

03 16 2010 Work Session

New Business

1. [8:30 AM - 8:40 AM Board Member Comments](#)

Minutes:

Chairman Fields provided dates to hear a grievance filed by several Bartow High School staff members: March 24, April 7th, or 8th. Consensus was to have the hearing at 10:00 AM on April 8, 2010.

Mrs. Fields asked if any Board Members would be interested in participating in site visits of potential superintendents on June 1 and 2, 2010. Mr. O'Reilly and Mrs. Cunningham suggested Mrs. Fields, as Board Chair, cover the site visits. Board Members are to provide Mrs. McManus their intentions to participate in the dinner, meet and greet reception, and final interviews on May 17 - 19th.

The Board Chair also noted that primary elections will be held on August 24th the same day as the evening school board meeting. Mrs. Fields asked the Board Members to let Mrs. McManus know if they prefer to swap the meeting times with the 1:30 meeting, cancel the meeting, or leave it as is.

Dr. McKinzie advised the School Board that Marianne Capozziello, PEA President, would like to send out letters to teachers informing them of the town hall style community meetings. The letter would be from PEA, the School Board and the Superintendent. The meetings are scheduled for:

Tuesday, April 6, (HS and MS teachers) Haines City Lake Eva Center, Rooms A & B.

Monday, April 12 (HS & MS) George Jenkins High School Cafeteria, Lakeland

Thursday April 22 (Elementary) Lake Region High School Cafeteria, Eagle Lake.

Board Agenda Review

2. [8:40 AM - 9:00 AM Review Agenda of March 16, 2010 School Board Meeting](#)

Attachment: [03 16 10 School Board Agenda.pdf](#)

Minutes:

- Item C-19, School Lunch Equipment Grant

Mrs. Cunningham asked which schools will be receiving the warmers? Mark Grey will provide her the information.

- C-20 Academic Riger, AP/IB Grant

Mrs. Cunningham asked if this is a \$1,000,000 grant for three years and if the evaluator's cost will remain the same for the three years? Mrs. Ford reported that the grant is to be renewed annually and they will try to keep the same fee for the evaluator.

- Item C-52, HCHS,

Mrs. Cunningham asked for the cost savings for work done in-house. Mr. Murphy will provide the School Board with the figures.

Mr. Harris asked if there was an in-house dollar limit before we go outside for vendors. Mr. Murphy reported that \$300,000 is the limit for in-house using day labor, more than that amount is competitive bidding that the district can participate if we follow the procedures.

- R-71 LifeSkills Non-Renewal Contract

Mrs. Fields asked if there are any options available or a time limit we can offer them?

Mrs. Cunningham stated that in viewing the data, she would be in favor of an extension in the contract to allow Ms. Wright the opportunity to work out any issues identified by district staff. She suggested a 9 month extension.

Mrs. Lofton stated that the Charter Review Committee voted 14-1 to deny the renewal. She believes the Committee knows more of the facts and issues than she and would defer to their knowledge. The main issue is the management company.

Mrs. Sellers requested Mrs. Bridges provide details to the Board if an extension is possible, such as goals that should/could be set and met.

Mrs. Bridges reported that the Superintendent and she met with Ashlee Wright this past summer to discuss a list of concerns; the main issue was the contract with (White Hat) the management company. When the renewal contract was submitted the management contract was the same as before. The key issues did not appear to be addressed in the management contract: 97% of the funds go to the management company. The Charter Committee evaluated the contract as presented. Concerns are: is the money (public

dollars) being used appropriately; the Management Company creates the governing board agendas; there are currently only three board members and one of the members is employed by the management company.

Mrs. Sellers asked what the down side would be if we allowed them a provisional contract? Mrs. Bridges stated that the overview of money flowing into the classroom from the Governing Board/Management Company. If it leads to an outcome that the Board can accept, then the School Board can renew or non renew.

Mrs. Lofton reported that money going back to the classroom has been decreasing: 39% in 07-08; 26% in 08-09. 65% is the state recommended amount.

Mr. Grey stated that should the school be closed, the school has no assets to return to the district - everything is owned by the management company. Taxpayers bought the equipment, and if they close, taxpayers will have to buy them again from the management company. \$999,000 plus dollars.

Mrs. Sellers reported this should be handled legislatively. If we have to maintain 65%, charter schools should have to follow the same guidelines.

Dr. McKinzie reported this happens when you deal with an outside company. Under the accounting processes, there are 3 staff members that contribute to the students but are not categorized so that it can count toward money to the classroom. Because they have such few people, any one person is a huge percentage of the amount. The issue is the management company. When the management company determined the district was serious about closing them, they allowed minor changes to the contract.

Mr. Harris asked if the Governing Board cancels the contract would the recommendation remain as non-renewal?

Mrs. Bridges reported it might have been a different recommendation. However, if they try to sever the contract, they face a huge debt: nearly \$1 million and will not have the ability to continue with the program. No building, no equipment (computers and other classroom furniture), no way to pay staff. There were other concerns in addition to the management contract: met 65% of their goals, did not have the evening class as originally set forth.

Mrs. Sellers would support a one year (9 month) extension.

Mr. O'Reilly stated that the contract between LifeSkills and White Hat is for another 25 years. They are not going to spend anymore money in the classroom. They are after a profit. He asked if the district has space for the 200 students. Mrs. Bridges said there is space but some of the students will not choose to return to the regular classroom setting. The Review Committee saw the issues; the governing board elected to renew the current contract for another 25 years....they are not going to renegotiate a contract.

Mrs. Fields will support an extension.

Mrs. Lofton asked if the teachers are highly qualified. Human Resource Services reported they are. Ashlee Wright is the member of the Governing Board employed by the

management company.

Mrs. Sellers asked if the review committee looked at offering options for extension?

Mrs. Bridges reported the committee did consider the option but since there had not been any movement to meet the recommended changes, they did not consider an extension.

Ashlee Wright reported that there would be a debt: \$600,000 not \$900,000. The Management company is willing to work with the district.

Mr. O'Reilly asked what are the changes the district would be looking for? Has the contract of 25 years been signed by LifeSkills?

Mrs. Bridges reported that LifeSkills' contract with White Hat has been signed.

Mrs. Cunningham stated she would like to see more dollars into the classroom, higher student achievement, greater academic achievements, and an increase in graduates. Mr. O'Reilly suggested Ms. Wright contact the management company with the requests of the School Board and have an answer before the School Board meeting.

Mrs. Bridges reported it is the role of the governing board that makes the decisions, not the management company. Overseeing the budget and the school should be the responsibility of the governing board. Are they running the school or is the management company? That is an issue.

Dr. McKinzie stated that it was not fair to ask Ms. Wright to have the information by this afternoon.

- C-75 AMI Kids

Mrs. Cunningham asked if it went out for bid? Dr. McKinzie reported the group approached the district to fill some of their empty spots. The program has been in existence in Lakeland.

- Item R-76, Davenport School Property Acquisition

Mrs. Cunningham asked why the purchase amount is higher than the appraisal? Mr. Murphy reported that the appraised amount would have been less than what property owner owes. It would not have been advantageous for her to sell.

3. [9:00 AM - 9:10 AM BREAK](#)

Discussion

Item 4

4. [9:10 AM - 9:30 AM Discussion of Prayer Before Meetings](#)

Attachment: [Prayer.pdf](#)

Minutes:

School Board Attorney Wes Bridges reported that a recent newspaper article raised concerns on the practice of prayer before School Board meetings. This is different from prayer in schools, graduations, baccalaureates. No court in the land has said that a school board may not have an invocation before meetings. They might say that it is inappropriate, but they have not ruled it unconstitutional.

Mr. O'Reilly suggested a list be created of all clergy and used on a rotating basis. Mrs. Fields concurred. Mrs. Cunningham reported that the first recorded prayer at a Polk County School Board Meeting was June 24, 1953; that's 57 years of a tradition we can be proud of.

Mrs. Lofton suggested continuing the invocation using clergy or board member providing the invocation. Mrs. Sellers concurred. Mr. Harris stated that the rule of the majority runs the government. He does not feel the majority voice began the issue. He supports the invocation.

Mrs. Fields suggest we continue with Board Members providing the prayer until a list of clergy has been created.

Item 5

5. [9:30 AM - 9:50 AM Discussion of 2010-2011 Preliminary Budget](#)

Attachment: [SDFS Personnel Budget Programs 4.pdf](#)

Attachment: [March 2010 Budget Discussion.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Mark Grey, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, and Nancy Woolcock, Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support, provided information on issues facing our 2010-11 budget. Mr. Grey reported that the worst case appears to be a 2% reduction (\$12 million) from Tallahassee. Currently the percentage fluctuates from 2% to 6%.

Planned expenditures:

- Class size reduction will require 200 additional classroom teachers - new

hires: \$11.1 million (Staff is hoping to lower the financial cost by reassigning existing personnel.)

- Employee salary increases: - \$9 million. (The School Board requested that salary increases become part of the early budget process.)
- Unemployment expenses - The unemployment trust fund for Florida is bankrupt. Our district has already paid \$1.3 million for the first two quarters of this year, which is more than the entire budget for last year; and, we have two more quarters to go. This increase is the result of our county's 13.3% unemployment. To make up the deficit, the State gets the funds from employers still in business to cover the unemployment benefits of companies that have gone out-of-business. It is anticipated that our share for next year will be increased by \$500,000.
- Florida Retirement System - percentage increase for next year's contribution is unknown at this time. It is anticipated that it almost doubles our contribution: 9.85% to 15-16% by January 2011. Several bills being considered will impact the FRS; some wages (overtime) may not be eligible for retirement. (This is generally the lowest income personnel (bus drivers, custodians, etc.) We have employees that earn \$3,000 - \$4,000 in overtime. District paid \$425,000 in overtime for 08-09. Impact to the district is very low, but very detrimental to the employee's retirement income.
- IDEA Stimulus - If we do not meet the academic indicators, we lose the ability to employ people with these funds (social workers and school psychologists). We did meet the indicators for this school year but we won't know until later if the funds will be available.

All these factors equate to an approximate \$32.5 million detrimental impact to our projected budget for 2010-2011.

Mrs. Cunningham asked if there would be any change to the class size amendment. Mr. Grey reported that the Legislature plans to have it on the ballot in November; however, school districts have to abide by the current legislative deadline of school year beginning in August, 2010.

The 0.25 mills was levied by 42 counties across the state and used for a variety of needs. There is discussion in Tallahassee to require all districts to levy the .25 mills (critical needs millage) and use the funds exclusively for operational expenses. Currently, it is required for the millage to be approved by the voters of the district. There is discussion by the Legislature to remove that language and only require a majority vote of the school board rather than a super majority.

Mr. Harris asked if it were possible to use long term substitutes in the classroom until the vote on the class size amendment. Dr. McKinzie stated that the district hires approximately 400 teachers every year; the concern is the certification. It is more a high school issue rather than elementary.

Mrs. Lofton asked if the class size vote is changed in November, is there a length of time before it becomes part of the constitution? Mr. Bridges stated normally an amendment usually has an effective date within its language. If

not, it is approved upon vote.

Dr. McKinzie reported that District Administrators will be meeting with principals on March 22nd. Their intent is not to release people, but rather repurpose people based on their certification.

Capital Funds (LCI funds - Local Capital Improvement):

- To create our capital budget we calculate 1.5 mills x 95% of property value. Because of loss in property values, we anticipate an 8%-10% decrease in revenues. (8% equals to a \$3.3 million decrease in LCI funds). Three years ago the district received \$62.3 million in LCI; next year we are estimating \$43 million. Of that, \$42 million will go to lower our debt service; the remainder of the funds will be used within the maintenance division.

LCI provides funds for maintenance workers and maintenance projects, replacement of computers, buses (have not been purchased for two years), and white fleet (has not been replaced for three years). We do not anticipate an improvement in revenue over the next 2 - 3 years.

- If the Legislature moves another .25 mills, it will adversely impact on our debt service.
- Mrs. Woolcock reported that the Safe and Drug Free Schools Federal Grant was dropped from Pres. Obama's budget. Six employees were employed through the grant at the Mark Wilcox Center. The grant also funded the Anti-Bullying Campaign, Jeffrey Johnston Prevention program, investigation on bullying through on-line complaints, and health education. A modified format of the Mark Wilcox program will be presented to principals on March 22nd for their input on funding. There are Statutory requirements for health education and bullying. We'll have to provide services through general funds; expulsions will increase.

Mrs. Sellers suggested we contact the Polk Inner Alliance Center for help in some of the Drug Prevention/Intervention areas.

Item 6

6. [9:50 AM - 10:00 AM REVISED - 2010-2011 Polk County Schools Calendar](#)

Attachment: [REVISED 2010-11 School Calendar.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Jose Farinas and Ron Cirrana reported that a revision is needed to the recently adopted school calendar to move Spring Break earlier in the year allowing 3 weeks before the FCAT test and to include early release days which were part of the contract negotiations.

Mrs. Cunningham asked how early release days affected classroom time?

Dr. Tonjes, Associate Superintendent of School-Based Operations, reported that typically the class time is adjusted throughout the day by about 10 minutes.

Item 7

7. [10:00 AM - 10:15 AM AESOP, Substitute System \(revised\) Proposal](#)

Attachment: [AESOP - Substitute System 3-16-10 WS.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Ron Cirrana, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, reported that the current telephone system for substitute assignment has not been working smoothly. Calls were being dropped, repeat calls to persons already assigned, etc. The proposed system will integrate with our SAP system.

One person will be affected - placed on displaced list for next year and position will be found for her.

Mrs. Cunningham stated the system seems to be a win win program for the district.

Item 8

8. [10:15 Am - 10:30 AM Revised Job Description for Mental Health Counselor in the ESE Learning Support Division](#)

Attachment: [Revised Job Description for Mental Health Counselor 3-16-10 WS.pdf](#)

Minutes: Mr. Cirrana reported that in reviewing the job descriptions, it was decided to place them with Union.

Item 9

9. [10:30 AM - 10:45 AM Revise and Rename Job Description Sr. Director, K-12 Reading to Sr. Director, K-12 Curriculum and Instruction](#)

Attachment: [K-12 Curr.pdf](#)

Minutes: Dr. Nickell reported that the vacant Middle School Senior Director position was not budgeted for 2009-2010. The proposed job description changes to the Sr. Director, K-12 position will place some of those responsibilities to the Senior Director K-12 Curriculum and Instruction

Information

Item 10

10. [Overview of Proposed Magnet Schools Assistance Program \(MSAP\) Grant Application](#)

Attachment: [Overview of Proposed Magnet School Grant Application.pdf](#)

Minutes: Item will be submitted to the next work session.

Item 11

11. [Charter School Projected Enrollment for 2010-2011](#)

Attachment: [WS 2010-2011 Annual Maximum Enrollment 3 16 10.pdf](#)

Item 12

12. [Plan to Enhance the District's New Applicant Ranking and Hiring System](#)

Attachment: [Ranking and Hiring System.pdf](#)

Minutes: Superintendent suggested this item be submitted for the next work session.

Item 13

13. [Update on the Percentage of Highly Qualified Teachers Within the District](#)

Attachment: [Update District's HQT Percentages 3-16-10 WS.pdf](#)

Item 14

14. [District IBT Para Pro Examination Location Change](#)

Attachment: [ParaPro Examination Location Change to Florida Southern College 3-16-10 WS.pdf](#)

Item 15

15. [Domestic Security K-12 Access Control Grant Application](#)

Attachment: [Security Cameras 2010 - Board Summary Impact Statement.pdf](#)

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 AM. Minutes were approved and attested this 13th day of April, 2010.

Kay Fields, Board Chair

Gail F. McKinzie, Ph. D., Superintendent