

WORKSHOP MEETING – MAY 6, 2010

The School Board of Okaloosa County met in Workshop Session on May 6, 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 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 by the Board.

Mrs. Frakes asked about the difference in cost for student exams at Niceville High School and Choctawhatchee High School. Mr. McLaughlin responded that the cost difference is due to the number of days that the exam sites are utilized by each school.

In regard to the Lighting Retrofit Agreement with EnergyLife, Inc., Mr. Hill inquired as to the payback. Dr. Bill Smith stated that the paybacks for the lighting retrofit agreements are projected in 3½ years or less.

Mrs. Frakes made inquiry as to the number of students enrolled in the CSI classes at Crestview High School. Mr. Coleman, Principal, responded that approximately 120 students are enrolled and that five sections of the course are being offered, and the program continues to expand.

Mr. Hill asked about the language in the choice of responses to Question #19 of the Customer Satisfaction Survey, which relates to the students utilizing the services in the health care room at their school. He suggested that the choices of yes, no, or no opinion would be appropriate in relation to how the question was posed. Mr. McLaughlin explained that the Haas Center used a wording format that would best fit into the scale they use for compiling the responses. Although yes or no answers would not fit on this kind of survey, he stated that a different format could be suggested in the future. He stated that he would take suggestions from the Board to the principal's committee they would address reformatting the survey. Mr. McLaughlin added that certain healthcare information in the survey is required by statute. Mrs. Thigpen commented that the Health Department requires certain information be obtained through a customer survey, and that Pediatric Services of America, who provide services at the schools, would be providing the Board with information at the end of the fiscal year.

In response to Mr. Hill's question about the cost of the survey, Mr. McLaughlin responded that the overall cost is approximately \$32,000, which is reduced from approximately \$49,000 from four years ago. He provided a breakdown of approximately \$15,000 for the Haas Center to tally and formulate the survey and provide a report, and approximately \$16,000 for the disbursement of all the information. The survey is mailed only to the parents of secondary students, and is sent home with the elementary school students.

An academic intervention program for both the north and south end of the county was presented by Mary Beth Jackson, CHOICE Program Director. She stated that this is a dropout prevention and academic intervention program, not a discipline-based program.

WORKSHOP MEETING – MAY 6, 2010

Mrs. Jackson explained the identifiers that MIS has developed for a query which include the strongest predictors of dropouts involving 8th and 9th grade students. MIS will identify students meeting criteria as potential dropouts as early as the end of the first semester of their 8th grade year. During the second semester of the 8th grade year, middle schools will provide intensive counseling and tutoring for identified students. Students who are not successful with the counseling intervention will attend the new high school entering their freshman year. Last year 400 9th grade students were not promoted to 10th grade, and the national indicator is that they have a 75% chance of dropping out of school. The number of these students has increased over the last three years. As the District increases the rigor, more freshmen are unsuccessful. Mr. Hill asked if it will be mandatory that those students who are identified attend the new high school. Mrs. Jackson replied that yes, it would be mandatory; however, students who decide not to attend this school will have other options in public school settings.

Mrs. Jackson explained the individual school related risk factors, based on 2007 research from the National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University, and stated that MIS built these factors into the criteria for identifying students. She explained the various strategies that would be incorporated into the program and answered questions in this regard.

The location of the south end program will be in existing classrooms at OATC, with full access to all the career technical programs. The ECCI South high school program will be dismantled and students from that program will be moved to other appropriate settings. The program in the north end will be housed at existing classrooms at Crestview High School.

It is proposed that OATC be renamed to reflect a new high school transitional model with a strong emphasis on the CHOICE institutes and adult programs that will be offered. Mrs. Jackson stated that this is not a performance-based program, that there will be direct instruction with a career technical education component. Mr. Walker stated that Mrs. Frakes and Mrs. Thigpen are the two Board members who will bring forth the proposed naming of the schools, and that a majority vote is needed for it to be approved.

Mrs. Jackson presented an 18-credit/3-year graduation plan which meets the criteria for math and science, and stated that students will be encouraged to obtain an industry certification. She stated that if the student's schedule allows, they may choose to be a guest student at their zoned school, and if eligible they could participate in extracurricular activities. She also explained the exit criteria for students who are successful in the new high school. She stated that the goal is to enroll 100 students. Mr. Walker stated that although the proposed budget is based on 100 enrolled students, it would have to be modified if fewer students are enrolled. He stated that it may be difficult to enroll 100 students the first year, but he hopes that there are enough students to fund the program and that the program works.

Mrs. Jackson stated that the student, principal and parent will sign a discipline contract delineating expectations and consequences. Mrs. Frakes asked about the discipline criteria for admission to the program. Mrs. Jackson responded that discipline criteria will be developed by a committee and presented to the Board for approval. Mrs. Frakes stated that she would not support the program unless specific discipline criteria are included in the recommendation to the Board. Discussion between the Board members and the Superintendent followed defining the types of discipline infractions and number of discipline referrals that would be included in the placement criteria. Mrs. Frakes clarified that the new high school was not to be an alternative setting for students with serious discipline infractions. Mr. Walker recommended that if a student's discipline record exceeds the criteria, that Al Gardner and Kelly Day, principals at OATC, be allowed to review the student's information and be the final authority to determine whether a student would be accepted to the program on a probationary

WORKSHOP MEETING – MAY 6, 2010

basis. Mr. Walker suggested that Mrs. Jackson work with each Board member on defining the discipline criteria, then present a discipline contract for the Board's consideration.

There was discussion regarding providing ESE services, transportation, and the projected budget. Mrs. Thigpen stated that her only reservation with the program is that it would be mandatory for students to attend; however, as long as the principals support it and staff makes it work, she would support the program. Mr. Walker stated that it is important that the CHOICE component and other career technical programs are tied to the academics of this program. Mrs. Jackson stated she would provide the Board with a progress report at the last meeting in July 2010.

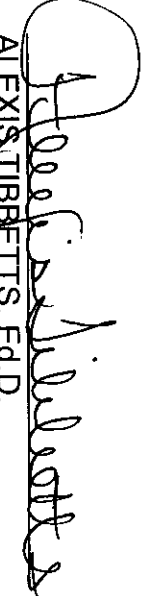
Mr. Hill asked if there was an additional cost to include the Longwood Elementary School lighting retrofit project in the Jacobs/Titan GMP proposal, rather than contracting that portion of the project with EnergyLite, Inc. Mr. Nobles responded that there would not be any additional cost, and since Jacobs/Titan is providing all the other services, the two companies would not overlap services. Dr. Bill Smith clarified that it would be cheaper to include the lighting retrofit project with the GMP because it would be included in the demolition of the ceilings.

Mr. Hill inquired about follow up information to the newspaper article he spoke of at the April 26th meeting regarding middle school athletes participating in varsity sports. Dr. Tibbetts stated that Mr. Shipp and Ms. Lowrey-Sexton would contact Mr. Hill regarding this since it was in reference to their schools. Dr. Tibbetts stated that she has had conversation with the athletic directors at both, Baker School and Laurel Hill School, and there are times that teams will roster an 8th grade student to a high school sport. FHSAA has ruled that if a roster does not include a certain number of students, then the school would have to eliminate that particular sport.

Dr. Tibbetts announced that Mrs. Thigpen and JC Connor led a dedication ceremony of a historical marker at the Carver Hill Complex in Crestview. Several former students, teachers, coaches and administrators of Carver Hill attended.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Jan Crawford, Recorder


ALEXIS TIBBETTS, Ed.D.
SUPERINTENDENT AND
CORPORATE SECRETARY


RODNEY L. WALKER
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD