TO
POLICY 5120,
ASSIGNMENT WITHIN
DISTRICT –
FIRST READING

The proposed amendment to Policy 5120 was presented to the Board on February 5, 2008. The Board requested a change to address the potential school enrollment impact of students in new developments. This statement will be provided to county and appropriate local government agencies in order to facilitate communication concerning school over-capacity.

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved the Superintendent’s recommendation to approve the proposed amendment to Policy 5120, Assignment Within District, as presented for advertising.

Mr. Eubank requested wording clarification regarding whether the timeline relates to submission or approval. He hopes the Superintendent and staff will review all developments that are not currently built, and present a recommendation to the Board as to whether they should be rezoned. Mrs. Roy concurred with these concerns.

Mrs. Pinkoson did not favor eliminating the priority criteria. She also suggested replacing the word ‘crowded’ with ‘over-crowded.’

Mr. Eubank suggested wording changes that would describe how the priority criteria is implemented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CONTRACT FOR
SWEETWATER BRANCH
ACADEMY CHARTER
SCHOOL

Approval of the charter contract for the NeoSprings, Inc., dba as Sweetwater Branch Academy Charter School, was tabled at the February 5, 2008, School Board meeting. The Board requested staff to revise the agreement to require a time limit for opening of the school and to clarify the application’s language on outcome measurements. Revisions have been made as requested.

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved that the Charter Contract for NeoSprings, Inc., dba as Sweetwater Branch Academy Charter School, be taken from the table.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

Motion by Mrs. Childs

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved the Superintendent’s recommendation to approve the contract for NeoSprings, Inc., dba as Sweetwater Branch Academy Charter School.

Mr. Eubank noted that information is not provided regarding the process for appointment of Board members, other than the initial Board. He was not comfortable with approval when their future governance structure is unknown. He suggested that, in the future, applicants be requested to attend the Board meeting, so questions can be answered.

Mrs. Roy had questions about the composition and diversity of the Board.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion failed 4-1

Yes: Mrs. Roy

No: Mrs. Childs

Mr. Eubank

Mrs. Pinkoson

Mrs. Williams

APPLICATION FOR
CHARTER SCHOOL
GAINESVILLE ARTS
AND TECHNOLOGY
ACADEMY

The application for the Gainesville Arts and Technology Academy Charter School was tabled at the January 15, 2008, School Board Meeting. On February 13, 2008, the Florida Schools of Excellence (FSE) Commission approved an application submitted by the Gainesville Arts and Technology Academy, Inc. (GATA), to operate a charter school in Alachua County. The FSE Commission operates under the Department of Education and is authorized to be the sponsoring entity for a charter school.

Motion by Mrs. Pinkoson

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved the Superintendent's recommendation that the charter application for the Gainesville Arts and Technology Academy, Inc., not be taken from the table.

Mr. Eubank expressed disappointment in the FSE Commission approval of this charter application, since he believes it does not meet the state requirement of 'expected improvement.' He noted that the present application is significantly better than the original, due to the excellent work of District staff.

Mr. Jim Adelman, Gainesville Arts and Technology Academy, Inc., addressed the Board concerning the application and requested it be approved.

Mr. Eubank thinks GATA could be an excellent program and wished the school success. However, he stated that cost of District services exceeds the 5% charged to charter schools, so approval of the application is not only unnecessary, since FSE now has responsibility, but it would be an expense to the District. It is his feeling that FSE should now bear the cost of providing the services.

Mrs. Childs stated that she believes that local School Boards are the sponsoring and supervising authority for charter schools. Now that GATA has gone to the FSE, Ms. Childs' view is that the school is in a difficult position between local and state authorities.

Mrs. Pinkoson believes the Board's authority was circumvented by GATA. The authority now rests with the FSE Commission.

When Mr. Eubank inquired, no staff member supported charter approval. The Superintendent stated that he sees no reason to change his recommendation.

The question was called. Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CITIZEN INPUT

There was no citizen input.

INFORMATION ITEMS

EXCLUSIVE
AUTHORITY TO
APPROVE CHARTER
SCHOOLS

Each year, district school boards must apply to the Department of Education if they wish to retain authority to approve charter schools within the district. Otherwise, charter school applicants could seek approval from the district or from the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission.

Last year, 30 districts applied for Exclusive Authority and only three were approved. Each of the approved districts received a review rating of 100% from the Department of Education. The DOE has said they expect only districts with perfect review scores will be recommended again.

If the Board wishes to apply for Exclusive Authority, a resolution stating their intent must be received by the Department of Education no later than March 1, 2008.

Discussion was held on whether or not to submit an application. Mr. Eubank felt that submitting an application might open an opportunity to join other districts in litigation against the state in the matter of Exclusive Authority. The detriment is a projected 100 hours of staff time to prepare the application and the DOE's statement that the Commissioner will only recommend those districts receiving a perfect score.

This matter was for information only and no action was taken.

IMPACT OF
AMENDMENT ONE

Mr. Birkett conducted a presentation of the District impact of the recently passed Property Tax Reform. The main impact is the loss of a potential \$17 million in millage dollars, estimated through 2013.

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
REQUESTS

Mrs. Pinkoson requested an update on any land negotiations and class size.

Mrs. Roy expressed disappointment in the energy update she received, and in the fact that it was not presented at this Board meeting, as she had requested. She asked that this be placed as an information item on the next meeting agenda, so the public has an opportunity for questions.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.