

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF INFORMAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
March 11, 2008

The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, met in informal session duly called at 9 a.m. in the Boardroom, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida. Present were: Janie S. Williams, Chairman; Tina Pinkoson, Vice-Chairman; Virginia S. Childs, F. Wesley Eubank, and Eileen Roy, members; and W. Daniel Boyd, Jr., Superintendent.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Williams.

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Motion by Mrs. Childs

Seconded by Mrs. Pinkoson

Moved to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2008, Informal Board meeting as presented.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

GENERAL
DISCUSSION

Mrs. Childs' comments:

- Suggested approval of informal/workshop minutes be done at regular School Board meeting.

Mrs. Pinkoson's comments:

- Provided the Board with a handout, which included (1) Suggestions related to a proposed policy which requires ALL Board members to receive copies of staff responses, (2) A proposed work flow chart to provide the Board with information on the status of Board requests; (3) Developing a "Welcome Package" for all new teachers and include incentives to work in the district; (4) Suggested the need for a new vision statement; (5) Requested information and status on the magnet numbers at Buchholz High School; (6) Complimented the Staff Development office on their very informative newsletter; (7) Suggested developing a master Board planning calendar, and (7) Requested a school concurrency and class size amendment timeline, which may have an impact on the schools the Board may decide to build.

Mrs. Roy's comments:

- Referred to the Staff Development newsletter article dealing with the Underground Railroad. Suggested this information be shared with the African-American education activist group, which is working to improve graduation rates.
- Concerned with the low attendance rates at several schools, specifically Horizon Center. Encourage principals to work on improving attendance rates.
- Attended the Juvenile Justice annual meeting and noted that federal grants are being pursued to address crime prevention and

dropout rates. Suggested working with guidance and home liaisons to work with parents and get them involved. Cannot fully rely on Success by Six, the District needs to have a back-up plan to help students.

Mrs. Williams' comments:

- Concerned that many students are not taking advantage of the opportunity provided by Success by Six and suggested the Superintendent work with the Housing Authority to encourage lower income families living in the projects to send their children to school, or lose their housing. Also work with teachers to set up requirements for parents to get their children to school.
- She informed the Board that she has been successful in recruiting mentors for both Metcalfe and Rawlings Elementary schools.

Mr. Eubank's comments:

- Concerned with monthly attendance figures—encourage principals to make this a high priority issue.
- Immediately begin implementation of a longer school day, since bargaining is involved.
- Due to budgetary concerns, he is concerned that staff is looking at developing a plan for filling critical ESP positions, such as custodial vacancies. Requested the Superintendent ensure that a decision is not automatically made and that the only positions currently being filled are teachers and bus drivers. Any other positions MUST go through the Superintendent for approval. Suggested an item on the agenda indicating which positions are being filled. He also noted the Board needs to send a clear message that this is a very bad budget year and it looks bleak.

Responding to Mr. Eubank's concern related to custodians, Mrs. Childs suggested a PR campaign informing employees that if a school loses a custodian they will not be replaced, and everyone must pitch in and take responsibility to clean up after themselves.

- Mr. Eubank appreciates the update on the missing 182 students, but would still like to locate the missing 800.
- Employee Incentive Program—did not support having groups holding brainstorming sessions listing ways to reduce costs. He had suggested the Board provide employees with an incentive (money), as dictated by Florida Statutes, and award employees for cost saving ideas.
- Requested that forms to discontinue membership with ACEA be made available to employees and a copy should be sent Payroll, and also recommended that Social Security numbers be removed from the form.

Superintendent Boyd's comments:

- Invited Board members to the middle school basketball Finals at GHS Wednesday (3/12) afternoon.
- Provided the Board with a draft of new procedures for hiring administrators under a DES contract.
- Provided the Board with a copy of a memo from Newberry Elementary School principal Lacy Redd stating that she and her PTA and SAC are requesting the Board reconsider moving 5th graders from Newberry Elementary to Oak View Middle School. Superintendent noted that he is prepared to place this issue on the April 1 School Board agenda for consideration.
- As a cost saving measure, the curriculum division and transportation department will begin working on reviewing the geographic areas for magnet schools.

Board members confirmed that they will be providing food and refreshments for the upcoming April 4 Fund Friday luncheon.

The Board discussed the upcoming Long-Range Planning workshop scheduled on Wednesday, March 19, 2008, 9 a.m., and suggested staff members attend the workshop to address several issues, such as rezoning timeline, under-enrolled schools, school consolidation, capital outlay, etc.

Responding to a question from Mrs. Pinkoson, Dr. Boyd stated that a complaint has been filed against the Love to Learn Charter School.

ADJOURNMENT

The Informal School Board meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.