

SCHOOL BOARD OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA WORKSHOP – May 31, 2012

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, conducted a workshop on Tuesday, May 31, at 9:00 a.m., in the Cabinet Conference Room, Administration Building, 301 4th Street S.W., Largo, Florida.

Present: Mrs. Robin L. Wikle, Chairperson; Mrs. Carol J. Cook, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Janet R. Clark, Mr. Glenton Gilzean, Mrs. Terry Krassner, Mrs. Linda S. Lerner, Mrs. Peggy L. O’Shea, Members; Dr. John A. Stewart, Superintendent, Mr. James F. Madden, Deputy Superintendent; and, Mr. James A. Robinson, School Board Attorney; and, Mr. David Koperski, Assistant School Board Attorney

During the review of the agenda, the topic of Board Subcommittee Report – Self Evaluation System & Process, was removed and will be rescheduled for a future date.

The following topics were discussed:

- **Lew Williams Project, Early Start & Head Start** – Mr. Jim Madden introduced those present in the room from the various organizations that have agreed to assist the district in the operations and the funding of this project, i.e., Juvenile Welfare Board, Early Learning Coalition, Pinellas County Health Department, St. Petersburg College, USF-St. Pete, COQEBS, R’Club. Mr. Madden and Ms. Pat Wright presented the update through a PowerPoint presentation. A grant proposal in response to an RFP for Head Start will be brought to the Board at their July 24, 2012 meeting. Mrs. Wikle offered the following questions: Do we have mission and vision statements; Who owns this initiative since Mr. Madden will be leaving in October; Does the district have a plan should we not be granted Head Start; What will be the hours of operation for the program; and, Is there a different cost to the district when dealing with babies? Mr. Madden shared that the plans are to move forward with the Project even if the district is not offered the Head Start and Early Start programs; and, stated that answers to Mrs. Wikle’s questions will be provided to the Board. Mrs. Krassner questioned if the district feels that there will be a sufficient number of teachers available for this project and whether VPK will be a separate entity. Mrs. O’Shea stressed the need to get parents involved. Mrs. Lerner shared that the district needs to look at all possible barriers, the needs for transportation that will result from this program, the likelihood of mobility among the population that will be enrolled in this program and the priorities to be considered for acceptance into the program. Mr. Gilzean stressed that this is a wonderful opportunity to get parents involved and offer training to them.
- **Insurance Revamp** – Mr. Kevin Smith and Mr. Ted Pafundi presented proposals to be considered in the effort to revamp our present insurance program for employees in order to reduce the district’s cost for this coverage. The Board requested the following information: A comparison of other counties to include what they are offering their employees, an overview of the employees covered and their salary ranges, and, the number of employees not taking insurance with their salary ranges. Mr. Pafundi stated that our budget target is a \$20 million dollar reduction in healthcare costs and that the only way to get to that amount was to consider

plans with deductibles and co-insurance. Mr. Pafundi also shared that an HMO like ours is the most expensive way to deliver health insurance; and, that 92% of our employees are on our HMO plans. Mr. Smith provided a brief budget update. Mr. Pafundi shared that they are looking at possibly offering a gap policy for employees, either purchased by the employee or possibly by the district. Discussion followed by the Board Members. Board Members agreed to add further discussion to their June 4, 2012 workshop agenda regarding the insurance coverage provided to employees. The Board requested that this added discussion include the recommendations being considered by the bargaining team and further details regarding the gap insurance that may or may not be offered to employees. Dr. Stewart shared that in order to find \$14 million to meet budget reductions, it will mean changes in the insurance or cuts in personnel.

- **Revised Job Descriptions** – Ms. Donna Winchester, Mr. David Cook and Dr. Ron Ciranna presented the revised job descriptions for the Strategic Communications Department/T.V. Operations, referred to as Phase II.
- **Social Security Numbers, Employees & Students** – Dr. Allen Mortimer and Ms. Laurie Dart presented information pertaining to the district’s present use of social security numbers of employees and students, as well as some changes proposed for the handling of this information. Ms. Dart shared that they will also be studying ways to shield this information, especially when sharing data with the state, as well as identifying all opportunities to eliminate the district’s unnecessary requests for these numbers on various forms. Discussion followed by Board Members, Dr. Stewart and Mr. Robinson. A policy will be developed and be brought back to the Board for formal approval.
- **Transportation** - Mr. Michael Bessette presented a brief overview on the ridership, runs and costs for the transportation of students from 1999 to 2012, as well information on potential savings for the 2013-14 year should certain changes be implemented. Mrs. Cook requested that staff seek input from parents pertaining to the possible use of multi-level/grades busing of students, while at that time sharing with the parents any impact a change in transportation services may have on their students’ school hours, etc. Dr. Stewart stated that planning and seeking input should begin right now in order to impose any changes for the 2013/14 school year. The Savings for Classroom study recommended a feasibility study to look at privatizing transportation services at one compound. Mr. Bessette suggested to the board that we instead look at a feasibility study to privatize our arterial routes (magnet, fundamental etc.). The results of the study would be brought to a future board workshop for additional discussion. Mrs. Lerner requested that the Board receive information on where the companies have privatized and what are the salaries and benefits that are being provided to their drivers. Dr. Stewart stated that a questionnaire will be formulated to receive input from parents regarding multi-level/grade transportation and that a feasibility study will be performed related to fundamental and out-of-zone magnet transportation, with an ultimate goal of moving to a two-tier bus service.
- **At this time, students from Madeira Beach Middle School, along with their Principal, Media Specialist and parents, joined the Board to celebrate their winning of the Battle of the Books competition that was held in the Conference Hall earlier today.**
- **HVAC & Tree Trimming Services** - Mr. Bessette presented the Board Members with information regarding the best way to deliver these services more efficiently and effectively.
- **Leadership:**
 - **Superintendent’s Update** –

- 1) *Absentee Concerns* – Dr. Stewart stated that the Board Members were informed through Friday Update regarding a new initiative of the district to reduce the number of absences by students. Dr. Stewart shared that there has been a committee formed of various stakeholders with Mr. Bill Lawrence leading that committee. Dr. Stewart invited the Board Members to attend the first meeting of this committee scheduled for Monday, June 4th, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m., at Northeast High School.
 - 2) *Lunch Period Schedules* – Dr. Stewart shared that he plans to eliminate the end-of-day lunch periods presently being used at four schools; and, that he has spoken to the principals of those schools.
 - 3) *Back-to-School* – Dr. Stewart shared that this summer’s back-to-school meetings for administrators will look different than past years. Dr. Stewart stated that he plans for a one-day session for principal that will focus on operational issues; Area Superintendents will have their conversations with principals; and, Lisa Grant and her team will be asking representatives from USF and SPC business education division to share relevant information with our principals.
 - 4) *Cabinet/School Board Retreat* – Dr. Stewart shared that he is planning a one full day retreat for the members of his cabinet and questioned whether the Board Members were interested in joining them. Dr. Stewart stated that it would be similar to the session conducted with the two groups shortly after he arrived in the district. Board Members agreed. This event will be scheduled for Monday, July 16, 2012, details to follow.
 - 5) *District Highlights* - Dr. Stewart distributed a document to the Board Members titled, Pinellas County School District Highlights, 2011-12 Academic Year and requested that the Board Members review this information. Ms. Winchester shared this information will be transformed into a facts document that will be shared with our stakeholders. Mrs. O’Shea, Mrs. Wikle and Mrs. Lerner stated that they do not want to have the FACTS brochure, in its present state, to disappear. Mrs. Krassner questioned whether we have a master calendar of reoccurring issues and timeframes. Mrs. Cook stated that the Board had formed a subcommittee to finalize such a document but have not had the opportunity to begin the project as of yet.
- **Mrs. Cook - Recognition Event for Former School Board Members** – Mrs. Cook updated the Board Members on this endeavor. Mrs. Cook stated that the committee has met; that the event will take place at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, June 12th, with a reception in room 203ABC; that invitations have been sent out to former board members; that a group photo will be taken; that a proclamation will be read and adopted by the Board; and, that Mr. David Cook will perform a formal roll call during the regular meeting that day.
 - **Ms. Clark – Savings for Classrooms** – Ms. Clark requested that the Board Members be informed when the Education Foundation starts the second phase of Savings for Classrooms.
 - **Ms. Clark - Student Recognition Event** – Ms. Clark questioned when the Board will have a discussion regarding the student recognition event that was held on May 23rd. Mrs. Wikle requested that Board Members forward to the subcommittee members their input and a discussion will be scheduled.
 - **Subcommittee Meetings** – Meetings will be scheduled on the Board’s calendar for the following subcommittees: Operations Manual and Meetings/Student Recognition.

