

**SCHOOL BOARD OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA**  
**WORKSHOP – November 10, 2015**

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, conducted a workshop on Tuesday, October 20, 2015, at 9:00 a.m., in the Cabinet Conference Room, Administration Building, 301 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Largo, Florida.

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

The following topics were discussed:

- **Health Care Update:** Mr. Ted Pafundi, Director, Risk Management and Insurance, introduced members of his team to the Board: Kara Hager, Employee Wellness Coordinator; Jessica O'Connell, Vitality Wellness Nurse, on site Humana Representative; and Leslie Viens, Benefits/Wellness Consultant, onsite Aon Hewitt. The following documents were shared: Be SMART: Pinellas County Schools Employee Wellness Program, Pinellas County Schools Employee Wellness Program Report 2014-2015 and Humana Vitality Update. The presentation began with Ms. Viens sharing information about district wellness programs. She said that employees asked for a Financial Wellness program; many deal with monetary stressors. About 1,100 employees participated in an online financial fitness program. We also have a new Employee Assistance Program Coordinator, Don Lykins; since coming onboard he has delivered 40 wellness presentations related to the EAP program. The district has 127 Wellness Champions at different worksites; their programs are listed on pages 6-14 of the report. Our district has received the American Heart Association's Gold Achievement Award for 2014 for meeting criteria for employee wellness. Also, a Diabetes Prevention Program was offered at four YMCA locations; scholarship opportunities were available to fifty employees. Ms. O'Connell shared the update on the Humana Vitality program, executed on January 1, 2015. Between January 1 and August 31, 18.54% of employees achieved silver status or above; monetary credits toward insurance were offered as an incentive. With only September and October data there are currently 4.91% of employees who have achieved silver status or above. This is a good indicator that we are communicating the message of the benefits of wellness to our workforce.
- **Capital Plan Update:** Mr. Kevin Smith, Associate Superintendent, Finance and Business Services, and Mr. Clint Herbic, Associate Superintendent, Operational Services, spoke of funding the Five Year Capital Outlay Plan, which was previously discussed with the Board at the June 25, 2015 and July 21, 2015 board workshops. The documents shared were: 2015-2020 Capital Outlay Plan Proposed Bonding Projects and The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, Certificates of Participation, Series 2016, Draft Financing Schedule, November 3, 2015. Mr. Herbic shared that the scope of each project was examined along with possible funding sources. His goal is to impact every school. There were three sources identified: 1) capital outlay budget 2) Area Superintendent funds, and 3) millage. Many Florida districts are funding capital outlay projects with Certificates of Participation. Mr. Jerry Ford and Mr. Will Reed, representatives of Ford and Associates, updated the board on bonding potential. They reviewed the process for issuing Certificate of Participation bonds to finance projects with a completion deadline of three years or less. Some of the larger projects would be divided into smaller segments to adhere to this guideline. Dr. Grego stated that we are investigating the bonding process, and the

discussion can continue; the decision can be made to complete the projects over a longer timeline. Mr. Reed explained that an underwriter would be obtained to seek out investors. Mrs. Lerner asked about underwriters' commission and interest rates. She was advised that everything would be disclosed; interest rates are impacted by the district's credit score. Ms. Flowers asked for no pre-payment penalty. Mr. Ford said that could be done at the eleventh year. Dr. Peluso shared that he is in favor of moving forward. Mr. Ford stated that this is currently the most common way school districts are funding building projects. There was consensus from the Board to move forward with this proposal.

- **Real Estate/Facility Update:** Mr. Clint Herbic, Associate Superintendent, Operational Services, stated that there were two properties he planned to discuss. They were North Ward Elementary (closed in June 2009) and site of the old Riviera Middle School. Mr. Herbic introduced Mayor George Cretekos. The Mayor shared that the City of Clearwater has held several community meetings regarding the closed North Ward Elementary which is in the area dubbed North Marina District. The consensus is that citizens want it reestablished as a school because they believe it will help to develop that area which has been neglected for decades. Mrs. O'Shea asked the Mayor if the city has any development ideas. He shared that they are considering a boardwalk, upgrading the marina, a high and dry for boats, and a restaurant. Mr. Herbic shared that a partnership school could be considered for city and county employees who work in the downtown Clearwater area. Dr. Grego said we should survey the workers that could have access to the school to verify interest and where their students are currently enrolled to see the overall impact. Mrs. Lerner shared that she is in favor of a partnership school; that it was previously closed due to budget issues. Mr. Bill Lawrence, Director, Student Demographics, Assignment and School Capacity, shared that Belleair Elementary is currently crowded; some addresses that were zoned for North Ward are now zoned for Belleair. Island Estates residents were zoned for North Ward. Dr. Peluso shared that we should move forward with the survey. Ms. Flowers stated that we could consider a middle school, or a combination of grades. Mrs. Cook said she feels that this is worth considering; it may bring students back into Pinellas County Schools. Mrs. Lerner received consensus from the Board to move forward with the survey. Mr. Herbic called upon Charlene Beyer, Real Estate Analyst, to share information about the fifteen acres at the former Riviera Middle School (closed in 2007). She shared that the YMCA has proposed a joint-use for the property. They would build a YMCA on the property and the district would construct a school on the site. The benefit would be for the community to have a school with after care on the same property. The closest school to this location is Meadowlawn Middle which is crowded. The YMCA would conduct a study prior to any commitment. Mrs. Flowers shared that when the school was closed the community was opposed to using the property for anything that would increase traffic in their neighborhood. She also has concerns about the number of projects we are already considering; it would be hard to justify building another school. Mrs. O'Shea stated that Pinellas County is build out and we need to look to future needs for schools; this is a very residential area. Mrs. Lerner believes that a needs assessment would be appropriate. Mrs. Krassner asked Mr. Herbic if he had any update on the Clearview elementary project that was to become the Dream Center. Mr. Herbic said there are no new developments. Dr. Peluso and Mrs. O'Shea asked about the Palm Harbor elementary property. David Koperski, School Board Attorney, said that it is in litigation. Clint Herbic went on to advise the Board about his new process for agenda items submitted for construction projects. He said that currently six agenda items come to the Board for a construction project and he is streamlining it down to four. They will be 1) Total budget for project with contract and scope of project, 2) the contract with Construction Management (CM) 3) the substantial completion, and 4) any changes to the project. The history of the project will be contained in the background section of the agenda item.

- **Youth Connect:** Mr. Mark Hunt, Executive Director, Career, Technical and Adult Education, introduced the topic of the Youth Connect program. A Power Point presentation was shown. Youth Connect, funded through a federal grant since July 1, 2007, is a Pinellas Education Foundation Program, in partnership with CareerSource Pinellas. The program is open to students ages 16-24 who meet specific program criteria. Youth coordinators work with students and assist with numerous services which facilitate program success. Students are given the opportunity to obtain their GED and enroll in Pinellas Technical College programs. The Education Foundation dedicates \$70,000 in scholarships to students in this program who attend PTC. The desired outcome is for the students to achieve employment, military enlistment, apprenticeship or a postsecondary education. Mrs. Lerner shared that the program began as SAVE by Frances Stavros and morphed into Youth Connect. Ms. Flowers said she met with Ed Peachey, President & CEO, CareerSource Pinellas, about establishing programs at the Science and Technology Education Innovation Center in St. Petersburg. Mr. Hunt stated that the plan is to add GED classes and skill specific training at that location in December. Mrs. O'Shea asked what is the typical timeframe for a student to attain their GED? Mr. Hunt stated that it generally takes about one year from enrollment in the program.
- **Career Academies of Seminole:** Mr. Mark Hunt, Executive Director, Career, Technical, and Adult Education, and Ms. Barbara Clare, principal, Career Academies of Seminole, reviewed the document: CAS, Career Academies of Seminole, "Nurturing Students Individual Potential." Ms. Clare stated that they have been working diligently to develop this plan to afford students a unique technical high school program. This program would fall under the guidelines of our countywide application programs. It would serve students in grades 9-12, offering academic and career, technical education. Three new programs would be added: horticulture, practical nursing, and marine mechanics. This would open in the 2017-2018 school year for 150 new freshmen, 150 existing/new sophomores and 100 part time juniors and seniors. By 2019-2020 school year there would be 150 students for each of the four grade levels. Graduates would possess a high school diploma and a vocational certification. Mrs. O'Shea asked if the expansion plan has been included in our five year capital outlay plan? She was advised that it is part of the plan. Board members voiced their interest in this program being available to students across the entire county. Mr. Hunt said the district will look into transportation options.
- **Instructional Support Model (ISM Visits):** This topic was introduced by Dr. Mary Beth Corace, Director, Strategic Planning and Policy. She shared that the ISM process is part of AdvancED accreditation which will be followed for five years. Its purpose is to build instructional leaders and teacher skills and to refine, monitor, and adjust instructional practices for high yield results that reflect the Florida Standards. Ms. Pam Moore, Associate Superintendent, Teaching and Learning Services, shared that the accreditation team was complimentary of our process overall but are not seeing the same skills across the district. The ISM visits are now conducted at a minimum of two per year for most schools; priority schools are visited every four to six weeks. Through these visits, evidence is collected in three areas: 1) implementation of standards of curriculum, 2) tracking student progress, and 3) helping schools to engage students in their learning. The school improvement plans (SIP) are reviewed prior to the visit to monitor if the school is utilizing the plan and obtaining the desired outcomes. Mr. Dywayne Hinds, Executive Director, Middle School Education, shared that the District Strategic Plan guides SIPs. Ms. Sandy Downes, Executive Director, Elementary Education, shared that four teams (usually three to a team) typically visit a total of ten to twelve classrooms. Then they summarize their observations and provide recommendations to school and/or district administration. Area Superintendents are involved in this process. She shared that ISM visits are not meant to identify teachers individually, but to support instructional practices. Mrs. Lerner stated that

- she often hears the term rigor and not mastery; some students cannot do grade level curriculum, but she does not believe that pacing guides address this concern. Mr. Hinds stated that the guides have suggestions on how to differentiate instruction. Three principals shared their experiences. Ms. K. Apuzzo, Dunedin Elementary, Mr. M. Bohnet, Osceola Fundamental High School, and Mr. J. Shedrick, Bay Point Middle School. They said that they feel it is a support from the district. If there is a problem with instruction, coaches or content specialists are sent out to assist, or additional materials are sent to support struggling students. These strategies and supports are shared to assist teachers and drive student achievement. Dr. Grego stated that the purpose of the district office is to provide support. Mrs. Cook asked how reporting to AdvancED is handled. Dr. Corace replied that it is done online; we state the facts, communicate the plan and the deployment of the plan.
- **Calendar Committee Update:** Dr. Ron Ciranna, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resource Services, and Mr. Dave Richmond, Managing Officer, Payroll Operations, co-chairs of the calendar committee. During the school board meeting on October 27, 2015, the Board approved the school calendar for 2016-2017 but requested that the Special Observance Days go back to the Calendar Committee to be reexamined. The Calendar Committee is recommending no change to the Special Observance Days but added a statement to the document. It reads: *If there is a day that is not listed on the Board-Approved Special Observance Days which impacts a significant number of students in any specific school; the principal has the discretion not to schedule any testing or major course review in accordance with the needs of his/her building.* Mr. David Koperski said this references Policy 8210.01 - RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY EXEMPTIONS.
  - **Proposed Board Meeting Dates from December 2015-November 2016:** Dr. Grego reviewed the Proposed Board Meeting Dates from December 2015-November 2016 with the Board. He shared that November 8, 2016 is Election Day and proposed moving that meeting date to November 15. Mrs. Lerner shared that she felt we needed additional evening meetings. It was suggested that June 14, 2016 be a 5:00 pm meeting. Mrs. Lerner stated that they typically review the Board's Committee Assignments at this time of year and suggested a board workshop following the November 17, 2015 Organization meeting. There was consensus that a workshop would be scheduled for this purpose.
  - **Charter School Update:** Mr. Rick Wolfe, Director, Charter Schools and Home Education, reviewed two agenda items that will come before the Board at the December 8, 2015 school board meeting. They are: *Request Approval of a Fifteen Year Charter Renewal for Plato Academy Tarpon Springs Charter School* and *Request Approval of an Amendment to the Current Charter for Academie Da Vinci Charter School to Include Students in Grades 6-8.* Mr. Wolfe shared that Plato Academy received high performing status from the Florida Department of Education on October 28, 2015. Plato Academy Tarpon Springs' five year contract will conclude in July 2016, therefore they are asking for renewal. Academie Da Vinci's plan is to add two sixth grade classes next year (2016-2017), then seventh grade the next, and eighth grade the following year. Over the three year period, 132 students would be added to their enrollment. They have been in existence for 18 years.
  - **Legislative Update:** Mr. Steve Swartzel, Legislative Liaison, shared the Pinellas County School Board 2016 Legislative Platform and the Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards' 2016 Legislative Program. Both programs have been adopted. Mr. Swartzel shared that the district's program is in alignment with other districts. He stated the GFCSBA meeting will be held at the FSBA/FADSS Joint Conference on December 2. Pinellas County Schools will host the Legislative Breakfast on December 10 at PTC-Clearwater. The school board office staff has sent out the invitations. Mrs. O'Shea shared that Radiah Dent, administrator at the PTC campus, is handling the details at PTC. Mrs. O'Shea said that for those attending, who are required to pay by law, the cost is \$6.00. The legislative committee consists of Mrs. O'Shea, Ms. Flowers and Ms. Clark. Mrs. Lerner

asked that board members speak with legislators at the breakfast regarding funding that has been eliminated from educational programs held at the Holocaust Museum and the Pinellas County Historical Society. Mr. Swartzel also advised the Board that when they are in Tallahassee to notify him as he can provide assistance with their legislative visits.

