

SCHOOL BOARD OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA WORKSHOP – September 21, 2010

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, conducted a workshop on Tuesday, September 21, 2010, at 9:00 a.m., in the Cabinet Conference Room, Administration Building, 301 4th Street S.W., Largo, Florida.

Present: Ms. Janet R. Clark, Chairperson; Mrs. Carol J. Cook, Vice Chairperson; Mrs. Mary L. Tyus Brown, Ms. Nina Hayden, Mrs. Linda S. Lerner, Mrs. Peggy L. O’Shea and Mrs. Robin L. Wikle, Members; Dr. Julie Janssen, Superintendent; Mr. James F. Madden, Deputy Superintendent; and, Mr. James A. Robinson, General Counsel.

Dr. Janssen requested that the scheduled topic, Parent Contract/Family Involvement be incorporated into the afternoon section, Long Range Planning.

The following topics were presented and discussed during this workshop session:

- **Race To The Top** – Jan Urbanski, upon the suggestion of Mrs. Lerner, will check with the state to see if wording could be added to the new evaluation scoring range that states the individual is improving, i.e., “improvement in progress”, rather than “Effective, Highly Effective and Ineffective.” Dr. Janssen will look to see what other districts are doing in this area. Upon Mrs. Wikle’s request, Dr. Janssen agreed that a conversation will be scheduled for the next workshop regarding the inconsistencies in administrators’ pay. Mrs. Lerner requested that staff look at ways to move more dollars to teachers who are in front of struggling students and that administration consider doing so in a small pilot program. Dr. Janssen stated that they are looking at compensating teachers differently, working with four schools right now and each school has to develop their own plan. Mrs. Cook requested an update on whether anything has changed since the first application was submitted; has anything changed from the state; and, what is the status of the requirement for “peer reviewers” and will they receive compensation. Ms. Urbanski stated that much is yet to be determined but that the reviewers will receive extra dollars. Mrs. O’Shea would like additional information on the “peer reviewers” and how often that task will be done. Discussion continued.
- **Report from the Subcommittee of the Board – Operations Manual** – Mrs. Cook, as chairperson of this committee, presented the updated version of the manual for discussion by the Board Members. The input agreed to by the Board will be incorporated into the manual. Mrs. Wikle stepped down from this subcommittee: The new committee will consist of Mrs. Lerner, Ms. Clark and Mrs. Cook. Dr. Mary Beth Corace and Dr. Eugene Givens will work with this committee on the decision-making guidelines that will be presented to the Board at a later time.
- **Report from the Subcommittee of the Board – Auditor** - Mrs. Wikle, as chairperson of this committee, submitted written overviews of the meetings held by this committee, Mr. Robinson and members of the Superintendent’s staff. Information also included job descriptions for both internal and performance auditor positions, as well as the related policy from Lee County. Board Members voiced their support of the position serving more as a performance auditor” rather than an “internal auditor.” Dr. Janssen

stated that she has asked each department to provide her with a flow chart, including positions and names of the individuals in their department. Dr. Jansse requested that the Board, before making a final decision, first look at the report to be completed from APCC. Mrs. Lerner urged Board Members and staff to review a very extensive review on the Walter Pownall Service Center from 2007. Discussion took place as to whether this position would be a full time or part time position; and, whether the Board should contract with someone with specific background related to the department being audited. Ms. Clark requested that Board Members send in questions they wish to be answered during the next presentation/discussion on this topic. A brainstorming session on this topic will be scheduled for the next workshop.