- **Mrs. Cook** – Requested that staff look into whether Board Members are able to receive component points for their workshops, as was done in the past, in order to maintain their teaching certificates active and up-to-date.
- **Mrs. Wikle – IQM2** – Mrs. Wikle shared that we need to move forward with expanding the use of the capabilities that are available through our electronic agenda program. Mrs. Beaty will own that process and follow up with that.
- **Mrs. Wikle** – The Board will be receiving their Master Board plaque during a recognition scheduled for Friday, June 15, as part of the FSBA Spring Conference.
- **Mrs. Wikle** - Shared that she had a conversation with someone who works for the FBI and found out that they sponsor a Junior FBI Academy in Hillsborough County, targeting middle school low-income students. Mrs. Wikle shared that Mr. Dave Barnes and she visited that program and that the FBI has now planning the same type of program for Pinellas Park Middle School.
- **Mrs. Wikle** – Suggested that the Board use the lunch period at the June 26th workshop day to recognize Mr. Robinson as their outgoing employee.
- **Mrs. Wikle** – Stated that Mrs. Lerner had a couple of times requested the voting record information on education issues from this last legislative session and that this information has not been received. Dr. Stewart stated that he will make sure that information is provided to the Board.
- **Mrs. Wikle** – Shared that she has received a request from a Jamerson Elementary School student to be allowed to shadow her during the June 12th Board meeting. Mrs. Lerner suggested that the student not sit at the table but be allowed to sit in the front row and be introduced and interviewed. Mrs. Krassner cautioned Mrs. Wikle to be careful since this is an election year. Mrs. O’Shea expressed concern that June 12th may be a busy day with the former board member recognition event. Ms. Clark shared that she is fine with the idea. Mr. Koperski cautioned Mrs. Wikle to be sure all documentation is appropriately completed by the parent and that the student not have access to any confidential information during that day.
- **Mrs. Wikle** – Shared that she was contacted by a Clearwater Police Officer who shared that they are experiencing a lot of trouble with the students attending the New Start Charter School. Dr. Stewart stated that the district has no authority over charter schools; but, shared that the district can make that school aware of the fact that we have received concerns from the Clearwater Police Department. Mrs. Lerner would like to have a discussion on charter schools and what can be learned from them; and, suggested that the district reach out to them when such news as this is received. Dr. Stewart will make a call to that school to share this information. Mr. Gilzean requested that the Board have a discussion on school safety and the contracts the district has with resource officers: Mr. Gilzean will complete and submit a workshop topic request form.
- **Mrs. Wikle** – Reminded Board Members to sign their bonding forms before they leave today.
- **Mrs. Wikle** – Shared some information from the Sterling Education Summit that Mrs. O’Shea, Mr. Gilzean and she attended in Orlando. Mrs. Wikle suggested that the Board have their own data wall located in the Cabinet Conference Room. Mrs. Lerner suggested that this information be a one-page document, available in hard copy and electronically.

No official actions were taken by the Board at this workshop. An audio recording of this workshop is filed in the Board Office archives. This workshop adjourned at 3:29 p.m.

Chairperson

Secretary

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