

10 22 2013 Work Session 1 00 PM

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New Business

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

Minutes:

Mr. Berryman commented on a luncheon invitation from the SAFE HAVEN Polk Coalition Committee. This national program identifies locations known as 'safe havens' for unwanted new borns without legal repercussions.

He stated the Sales Tax Committee met recently and it suggested that we consider doing an audit on the funds. He believes this transparency would support the district's needs should we decide to place a referendum on the ballot in the future.

Mrs. Wright attended the Central Florida Public School Boards Coalition meeting where a lengthy discussion was held on whether the University of South Florida, University of Florida, and University of Central Florida should establish the public schools' assessment tool. Representatives from the three universities were in attendance.

The Florida High Schools Athletics Association was also in attendance to discuss their policies and proposed changes. They hope to find corporate sponsors to reduce or eliminate the school districts' association fees.

Mrs. Wright announced that she will be attending the Florida School Boards Association's Legislative meeting on Thursday. If the Board Members have any items they would like her to bring forward, please let her know by the end of the day.

She also reported on a discussion in the Salary Committee to have an RFO; this would be an in-house salary review based on current salaries to ensure equity across departments. Mr. Dunn is researching to see if that will be possible.

Mr. Berryman and Mr. Rivers attended the County Commission meeting where the proposed Impact Fee Ordinance passed.

Mrs. Sellers commented that several Board Members and district staff met with Governor Scott last Friday where he talked about returning some local control back to school boards and city and county agencies. She suggested a joint meeting with the Board of County Commission to list areas where local control should be returned.

Mrs. Sellers noted that the Legislative Liaison and Alternate representatives need to be resubmitted to the Florida School Boards Association. Currently, the Liaison is Mrs. Wright and the Alternate is Mr. Mullenax. Both consented to continue in their current roles. Their nominations will be on the November 12, 2013 School Board agenda for approval.

Board Agenda Review

2. [1:15 - 1:30 PM Review October 22, 2013 School Board Agenda](#)

Attachment: [10 22 2013 School Bd Agenda rev 10 21.pdf](#)

Minutes:

C-7 - Minutes of October 8, 2013 School Board Meeting

Mr. Berryman requested the motion denying the Maritime Academy Charter Application be corrected.

C-15 21st Century Learning Grant

Mrs. Wright clarified this was a new grant. Mr. Harris asked if there is an opportunity to have another district-wide 21st Century Grant. Mrs. Ford replied that we apply every year; the funding has been reduced. Three applications were submitted but only one was granted.

R-46 Beanstalk Innovation Contract

Mrs. Cunningham asked if there are plans to add other schools. Superintendent LeRoy stated that it will begin at the two locations for the roll out but other schools will be included. We have 500 licenses included in the contract.

R-51 First Public Hearing on School Board Policies

Mr. Harris commented that we have committed to be a tobacco-free school district. With today's technology and innovations, we need to expand that to be 'nicotine-free'; with e-cigarettes, you smoke without using tobacco.

Wes Bridges, School Board Attorney, suggested changes be made during subsequent revisions. If we change now, the public would not have had an opportunity to

review before the public hearing. Mrs. Cunningham questioned the process to be followed should the public or a school board member make suggestions during the first reading. Mr. Bridges explained that the version advertised is what the Board will vote on. Any revisions will need to be readvertised with the appropriate 28-day notice before another vote. Policies may be revised anytime the Board wishes.

Wendy Dodge, Director of Government Affairs, noted that a NEOLA update is scheduled to be released in January.

Consensus was to have another Public Hearing on Nov 12th with the final adoption moved to January 2014.

3. [1:30 - 1:45 PM BREAK](#)

Minutes:

Superintendent LeRoy announced that the school district has reached a tentative agreement with the Polk Education Association on a salary settlement for employees for 2013-2014 based on the funding provided by the Governor. It is not a bonus but a step increase. The ratification process will start this week and should be complete before the November 12, 2013 School Board meeting. The increases should be in the November paychecks.

