

WORKSHOP MEETING – AUGUST 5, 2010

The School Board of Okaloosa County met in Workshop Session on August 5, 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 9:00 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 by the Board.

The Chairman noted that revisions had been made to Consent items #22C(3) and (4). Mrs. Scallan stated that the amount of SA# 11-49 was increased to \$30,000 and will be paid from school budgetary funds and SA# 11-50 was also increased to \$30,000 and will be paid from Title I funds. These agreements are to contract the services of professionals who will conduct classroom art and drama activities under the supervision of the classroom teacher.

Mr. McInnis requested an addition to the agenda to revise Resolution 10-05 regarding the surplus of the McGriff Street property which was previously approved by the Board. It has since been discovered that there is an error in the East and West calls in the legal description. The legal description will be corrected and attached to the Resolution.

The Chairman noted the modification to the Custodial Services Contract. Dr. Bill Smith stated that the Board had previously approved the renewal of the contract but he did not have the document ready at that time. The actual document is now being brought to the Board for approval with the addition of Fort Walton Beach High School to the contract.

Referencing the Wellness Initiative Review, Mr. Hill asked for further explanation of the projected action that states, "more focus will be given to district wide employee wellness programs". Stacie Smith responded that currently the individual schools plan their own activities. For the coming year, activities will be planned that involve all employees. That was one of the criteria mentioned when applying for the wellness recognition awards this year. For example, a blood pressure monitoring program will be initiated district wide.

Mr. Hill also noted that there were no projected actions listed under the curriculum section of the Wellness Initiative Review. Guyia Hendricks responded that health benchmarks are embedded in the science and social studies curriculum guides which are updated every year. There will also be a new teen dating violence curriculum in place for the coming year and the list of community resources will be updated in the Character Education Report.

Jessica Burge, Dietician in the School Food Services Department, addressed questions and concerns regarding items available to students in the vending machines. Ms. Burge stated that she has observed items of minimal nutritional value in the vending machines at the high schools. Vending machines are turned off during lunch hours as well as one hour before and after lunch hours; however, those items are still available to students at other times. Dr. Tibbetts stated that she would have Mr. Nobles discuss

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with the vendor which type of food items are allowed in the vending machines according to the contract.

Mrs. Frakes asked if menu changes were made based on input from the nutritional advisory committees. Ms. Burge responded that some of the suggestions have been incorporated such as changes to sandwich wrappings and the addition of more vegetarian items like veggie burgers and fruit and yogurt plates. Dr. Tibbetts added that when parents call with concerns about the food service program, they are invited to serve on the nutrition advisory committee.

Mrs. Frakes expressed appreciation to the staff for their efforts to make the food choices healthier, to teach children about healthy food choices, and making the information available on the website to help parents and children plan meals based on nutritional and health needs.

Mr. Hill asked if peanuts are prohibited in the schools because of allergies. Ms. Burge responded that they always try to respect this type concern. She stated that they are planning to serve Uncrustables in the cafeterias this year. They will respect any school that has students with severe allergies; however this product is prepackaged so there is no risk of cross contamination in the kitchen. Dr. Tibbetts added that a note is sent home to the parents of every child in the classroom when there is a child that has a severe peanut allergy asking the parents to not send any food with peanuts for the class or the individual student.

Mrs. Frakes noted an inconsistency in the Minutes of the July 26, 2010 meeting regarding the amount that the budget has been decreased over the past three years. It was determined that the amount of \$3.5 million as recorded was incorrect and should be changed to \$31 million.

Mr. Hill asked for clarification of the amount of funds that would be generated by the 0.25 mil as referenced in the Minutes of the Special Meeting of July 21, 2010. Mrs. Scallan verified that based on the tax roll provided from the Final Conference a quarter of a mil would generate \$4.7 million as is stated in the record.

Dr. Smith explained that the portables to be surplused and transferred to Okaloosa Academy are older portables in the district's inventory that are scheduled for demolition. The charter school made a request for portables and will pay to have them moved.

Responding to questions from Mrs. Frakes, Elaine Anderson stated that the multi-media equipment to be purchased would include iPads and Kindles for student use. These items were recommended by Eric Mitchell, Technology Specialist, and will require a student network to be in place. The principals at the five participating schools have agreed to have the network installed. Mrs. Anderson explained that the grant parallels the Take Stock in Children program. It is designed to reach at-risk, low performing students and to get parental involvement, but there is no student contract with minimum GPA requirements, attendance requirements, or behavior requirements as with the Take Stock in Children program. Mrs. Frakes asked that the nine-week progress reports referenced in the grant application that are submitted to the Florida Department of Education be provided to the Board as well.

Addressing concerns expressed by Mrs. Frakes regarding the beverages that are purchased under Tag-on-Bid #094003, Rick Norris stated that the request is for the renewal of a one-year contract to provide direct delivery of beverage products to the schools. In accordance with USDA requirements and the agreement with the National Alliance for a Healthier Generation, carbonated drinks are not available to students through the serving lines or the vending machines.

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Mr. Norris informed the Board that the Food Service Department is planning a pilot program offering healthy meals in the vending machines. Students will be able to make purchases from the machines and it will be charged to their food service account.

Mr. Hill stated that he had heard complaints that the drink prices for students are more than the price charged to teachers. Mr. Norris stated that Coca-Cola has reduced their prices this year so the change in prices should be reflected in the schools.

Responding to Mr. Hill's question regarding revenue from vending sales, Mrs. Scallan stated that the revenue is budgeted as it is collected and that the estimated amount is for Food Service only, not for the schools. Mr. Norris added that Coke commissions for the schools go directly to the school internal accounts.

