

10 10 2017 Work Session 9 00 AM

## NEW BUSINESS

### 1. [9:00 - 9:20 AM School Board Comments](#)

#### Minutes:

Board Chair Fields opened a discussion on the upcoming Master Board training which was postponed due to Hurricane Irma. There is a suggestion to delay the training until after the November 2018 primary election. Consensus to postpone until after November 2018 election. There is also a need to reschedule the School Board Retreat for the same reason.

Mr. Townsend commented he wrote a long and detailed article on the recent investigation of Tenoroc principal Jason Looney. He hoped the Board Members would read it. He asked what is the status of Mr. Looney's employment? Will he remain as principal? Mrs. Byrd responded the investigation results found that the allegations were unsubstantiated. He is the principal of Tenoroc.

Mr. Townsend asked if it is correct that Mr. Looney discussed his concerns regarding the complainant, Brandi Blanchard, with his Regional Assistant Superintendents Tami Dawson and Tony Bellamy, and School Board Member Tim Harris throughout the year. Mr. Townsend asked Mr. Harris if this was correct. Mr. Harris responded he didn't recall any. Mr. Townsend commented the investigation must be inaccurate. Mr. Harris responded that the investigation hasn't been presented to the Board. Mr. Townsend wanted clarification that Mr. Harris hadn't had any discussions with Mr. Looney about the complainant.

Mrs. Fields stopped the discussion as it appeared Mr. Townsend was cross examining a fellow board member. She didn't believe a work session was the venue for that type of discussion. She asked School Board Attorney Wes Bridges if she was correct. Mr. Bridges stated the Board Chair runs the meeting and can determine what is in order or not. The topic is not on the agenda nor has the superintendent made a recommendation to the School Board. Board Members typically use this venue during the work session to talk about things on their minds or on their hearts. It is the decision of the Board Chair to determine what is to be discussed.

Mrs. Fields stated she respects Mr. Townsend's ability to have his thoughts and comments. However, she doesn't think it is appropriate for him to cross examine board members. He can make comments about the investigation if he chooses to do so.

Mr. Townsend said he has a question as to why Mr. Harris went to Tenoroc High School while the investigation was open and lectured the captive faculty on how to vote, about his support, and he made representations on the superintendent's position which she hasn't clarified. Under the rules of the Sunshine Law, he has no other venue to discuss this with Mr. Harris. He asked what part of Tim's role was he fulfilling by lecturing employees in our schools in front of a principal that was under investigation for sexual harassment.

Mr. Harris responded that he did not request a meeting of the faculty for Mrs. Byrd and himself to attend. There

was not a faculty meeting called for them to speak; he spoke at the end of Mr. Looney's faculty meeting as a voice of support. At that time, the Board had not been made aware of any on-going investigation. For Mr. Townsend to imply that he (Mr. Harris) was aware of an investigation which you had background knowledge because you were a Facebook friend of the person in question is incorrect. You can have your opinion and I have mine. The superintendent makes decision on staff, not the 7 board members.

Mr. Townsend responded that on July 10th, Mr. Harris sent an email asking why Ms. Blanchard went to him (Mr. Townsend) and not to Mr. Harris. Mr. Harris stated that is correct because the school is in his district; he wanted to know if there was something that he should be aware of. That person did not come to him, they went to Mr. Townsend who did not refer them back to him (Harris).

Mr. Townsend asked what part of your role allows you to tell people, our employees, how to vote. You gave characteristics of the type of person people should vote for to captive employees. Mr. Harris responded they were free to leave and asked for specifics from Mr. Townsend on his question. Mr. Townsend stated you told the captive audience that people should never vote for someone who doesn't have major experience or some sort of non-profit board experience. Mr. Harris responded in his experience it is beneficial to an elected official. Mr. Townsend again asked by what right did Mr. Harris have to say that to our employees who cannot leave. Mr. Harris responded that board members speak at school functions all the time.

Mr. Townsend asked Superintendent Byrd if it is true that she would have attended the meeting to give support to Mr. Looney while there was an on-going investigation. Mrs. Byrd responded she supports all of her employees just the same as the board members.

Mrs. Fields closed the discussion and asked for any other board comments.

Mr. Wilson thanked Superintendent Byrd for her leadership during Hurricane Irma. He is incredible grateful to her and staff. Our staff commitment is something to be proud of.

Mrs. Sellers also complimented the Superintendent, district staff, school staff, and students for their joint efforts in returning schools back to a place for education activities. She is very impressed and amazed at our staff and students.

Mr. Townsend reported that because staff performance was so good he believes there will be repercussions down the line as well; the public needs to understand that we are the red cross in a meaningful way. He salutes all those that helped out in the shelters. It is that kind of commitment we have to support.

Ms. Reynolds attended the Coalition meeting yesterday where hurricane relief was discussed:

- several districts and the Coalition plan to send a letter to Tallahassee requesting class size no penalties at least until the end of the year
- a later FTE date
- accountability flexibility for exams especially for those students coming from Puerto Rico. In his Executive Order, the governor is allowing up to a 9-weeks later FTE reporting if you have at least a 5% influx.
- there was discussion on several bills working through legislature: weapons on campus; removing mandatory retention for students who score lower than a 2 in Grade 3; financial literacy; and Osceola is asking the GKE to match the temporary certificate where you have 3 years to pass.

Mrs. Byrd stated we are one of 10 districts that has applied for the FTE waiver for the influx from Puerto Rico. The Chancellor is looking at the testing window, how many students are arriving, relaxing enrollment requirements for students, as well as certification requirements for teachers coming from Puerto Rico.

OLD BUSINESS

BOARD AGENDA REVIEW

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Item 2

2. [9:20 - 9:45 AM Financial Advisor Services](#)

Attachment: [002-PLA-0718 Summary.pdf](#)

Attachment: [RFQ for Financial Advisor Services-Summary.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Lynn Adams, Director of Purchasing, introduced the Financial Advisers Evaluation Committee members: Jeff Sterns, Treasurer, City of Lakeland; Calvin Bowens, Director of Finance, City of Winter Haven; David Wright, Assistant City Manager, City of Bartow; and David Levi, Retired from Goldman Sachs (joined the discussion through the conference phone).

Mrs. Fields would like a better understanding of the scope of work and scoring.

Mrs. Adams reported it was outlined in the Request for Qualifications document. The project description was to provide advice to the district regarding financial matters related to issuing and refinancing debt issues, including but not limited to general obligations bonds, certificates of participation, bonds and notes, sales tax bonds, developing financing plans, schedules, evaluating legal approaches or legal documents. There were 16 criteria.

Mrs. Fields stated, for future requests, she thought the scope should be provided as an attachment. She stated that PFM scored very high in capability in performing the work, while Ford and Associates received a 3 and a 4 or 4.5. in the other areas. Was any thought given to prior work with the school district or was it a clean slate?

Mrs. Adams responded the applicants were asked to describe their capability to perform the work, list experience with other Florida school districts their firm represents; they were given an opportunity to provide any information on their qualifications.

Mr. Townsend was curious what accounted for the big gap on the ability to perform work. Mr. Bowens responded that the firms were very close, they both had provided services to many districts. It came down to how well would the firm work with this administration. The selection was PFM because they had more in house capability than Ford. But as far as expertise or client base, there wasn't that much of a difference. The committee was concerned that because this is a personal service as well as a professional service, they might be selecting someone that may appear more capable on paper than the other, but may not work as well with the administration. We did ask with one of the finance administrators what their relationship between the two had been and were told they were indifferent. That's when the selection became PFM.

Mr. Harris asked the evaluators if Ford or PFM performs any services for the cities they represent. It was reported that PFM works as a Financial Adviser for the City of Winter Haven but it is a different department that would be working with the school district.

Mrs. Sellers commented that she has been very pleased with the work received from Ford and Associates over the years; many times they met one-on one with board members to explain the process. It bothers her that they given a 3 in the experience. It doesn't match what she has seen and experienced from them.

Mr. Levi (from phone) commented the Committee graded from what was on paper and what was requested of them. They could not grade on 20 year past experience or the prior working relationship you had received. There is always a possibility that what was on paper is sufficient to make a decision. There were only two applicants: PFM and Ford and Associates. The evaluation process can't supplant what you received last year from PFM or for the past 20 years from Ford and Associates.