Mr. Berryman asked if any of the dollars come from the General funds. Mike Perrone, Associate Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer, explained that all the funds are in the General fund and will come either under the Governor's amount or right at it. Superintendent LeRoy added that Districts have been told the monies have been 'fixed' as a categorical in future years.

Mrs. Wright asked if a salary comparison can be made with surrounding counties. Comparison districts would be Pinellas, Orange, Osceola, Lee, and Volusia. Marianne Capozziello, President of PEA (Polk Education Association), has the data and will share it with the Board.

Discussion

Item 4

4. ~~1:45 - 2:20 PM 2011 - 2014 Strategic Plan (Continued)~~

Item 5

5. [1:45 - 2:15 PM Employment Agreements - Board Attorney & Director of Internal Audit](#)

Attachment: [Agreement - Director Sheila Phelps 3-22-11.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Employment Contract - Wes Bridges 3-22-11.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Mrs. Sellers asked for comments on the contracts for Wes Bridges, School Board Attorney, and Shelia Phelps, Director of Internal Audit. If there are no changes, the contracts continue as they currently are.

Mrs. Cunningham asked if discussion on an audit of our legal department is a separate issue. Mrs. Sellers said it would be.

Mr. Berryman commented he believes both contracts should be voted on rather than an automatic renewal.

Mr. Bridges clarified that each November 1, he provides notice to the School Board on behalf of Sheila and himself that if no action is taken by the School Board before December 31st, each contract is extended one year automatically.

Mrs. Cunningham would like to see them come to the Board for a vote.

Mrs. Fields commented that the current contracts are valid through 2014. Why are we changing the contracts before they are to be renewed. She also wants the discussions to come to an end. Mr. Bridges' last evaluation said he met each expectation. If there is a problem with our staff, we need to have a discussion so they can address the concerns before it comes to a vote.

Mr. Berryman stated he would like to see them on an agenda for a vote.

Mr. Bridges clarified that the 2011 contracts were for a three year term (June 2014) with annual renewals. The current contract is valid through June 30, 2016. The question now is do you want the contracts to roll over for an additional calendar year. At all times, it is a three year contract.

Mrs. Sellers commented that she and the Superintendent have been working closely with Wes. He has been invaluable this school year with all the issues that have come. The evaluation should be the driving tool and he had a good evaluation.

Mrs. Wright stated that the paperwork does not support the comments being made. If there are concerns, she doesn't know about them. She feels a more in depth discussion is needed to be fair to staff.

Superintendent LeRoy added that there have been several instances where major legal questions had to be addressed through public relations: the recent bullying case, the Mulberry High School issue, and several others. There were several evenings that emails continued well after midnight. He has been extremely helpful to her and her staff.

Mr. Berryman commented he respects the evaluation process, he believes Mr.

Bridges is very knowledgeable but feels there is a conflict of interest issue; maybe not legally but professionally when he and Carolyn married. He proposes the contracts come for a vote. He also feels the contracts should be annually, the same as other administrators in the district.

Mrs Fields reported that Carolyn Bridges was moved during the last Administration to resolve the conflict of interest voiced by Mr. Berryman. If you look at this situation, then look around, there are many other employees in like situations. Mr. Berryman responded that policies are in place to address some of the relationships but not at the level currently being discussed.

Mrs. Phelps added that to be fair, you would need to address the relationships across the district. There are a lot of administrators that this will affect at different levels. Mr. Berryman continued that it is the General Counsel that concerns him, it's different.

Mrs. Cunningham commented her issues were on Wes' performance evaluation; she believes he is lacking in his performance as our general counsel. She believes it should come to a vote.

Mr. Bridges responded that he guards his license to practice law jealously. He is exceedingly careful of the ethical standards that governs attorneys. He repeated what he told the School Board the minute the conflict of interest was first raised, he contacted the Florida Bar and spoke with Ethics Counsel of this specific issue. The response he received was that this was not a conflict of interest but a unity of interest where both represent the same client: the School Board. At the behest of some outside requests when the School Board asked for charter school issues to be assigned to outside counsel, he advised the Board that neither the Ethics Counsel nor himself believed there was a conflict of interest. He has endeavored, at all times, to provide high quality legal services. He likes what he does and the people he works with. In the contract there is a requirement that if a board member is critical of his performance, that prior to any rating below unsatisfactory or acceptable level of performance being entered into an evaluation, notice is to be provided in writing with specificity to allow him an opportunity to correct the action. If there is a problem, he will fix it.

Mr. Mullenax commented that Wes' last two evaluations have been higher because he has improved. He will support Mr. Bridges if it comes to a vote.

Mrs. Wright commented on the past perception of conflict of interest; she suggested a roll call vote be held; a separate conversation be held on the rolling annual contract; and, the contract language be reviewed. She reiterated that if we begin looking at spouses and stuff; there's a whole lot of weeds out there. We may not have enough people out there to plug it back up. We may be defeating our own purposes. She reminded the Board that she brought the subject up in a NEOLA review.

Mrs. Sellers reported that she worked with the past superintendent (John Stewart) to resolve the conflict. She and many of the Board Members thought

that when Mrs. Bridges was moved that the perception of a conflict of interest was resolved.

Consensus reached to vote on both contracts at the November 12, 2013 School Board meeting and to have a future discussion on whether or not to have annual contracts. Mrs. Sellers will look for sample annual contracts.

Mr. Harris asked why we have a multi-year contract in place now. Mr. Bridges replied it is standard practice across the State.

Item 6

6. [2:15 - 2: 25 PM Turnaround Option Plans](#)

Attachment: [Sleepy Hill Middle.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Griffin Elementary.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Westwood Middle.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Bartow Middle.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Garner Elementary.pdf](#)
Attachment: [McLaughlin Middle.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Denison Middle.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Kathleen Middle.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Dundee Elementary.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Wahneta Elementary.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Superintendent LeRoy reported we have 10 schools that will have to submit a district-managed turnaround option plan to the State. Deputy Superintendent Jacqueline Byrd, reported on the proposed plans.

In September, the district outlined the Priority schools (F) and Focus schools (DD and DDD) and in November they are required to identify and select which option is to be implemented in August, 2014. We have selected the District-Managed Turnaround option for these schools. If the schools improve their letter grade to a "C" by the end of this school year, we will not implement the District Managed Turnaround plan for that site. Some of the interventions are currently being implemented at Tenoroc High School and Lake Alfred Addair Middle School.

Mrs. Cunningham asked what happens next fall if a school does not improve. Mrs. Byrd replied that this is our selection plan to be submitted to the State for approval; in February we will actually write the plan to be executed in the summer for these schools.

Item 7

7. [2:25 - 2:35 PM Amending 2011-2012 Student Progression Plan](#)

Attachment: [Proposed Changes to the 2011-2012 SPP Grade 3 Mid year](#)

[Promotion Policy.pdf](#)

Attachment: [6A-1 094222 Standards for Mid-Year Promotion of Retained Third Graders .pdf](#)

Minutes:

Superintendent LeRoy commented that the last version of the Student Progression Plan was in 2011- 2012. There have been policies and statutes at the state level allowing for alternative standardized reading assessments and the use of the Student's Portfolio for Good Cause promotion for 3rd grade readers that are Level 1s. There are opportunities for students to do a reading portfolio that assesses each of the standards they should meet. It is very stringent and is overseen by the State and the K-12 Reading Plan. This provision is in state law but was not included in the 2011-2012 Student Progression Plan. The request is to add that State Statute language to the SSP to implement Good Cause Promotions in January. It will allow third grade students that scored a certain level based on the FCAT and FAIR to have an opportunity for a mid-year promotion to the 4th grade with a lot of oversight.

