

WORKSHOP MEETING – FEBRUARY 4, 2010

The School Board of Okaloosa County met in Workshop Session on February 4, 2010, in the School District Administration Building, 120 Lowery Place, SE, Fort Walton Beach, Florida.

PRESENT: Rodney Walker, Chairman

Cindy Frakes, Vice-Chairman

Howard Hill

Chuck Kelley

Cathy Thigpen

Alexis Tibbetts, Superintendent

C. Jeffrey McInnis, Esq., Attorney to the Board

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 915 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 by the Board.

The Chairman made the following changes to the Agenda: Added as Visitors #3, Recognition of Ruckel 6th grade Knowledge Master Team; added as Consent item #14F, Suspension of Employee #xxx-xx-7246; added as Consent item #19C(1), Amendment to SA# 10-89 Dee Dee Watson, Choreographer/Clinician for Indianettes, Choclawhatchee High School; added as Discussion item #1, Suspension of Employee #xxx-xx-8826 (tabled 1-25-10).

Mr. Hill inquired as to the audit report for Northwest Florida State College Collegiate High School being 29 days late and the District's audit report being 10 days late. Mrs. Scallan reported that in both cases the lateness was not due to incompleteness of the audit, but rather the paperwork was submitted to the State after the deadline.

An update on the CHOICE program was provided by Mary Beth Jackson, Program Director of CHOICE. Ms. Jackson showed the number of certifications earned, as well as the earned funding for 2008-2009 in the in the career and technical education program. She stated that approximately \$71,000 has been expended for certifications for students, and that approximately \$75,000 net income has come into the county from certifications that students have earned. The PowerPoint presentation showed a breakdown of CAPE funding in the various programs at each school. Mr. Hill noted that the percentage holdback should be 10%, rather than 90% that is shown on the spreadsheet. Ms. Jackson stated that based on the allocations provided by the Finance department, enrollment of approximately thirty students in each class is needed in order for the program to break even.

Additional data showed the 2009-2010 current enrollment in each career and technical education program, and a separate slide showing a breakdown of over 1000 middle school students by school. Ms. Jackson noted that based on a report from the Florida Department of Education, Okaloosa School District is listed in the top five districts for the number of CAPE academies and the number of students enrolled in these programs.

Patti Bonezzi, CHOICE Specialist, provided a breakdown of the IT programs in the middle schools and explained the courses offered. She gave an overview of the current status of the IT Institutes in the high schools, and the areas of focus for next school year. Ms. Bonezzi informed the Board that Perkins funds were used for the upgrades to the IT labs. Dr. Tibbetts stated that even though some of the IT funding is from Perkins, Capital Outlay funding covers a lot of the technology costs as well.

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Ms. Bonezzi stated that certifications are offered through the Academy of Medical Assistant Technology, and that an articulation agreement is in place with Northwest Florida State College where a testing center is in place. She provided pictures of the upgrade to the Gulf Power Academy in the electrical program at Laurel Hill School. Through Perkins funding, Capital Outlay, and donations from Boeing and Gulf Power, the electrical academy has been brought up to standard and students are now better equipped to pass the certification exams.

Additional PowerPoint slides showed CAPE funding improvements for the District and the 2010-2011 CHOICE goals. There was discussion regarding bandwidth at the schools and the ability to increase the bandwidth through contact with Hayes Computer Systems in Tallahassee. Mary Beth Jackson introduced the Project Lead the Way Biomedical Program anticipated to begin at Fort Walton Beach High School next school year. Ms. Jackson stated that she has met with Principals, Cindy Gates and Ed Coleman, and with Dr. Robert Owen of Embry-Riddle, regarding the Embry-Riddle contract. They are in the process of drafting a contract that will be more cost effective for the District, and will bring a draft to the Board for review prior to the negotiations process. Mr. Walker confirmed that the contract will be provided to the Board before negotiations begin.

Dr. Bill Smith, Director of Facilities, gave an update on the privatization of custodial services with GCA Services. He stated that if the Board chooses to renew the contract with GCA Services, he would suggest that the contract commence in July so that the summer cleaning of schools could be completed before school starts, and also to give plenty of lead time to start the contract so that managers are involved from the beginning. He stated that a complete evaluation cannot be made until both the winter cleaning program and the summer cleaning program are completed. Mr. Hill suggested that rather than having the District subsidize the schools for the services, schools that choose the privatization services pay the cost. Dr. Smith stated that he is in the process of collecting financial data to provide to the Board for their consideration. Dr. Smith introduced Clark Brady, GCA Services Regional Manager.

Mr. Brady gave a PowerPoint presentation that included the custodial management accomplishments in the ten pilot program schools. He explained the winter customer survey results from principals, stating that services were rated a level 4 which is considered above average. Mr. Brady showed pictures of before and after winter clean-up at all of the piloted schools. He explained that custodians perform a winter clean-up, which is a reduced cleaning program, and a summer clean-up program each year. He showed the personnel statistics of GCA Services and the District which indicated a .08% and .06% turnover rate respectively. Mr. Brady explained the method of the week training topics for the month of January, and stated that continued safety training is provided. An outline of goals for 2010 was given, which included a computer-generated inspection program that will track progress through trending, implementing an Employee of the Month Award program, and implementing a monthly Clean Campus Award.