- **Decentralized Decision Making Policy** – Mr. Robinson stated that he brought this forward to see whether the Board wished to amend policy to reflect reality. In response to Ms. Clark and Mrs. Lerner, an update on what schools are actually doing under DDM will be placed in Friday Update. Mrs. Cook requested that the Board receive information when a school has placed a request in their School Improvement Plan that would fit under the DDM umbrella. Ms. Clark, in summarizing the wishes of the Board, requested that the Superintendent and staff implement a method of first ensuring that the Board is made aware of such initiatives by individual schools and then to let the public be aware of the same.
- **Long Range Planning – Student Assignment & Opportunities, including Parent Contract** - Dr. Janssen presented her proposal for changes to the student assignment process; proposed actions to improve student achievement; information demonstrating the coalition between the delivery of professional development and improvement in student learning; suggestions for moving to a fundamental PreK-8 district; expectations of the stakeholder school and community, etc. More specifics will be brought to the Board at their October 5, 2010 workshop with a proposed plan being presented to the Board at the November 9th meeting for the first reading and at the December 7th meeting for a final reading. Community forums will be scheduled to receive input from schools and their communities regarding these proposals. Mr. Madden, after meeting with parents of gifted students and staff, will bring back to the Board further details as to what the delivery of those programs will look like. Dr. Janssen and staff will utilize workshops to update the Board Members as things progress. Further information needed – a) will there be a guarantee for MEGSS students into the IB program; b) if a school-within-a-school fundamental concept is considered for Boca Ciega, what will happen to students as far north as Tarpon who would like the same; c) there is need to assist struggling students in south county, but options for north county students need to be considered; d) more information needs to be delivered to our parents regarding all opportunities available to their children, i.e., the Montessori program, etc.; e) what steps will be taken to assist students who need transportation to take advantage of the opportunities; f) will middle school students have a guaranteed spot in their area of study when they enter high school; g) how will administration ensure that the changes are implemented and the system is up and running for next school year; h) is there data to show the success of proposed changes; i) how will the “tweaking of zone lines” be determined; j) are there any plans of implementing a career/technical high school in Pinellas; k) need an update on the Centers of Excellence; l) ensure that when we talk about ethnicity, we are looking at the whole county, not just one area of the county; m) further information is needed as to how elementary school magnet programs can be

strengthened; n) need for increasing awareness for middle school parents of opportunities available to their students; o) further look at the Childrens Movement; p) further information regarding what seems to be buy-in in the Dunedin school and community for that school to convert to a fundamental high school, even as a school-within-a-school concept; and, q) more details regarding a parent contract set of requirements, i.e., parents reading to their children for a specified amount of time – should be broad, simple, realistic and measureable.

➤ **Leadership Discussion**

- The following topics will be scheduled for the workshops: administrative salaries and the existing inconsistencies; progressive discipline for administrators; an opportunity for the Board to further brainstorm on the auditor's position; Mr. Robinson's improvement plan; implications between the proposed student assignment changes and the Bradley case; and, budget update.
 - Mrs. Wikle questioned whether the Board offers a recognition of School Resource Officers to thank them for the job they perform. Mrs. Cook suggested that this be done at an evening Board Meeting.
 - Mrs. Lerner stated that the NAACP will be holding a forum to discuss student achievement and suggested that Dr. Janssen and the district take a lead in forming a task force to look at the real data. Dr. Janssen stated that she learned at the superintendents' meeting that a report is to be presented by Senator Wise indicating that Pinellas County has the lowest graduation rate for black males. Dr. Janssen will be sending a report to Sen. Wise that shows more accurate data. Mrs. Lerner stated that the district needs to find a way that this information can be explained to the NAACP and the public in understandable terms. Dr. Janssen will be meeting with the team in Accountability to do a complete longitudinal study which will be forwarded to all.
 - Mrs. Cook requested agreement from the Board Members for language placed on page 16 of their Operational Manual: Agreement was given.
 - Mrs. Cook stated that a school, when preparing for their walk-a-thon, wanted to place advertisements on their t-shirts but policy would not allow. Mr. Robinson stated that the newly revised policy will not allow; however, the old policy allowed for an exception to be made by the Superintendent. Mrs. Cook requested that Mr. Robinson forward both the old and new policies that speak to this issue; and, that the Board schedule a workshop discussion on this.
 - Ms. Clark stated that she had received a concern from a parent of a fifth grade student whose class had scheduled a dance. Ms. Clark, in agreement with the parent, expressed her concern with such events being held for that young of an age group. Dr. Janssen requested the opportunity to see how prevalent this is occurring in the district.
 - Mrs. O'Shea requested that the Board receive an update as to how the extended school day is working for kids and families, impact on programs and options that are available to schools.
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- Dr. Janssen requested that the Board schedule a ten-minute presentation at the next workshop on the topic of district real estate.

- Dr. Janssen announced that she will not be in the district for next Tuesday's meeting; that she will be in New York at an educational summit; and, that Mr. Madden will take her place at the Board meeting.

No official actions were taken by the Board at this workshop. An audio recording of this workshop is filed in the Board Office archives. This workshop adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Chairperson

Secretary

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