

WORKSHOP MEETING - MARCH 9, 2000

The School Board of Okaloosa County met in Workshop Session on March 9, 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
C. Jeffrey McInnis, Esq., Attorney to the Board

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:05 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 9:05 a.m. for the scheduled Special Disciplinary Hearing.

SPECIAL DISCIPLINARY HEARING:

Mr. McInnis informed the Board that he had inquired of the mother and she has requested that the hearing be open to the public and further approved the use of the student's name in the hearing.

Mr. Fred Mangum stated that the recommendation of the Superintendent for the expulsion of Student #4675638922, Bobby Rosado, for the remainder of the 1999-2000 school year plus the 2000-01 school year for assault on an administrator was tabled at the last meeting for further investigation. After having further investigated the incident, it is the recommendation of the Superintendent to amend the charges against the student to also include willful disobedience and open defiance of authority. He requested a date be set for the hearing to allow time for due process to the family.

Mr. McInnis advised the Board that it would be appropriate to schedule another hearing so that additional notice of the amended charges can be given to the family.

Ms. Rosado requested the Board review the statements of those involved and the procedures for use of reasonable force prior to the hearing. She also requested that a copy of the investigation report be provided to her prior to the hearing. The Chairman instructed her to make her requests to the Superintendent.

Motion to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to amend the charges against Bobby Rosado to include willful disobedience and open defiance of authority and to schedule a Special Disciplinary Hearing was made by Mr. Gaetz, seconded by Mr. Hill and carried unanimously.

Mr. Walker scheduled the hearing for March 16, 2000, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the Fort Walton Beach Administration Building.

The hearing was concluded at 9:10 and the Chairman reconvened the Workshop.

WORKSHOP (cont.):

The University Schools Charter Proposal was addressed by Steve Horton. Mr. Horton stated that students and parents are appreciative of the opportunity for students to earn college credit or a two-year degree while remaining on the high school campus and

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being able to participate in their regular high school activities. Response to the program has been good with an anticipated enrollment of 300 - 350 students at each of the four high schools.

Mr. Walker passed the gavel to Vice-Chairman Cindy Frakes and left the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

Mr. Ray Sansom, Chairman of the Citizen's Review Committee, stated that the committee unanimously and enthusiastically recommended approval of the charter school application for the University Schools.

Mr. Horton and Janie Varner responded to questions regarding funding, term of office for the Board of Directors of the University Schools, the conversion process from the School-within-a-School designation, the length of the contract with Troy State University, the requested five-year term of the charter contract, coordination of school calendars and grade reporting periods, and hiring practices. Discussion clarified that when the Board entered into the contract with Troy State University for this program, it was with the intent of both parties for it to be a multi-year relationship.

An amendment to the language in the proposal regarding the salary of employees was offered by Mr. Gaetz to state that "With respect to Okaloosa County School District employees, salaries, benefit packages, contracts, hiring, and dismissal policies will be consistent with the standard practices of the Okaloosa County School District " and a consistent statement to reference Troy State University employees.

Superintendent Gordon recommended approval of the charter school application for the University Schools for a period of two years. He further recommended that the annual evaluation of progress be contracted to an outside agency based on the assumption that charter school operations are under a performance agreement with the School Board as their sponsor.

Mrs. Jo Henderson made opening remarks regarding the Liza Jackson Preparatory School proposal and introduced members of the parent focus group for the proposed school. Dr. Frank Fuller gave a summary of the mission and program highlights of the school. Dr. Fuller addressed questions regarding the proposed term of the charter and governance of the school.

Mrs. Terri Roberts advised the Board that regretfully she would be resigning from the Board of Directors of the Liza Jackson Preparatory School due to her decision to run for Superintendent of Schools in Okaloosa County. Mrs. Janet Chalk will be taking her place on the Board of Directors.

Mr. Sansom informed the Board that the Citizen's Review Committee unanimously and enthusiastically recommended approval of the Liza Jackson Preparatory School charter application.

Superintendent Gordon recommended approval of the proposal for the Liza Jackson Preparatory School for a period of three years and that the annual evaluation of progress be contracted to an outside agency based on the assumption that charter school operations are under a performance agreement with the School Board as their sponsor.

Mrs. Frakes asked that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 28, 2000, reflect the suggestion of the Board that any retention ponds and parking lots constructed on the Shalimar property being leased to Okaloosa County for a judicial center complex be built in such a way that they can be shared with the school district if, in the future, the district develops the remaining portion of the property.

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Mr. Gaetz requested Consent Agenda items #3, Budget Amendment requests for the Technology Program, and #4, Monthly Financial Report for February 2000, be moved to Discussion Agenda. Mrs. Frakes approved the request.

