

01 14 2014 Work Session 12 30 PM Kathleen High School

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A. New Business

1. [12:30 - 12:45 PM Board Comments](#)

Minutes:

Mrs. Wright asked for updates on:

- Kelly Staffing update at the next Work Session
- The Brookings report and how it relates to Polk County Schools (Who reads it and what is its purpose?)
- Strategic Plan revised targets - a corrected school grades report
- Academic reports at each work session (similar to the financial updates; where we are going and how we are improving)

Superintendent LeRoy responded:

- She will discuss Kelly Staffing with staff and have a written update and short presentation on January 28th.
- Brookings is a 'think tank' that works a lot in the areas of education and policies. Their report pertained to the institute rubric grading of the 100 largest districts in the United States based on the choices available to parents: traditional public schools, charter schools, choice schools, and magnet schools. Beginning next year, she believes parents will have more options in the four regions of the district. The regions should have equitable and similar offerings of acceleration, career programs, and academies, etc. She is working on hosting one school choice expo, one open enrollment (application) period; and streamlining the application process. The impact is in the area of building community trust and it is targeted toward business leaders, educators, policy makers, etc.

- o Schools are very clear on their strategic plan targets; she will make sure that the Board has the most updated target lists.
- o In February, the first work session is specifically for an updated mid-year report on all the data collected from base line and mid year assessments: discipline, suspensions, support services, professional development, human resources, and community (all areas of the Strategic Plan), for an extensive overview of where we are and how to will go forward. She will bring items forward at every work session.

Mr. Berryman reported he attends the Polk Vision Education Task Force meetings and Polk Vision is hoping to lead the Alignment plan. A meeting is scheduled for the first week of March.

Mr. Mullenax reported that he met with Polk County Commissioner George Lindsey where he learned the Commissioners would like to take \$250,000 from the county's impact fees to provide sidewalks in proximity of our schools.

Greg Rivers, Associate Superintendent of Facilities, said he would be in favor of their proposal but, procedurally, the County would need to research their ordinance that outlines the usage of impact fees. Currently the ordinance states that the money 'shall be used solely for the purpose of providing growth-necessitated capital improvements to education and ancillary plants'. It does allow for site development and off-site incidental to construction. The concern is whether there is a time limit placed on the growth-necessitated improvements. Using Tenoroc High School as an example (the school has been open for a few years), is it legitimate, by the ordinance, to place sidewalks in that area that would be deemed 'growth necessitated'. Mr. Rivers also commented that the County recently made ordinance revisions that require the School District to go to the County first for any proposed projects. The County Manager shall review all such applications to ensure that the proposed expenditures are in accord for the purposes set forth herein and applicable law. He believes more discussions with the County is necessary.

Mr. Harris stated he hoped he misunderstood and asked for clarification; the School District has to gain the permission and blessing of the County Manager to do any construction going forward? Mr. Rivers responded that we have always been accountable to the County; now we have to go to the County first with the proposed use and school we wish to build based on the growth that has occurred. Mr. Harris asked what happens if they refuse or disagree with the construction proposal. Mr. Rivers responded that would be new ground but we've always been accountable to the County. Mr. Harris commented that it sounds like they want to be a School Board; we were accountable before but did not have to seek their permission to spend our money.

Mrs. Sellers also talked with Mr. Lindsey. She stated the County would only turn down a project if it wasn't being used for the proper means; doesn't meet the law. Mr. Harris commented this change came about because the County believes we built something that shouldn't have been built. Mrs. Sellers agreed the County did have that worry- because they are accountable. But we have to remember, while we can request them to support impact fees, ultimately it is their decision. They want to make sure we are following the law.

Mrs. Fields would like to know if there is an appeals process; who determines yea or nay? Who determines where sidewalks are placed? Mr. Rivers responded that the ordinance does not include a provision on appeal process. The County Manager makes a recommendation to the County Commission. If there are any questions, we would have to appear before the Commission. Mrs. Fields would like answers before the next step. Mr. Rivers stated that the sidewalk placement would also have to be worked out because this is completely new in the ordinance.

Mr. Berryman feels there is public mistrust of how education dollars are spent; he feels this is a case of transparency going forward. Mr. Lindsey was attempting to provide a simple solution to resolve the sidewalk issue and named \$250,000 as an amount. It may not be that amount. More discussions may be necessary to address the placement of sidewalks; and, it may not be feasible to use the impact fees, or they may need to change the ordinance.

Mrs. Fields commented that it seems some board members have had discussions with the County Commission, she has not. All board members should have the information before going forward.

Mr. Mullenax responded that Commissioner Lindsey indicated that he was going to speak with the other board members. His conversation with Mr. Lindsey is that they are reaching out to help us and are asking that we do the same. The sidewalk issue at Tenoroc High School is a big concern of theirs at a cost of \$2.2 million.

2. [12:45 - 1:15 PM Possible Review of Legal Expenses by FSBA](#)

Minutes:

Mr. Berryman stated that the legal expenses and the current attorney are not the issues. He simply would like to know if we are using the best practices and processes in meeting our legal requirements and needs. He had a conversation months ago with Dr. Wayne Blanton, Executive Director of the Florida School Boards Association, who had offered a consulting arrangement to review the matter. Mr. Berryman suggested tabling this discussion until the Superintendent has met with her mentor (a former superintendent) and Mr. Mullenax has had an opportunity to receive his training through FSBA. Perhaps discuss with them best practices for the legal area and others or meet with Dr. Blanton to continue the conversation.

Superintendent LeRoy stated that as part of her association with FADSS (Florida Association of District School Superintendents) as a new superintendent, they offer her an official mentor. Dr. Bill Vogel, the former, highly effective Superintendent of both Seminole County and St. Lucie County will be working with her. She will be working with him on a regular basis every week on several different things in Human Resources. She made a commitment to the new Board Chair to, as a team, establish roles, responsibilities, and goals as we move forward. FSBA will be here with Dr. Vogel on January 21st to begin working with us, as well as to begin looking at the efficiency of the

Human Resources Department.

Mr. Berryman asked if the legal review could be a part of their overview.

Mrs. Wright thought that we might be taking on more projects in one year that we can do effectively. What is the purpose of the conversation today; are we tabling the discussion or asking that FSBA review the practices of the legal department?

Superintendent LeRoy reported that Dr. Vogel is working with her as a new superintendent and she has asked that he review the Human Resource Department since she will not be replacing Mr. Dunn (retired Associate Superintendent) until June.

Mrs. Wright thought that the earlier concerns of Mr. Berryman were addressed with the restructuring of the charter duties of the part time attorney and Mr. Bridges. Is it Mr. Berryman's request that we continue to look at this piece this year?

Mr. Berryman responded in the affirmative; he feels that Dr. Blanton, as the facilitator, and his consultants should review our best practices to see if we need to improve. If it was put to a vote today, he would vote to hire FSBA to study our best practices on legal procedures.

Mrs. Sellers did not remember restructuring the legal department as being considered. Mr. Bridges has been the full-time attorney and John Murphy has been on a consultant contract for up to 10 hours a week. She feels that agreement should continue because we are a huge district with one attorney that serves the District and the School Board. She has not been a part of a restructuring conversation.

Mr. Mullenax stated that he remembered it was the Board that decided they wanted the charter school issues handled differently; and they were, not realizing how expensive that would be. He believes the department is efficient as it is now. He stated consensus is needed to go forward with a restructuring study at a cost of between \$10,000 - \$15,000.

Mrs. Wright asked if Mr. Murphy is working on charter issues. Mr. Mullenax confirmed he is not.

Mr. Berryman reiterated that the charter issue has nothing to do with his request. His concern is that we spend over \$2 million in legal expenses most years. Do we have the right structure in place? His contact with FSBA several months ago offered to do a consulting arrangement to review our legal process and the costs involved. Do we proceed or not?

Mrs. Cunningham feels strongly that it would be nice to have an audit on the legal services department. However, realizing that the Superintendent and Board Chair will be working with people associated with FSBA over the next several weeks, she would agree to postponing this discussion, allowing Mrs. LeRoy and Mr. Mullenax time to have a conversation about the same. She suggested it be discussed in February for a consensus and vote.

Mrs. Fields agreed to table the discussion. If it was to come to a vote today, she would not support it. There are other issues that need to be addressed, such as staff that has not received a raise.

The item was tabled.

B. Board Agenda Review

3. [1:15 - 1:45 PM Review January 14, 2014 School Board Agenda](#)

Attachment: [01 14 14 School Board Agenda.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Item C-11: Contract with Walt Disney for 2014 National Tournament of Academic Excellence.

Mr. Harris asked if the venue could be held somewhere other than Disney. Mrs. LeRoy responded that Tallahassee decides the venue.

4. [1:45 - 2:00 PM BREAK](#)

C. Information

Item 7

5. [Women and Minority Business Enterprise Annual Report](#)

Attachment: [Annual summary 7-1-12 6-30-13.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Mrs. LeRoy asked if there is more or less participation than before?

Scott Clanton, Director of Purchasing, reported there had been a spike several years ago in the number of transactions. Expenditures had stayed the same or trended up. This year is about the same as last year.

Other discussions:

The Superintendent announced that the Board Chair has recommended that the Information section of the agenda follow immediately after the Agenda review. This will allow staff to leave as soon as their item is covered.

Mrs. Cunningham asked that having one meeting a month rather than two be considered.

D. Discussion

Item 5

6. [2:00 - 2:20 PM Internal Funds Annual Audit](#)

Attachment: [11112013 MASTER SBPC FY13 Internal Accounts Report FINAL.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Clara Ewing and Jennifer Murtha of McGladrey LLP reported that the district has approximately \$11 million flowing thru internal accounts which need to be audited to ensure funds are used to benefit the students of the schools for activities authorized by the School Board. An annual audit is required per Rule 6Z-1.087, FAC. For the year ended June 30, 2013, fifty-seven (57) of the fifty-eight (58) schools tested received comment as compared to 30 of 30 in 2012; as well as, 38 out of the 58 schools were in previous sample populations since June 30, 2009 with results as follows:

- 8 schools had a decrease in the number of findings
- 22 schools had an increase in the number of findings and
- 8 schools experienced no change in the number of findings

Mrs. Sellers asked what could be done to reduce the number of findings. Mrs. Ewing reported that for other districts they audit 100% of the schools; this tells the schools they will be audited every year rather than every three to five years. It is the district's responsibility to prevent, detect, and to deter through safeguarding of assets; protecting the entity's assets through an effective internal control system. Assurance must exist that transactions related to assets have been properly processed and that appropriate physical handling and control over assets exists.

Mrs. Phelps suggested that principals and school financial secretaries receive mandatory training every year or mid-year for new employees. In addition, the district should consider contracting for 100% of the schools to be audited.

Mrs. Field asked if the armored truck service has reduced the number of findings in the audit and is it a cost savings. Mrs. Phelps stated that it has not reduced the number of findings because schools have to have their deposits ready at the date and time specified by the armored car service. The contracted service is not going to wait for a deposit to be completed; it has to be ready when they arrive. Also some of the findings related to deposits had nothing to do with the armored services. Mrs. Phelps believes that using the armored service may have saved the district money by avoiding liabilities associated with staff taking the money to the bank, it has not saved the schools money.

Mrs. Fields asked Mrs. Phelps to provide her (at a later time, if necessary) the percentage of schools that have not received training: principals and secretaries.

Mr. Harris voiced concerned that there are 22 repeating schools, blatant violations of school board policy should be grounds for dismissal. What are principals telling you is the reason behind the infractions? Mrs. Ewing stated that turnover in principals and secretary positions are a large factor. The auditors review the responses to see that they have a clear understanding of the concern and how they plan to clear up the action.

Mr. Mullenax asked how other districts handle infractions. Mrs. Ewing responded that typically the audit report is a part of the principal's evaluation. Some districts recognize schools with no infractions or are showing improvement.

Mrs. Wright asked if there is a follow up on the principals' responses and follow through. She asked if the auditing firm could provide a monthly report on those schools that do not have the deposits ready on time. Also the consequences should be significant enough to encourage principals to be sure procedures are followed. Mrs. Wright asked if the internal accounts audit is a part of the principal's evaluation. Mrs. LeRoy will verify that it is or becomes a part of the evaluation.

Mr. Berryman noted that of those audited by the firm, Polk County is the only one that uses a centralized control system; is that a good thing? Ms. Murtha responded that it is a benefit to have it centralized for efficiency but it also takes away from the schools being visited more often.

Mrs. Phelps stated that a centralized control provides a more desegregation of duties and allows monitoring of the internal account items.

Item 6

7. [2:20 - 2:35 PM Realignment and Organization Chart Changes of Departments](#)

Attachment: [Realignment and Org Chart Changes 1-14-14 WS.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Mike Perrone, Associate Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer, reported that the Organizational Chart will be updated to show the Wellness Department under the supervision of the Director of Risk Management and the Warehousing and Distribution Department will report to the Senior Director of Support Services for efficiency and alignment.

Mr. Mullenax voiced concern that the effectiveness of Wellness not be jeopardized. Mr Perrone believes this will be a better fit; Wellness will be able to work closely with the clinic.

E. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM. Minutes were approved and attested this 28th day of January, 2014.

Dick Mullenax, Board Chair

Kathryn M. LeRoy, Superintendent