- **Discipline Disparity Update:** Dr. Dan Evans, Executive Director, Assessment, Accountability and Research, and Area Superintendents, Dr. Barbara Hires, Mr. Ward Kennedy, Mr. Bob Poth, and Ms. Pat Wright, were asked to speak to the topic of discipline trends and the disparity between black and non-black students. They shared three graphs: Decrease in Student Arrests, District-Date Range Top 5 Infraction Counts-Comparison Chart (black students), and District-Date Range Top 5 Infraction Counts-Comparison Chart (non-black students). The data date range is based on the first 56 days of school for 2014-15 versus 2015-16. The infraction categories for black students are: defiance/insubordination, class/campus disruption, excessive tardy, skipping class, and profanity/obscene language. The infraction categories for non-black students are: defiance/insubordination, class/campus disruption, excessive tardy, skipping class, and dress code. The data indicates that in all categories for both black and non-black students, infractions have decreased. The Decrease in Student Arrests graph compares data from 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15 (three years from Aug. /Sept. - May) and 2015-16 (Aug. /Sept. and Oct.). The graph indicates that for Aug. /Sept. data arrests are down 20% and October arrests are down 29% compared to last year. Dr. Grego stated that specific behavior plans are an intricate part of the school improvement plan. Mr. Kennedy shared that during the October 20, 2015 board workshop they shared interventions and strategies that are being implemented. Administrators are reviewing school improvement plans and professional development opportunities are aligned to this goal. Dr. Hires shared that the data is monitored monthly; keeping in mind school safety while closing the gap. Area Superintendents are working closely with principals to close this gap. Dr. Dan Evans shared a research brief: *PCS Discipline Disparity*. The research reveals that across the nation there is a disparity in discipline practices for white students versus non-white students. Dr. Grego stated that there must be a balance between supporting students and teachers and addressing behavior issues.

- **Leadership Discussion:**

- Dr. Grego distributed the letter from the Florida Association of District School Superintendents (FADSS) dated November 9, 2015 which was sent to the State Board of Education. The letter stated FADSS “support the achievement level cut scores that Commissioner Stewart has recommended to the State Board of Education.” Within the context of the letter it is noted that the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) have different purposes and don’t cover the same standards or measure achievement in the same way. He shared good news about the College Board SAT report stating that the number of black student SAT test takers increased by 6.7% since last year, with an 18.7% increase in the number of black students taking the exam. And the best news was the district saw an increase of 11.4% in the number of black students earning passing scores of 3-5 on the AP exam which is a greater increase over state and national numbers. He also advised the Board of the upcoming District Application Programs Fair, 9 a.m.-noon, at Pinellas Park High on Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup> and the Intern Fair being held at Oak Grove Middle School on Monday, November 16, 5-7:30 p.m. Human Resources will interview interns scheduled to graduate December 15, 2015 for available instructional positions.
- Mrs. Lerner distributed the notes from the Community Listening Sessions Subcommittee meeting-September 22, 2015. Board members shared some of the

community events they have attended: Mrs. O'Shea and Dr. Peluso attended the College and Career Fair at Countryside High; Mrs. Krassner attended one of Dr. Grego's Superintendent Cadre meetings and will attend the Friends of North Shore community meeting scheduled for 7:30 pm tomorrow evening. The consensus is that board members are accessible and are actively attending many events and meetings across the county. Mrs. Lerner also suggested a board retreat topic. She would like to discuss students with repeated misconduct and students that are overage by two or more years and below grade level two or more years to explore what can be done differently to help these students be successful. Dr. Grego added that we have Pinellas Gulfcoast Academy that is running three sessions and Lealman Innovation Academy; and the Youth Connect program that was discussed today. He believes that we are trying to help many students in this situation become successful. Mrs. Lerner asked about state special diplomas or a Pinellas County Schools diploma with a special designation. She would like to discuss this further at a workshop.

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 3:02 p.m.

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Chairperson  
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Secretary