Sean Golder, Executive Director of the Emerald Coast Marine Institute, presented a request to increase the educational services offered by ECMI. Mr. Golder and Mr. Bill Knight explained the proposed Phase II program and addressed questions from the Board regarding the program and funding.

Mr. Gaetz asked these questions of the Superintendent: is it in the best interest of students to expand the ECMI program, does the district have existing programs that might benefit these students or should the district have these programs, is it better to let these students complete the program they start and is it in the best interest of the district financially to expand the ECMI program?

Sue Larrimore responded to questions regarding the benefits of the Agreement with the University of West Florida to provide professional development services at Valparaiso Elementary School.

Mr. Taylor left the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

In reference to the waiver to pay a stipend to the Shalimar Elementary SAC Chairperson, Mr. Gordon stated that he is still waiting on a legal interpretation from the Attorney General. If he has not received it by Monday, he will recommend this item remain on the table.

Mr. McInnis advised the Board that Employee #262-31-9586 has requested an Administrative Hearing regarding his termination. As a procedural matter, he requested the Board's approval to forward the request to the Division of Administrative Hearings and to authorize the Superintendent to retain the services of Attorney Joe Hammons for representation in this personnel matter since he will be representing the Board.

Mr. Hill made a request for information on the rates charged to Bluewater Elementary for district services under the Fee for Services model.

Mr. Gaetz requested an addition to the Discussion Agenda to consider his proposal on an Ability-based Grouping Program at Shalimar Elementary School. He stated that the request was not to reconsider the School-Within-A-School designation at Shalimar but to offer an alternative proposal. He then offered explanation of the proposal.

Mrs. Frakes noted that the Shalimar proposal did not reference students as the gifted and talented but as high achieving students. Mr. Gaetz accepted that correction.

Mr. Hill asked if the school had been given the opportunity to review the proposal to determine if it meets their needs and intent. Mr. Gaetz responded that they have not seen the proposal.

Mr. Gordon requested the proposal not be placed on the Agenda until the school and staff have had the opportunity to review and discuss the proposal. Mrs. Frakes agreed that it should be delayed until the next meeting.

Mr. Gaetz requested it be placed on the Agenda to receive comments from staff, the school and parents. If enough information is not received, then he will agree to table the proposal. Mrs. Frakes approved his request.

Mr. Gaetz stated that parents have expressed concerns that the proposed school calendars for next year will cause economic hardship on parents for the additional day care services and interfere with pre-planning of TDY trips and vacations for the military

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community. Additionally, the Construction Program Manager has stated concern that the proposed calendar will interrupt the construction project schedule causing a delay in completion of projects or additional cost for overtime work. He suggested the extra inservice days be pulled out, the Christmas break be shortened and that school start the second week of August instead of the first week resulting in school ending one week later than proposed.

Mr. Gordon responded that each of these points has been considered and that he believes that a calendar will be coming to the Board that will receive a unanimous vote of approval.

In response to some phone calls, Mrs. Frakes asked if annual pre-planned dates such as the Honors Banquet, etc. could be placed on the web site to assist families in planning for these events. Mr. Gordon responded that he address this matter with the appropriate personnel.

Mrs. Frakes asked that all available scholarship information be posted on the web site also.

Mrs. Frakes asked for a status report on the mid-year budget audit. Mr. McInnis responded that the Scope of Work has been provided to the CPA firm to provide a draft engagement letter but it has not been completed at this time.

Mrs. Frakes informed the Board that she and Gayle Grimes attended the Take Stock in Children meeting in Tallahassee and while there they visited Representative Melvin and discussed the Board's legislative agenda. Also, in regards to the Mentoring Initiative, the Governor has signed an Executive Order giving all State employees one hour a week off to mentor in a school. The Governor is also sponsoring a Corporate Honor Role which requires the CEO of an organization to commit to mentoring and to have at least 10% of the employees do the same on paid time off from work. This information will be shared with the Chambers of Commerce with a request for them to encourage local business to participate. The kick-off for the Mentoring Campaign is being planned for May and efforts are being made to have the Governor or the Lt. Governor here as the speaker for the kick-off campaign. She then invited the Board Members to participate as mentors.

Mr. Hill asked if budget workshops will be scheduled to start pre-planning for next year's budget. Mr. Gordon responded that he will be setting up those workshops with the Chairman.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Teresa Epperson, Recorder

WALTER C. GORDON
SUPERINTENDENT AND
EX-OFFICIO SECRETARY

RODNEY L. WALKER
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD