

## WORKSHOP MEETING - SEPTEMBER 7, 2000

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

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

Walter Gordon, Superintendent  
C. Jeffrey McInnis, Esq., Attorney to the Board

ABSENT: Lloyd Taylor

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 for the scheduled Special Disciplinary Hearing at 9:00 a.m. and reconvened the Workshop at 9:15 a.m.

The Chairman approved the following additions to the Agenda: Consent #20, Donation of \$1665 to Laurel Hill School; Superintendent's Business #4, Niceville High School trip to Troy State University on September 21, 2000; and Superintendent's Business #5, Niceville High School trip to North Carolina on September 15-17, 2000.

Mr. Gaetz questioned the personnel appointment being on the Agenda without an individual being recommended by the Superintendent. Mrs. Spence explained that the interviews were being conducted this week and the recommendation will be made prior to the meeting on Monday. The principal requested the appointment be placed on the agenda in order to fill the position in a timely manner. She clarified that this is not an additional administrative position but an allocated position. The individual in this position left the district for employment in another county.

Mr. Hill asked for explanation of the need for a district level administrator to be assigned as the coordinator of the Failure Free Reading/Bridges Program being requested by the DJJ schools. Mrs. Gunter responded that it is a state grant and requires that a district administrator be assigned to supervise the program. She stated that this is not an additional position but someone from the curriculum staff will be coordinating the training program if the grant is awarded.

Mr. Gaetz asked for assurance from Mr. Windham that no school was accepting zoning waivers that put them above the 95% cap on enrollment. Specifically, he asked if Antioch Elementary was above the 95% cap and if they had a waiting list of students who would be accepted into Antioch as space becomes available. Mr. Windham stated that none of the schools were above their 95% cap. He stated that there was a waiting list and parents were called during the summer if space was available, but that was not the case since the beginning of the school year.

Mrs. Frakes asked if there is a safety training program, in particular for custodians and maintenance personnel, to help reduce the number of injuries on the job. Bill Smith responded that he could speak only for maintenance personnel and that some safety training is provided and all safety equipment is provided.

Mr. Gaetz asked what benefit the district will receive from participation in the Utah State University Dietetic Internship Program. Jimmie Bobo responded that there is no

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expense to the district and food service employees will benefit from the up-to-date knowledge of dietetic studies and education the students will bring with them.

Mr. Walker added that the program will accommodate students who live in Florida but are enrolled in Utah State University. Mr. Gaetz stated that he would support the program since it will be helping local students.

Mr. Hill asked for explanation of the large kitchen equipment purchases. Mr. Bobo stated that Davidson and Destin Middle Schools would like to purchase deep-fat fryers because the students complain about baked fries and Valparaiso Elementary needs to replace an oven that is out of service. Discussion followed regarding the purchase of the deep-fat fryers and Mr. Bobo was requested to provide additional information on the need for the purchase prior to the meeting on Monday.

Mr. Gaetz asked if the tag-on bid for charter bus services precluded the schools from using local vendors. Rick Norris responded that most of the local vendors do not have enough buses to accommodate the band and athletic team trips or not enough buses available on the dates needed. The schools still have the option of requesting the Purchasing Department to obtain quotes or to put out another bid for local vendors to provide charter bus services.

Mr. McInnis requested the addition of two items to the Consent Agenda: 1) an agreement with Okaloosa Child Care that was approved by the Board in August and is being re-submitted with technical corrections; 2) a Representation Letter for Attorney Harry Barr who represents the Board in insurance claims and provides workman's compensation defense. The Chairman approved the addition of these items as Consent #21 and #22, respectively.

Referencing the requested State Food Waivers, Mr. Hill questioned the disparity in the amount of profit for School Food Services between Plew Elementary and Longwood and Oak Hill Elementary Schools. Mrs. Gunter responded that the profit is in relation to the amount of participation in the food service program. Also, Oak Hill and Longwood have a higher ratio of free and reduced lunch participation than Plew, which increases their overall program participation.

Mr. McInnis stated that a public hearing is scheduled on Monday evening for the Board to consider the adoption of a policy regarding mentors. Since the inception of the mentoring program, Mrs. Spence has some concerns regarding that portion of the recommended policy relating to the criminal background screening and the cost of such.

Mrs. Spence stated that the policy requires the individual to pay for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) criminal background screening. Rather than paying for the screening, many individuals are bringing in clearance from various other sources (i.e., Air Force Base clearance, day care clearance, etc.). Since the policy requires the FDLE criminal background screening, she asked for direction from the Board on accepting other clearances.

Mr. Walker expressed concern that the staff member in charge of the program has not asked the principals if they want mentors or how many mentors they would like to utilize. He also expressed concern that school personnel have not been given guidelines for the mentoring program.

Mrs. Gunter stated that training sessions have been held for individuals volunteering for the mentoring program. All of the elementary schools have received the guidelines and a training session has been conducted for the school personnel. Training sessions are being scheduled for the middle and high schools.

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Discussion among the board members concluded that it would simplify the process if the district pays for the screening or accepts a current FDLE clearance if the appropriate documentation is presented. Current would be defined as within 90 days of the application to become a mentor.

Mr. Gaetz stated agreement with Mr. Walker that the schools should indicate the number of mentors they would like to use so as not to have a data bank of mentors that the district has paid for the screening but they are not being utilized.

Mrs. Frakes suggested the policy state that all mentoring activities will take place on school property. Any activities after school hours or off the school site should be coordinated directly between the volunteer mentor and the parent or legal guardian of the student.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Teresa Epperson, Recorder

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WALTER C. GORDON  
SUPERINTENDENT AND  
EX-OFFICIO SECRETARY

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RODNEY L. WALKER  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD