

**SCHOOL BOARD OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA  
WORKSHOP – July 19, 2016**

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, conducted a workshop on Tuesday, July 19, 2016, at 9:03 a.m., in the Cabinet Conference Room, Administration Building, 301 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Largo, Florida.

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

**Review of Agenda:** Dr. Grego recommended moving the order of the agenda. University Preparatory Academy Charter School Improvement Plan was to be the third topic for discussion. UPA Board is scheduled to meet at 10:00 a.m. and Dr. Grego feels it prudent to wait until the conclusion of that meeting, since the outcome will impact the discussion. Mr. Rick Wolfe, director, charter schools and home education, is attending their board meeting. Dr. Grego also announced that Principal Darius Adamson will not attend today’s workshop. Mrs. Lerner stated that she finds it unacceptable that the school’s leadership is not attending today’s discussion. Mrs. O’Shea and the board were in agreement to flex the agenda schedule as needed.

Mr. David Koperski, school board attorney, called for an Executive Session to follow today’s special school board meeting. Florida Statute 286.0113 (1) states that an Executive Session may be called to discuss security issues without notice and without minutes.

The following topics were discussed:

- **Gifted Education Program Update:** Ms. Jenny Klimis, gifted supervisor, updated the board on the progress being made in our gifted studies programs. She said our middle school gifted programs are model programs. At the National Association for Gifted Children conference, November 3-6, 2016 in Orlando, Florida, part of the discussion will be about our middle school programs. Ms. Klimis invited board members to attend. The newest plan will be rolled out this year for gifted high school students. It is a consultative service delivery model. This does not require any change to students’ courses; which is beneficial because students are taking specific courses to meet graduation requirements. In the consultative model, gifted students will meet once a month with a gifted teacher to discuss expanded program work and utilize this teacher as a touchstone. Mrs. Lerner referenced an article in *Gifted Child Today* magazine that spoke about Pinellas County Schools’ programs. The article is “Designing Self-Contained Middle Schools for the Gifted: A Journey in Program Development” by Jenny Klimis and Dr. Joyce Van Tassel-Baska. Ms. Klimis said she has increased gifted screenings resulting in identifying 7,200 students in grades K-8 and 3,000 in 9-12. An increase of 3,800 students since 2010 when the district had identified 6,400 gifted students with no increase in student enrollment. Recommendations for gifted screening may come from teachers and/or parents. The Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test is used. This is found to be more effective for students from culturally and linguistically different or low-income backgrounds which eliminates barriers in determining gifted ability. This test may be given in a group setting in about thirty minutes. All second grade students will be screened this fall.

Some district schools screened first grade students last year; those that followed that process will repeat it. Last year all ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) students in the district were tested with the assistance of Ms. Natasa Karac, ESOL specialist. Once a student passes the initial screening they are tested by a psychologist within 90 days. Dr. Peluso asked about the cost for screening all second graders. Ms. Klimis shared that it is about \$50,000.00 for testing manuals and scoring guides. Our district delivers services to students with a score of 120, the lowest threshold in the nation. Typically the cut score is 130. The district's Talent Development Program has increased the number of gifted teachers. There is currently a gifted teacher at each elementary school, and we have 45 schools with gifted/talented programs. Gifted teachers also reach out to other students, forming small groups of talented students and assisting in identifying potentially gifted students. Westgate Elementary had 31 gifted students; but with a full-time gifted teacher they have now identified 57 students. Sandy Lane Elementary had 6 gifted students; they have more than 40 now. Ms. Klimis thanked Dr. Grego for his support through funding and professional development opportunities. She advised that a School Enrichment Model which focuses on the enrichment of all students through a high level of engagement around specific areas of interest is being used at some of our schools. These enrichment clusters occur for one hour once a week. North Shore Elementary started this practice last year. Twenty-one teachers went to the University of Connecticut for training this year. Six of the school principals are so passionate about this program; they paid through their own school funds for staff to attend training. Part of the goal is to develop gifted behaviors in all students. She stated that this is one of our best initiatives. Dr. Peluso asked if she had enough teachers to meet the demand. She stated they do not and are continually training; they want to have someone on every campus. Ms. Flowers asked for a list of the 45 schools that are designated as gifted/talented. Mrs. Lerner asked which schools currently offer the one hour cluster. Ms. Klimis said it is occurring at Bardmoor, Bauder, Cypress Woods, Garrison-Jones, Madeira Beach, North Shore, Ridgecrest, Seminole and Tarpon Fundamental. She added that Dr. Renzulli from the University of Connecticut is scheduled to come to our district; she will get that information to the board. Dr. Grego thanked Ms. Klimis for her expansion of gifted programs across the district and increase in gifted screenings. He is in full support and stated that if psychologists are needed to do evaluations he will allow for contracted services to meet the demand.

- **Law Enforcement/Memorandum of Understanding and Training Update:** Dr. Grego opened this topic by sharing that since the Memorandum of Understanding was put into place with county law enforcement agencies there has been progress in reducing student arrests and we continue to build on that goal. Chief Rick Stelljes, Pinellas County Schools Police, shared that during Summer Bridge there were very few calls to schools police. He said the MOU occurred two years ago. Since that time training has been delivered and he has met with many stakeholders. The district has made progress and the MOU will stand as written. His office is always looking at trends and strategies to make a difference and reduce arrests. PCS School

Resource Officers are stationed at eleven schools and cover all elementary schools. They've made ninety classroom visits. Mrs. Krassner asked about the need for consistency of the same SRO serving a school; building relationships is important. Chief Stelljes said about 90% will stay at the same school; there are retirements. He also wants to keep those relationships intact. There is conversation about juvenile detention alternatives and creating more structured programs with services to help young offenders. Mrs. Krassner asked about the program for students entering high school with a high number of referrals. Ms. Pat Wright said that Principal Hepburn at Gibbs High has created a "Student Success Team". Incoming ninth graders with 10 or more referrals in middle school will meet with the school team and their parents to review expectations and provide support. Mrs. Lerner asked about students who are continually in and out of the juvenile justice system, is there something being developed to help these young people. Chief Stelljes said that the Pinellas County Sheriff had a meeting to discuss the 28-30% increase in juvenile crimes in our county. They are looking for solutions; there is a desire for rehabilitation. There are committees that are also looking for solutions; the Pinellas County Legislative Delegation and Juvenile Justice. The Healthy St. Pete community initiative will provide training for School Resource Officers, who serve St. Petersburg schools, in restorative justice. Dr. Grego asked if any board member wanted to participate on either committee. Mrs. Lerner wants to work with juvenile justice and Mrs. O'Shea wants to participate with legislative; Mrs. Cook will serve as alternate on legislative. Chief Stelljes shared that August 4 will be a countywide SRO meeting. Presentations from Officer Long, SRO at Countryside HS, on their Teen Court program and one about working with EBD (emotional and behavioral disorder) students. Public service announcements will be aired on elementary schools in house news programs to deliver anti-bullying messages. Chief Stelljes is reinforcing safety practices in the district and reminding officers not to become complacent due to the recent increase in violence across the country.

- **Graduation Committee Update:** Mrs. Rita Vasquez, executive director, high school education, opened this topic by stating that the hard work of graduating students is happening at our schools. She introduced Katie Csazar, ESE specialist, Natasa Karac, ESOL specialist, and Andrew Weatherill, K-12 guidance services specialist. They all serve on the graduation committee. She shared her presentation *Graduation Committee Update 071916*. She reviewed credits necessary to obtain a high school diploma; a total of 24 for a standard diploma. Progress monitoring is done student by student by both the school staff and the committee monthly. Early warning indicators such as low GPA, credits, FSA/ELA scores, EOC scores etc. are noted. Supports are then adjusted or added as needed. Some of the supports are mentoring, tutoring, ACT / PERT / SAT tests, & credit recovery programs. Tenth grade students utilize the Future Plans online assessment tool developed by the Pinellas Education Foundation to help students determine their educational pathway. We know these systems are working because our graduation rate has increased and the achievement gap has decreased, as well as the dramatic rise in industry certifications. In four years, almost 8,000 more certifications have been earned. The number of students taking and scoring 3+ on Advanced Placement Exams has also increased in the last four years. Mrs. Krassner and Mrs. Lerner thanked Mrs. Vasquez for her responsiveness and for serving the needs of our students. Mrs. Lerner expressed her concern for students having difficulty mastering the basic skills in reading and math. Ms.

Csazar said they have resource teachers reach out to these students. Ms. Karac shared that Gulf Coast Jewish Community and Family Services delivers tutoring. Dr. Grego responded that we are aware of those students because the data identifies them. We have programs in place like the 5.5 and 6.5 programs, Lealman Innovation Academy and personalized learning programs. He said when students are two plus years behind it inhibits their potential to graduate; it is so important to catch them up.

- **University Preparatory Academy Charter School Improvement Plan:** Dr. Grego opened this topic by stating that UPA's Board met today at 10:00 a.m.; he was waiting for the official word from them before addressing this topic. The district has consistently supported them and offered to assist if they chose to file a waiver with the state. He understands this is not easy work educating students who come from high poverty areas; but these are our community children and he has never felt any resistance from our school board to step in and help. The UPA board voted to terminate the charter contract due to their receiving three consecutive F grades from the Florida Department of Education. The district will work 24-7 to help these students. The options are to send the student to their assigned zone schools or work with the current landlord and keep the school open. The current landlord is interested in helping the kids. Mr. David Leahy, the landlord's representative was in attendance. The district reviewed the FTE from October 2015 through February 2016 and believes it is feasible to keep the school open as a school of choice to its current population. Dr. Corbett advised the board that the landlord has proposed use of the building rent free for one year; the district will pay the property insurance. Student FTE will generate enough funding for the staff. There are about 450 students involved and we don't want chaos. Any student that was enrolled in the school during this last year will be offered a seat there. The building is in exceptionally good condition. There are 20+ classrooms on each of the two floors. But we have no principal, no assistant principal, no staff, no school name or school id number. Mrs. Lerner asked if the students would be better served at the Transformation Zone schools that are within a mile and half range. Dr. Grego said some of those schools have capacity issues. He said there is no perfect solution. Ms. Flowers asked how this can be managed by August 10 when school begins; we also have Windsor Prep students needing to be placed, as well as the class size legislation to consider. The five elementaries in the Transformation Zone plan have their own challenges and she felt that putting additional pressure on those schools may not be in the best interest of students. The thought of uprooting 450 students, at this point, she would support taking over the school for one year. Mrs. Krassner asked how parents are being advised. Dr. Grego said their board will send out a letter. He believes it will not cost much more than sending those students to their zoned schools. Dr. Peluso said if the district believes in taking over the school, then we should move forward and do it. Mrs. Cook said she had heard that parents wanted to keep UPA open; so, we should respect that and try to keep these students together. Mrs. O'Shea also shared the same sentiment; that it is in the best interest of the students and the community to keep this school open. She does not want to interrupt the progress being made at the Transformation Zone schools and wants to be able to measure the gains by keeping the same student population. Dr. Corbett said they would have included it in the Transformation Zone plan, but they have an extended school day, which is a negotiated issue. The school will be considered one of our Scale Up for Success Schools. We will need to interview teachers for this school; existing staff does not work for PCS. Mrs. Krassner asked if UPA is part of the Bradley MOU. Mr. David Koperski shared that our legal obligation to support a charter school for 500 students in that area has been fulfilled. The district met with Guy Burns, a lawyer for COQEBS. He was in attendance at the workshop, also. He agreed that this is the best option since parents want the school to remain open. Dr. Grego will share the plan with the state. Agenda items will come to the

board on Tuesday, July 26, for approval. He shared that the plan will be to operate the school for one year and then evaluate the situation.

- **Alternative Classroom Environment:** Dr. Barbara Hires, area superintendent, Ms. Michelle Topping, director, educational alternative services, and Mr. Darren Hammond, principal, Pinellas Secondary School, reviewed the *Alternative Classroom Environment Presentation*. Dr. Hires stated that this plan is addressing secondary education students receiving one to three days of out of school suspension. The Code of Student Conduct addresses out of school suspension practices. The intent is for these programs to be restorative and not punitive. The program will be housed at three sites: Clearwater Intermediate, Bayside HS, and PTC-St. Petersburg, with a designated classroom. There will be a teacher and a paraprofessional at each site, as well as five computers and a full complement of textbooks for curriculum. Students attending ACE will go through the reintegration plan if serving more than one day. The ACE staff will belong to the school site they serve to afford principals flexibility if there are not any students attending on any given day. The program will be available September 6, 2016. Mrs. Cook raised a concern that this program is called ACE and we have another program called AICE, Advanced International Certificate of Education; part of the Cambridge Program. Dr. Hires shared that they will revisit the name. Dr. Peluso suggested the name APP-Alternate Placement Program.
- **Reintegration Support:** Dr. Barbara Hires, area superintendent, Ms. Michelle Topping, director, educational alternative services, and Mr. Darren Hammond, principal, Pinellas Secondary School, reviewed the documents: *Pinellas County Schools Protocol for Reintegration Following Out-of-Educational Environment Time and Pinellas County Schools Restorative Practices Re-Entry Support Plan*. Ms. Topping reviewed the documents and made note that this is to serve as supportive for students. There was some discussion about the hours of the program, since PTC is a post-secondary education site. The board was told it would operate during high school hours. There was discussion about the School Reintegration Team and it was explained that only the administrator and school counselor are required. If the teacher representative is needed, they will work around the teacher's schedule, so as not to interrupt the learning of other students. Dr. Hires noted that the reintegration plan is to be used district wide.
- **Pinellas Secondary Modifications:** Dr. Barbara Hires, area superintendent, Ms. Michelle Topping, director, educational alternative services, and Mr. Darren Hammond, principal, Pinellas Secondary School, reviewed the following document: *Pinellas Secondary the 4A's*. Mr. Hammond shared that many students assigned to Pinellas Secondary do not attend. He now has plans to stagger the intake schedule to accommodate parents/guardians. A school in Osceola County called "New Beginnings" serves a similar purpose in their district and they established a rubric to assist students in modifying their behaviors to aid their success. Pinellas Secondary has adopted this model for success- The 4A's-academics, attendance, accountability, and attitude/behavior. The minimum number of points to return to a traditional school will be 32. This is intended to create an incentive for students to improve overall school performance and lay the groundwork for future success. Parents who do not utilize Pinellas Secondary, but another educational option, will still require their student to meet the same criteria for returning to a traditional school site. Some students prefer to remain at Pinellas Secondary because the environment works for them. This may be determined by the parent/guardian and the administration. Dr. Grego noted that students who are reassigned to Pinellas Secondary due to an expulsion hearing will not be able to return to traditional school early.  
Ms. Patricia Wright, area superintendent, reviewed her work with the Discipline Committee. This committee has representation from the community, district personnel, union representation and service organizations. There have been four meetings. The goal is to

review alternatives to suspension, changes to in-school suspension, addressing situations when students are removed from the educational setting, and offering a video format for in-school suspension. The discussion about utilizing technology to provide instruction in ABC rooms raised some concerns; a webinar type format may be considered. Mrs. Lerner asked about best practices for in-school suspensions; she was advised that these will be shared with the board. There is community support to aid students for better outcomes. The next meeting will be held in September.

- **Student Assessment Calendar:** Mr. Dywayne Hinds, executive director, middle school education; Dr. Shana Rafalski, executive director, elementary education; and, Ms. Rita Vasquez, executive director, high school education, reviewed the following documents: *PCS Assessment Calendar 2016-17 Elementary School draft*; *PCS Assessment Calendar 2016-17 Middle School draft*; and, *PCS Assessment Calendar 2016-17 High School draft*. Dr. Grego shared that there are many state requirements governing assessments. They are necessary to guide instruction. Mr. Hinds noted that the district is in compliance with HB7069 to limit testing to 5% of student time. Dr. Rafalski noted that third grade will begin computer based testing during cycle 3. Select elementary schools will pilot Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). This test format provides results in 24 hours. Mr. Hinds noted that grades 7 & 8 will have optional testing during cycle 3. During the collaborative team meetings, teachers stated their desire to have cycle 1 testing be a part of the middle school student grade because the students take the exam more seriously and perform better as a result. Assessments are utilized to drive instruction and promote student success.
- **Leadership Discussion:**
  - Dr. Grego:
    - He asked Beth Rawlins, tax referendum advocate, to speak with the board about the November 2016 referendum vote. She stated that she is working closely with Pinellas County Classroom Teachers Association (PCTA), Pinellas Educational Support Professionals Association (PESPA), and PCS Office of Strategic Communications, to get the word out to the voters regarding the benefits of the referendum. A public service announcement will air on television. She is also working with the business community, the arts council and the realtors association. She sent a letter to all candidates for school board to share information about the referendum to be sure they were communicating an accurate message. In September, ICROC (Independent Citizens Referendum Oversight Committee) will hold their meeting at a school; they will share the way money is integrated in all curriculum. She is currently promoting fundraising through their website and Facebook page. Melanie Parra, director, strategic communications, showed a 3 ½ minute video, which will be emailed to the board. Information is posted on our website [www.pcsb.org/referendum](http://www.pcsb.org/referendum) . The district will make every effort to publicize the benefits of the referendum.
    - He asked Dr. Mary Conage, director, special projects, to review the status of the USDOE TIF (Teacher Incentive Fund) grant. This is a performance based compensation grant. She shared that the district has applied for this grant, but it is highly competitive. Rural districts are prioritized this time. She will advise the board when they are notified of the outcome.
    - He shared that the budget and District Strategic Plan will come before the board at Tuesday's meeting, July 26, 2016.
  - Mrs. O'Shea:
    - The FAST Organization, Reading Forum invitation for Friday, July 22, was discussed. Ms. Flowers said she may attend. It was noted that Dr. Antonio

Burt, director of school transformation is utilizing one of their recommended reading programs.

- The Council of Great City Schools conference will be in Miami in October. Board members planning to attend; notify the board office to get registered.
- The Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards annual legislative meeting is scheduled for September 8 & 9; the pre-planning meeting is on August 19. Mrs. Cook is planning to attend the September meeting.

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 2:35 pm.

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Chairperson  
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Secretary