

09 22 2015 Work Session 9 00 AM

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A. New Business

1. [9:00 - 9:15 AM School Board Comments](#)

Minutes:

Mrs. Sellers commented on the recent Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) meeting which she attended on the Public Liaison Committee for the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA). One of the primary concerns addressed was training for coaches since there is such a large turnaround in that area. Pasco County has developed a virtual component used to train coaches on various rules and policies. They have offered to share this with us.

Mr. Berryman discussed his recent attendance at the Central Florida School Boards Coalition (CFSBC) meeting. Thirteen school districts and over 1 million students were represented. Some topics covered were:

- There will be a free ethics training offered at the November Coalition Meeting.
- Kim Williams, Executive Director of Frameworks of Tampa Bay, was a speaker at the meeting. This nonprofit organization provides evidence-based training around the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). She presented an overview of subjects such as bullying and how to assist students in being more comfortable in their school environments.
- Orange County will propose, via letter, to the Governor that he issue an executive order to proclaim 2014-2015 test results be used as a base line year for results.
- Legislative platform, additions, revisions, and recommendations:
 - FHSAA Bill
 - Optional paper and pencil versus computer based testing flexibility for each district

Superintendent LeRoy commented that she has received correspondence from Volusia County discussing the testing matter and will have more information following the Florida Association of

District School Superintendents (FADSS) conference. It was originally discussed that the State would use the 2014-2015 Florida Standards Assessment as a baseline and there would be a pause on school grades; however, that information changed over time. Tentatively, school grades may be available in December or January. Although the validity and reliability of the test have been verified, many technical issues were experienced across the state of Florida.

Mr. Berryman commented the Governor has discussed a proposal to leave taxing authority up to the individual school districts. Also, the State Board of Education is meeting in Miami where it is anticipated they will address cut scores.

Mr. Berryman discussed the upcoming United Way campaign and his support of that program.

Mr. Mullenax inquired if the FHSAA coach training Mrs. Sellers discussed would be the same across the platform for various sports. Mrs. Sellers responded that, although she has not seen the training module Pasco has, it is her understanding it is very comprehensive and will be sport-specific. The training is intended for new coaches as well as coaches needing refresher training regarding new and revised policies.

Mr. Mullenax is the representative of the Board on the Legislative Committee for the State. He will be attending the conference in October.

B. Board Agenda Review

C. Information

Item 2

2. [Potential New Format of Board Items/Agenda](#)

Minutes:

Superintendent LeRoy discussed the transition to the BoardDocs platform to enter and maintain work session and board meeting agendas and minutes. She requested that all media outlets present receive copies of the handouts that were provided to the staff. She presented an example of the new format once the migration to BoardDocs has occurred. This program will require more information be provided in the Executive Summary area such as; description of the activity, rationale, impacted audience or school, and benefits and challenges. She reminded the Board that the BoardDocs training for them will be on October 6, at 10:00 am. She informed them that at that time the agenda will be more definitively compiled with special attention paid to the departmental accountability for items as well as more extensive attachments.

Mrs. Fields inquired as to how much additional time and effort will staff incur in preparation of this new program. Superintendent LeRoy responded that there will be an initial increase in workload while preparing for this migration; however, the new platform will be more comprehensive, in depth and transparent and in the end, may decrease workload for staff members. She added that this will ensure the Board Members have complete access to information when reviewing expenditures and activities in our school district. She also discussed the need to provide additional copies of work session items to media colleagues and others that may be present. These

folders are currently provided to Board Members and ancillary staff.

Item 3

3. [2015-2016 Annual Contracts for School Based Administrators and District Office Administrators](#)

Attachment: [Administrator Contract Renewal 9-22-15 WS.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Superintendent LeRoy discussed the annual contract renewal for school based administrators and district office administrators. She reminded the Board that there had previously been a short, three month extension and this contract would be for nine months. This continuation of previous provisional contracts extends October 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016.

Mr. Wilson inquired if Lake Region High School has two assistant principals. Superintendent LeRoy commented that there are two assistant principals at Lake Region but one of those positions may be "To Be Announced (TBA)" and that is why the information was not provided.

Brian Warren, Director of Human Resources, commented that this information is centered around those positions with the 90 day provision. Administrators hired after this would not be reflected on the sheet provided to the Board.

Mr. Mullenax inquired if this action was retroactive. Superintendent LeRoy and Mr. Warren discussed that this is not retroactive but is a continuation. The Superintendent discussed the correlation between the State releasing test scores and the need to invoke temporary contract extensions. She also commented that school staffing plans and district staffing plans will be presented to the Board earlier in the year in an effort to avoid these provisional contracts.

Item 4

4. [Head Start Grant Monthly Services Report](#)

Attachment: [August 15 Board Executive Summary.pdf](#)

Attachment: [15HSA - Head Start Financial Report as of 6-30-2015.pdf](#)

Minutes: N/A

D. Discussion

Item 5

5. [9:30-9:45 AM BREAK](#)

Minutes: N/A

Item 6

6. [9:45-10:45 AM Charter Review Committee Recommendations to the Superintendent for Charter](#)

[Applications Received August 1, 2015](#)

Attachment: [WS Summary - Charter Application Recommendations.pdf](#)

Minutes:

John Small, Assistant Superintendent of Career, Technical, Adult & Multiple Pathways, and Melissa Brady, Director of Charter Schools, were joined by Vickie Mace, an independent reviewer/external evaluator contracted to present the charter review recommendations. Ms. Mace explained that there were seventeen voting members on the Charter Review Committee comprised of community members, key district staff, a diversity council representative and a current charter operator. Only a few of the members had ever served in this capacity. They performed individual evaluations then met to share information to come to a final group recommendation. Ms. Mace presented the recommendations with substantiating information and the approval/denial statistics per school.

1) Bridge Prep

The committee recommendation was denial (0 approved/17 denied).

Mr. Mullenax and Mr. Small discussed the geographic location of the school (Zip Code 33813, South Lakeland) and that the information to determine demographics had been gleaned from past census data to show potential school population.

Mr. Wilson commented on the committee's concerns regarding adoption of Polk's Comprehensive Core Reading Plan (CCRP) and inquired if that was because charter schools do not have access to that.

Jacqueline Bowen, Chief Academic Officer, clarified that everyone in the State has access to our CCRP for student support. They do not use the same instructional materials, but that is not a requirement.

2) Discovery High

The committee recommendation was denial (5 approved/12 denied).

Mrs. Sellers inquired what the independent evaluator's opinion was of this action. Ms. Mace commented that it was her opinion that this organization corrected areas that had caused previous concern.

Mr. Wilson commented on these organizational changes from last year's application and inquired of Mr. Small if the remaining concerns were problematic. Mr. Small responded that it was his opinion that there were no issues that he felt could not be overcome. Mr. Wilson voiced his opinion that he respectfully disagrees with the committee's recommendation.

Superintendent LeRoy stated she is recommending approval of this charter application on the basis that due diligence has been accomplished since last year's application denial.

Mr. Mullenax commented on last year's application from this organization. It is his

opinion that many of the issues that caused denial last year have been corrected.

John Murphy, Legal Counsel for the School Board, commented on pending litigation and although the Charter Committee is to be commended for their thorough evaluations, it is legally defensible for the Superintendent and the seven elected board members to reach a consensus on the approval or denial regardless of the committee's recommendation. Also, any remaining issues unaddressed will be corrected as the contract is drafted by working cooperatively with those with legal expertise.

Mr. Berryman discussed Discovery's intent to add high school grades in the future. Ms. Mace responded that their intent is to add grades 9-10, then 11th grade, and then 12th grade.

Mrs. Fields inquired of Ms. Mace regarding her participation with the review committee as to her presence at their meetings and had she relayed her thoughts to the committee regarding the areas that could be rectified in this application. Ms. Mace responded that she had been a participant in the meetings and had expressed her thoughts to the group.

3) Joint Services Military Academy

The committee recommendation was denial (0 approved/17 denied).

Mr. Berryman inquired how many of this type charter organization are being operated at this time. Mr. Small responded that one member of the organization was the founder of the Sarasota Military Academy.

Mrs. Fields inquired if this was the same group that had applied previously. Mr. Small responded that it was not the same organization.

4) Lakeland Institute for Learning

The committee recommendation was denial (0 approved/17 denied).

John Murphy, Counsel for the Polk County School Board, commented this organization is a currently operating private school. According to State Statute addresses private schools do not qualify for charter status. This could be in conflict with Statute and would be prohibitive.

Mr. Berryman inquired if this organization applied for a charter as a private school. Mr. Murphy responded he has found no evidence that would indicate otherwise.

Mr. Wilson asked if their current status would prohibit them legally from being awarded charter status. Mr. Murphy responded it is his opinion that this application, if approved, could be considered contrary to statute. Although there are other significant issues that would prohibit them from moving forward as well.

5) Montessori of Winter Haven

The committee recommendation was approval (13 approved/4 denied).

Mrs. Brady discussed the organization's intent to pursue community sponsorship for scholarships for a Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) program. Currently five sponsorships are being targeted with eventual 100% scholarship as their goal.

Mr. Mullenax commented this group has made tremendous efforts to address and correct concerns that surfaced in their application last year especially in regard to budget.

Superintendent LeRoy commented that Montessori meets a niche that we currently have not filled and that many children thrive in that type of program. She explained that this program is not grade-level specific but is proficiency based with a self-paced curriculum, and is multi-grade structured.

Mr. Berryman inquired what concerns existed from the four committee denials. Ms. Mace responded that it was a mixture of curriculum, staffing, and diversification.

6) New Beginnings High

This application was withdrawn.

7) Our Children's Academy

The committee recommendation was denial (7 approved/9 denied).

Mrs. Brady discussed her opinion that the committee's denials may have been impacted by the knowledge this organization would lose capital outlay if approved.

Superintendent LeRoy stated she is recommending approval of this application.

Mrs. Sellers and Mrs. Cunningham inquired for additional information regarding the Capital Outlay issues. Mrs. Brady responded the organization's Certified Public Account (CPA) has been contacted and advised that even without capital outlay for three years, they would still be financially solvent. It is Mrs. Brady's recommendation that it would be in our benefit to approve this application.

Mr. Berryman inquired as to the organization's intent. They are a current charter, therefore they are requesting the addition of upper grade levels, 10, 11 and 12.

8) Our Children's Prep

The committee recommendation was denial (2 approved/15 denied).

Mr. Murphy commented this particular applicant appropriately distanced themselves from their private school status for this application.

Mrs. Fields inquired if this was the same organization that withdrew their application last year. Ms. Mace responded that they were and despite common practice that

organizations speak to the administration to gain insight or guidance on what to change to increase the likelihood of approval, this one did not. This year they have amended their application only slightly.

Mr. Wilson commented that this is a model that has been extremely successful in the Lake Wales area and feels the Winter Haven community advocates for and could benefit from a program of this nature as well. He inquired if there was any window of opportunity to amend this in order to approve, or if it was too late. The Superintendent advised that is not an option at this time.

Mrs. Sellers commented that last year the Board encouraged applicants to seek guidance in efforts to avoid denial.

Mrs. Fields commented that this program has value and suggested that this group resubmit their application next year after the issues that were unsatisfactory are addressed/corrected.

Mr. Small commented that last year this organization withdrew their application prior to the recommendation phase. This may explain their previous lack of follow up.

Mr. Mullenax commented that it was unfortunate this organization did not take additional measures or seek assistance or guidance to increase the likelihood of approval.

Mrs. Cunningham asked for clarification on the Executive Summary. The Superintendent confirmed that three charters will be voted on for approval; Discovery High, Montessori of Winter Haven, and Our Children's Academy of Lake Wales. These recommendations will be voted on at the October 6th Board Meeting and the Committee will provide additional information covering all factors that were discussed today for these organizations.

Item 7

7. [10:45-11:00 AM Fund Balance Policy Discussion](#)

Minutes:

Mr. Mullenax provided his interpretation of reserve funds which included putting a dollar amount aside and not accessing it until an emergency presents itself. He discussed his concern that the School District's fund balance has not resulted in the entire 5% that is reflected in the policy and that this amount should be constant. He commented on previous years when the Polk County School District did not have such a healthy fund balance and he does not care to ever return to that financial state.

Mr. Wilson discussed the difference between a reserve and a fund balance as well as recurring costs versus non-recurring costs. He commented that his focus was from a cost object perspective as opposed to the way the state requires reporting. He also stated that it might be helpful to look at individual items and how they effect the fund balance. He discussed the fund lapse that is built in will allow the District to meet the percentage requirement as long as no unforeseen disasters occur. He spoke on the Board's competing objectives of capital needs, rewarding teachers, and meeting the

fund balance goal.

Mrs. Cunningham discussed the fluctuation of the fund balance. She commented that the flexibility built in has worked well. She stated that she did not feel that the required 5% must be a constant on any given day. She feels the Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer are making every effort to ensure transparency; is confident in how the funds have continued to progress; and is pleased with the leadership team's efforts to keep the Board adequately informed.

Mrs. Fields agrees with the flexibility currently established in our fund balance and the consistent updates the Board receives allows her to feel she is well informed. She does not believe administration would wait until there was cause for alarm for there to be communication.

Mr. Berryman commented the fund balance should result in 5% at the end of the year. He also discussed areas the fund balance should be spent on such as capital expenditures for recovery after natural disasters and also one- time versus recurring expenditures. He reported the State Fund Balance average is approximately 10%.

Mrs. Sellers discussed the percentage of 5% is the percentage minimum that is allowable but tight reins must be applied to maintain this. She discussed the 3% fund balance indicated by the State is the point where they come in and enforce corrections.

Mr. Wilson, Mrs. Cunningham and Mr. Berryman discussed the desire of the Board to increase the fund balance incrementally above 5%.

Mike Perrone, Chief Financial Officer, discussed various aspects of the Board Policy regarding fund balance information, which is 3.5%-4.5% which is not budgeted out but is set aside. He commented on different Board Member expectations of beginning balance versus ending fund balance. He stated that the loss of the Capital Funds Transfer has caused him some concern; however, he believes the lapse will result in meeting or possibly exceeding the 5% requirement.

Mr. Perrone recommended waiting until our ending fund balance meets the current expectation and make that the baseline, then make an .5% incremental shift. If it is 5.2% they will increase to 5.7% ending fund balance with a projected date of 3-4 year time frame. More details will be available in late July or early August.

Item 8

8. ~~10:30-11:00 AM Florida Educational Equity Act Annual Update 2014-2015~~

Item 9

9. [11:00-11:15 AM Discussion of 2015-16 Salary Schedules Non Union PT, District Administrators and SB Administrators](#)

Attachment: [Revised 2015-2016 salary schedules 9-22-15WS.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Brian Warren, Director of Human Resources, discussed the handout provided to the Board that illustrates the changes for various positions in an effort to level the salary schedules. These changes reflect 49 salary steps for non-union professional technical

positions, 30 salary steps for district administrators, school-based principals, assistant principals and 43 salary steps for food service managers. These changes will reflect a 1% pay increase for all non- union professional technical staff, district office and school based administrators including newly hired employees. Staff members in professional technical positions who meet the criteria of one year in service will receive two salary steps on his or her pay grade equal to a 3% pay increase. He noted that position 10.1 indicated on the handout has been deleted. There is no one occupying that position and it does not meet the minimum wage requirements.

Mrs. Fields requested information as to what sort of feedback is received from staff members when we are trying to make changes such as these. Mr. Warren explained that the first step is running data. Multiple staff members worked to determine where certain pockets of individuals were in respect to maximum allowance, etc., then human resources and the finance department worked collaboratively to review the data and collect feedback.

Superintendent LeRoy commented on the great amount of time and effort invested in trying to create an equitable range of rate of pay.

Item 10

10. [11:15-11:35 AM School Grading System Changes](#)

Minutes:

Superintendent LeRoy commented that she has done a video and Microsoft PowerPoint presentation with voice over to assist the community in understanding the school grading system changes.

The Assessment, Accountability, and Evaluation Department shared a simulation of school grades for 2014-15. School grades dashboard may be found here:

<https://public.tableau.com/profile/brandon.craig#!/vizhome/SchoolGradesandPoverty>

Heather Wright, Director of Assessment, Accountability and Evaluation (AAE), accompanied by Brandon Craig, Psychometrician, discussed components of calculation processes that will be applied this year for school grades. The charts presented online interactively have been created in the AAE department. Using last year's information with an overlaid application of this year's method of proposed calculation, you can visualize the impact that may result with no acknowledgement of gains. Also addressed is the impact of poverty on student achievement. This information is applied to all of the school districts across the State of Florida.

Mr. Berryman asked for clarification of the formula that will be applied.

Mr. Craig explained that this year's school grading formula was applied to 2013-2014 data to populate this tool. He also commented that because the formula changed, it may appear even with the same data that school performance declined. He also stated there will be no demographic or other variable applied to this formula.

Superintendent LeRoy explained this information is based on FCAT 2.0 data applied to demonstrate anticipated conflict areas.

Mrs. Cunningham asked for clarification of proficiency versus gains. Mr. Craig, explained that gains can be made without acquiring proficiency. Learning gains are merely an indication of increased knowledge but proficiency is a specified degree of competence.

Mrs. Sellers inquired if learning gains were being removed this year because there is no existing starting point. Mrs. Wright, Mr. Craig, and the Superintendent all agreed that is their expectation. Mrs. Sellers stated that the lowest 20% of learning gains ensures that we protect the most vulnerable students. Removing this acknowledgment in the school grading system may have an impact on students because there may be institutions that begin focusing solely on the students who can acquire proficiency in an effort to increase their school score. Therefore the lower performing students will be forgotten or underserved. She also commented that Polk County is performing with an economically challenged/poverty stricken populace better than the rest of the state.

Mr. Mullenax stated that this is a single year formula that doesn't appear to do anyone in the State of Florida any justice because it shows such negative results.

Superintendent LeRoy discussed efforts over the past year that have focused extensively on impressing standards and expectations on teachers. The trends are showing positive progress. One example is the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) reflection that our third grade, level one student scores in reading went from 59th up to 48th. She also stated that a great deal of work has been done by teachers and leaders.

Mrs. Sellers commented that the reliability of school grades will be greatly effected by only applying the formula for one year because it may reflect an inflation that was not there if there is no consistency in grading.

Mrs. Fields commented that we need to have the information ready and available that reflects what our gains are in an effort to keep the public adequately informed of our true progress.

Superintendent LeRoy stated the changes in the release of results will no longer be limited to districts followed by other outlets. Now, all information is released at once, limiting the amount of time to present the information to the community in a more comprehensive format.

Item 11

11. [11:35-11:45 AM Review of District Assessment Calendar](#)

Attachment: [PolkAssessmentCalendar8.24.2015.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Mr. Berryman inquired what elements were eliminated from the District Assessment Calendar this year.

Heather Wright, Director of Assessment, Accountability and Evaluation (AAE), responded that baseline tests have been replaced with shorter formative assessments that will be administered in class by the teacher. This was done based on research that showed more positive results when applying this method of formative assessment in their natural classroom environment.

Mrs. Cunningham asked how many times the students will be assessed. Mrs. Wright explained that this will vary by subject area and can be referenced individually. Mrs. Cunningham discussed public concern regarding the amount of time being allocated for testing. She also inquired where these tests will be generated from as in who is preparing those (150+) teachers. Mrs. Wright explained that teachers met and coordinated with AAE to create these tests.

Jacqueline Bowen, Chief Academic Officer, commented that prior to this policy change we were already below the 5% threshold of class time dedicated to testing. By making this change, we have reduced the amount of time and consolidated. These tests will be retrieved from State teacher banks of questions.

Superintendent LeRoy discussed the differences between district-driven and classroom/school-driven testing and assessment. She also explained that this has been done in an effort to base our requirements dedicated to assessment more formative in nature so they will be useful to assist our teachers to drive instruction. This will more adequately monitor the progress of our students.

Item 12

12. [11:45 AM Executive Session](#)

Minutes: N/A

E. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned for Executive Session at 11:45 AM. Minutes were approved and attested this 10th day of November 2015.

Dick Mullenax, Board Chair

Kathryn M. LeRoy, Superintendent