Mr. Hill asked how the vendor for produce was selected when there were two bids at the same estimated price. Mr. Norris responded that Adams Brothers Produce was chosen because the district used the other vendor two years ago and they did not perform very well. The other vendor is out of Pensacola and their delivery was not timely and invoicing was incorrect. He chose to go with Adams Produce because of their proven service, they are located in Destin and they are also part of the DSO contract.

Referencing the service agreement for financial advisor services for potential refunding of Series 1994 Revenue Refunding Bonds, Mr. Hill asked how much refund would be received. Mrs. Scallan responded that the proceeds are estimated to be \$2 million. It will probably take 60 days to complete the process but the market is right and the interest rates are good, so now is the time to do this.

Mr. Hill stated that it was his understanding when the concept for the fine arts program at Edwins Elementary was presented it was to be funded through grants and donated funds. The two service agreements for art and drama instructors are being funded from school budgetary funds and Title I funds. Dr. Connie Hall, Principal of Edwins Elementary, responded that this is the back-up plan for funding since they are still waiting to find out if the grants were approved. She is hoping to receive notice of grant approval by the first of September. Rollover reserves are being used to fund one of the positions and there was enough Title I funds left after all the teachers were hired to fund the other position. She stated that the school enrollment is at 480, up from 417 last year. She attributes the increased enrollment to the fine arts program.

Dr. Tibbetts stated that there are three schools (Edwins, Eglin, and Longwood) with enrollment under 500 but all three are showing some growth potential. It is expected that housing will begin to be re-built on Eglin AFB as early as March 2011.

The Chairman asked Dr. Smith to give a report on the repair of the HVAC system at Edge Elementary School. Dr. Smith stated that the 25-year old chiller went down and it was not financially feasible to repair it. A leased chiller has been brought in temporarily while waiting for a replacement chiller to be manufactured. It will take approximately 120 days to build the unit and it will cost about \$700,000.00 to replace the unit. The replacement of the unit will be a time and materials project through Jacobs/Titan.

Mrs. Thigpen stated that she would like to see how the capital outlay plan, one-year and five-year, may be changing because of these major expense items. When the dollars are dwindling and there is a \$700,000 repair, projects for other schools will be delayed.

Mr. Walker stated that staff will be meeting with board members individually because the current capital outlay plan is changing due to these major repairs. The plan is to move approximately \$1 million of the capital outlay budget into Reserves because there are no available funds to cover emergencies like the chiller repair at Edge Elementary.

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Mrs. Scallan stated that after meeting all commitments - debt service, SEAT Management, maintenance transfer - there will only be about \$4 million available in new revenue. She stated that at the monthly capital outlay meeting the group will be reviewing the new revenue and projects list and will make recommendations to adjust the capital outlay plan.

Dr. Tibbetts stated that staff has worked hard to meet class size requirements. There has been some growth over the last 72 hours due to late registrations. She reminded the Board that it is more cost effective to meet class size than to pay back the penalty.

Mrs. Scallan explained that for the 2010-2011 school year, for non-compliance in any class, the number of students times the amount of funds generated based on FEFP times 50% is what will have to be paid back. For 2011-2012 it escalates to 100% of what the student generates.

Dr. Tibbetts stated that it may reach the point that if a school reaches capacity, students may have to be shifted to another school. She added that rezoning may have to be considered for next year.

Mrs. Thigpen asked if it would be less expensive to pay the penalty if, for instance, a class was only 2 students over the class size limit. Dr. Tibbetts responded that in previous years it would have been less expensive but under the new penalties that is no longer the case. Also, the district may get additional funds from the state for meeting class size requirements. The additional funds would be a portion of the funds taken from districts that did not meet the requirements.

Dr. Tibbetts stated that two trial runs on the class size counts will be done in September before the official count in October. Shifts in classes and even teachers in elementary schools may be necessary in order to meet class size requirements.

Dr. Tibbetts noted that enrollment in elective classes is high in order to offset the amount of money needed to hire teachers for classes that are included in the class size requirements. Elective classes with low enrollment are being closed for the same reason.

Dr. Tibbetts stated that school grades for elementary and middle schools are expected to be released tomorrow. A previous concern regarding the scores was verification of the match in learning gains, but the Department of Education (DOE) says that all scores are accurate. DOE says that state wide fourth and fifth grade has reached a plateau in reading. She further stated that last year there was a loss of instructional time due to state mandated tests and she has informed Chancellor Halthcock and Commission Smith that those tests will only be given in the required schools this year. School grades for high schools will be released in November because they are trying to aggregate the graduation rate and the AP/IB/AICE scores.


Mrs. Frakes stated that it was a dream of the late Bernie Collins, physical education teacher at Shalimar Elementary, to get a track built at the school. Shalimar Elementary has started a "Bernie's Dream" campaign to raise funds for this purpose. Kohl's Department Store has launched a nationwide initiative to give 20 schools \$500,000 each. Shalimar ES has entered the competition with their "Bernie's Dream" campaign and is currently in the top 20. She encouraged everyone to go on Facebook and vote for Shalimar Elementary. Voting is open until September 3rd.

Mr. Hill requested the Board be provided a copy of the Technical Assistance Paper on the proposed Associate Teacher position that was developed by OCEA.

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

Teresa Epperson, Recorder


ALEXIS TIBBETTS, Ed.D.
SUPERINTENDENT AND
CORPORATE SECRETARY


RODNEY L. WALKER
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD