

WORKSHOP MEETING - MARCH 27, 2000

The School Board of Okaloosa County met in Workshop Session on March 27, 2000, in the Fort Walton Beach Administration Building, 120 Lowery Place, SE.

PRESENT: Rodney Walker, Chairman
Cindy Frakes, Vice-Chairman
Don Gaetz
Howard Hill
Lloyd Taylor

Walter Gordon, Superintendent (arrived 4:35 p.m.)
C. Jeffrey McInnis, Esq., Attorney to the Board

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.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 meeting at 4:05 p.m. for the scheduled Special Disciplinary Hearing and reconvened the meeting at 4:10 p.m.; all members present as before. The Chairman passed the gavel to Mrs. Frakes and left the room at this time.

Mr. Gaetz reviewed the membership and mission of the Task Force for Technical Education established by the Board in December 1998. He stated that the recommendation of the Task Force was not to close Okaloosa Applied Technology Center but to maintain the current programs and add programs for high school students. The recommendations of the Task Force do not ask for funds from the Board at this time, but for the Superintendent to develop a funding plan to operate a technical high school. A final recommendation on how the technical high school should be governed has not been decided, but the Task Force does agree that it should have a large measure of flexible independence. To determine the needs of the market for technical education, extensive research was conducted by the Haas Center for Business Research, University of West Florida.

Dr. Rick Harper of the Haas Center gave an overview of the feasibility study on technical education in Okaloosa County. The Center conducted a survey of the firms within Okaloosa County, South Santa Rosa County and South Walton County as well as a survey of families in Okaloosa County who had students attending the 8th grade, the 11th grade, and who had graduated three years prior. Additionally, interviews were conducted with key businesses to further determine the needs from the business community. Dr. Harper gave a summary of the survey findings and responded to questions from board members.

Mr. Gordon arrived at 4:35 p.m.

Mrs. Frakes recognized members of the public to make comments regarding the recommendations of the Task Force: Ray Navitsky, Denise Gronberg, Larry Sassano, and Mike Chesser. Each individual spoke in support of the need for a quality, skilled workforce and encouraged the development of a technical high school.

Mrs. Frakes reviewed the recommendations of the Task Force to establish a formal career-technical high school program to be located at the current OATC site with satellite campuses at other locations in the county. She offered further explanation of the recommendations as necessary.

Mr. Gaetz stated that he would be making a motion at the Regular Meeting to approve the recommendations of the Task Force with the caveat that the Board will consider funding options following the legislative session and in the context of the regular budget cycle; that the Superintendent is requested, at the earliest practical time, to develop

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three-year financial pro formas for the school as a charter, a de-regulated school and a traditional school; and that the Superintendent is requested to work cooperatively with OCEA and the Okaloosa Applied Technology Center staff to develop a transition plan that will reassure employees and safeguard the adult courses currently being offered subject to funding from the legislature and market availability. There was further discussion of the recommendations among the board members.

Mr. Walker returned to the meeting at 5:25 p.m. and received the gavel.

The Chairman approved the addition of the appointment of Dispatch Supervisor to the Agenda.

The Update on the Florida High School On-Line Program was not given due to the absence of the presenter, Donna Wiseman.

Guyla Hendricks reviewed the mission of The Edwins Enhancement Program of Okaloosa County and requested the Board's approval of conversion from a School-Within-A-School to charter school status. Mrs. Hendricks and Susan Lowery responded to questions from Mr. Walker regarding test scores and the impact on the school's grade under the State grading system.

Janeane Williams reviewed the mission of The Northwood Elementary School Program of Discovery and requested the Board's approval of conversion from a School-Within-A-School to charter school status.

Referencing the Support Agreement for Okaloosa County Schools with Eglin Air Force Base, Mr. Hill noted that the 25-year Lease Agreement will terminate in December 2001. Mr. McInnis responded that the Support Agreement is an extension of the lease and is renewed bi-annually for both schools located on Eglin AFB.

The Chairman approved the addition of two Bids and Purchasing items on the Consent Agenda. Added as #14A(4), Sole Source Request for Computer Curriculum Corp., Northwood Title I and added as item #14A(5), Bid #00-B42 Lawn Service for Edwins Elementary,

The Chairman approved the addition of Consent item #16, Acceptance of donation of trailer to Ocean City Elementary. Mr. McInnis requested the Board authorize acceptance of title on the trailer.

Mr. Gordon requested, and the Chairman approved, the addition of a school trip request by Choctawhatchee be added to the agenda.

At the request of Mr. Hill, the Chairman deleted Board Members' Business item #1, Update on the status of the School District's Employee Health Care Insurance Coverage. Mr. Hill requested this item be placed on the next agenda for a report to be made during Workshop.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Teresa Epperson, Recorder

WALTER C. GORDON
SUPERINTENDENT AND
EX-OFFICIO SECRETARY

RODNEY L. WALKER
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD