

## **WORKSHOP MEETING - DECEMBER 7, 2000**

The School Board of Okaloosa County met in Workshop Session on December 7, 2000, in the Fort Walton Beach Administration Building, 120 Lowery Place, SE.

PRESENT: Rodney Walker, Chairman  
Cindy Frakes, Vice-Chairman  
Howard Hill  
Lloyd Taylor  
Cathy Thigpen

Don Gaetz, Superintendent  
C. Jeffrey McInnis, Esq., Attorney to the Board

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., the purpose of the meeting being to review Agenda items, thereby expediting the Regular Meeting. Items may be considered in random order to accommodate visitors and presenters. Routine items not discussed during the Workshop were reviewed prior to the meeting with no further questions or comments from the Board.

The Chairman recessed the Workshop at 9:00 a.m. for the Special Disciplinary Hearing and reconvened the Workshop at 9:19 a.m.; all members present as before.

Mr. Gaetz advised the Board that he is conducting interviews for the Chief Financial Officer position and will make his recommendation on Monday.

Bill Smith informed the Board that the bid will be opened for electrical services for the Destin lighting project this afternoon and the recommendation will be submitted on Monday. He further informed the Board that the School Zone Signage project is nearing completion and application for reimbursement of funds from the Department of Transportation will be made in January.

At the request of Debbie Hurst, Budget Amendment #2 (Consent #2) was deleted.

Mrs. Frakes stated that Budget Amendment #1 was placed on the table at the last meeting. Her questions have been answered and she suggested this item be placed on the Agenda for approval. The Chairman added Budget Amendment #1 as Discussion item #8.

Becky Spence requested, and the Chairman approved, the addition of two items under Personnel Recommendation: 17D) Suspension of Employee #578-66-3085; 17E) Termination of Employee #267-35-9588.

Mr. Gaetz and Chris Dodd responded to questions from Mr. Hill regarding the purchase of the CompassLearning Educational Package. It was explained that Jostens has been providing and servicing this educational program used in the Performance Based Program at OATC. This company has sold out and it is necessary to purchase the software and equipment from CompassLearning, Inc., in order to continue providing services for this program. If scheduling permits, the new equipment and software will be installed during the Christmas break so that there will not be a lapse in service to students.

Mr. McInnis explained that a Resolution of the Board is required for the purchase of the CompassLearning program for Choctawhatchee High because of the Lease Purchase Agreement. A copy of the contract was provided to the Board in the agenda package. The Resolution will be provided on Monday for approval.

Mr. Hill expressed concern that grammar and spelling are not included in the teaching process for Florida Writes. Mary Gunter and Patti Boyles explained the grading process for Florida Writes indicating that grammar and spelling are a part of the grading scale. They also explained that it is included in the "6-Traits" Writing training.

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Mrs. Frakes expressed concern with the amount of property reported as missing on the annual inventory report. She suggested there is a need for better inventory control and accountability.

Mr. Walker responded that the amount on the report is deceiving because the state does not allow for depreciation of equipment. Additionally, schools and departments need to follow the appropriate procedures for filing police reports for missing items when necessary.

Mr. McInnis requested the addition of Food Service Agreements to the Consent Agenda. He stated that Cinco Baptist Church and Emerald Coast Marine Institute have requested the central kitchen provide meals to students at these facilities. He also requested that renewal of the Food Service Agreements with Okaloosa Academy (north and south facilities) and Tall Pines Academy be added to the Agenda.

Mr. Walker asked why the preparation of these meals cannot be done at the central kitchen rather than putting the burden on schools. Mr. Bobo and Mr. Gaetz explained that the schools are equipped to heat the food and complete the food preparation process whereas the central kitchen does the preparation and chill process. Schools that have the capacity to handle the extra work load are used for these agreements and they are given additional man hours to prepare the meals.

Mr. Walker suggested that any additional food service arrangements be limited to customers who have the provisions to complete the food preparation process. Mr. Hill suggested that there be a profit sharing arrangement with the schools that are providing the services for the current food service agreements.

The Chairman approved these additions as Consent #26A) Food Service Agreement with Cinco Baptist Church; #26B), Food Service Agreement with Emerald Coast Marine Institute; #27A) Renewal of Food Service Agreement with Okaloosa Academy; and #27B) Renewal of Food Service Agreement with Tall Pines Academy.