A committee has been established to revise the Student Progression Plan and submit as policy to the Board in January. The normal time line is in the spring (June/July) for a 1st reading, with a final vote in October at a Public Hearing.

Mrs. Wright voiced concern on the promotion standards set at 3rd grade, it should be taken care much earlier. She would like to see the promotional standards for grades K-2 be tightened.

Item 8

8. [2:35 - 2:45 PM Monthly Financial Reports for August and July 2013](#)

Attachment: [Aug 13 Board Agenda Items.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Mike Perrone, Associate Superintendent and CFO, and Pennie Zuercker, Director of Finance, presented the Financial Report for July and August 2013. In the future, they will be presented at the second monthly meeting or, in cases of only one meeting, at the first meeting.

Mrs. Fields asked Mr. Perrone if he could report on the Insurance fund balance. Mr. Perrone did not have that information available but could present it at the next work session. She stated that in the Financial report is seemed to have a downward trend. Mrs. Zuercker replied that at this time of the year, it is typical for an increase of medical procedures as people prepare for the new school year with physicals, shots, etc. Another increase will appear in December as people go for procedures while they're off on break. Mr. Perrone will provide an estimate of what the end of the year should look like.

Mrs. LeRoy reported that beginning in December, Facilities will also bring updates on our Capital concerns.

Item 9

9. [2:45 - 3:00 PM Public Relations & Strategic Partnerships Departmental Realignment](#)

Attachment: [Addendum to Staffing Plan SY 13-13 Public Relations and Strategic Partnerships 10-22-13 WS.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Mrs. LeRoy commented that when she arrived in June, Mrs. Lauderdale, Senior Director of Public Relations and Strategic Partnerships, informed her of an upcoming key retirement within her department. The Superintendent had planned to wait until the retirement occurred to bring back proposed changes. However, in looking back, the changes should have been included in the Staffing Plan pending a November effective date. The department's job descriptions and salary scale are not competitive with the outside market and Mrs. Lauderdale continues to lose staff. The level of public relations we have been trying to push has increased tremendously, with more to come. The outgoing position is being reduced and the salary savings divided between positions within her department based on duties and responsibilities. An extensive revamping of job titles and job descriptions has been provided with increases in the minimum qualifications.

Mr. Harris asked if this will assist in utilizing the TV station more. Mrs. Lauderdale stated that is an opportunity and the possibility of a TV program, with the Superintendent being a regular personality. Mrs. LeRoy stated that we could have a monthly show with the students being the moderators with various district staff as the guests. Also, it would be a great opportunity to showcase events happening around the district.

Mr. Harris asked if this would allow us to broadcast our own sporting events. Leah responded that might be possible if we had a satellite truck and could partner with some of our academies. Bright House has contracts with some of our schools to cover their sporting events, but it is an excellent idea that she would love to pursue.

Mrs. Wright appreciated the fact that the minimum qualifications have increased.

Information

Item 10

10. ~~Magnet School Assistance Program Grant Positions~~

Attachment: ~~Work Session Summary 10.22.13.pdf~~
Attachment: ~~Acct Spec II.pdf~~

Attachment: Teacher.pdf
Attachment: TRST Magnet Schools.pdf
Attachment: TEACHER_12-13_Salary_Schedule.pdf
Attachment: Copy of 2013-2014 Non-Union Salary Ranges.pdf
Attachment: ESP_12-13_Salary_Schedule.pdf
Attachment: Visio- Assoc Supt Teaching & Learning_Magnet, Choice & Federal Programs_Revision_10.22WS.pdf

Minutes: Superintendent LeRoy informed the Board that she pulled this item to take a closer look at the adjustments in staffing included in the grant.

Item 11

11. [21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant for Polk City and Loughman Oaks](#)

Attachment: [21st Century Grant.pdf](#)

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 PM. Minutes were approved and attested this 12th November, 2013.

Dick Mullenax, Board Chair

Kathryn M. LeRoy, Superintendent