Mrs. Adams stated that the district will enter into a contract with the highest scoring company if the Board's wants to move forward. Mrs. Byrd asked for the Board's direction to go with PFM (highest ranking score).

Preference of the Board:

- Ford & Associates
  - Kay Fields
  - Tim Harris
  - Lori Cunningham (text her support to Wes Bridges, Jacqueline Byrd, Susan Worbington)
- PFM:
  - Sara Beth Reynolds
  - Lynn Wilson
  - Billy Townsend

Hazel Sellers stated that PFM is an excellent company and a large one. But at the same time, there was nothing that Ford and Associates has done that would cause her to change advisory companies. They have provided excellent services. She would support either company.

A recommendation will be coming from the superintendent for the next school board meeting.

The Board Members voiced their appreciation of the Evaluation Committee.

Item 3

3. [9:45 - 10:45 AM 2017 School Improvement Plans Review](#)

Attachment: [District 5 SIP.pdf](#)

Attachment: [District 6 SIP.pdf](#)

Attachment: [District 7 SIP.pdf](#)

Attachment: [District 3 SIP.pdf](#)

Attachment: [District 2 SIP.pdf](#)

Attachment: [District 4 SIP.pdf](#)

Attachment: [District 1 SIP.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Superintendent Byrd announced the School Improvement Plan requires Board approval before being sent to the State. Each school principal, teachers, and community members helped create the SIP which have been submitted for your review. Dr. Akers stated that the plan represents the work that is going on at that site; it is a living document.

Mr. Wilson stated this is a state mandate and it is daunting. There are so many requirements that it is hard to understand when they expect schools to teach.

## INFORMATION ITEMS

Item 4

4. [Lakeland Montessori School House Request for Contract Modification \(15-Year Contract Term\)](#)

Attachment: [High-Performing Letter - Lakeland Montessori Schoolhouse.pdf](#)

Attachment: [WS Summary - Lakeland Montessori Contract Term Request.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Lakeland Montessori Schoolhouse Request for Contract Extension Letter.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Melissa Brady, Director of Charter School Division, reported that Lakeland Montessori is an elementary school that serves 102 students. They have earned the high performing status and are requesting to modify their current contract to a 15-year contract as allowed them by state. The term would be from July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2029.

Mr. Townsend asked if it is possible to bring a Montessori-themed school to the district? Mr. Bridges

said he believes it is possible as long as it is not a faith-based program. Superintendent Byrd commented that there are districts that have implemented the Montessori curriculum in their schools.

Item 5

5. [Hurricane Irma Storm Make Up Time for School Year 2017-2018](#)

Minutes:

Teddra Porteous, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, reported that several instructional days were lost due to Hurricane Irma. In order to protect holidays and time off for our employees, the district, in consultation with PEA, changed the following early release days to full instructional days: October 11th, November 15th, January 24th, February 7th, March 14th, and May 16th.

Miss Reynolds thanked staff for being innovated and creative by not looking at the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays for the make up days.

Item 6

6. [2017 Summer Power Up Program Update/Data](#)

Minutes:

Mrs. Byrd announced that staff has begun looking at the summer program for 2018. We have set aside Title 1 dollars for this year but the following years may not be possible due to HB 7069.

Mrs. Sellers asked if schools can elect to use Title 1 allocated funds for their school-base programs but not a district-wide program. Ms. Townley commented that her department has had conversations with principals on possible ways to use their Title 1 funds for a summer program for their students as they develop their budgets.

Item 7

7. [Head Start Grant Services Report](#)

Attachment: [FY 2017 Head Start Financial Report 9-27-17.pdf](#)

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

Minutes: Mrs. Friedt stated the Head Start services continue to grow. The district may see a significant impact from Puerto Rico, she has asked that their funds be extended to assist students arriving from that area.

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 AM. Minutes were approved and attested this 24th day of October, 2017.

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Kay Fields, Board Chair

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Jacqueline M. Byrd, Superintendent