Mr. McInnis stated that Valparaiso Elementary has requested a modification to the Agreement for Services with University of West Florida in which Valparaiso Elementary provides a staff person to serve as curriculum coordinator for the professional development partnership and is reimbursed the cost through a prime grant between UWF and Florida Department of Education. The school no longer has the staff support to provide this service. The Chairman added this matter as Consent #28.

Mr. Gaetz requested that Destin Middle School be added to the Agenda to present their school uniform proposal. The Chairman approved the requested and added this matter as Discussion Agenda #9.

The Superintendent offered thanks to the Board for their generosity, support and foresight in making other financial sacrifices in order to provide a raise and increased benefits costs to employees. He also thanked OCEA and OCESPA for their work and cooperation in contract matters.

Mr. Hill noted the need for technical corrections to the OCEA Master Contract prior to approval.

Mr. Gaetz stated that next year he would be recommending a pay for performance program.

Mr. McInnis stated that Discussion #6, Resolution authorizing the exchange of property in Niceville, will complete the recommendation of Superintendent Walter Gordon to exchange certain parcels of land in Niceville owned by the District for a parcel of land currently being used as a part of the Niceville High School practice fields which is owned

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by Valparaiso Realty Company. The property has been evaluated by two independent appraisal firms and both firms have stated that this will be a fair and equitable exchange. The Phase One Environmental Assessment Report has also been provided and the report does not recommend further assessment.

Mr. McInnis again advised the Board that he has provided representation to Valparaiso Realty from time to time but has offered no legal advice in this matter. He stated that he has prepared the standard documents for this transaction at the direction of the Board and the Superintendent but all other recommendations and legal opinions have been provided by independent consultants.

Mr. Gaetz presented highlights of the District Reorganization Plan submitted to the Board for approval. The plan proposes dividing the district into three zones (north, central and south) with an Assistant Superintendent functioning as a Chief Operating Officer assigned to each zone. The district departments of elementary education, secondary education, exceptional student education, Title I, and student services will be combined into a Division of Quality Assurance and Curriculum headed by a Chief Officer. As to Fiscal Services, he recommended the Chief Financial Officer position be filled as soon as possible by an individual with experience in school finance. The CFO shall have overall administrative responsibility for fiscal services, human resources and information services as well as the food service department. No changes were recommended for the Transportation Department at this time. Facilities Planning/Maintenance will be divided into three zones. The focus of the maintenance department will be on preventive and corrective maintenance of school facilities and ancillary buildings.

Mr. Gaetz distributed an updated financial analysis depicted the positions recommended to be deleted, positions which will remain unfilled due to assignments made to schools, district office positions to be decentralized to schools, and positions requested to be added. He reviewed the projected savings of \$1.7 million through decentralization and reorganization.

Mr. Walker asked if the speech therapists should be decentralized along with the school psychologists, staffing specialists, and student service workers. Terry Hecker responded that most of the speech therapists are already assigned to the schools. She then explained the purpose and approach in re-assigning these employees to the schools.

Mrs. Frakes requested the Superintendent consider adding a position to coordinate mentors and volunteers, scholarship programs, etc.

Superintendent Gaetz, Dr. Frank Fuller, Dr. Robert McEachern, Mr. Wayne Ansley, and Ms. Terry Hecker responded to questions from board members and offered further comment and clarification as needed.

All board members stated their support of the reorganization plan. Mr. Walker noted that it appeared that some of the department heads had a heavy work load and may need assistance in order to be successful. He stated that he would be willing to support additional positions if justification was provided.

Mrs. Frakes reminded the Board that it was time to consider a legislative agenda. She noted that during the last week of January the FSBA is sponsoring a program to invite legislators to spend the day in the classroom working with teachers.

Mrs. Frakes suggest the Superintendent develop a budget calendar for preparation of the budget and other budget issues that have to be considered throughout the year.

Mr. Hill announced that a parent meeting for students in the Bluewater area has been scheduled to discuss a school of choice proposal involving Ruckel and Destin Middle Schools with the district providing transportation. This approach is being considered to help

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alleviate the enrollment problem at Destin Middle School. If enough interest is expressed, a proposal will be presented in January in order to prepare for school registration in February.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Teresa Epperson, Recorder

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DON GAETZ  
SUPERINTENDENT AND  
CORPORATE SECRETARY

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RODNEY L. WALKER  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD