

SCHOOL BOARD OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA WORKSHOP – December 12, 2013

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, conducted a workshop on Thursday, December 12, 2013 at 1:30 p.m., in the Cabinet Conference Room, Administration Building, 301 4th Street S.W., Largo, Florida.

Present: Mrs. Carol J. Cook, Chairperson; Mrs. Linda S. Lerner, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Janet R. Clark, Ms. Rene Flowers, Mrs. Terry Krassner, Mrs. Peggy L. O’Shea, Mrs. Robin L. Wikle, Members; Dr. Michael Grego, Superintendent; Dr. William Corbett, Deputy Superintendent; and, Mr. David Koperski, School Board Attorney.

The following topics were discussed:

- **Budget Update** - Mr. Kevin Smith and Ms. Karen Coffey presented an update on the Yellow Brick Road comparative data report.
- **Monitor “Beyond the Classroom”** – Ms. Pat Lusher and Ms. Sue Lemire presented an update on the methods being employed to monitor the “Beyond the Classroom” initiative. Ms. Lemire also updated the Board on the Title I laptop initiative. The PowerPoint used in their presentation will be forwarded to the Board Members via email. Ms. Lusher invited the Board to visit the Title I programs.
- **Collaborative Agreement - School Discipline** - Dr. Grego shared that Ms. Flowers had forwarded to him information from Broward County that increases the role of School Resource Officers with school administrators regarding student discipline matters. Dr. Grego shared that Mr. Michael Bessette’s plan is to arrange a meeting with Sheriff Gualtieri, leaders from different municipalities and school principals to bring another level of understanding regarding the handling of student discipline matters. Mr. Koperski stated that the Board presently has an agreement with the Sheriff and law enforcement in the various municipalities regarding the interviewing of students on school grounds. Mr. Bessette shared that there seems to be agreement with our Chief of Schools Police and the Sheriff to incorporate the practice by Broward County to work towards noncriminalizing non-violent behaviors demonstrated by students. The board indicated their desire for the Superintendent to move forward with a meeting in January as described by Mr. Bessette. Dr. Grego stated that the effort will be to combine the best practices in looking at the roles of law enforcement with our student discipline matters. Mrs. Cook suggested that Dr. Grego and staff look into Lake County and how that district handles such matters.
- **Achievement Gap – Matrix** – Ms. Lori Matway and Dr. Valerie Brimm provided the Board with an update on the Bridging the Gap Strategic Plan. Dr. Grego will forward to the Board an executive summary report on the initiatives put in place in our schools to increase student achievement. Mrs. Wikle suggested the need for similar program to be incorporated into north county schools as well. Ms. Flowers requested that the Board receive information on what is being done to put struggling seniors on track for graduating and general data related to this population of students.

- **Human Resources – Agenda Item Format** – Dr. Ron Ciranna provided the Board with a sample of a personnel agenda item to demonstrate the change in the reporting of employees requesting Leaves of Absence and Retirement. The change removes the column titled, REASON.
- **Gulf Beaches and Kings Highway Sites** – Dr. Grego stated that these two sites are being brought to the Board for possible reopening with two incubator concepts. Mrs. Pam Moore and Mr. Bill Lawrence presented an overview of the proposed use for these two sites. Dr. Grego stated that with a head nod of the Board, staff will continue to explore this potential; that staff will be looking at the potential costs; that these will be schools-of-choice; and, that, should this move forward, it will not result in rezoning of students. Dr. Grego received the head nod from the Board; and, will bring back further information to the Board at their January workshop.
- **Standard Charter School Contract** – Mr. Koperski stated that if the Board were to have a standardized contract for charter schools designed by the Department of Education, the Board would be going into negotiations of those contracts with their hands tied. Mr. Koperski shared that it appears that other school districts plan to pursue legal action to demonstrate that the standardized contract is unconstitutional. Mr. Koperski requested direction from the Board to allow our legal staff to investigate this potential further and to return to the Board at a future workshop with findings of their research. Board Members provided that permission.
- **Public Participation at Board Meetings** – Mrs. Cook stated that when the Board’s subcommittee brought the recommendation forward for a change in the agenda format regarding presentations from the public, they presented that with an agreement that there would be a review of the new process following a period of time. Dr. Mary Beth Corace shared that the change being proposed in this workshop would provide a better flow of the business meeting of the Board. Ms. Flowers voiced her agreement that the public comments that presently are heard prior to the start of the meeting should be moved but was not sure that placing them at the end of the meeting was the best decision since the public has no idea when the meeting will end. Ms. Flowers and Mrs. Lerner suggested that the Board consider having a 30-minute time-certain within the agenda for this item. Dr. Grego suggested, and consensus was provided by the Board, to provide the Chairperson with the discretion to entertain a motion to interrupt a regular meeting that is going beyond the specified time identified for Public Comments of a general nature. Mrs. Cook clarified that any change would also include that the meeting of the Board would move to 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. start times. The electronic sign-in of speakers will also be reviewed further to ensure efficiency and optimum use of staff.
- **Leadership Discussion:**
 - **Superintendent’s Update** –
 - Referencing the recent report on graduation rates, stated that the district can do better; that the results are from 2009/10; and, that we must continue to look at an improved systems approach to look at each student individually. Dr. Grego shared that he will be meeting with principals this coming Monday to discuss the need to monitor students prior to ninth grade, as well as the need to have safety nets in place for students
 - **Mrs. Cook** – Requested that the Board Members review the committee assignments list and determine whether any deletions of committees or changes in assignments are desired. Discussion followed. An updated list will be forwarded to the appropriate departments and outside agencies. Mrs. Cook, referencing the request presented to the Board by

Commissioner Karen Seel during the joint meeting held earlier today that three School Board Members join the Human Services Coordinating Council, suggested that the Board delay their action on this until further information is provided to the Board by Commissioner Seel. Board Members agreed.

- **Mrs. Lerner** – Shared that some teachers have spoken to her regarding the exam schedule and questioned whether the calendar could be reviewed. Mrs. Lerner will forward the emails she has received regarding this matter to Dr. Grego.
- **Dr. Grego** – Wished all a wonderful holiday.

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 4:15 p.m.

Chairperson

Secretary

/db

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