Mrs. Thigpen commented that the current contract ends June 30, and the sooner a proposal comes to the Board, the better, as summer cleaning is going to be an issue at the schools. She suggested that the Union and Finance be involved as it will be difficult to provide a clear picture of costs and determine whether the District wants to maintain the pilot program, or go to a different method of custodial services. She stated that everyone should be on the same page as the process moves forward. Mr. Hill stated his concern is the District subsidizing the schools for custodial services. He suggested that principals pay for the services they receive.

In regard to the Minutes of the Special Meeting/Hearing of January 19, 2010, Mr. Hill requested a change in the paragraph outlining his PowerPoint presentation showing a two-part proposal to amend Resolution No. 10-03. The Minutes reflect that an

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increase in students would be needed for Lewis Middle School to remain a viable and competitive middle school, and he requested that the minutes reflect that an increase in middle school students would be needed for Lewis Middle School to remain a viable and competitive middle school.

Mr. Hill inquired about the technology project at Pryor Middle School which was outlined in the re-appropriation of District 1 School Board Member Capital Outlay Funds. He asked if Pryor would be on the District's Internet program, and why funds were allocated for the McAfee SecurityCenter when the District uses Symantec at no cost. Mr. Mitchell responded that he would look into the matter.

Regarding the Appropriation of District 2 School Board Member Capital Outlay Funds to Fort Walton Beach High School for two smart boards, Mr. Hill stated that the MIMIO converts white boards into smart boards and they are less expensive than the two smart boards requested. Mr. Mitchell explained that the request for funds was submitted to complete a previous grant award, the program is already in place, and the MIMIOs would not work in this situation.

Dr. Bill Smith informed the Board that he has spoken with a representative from Eglin Real Estate regarding renewal of the lease for the piece of property north of the Lewis Middle School practice field, and they anticipate renewing the lease with the Department of the Air Force at no cost to the District once the paperwork is filed.

In follow-up to an employee suspension that was tabled at the previous Board meeting, Mr. Foxworthy stated that a school resource officer and the Department of Family Services looked into the matter and recommended no legal action be taken against the bus driver; however, the safety committee believed the incident was serious enough to recommend a two-day suspension without pay. Mr. Foxworthy stated that he concurred with their recommendation, also taking into consideration the discipline measures of similar situations in the past.

Mr. Kelley stated that the recommendation from the school resource officer and the Department of Family Services was from a legal perspective and was not relevant to an in-house disciplinary action. He stated that this action was a significantly poor choice by the employee and, in his opinion, a two-day suspension was not an appropriate measure of discipline. He asked Mr. Foxworthy if he reviews all employee suspensions and terminations prior to recommending Board action. Mr. Foxworthy replied that in this case he moved forward with the recommendation as he did not see anything out of line. After parent inquiry at the previous Board meeting, he researched the incident further and learned that the employee initially used poor judgment; however, when he realized he had used poor judgment, he took action to correct it so the situation would not become worse. Mr. Foxworthy took this into consideration when determining the recommended discipline.

Mr. Walker agreed with the recommendation Mr. Foxworthy presented after having looked into the situation further. Mr. Walker asked the Board members if they preferred that Human Resources review the matter further and present the Board with a different recommendation, or if the recommendation as presented was acceptable. The Board members concurred with Mr. Foxworthy's recommendation as presented; however, they requested that recommendations for employee terminations and suspensions be investigated thoroughly and reviewed closely before requesting Board action. Dr. Tibbetts confirmed that the Human Resources Director will review future employee suspensions prior to submitting a recommendation to the Board.

With regard to the SEAT Management task order for installation of projectors in the classrooms at Walker, Mr. Hill asked about the source of funding for the project. Mr. Mitchell responded that Walker Elementary School is funding a portion of the project,

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and have also requested assistance, since they decided to move forward with the project after their grant was not selected.

Dr. Tibbetts informed the Board that a reception for the National Board Certified Teachers will be held at Choctawhatchee High School, Monday, February 8, 2010, at 4:30 p.m.

Dr. Tibbetts announced that next week is National Counselor Week, and she expressed her appreciation toward the school guidance counselors.

Dr. Tibbetts stated that she recently attended a meeting in Gainesville with other superintendents, and the State's budget that was published indicates districts will have big fiscal challenges next year.

Mrs. Frakes expressed concern regarding the perception of the voting for the school calendar. The perception is that the majority vote will determine which school calendar the District will follow. She made clarification that the voting process is a method of obtaining a sense of the community's preference in the school calendar; however, the Board members are tasked with setting the school calendar by looking at this information and determining what is educationally sound for most of the students and for the District. Mr. Hill stated that the Board can accept, reject, or modify the recommended school calendar. Mr. Walker stated that in the future he would recommend only two calendar options be presented for public input and that the rules be explained before voting begins on the options.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Jan Crawford, Recorder


ALEXIS TIBBETTS, Ed.D.
SUPERINTENDENT AND
CORPORATE SECRETARY


RODNEY L. WALKER
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD