

SCHOOL BOARD OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

WORKSHOP – April 19, 2011

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, conducted a workshop on Tuesday, April 19, 2011, at 8:00 a.m., in the Cabinet Conference Room, Administration Building, 301 4th Street S.W., Largo, Florida.

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

During the review of the agenda, the following items were added under Leadership: Climate Survey, AON contract, Needs Assessment, Superintendent Evaluation, Letters of Support requested from the Board, Oil Spill Litigation, Performance Auditor, and Career/Technical High School – visitation to Broward County school.

- **Budget Update** – Dr. Janssen thanked the Board Members for developing the process for decision making; and, requested that Board Members indicate that they have confidence in the staff and the information they will be presenting. Mr. Steve Swartzel, Director of Governmental Services, presented an update on educational matters that are before the Legislature. Mrs. Lerner requested that a one-page summary be prepared and provided to all employees via e-mail. Mr. Fred Matz and Mr. Kevin Smith presented an update on the district’s budget.
 - **Title I** – Dr. Janssen reviewed the Federal laws/guidelines for utilizing Title I dollars, specifically, the percentage of students meeting the requirements for free/reduced meals. The Federal Law requires that 75% of a school’s population must meet criteria for free/reduced meals. The district started out using 45% as the measurement, then moved to 57% and now will use 69% as the measurement for next school year. Ms. Mary Conage, Director for Title I Technical Compliance, provided information pertaining to Title I through the use of a PowerPoint presentation. Mrs. Lerner questioned how much of the Title I dollars are being used to support the Lastinger project; how many teachers are benefiting from the Lastinger project; and, how many teachers are receiving their masters degree as a result of the Lastinger project. Mrs. Krassner expressed concern that some of the schools that are now having their Title I funding removed are schools that have dropped a letter-grade and asked Dr. Janssen what will be done for those schools. Mrs. Cook questioned whether schools that are receiving Title I and then receive SIG dollars, could the Title I funds be allocated to a different school. Mr. Williams questioned what assistance could be provided to schools losing Title I funds who then find that their students are beginning to suffer from the loss of those funds and what they provide. Mrs. Lerner questioned whether a process could be implemented to utilize capital dollars for schools who are losing Title I funds to fill the void left by the removal of these funds and support they provided. Mrs. Wikle, referencing the Title I funds allocated to Lastinger, requested that the Board received answers to the question presented, i.e.,

data on the results of using Lastinger in our district for the past three years; how many teachers have received their masters degree; how many of those teachers are serving in Title I schools; and, how many of our schools will be losing Title I funds next school year. Mrs. Lerner added that she would like to know the total amount spent on Lastinger, to date, and what is the district's obligation to those who have already started the program. Ms. Conage stated that Lastinger will no longer be a part of the Title I dollars. Mrs. Lerner, in response, stated that she wants to know exactly where the funds will come from in order to continue funding Lastinger. Principals, Sue Boyd and Bonnie Cangelosie, shared information with the Board. Ms. Clark stressed the need for Board Members to receive answers to their questions; but, suggested that the Board return to discussing the general budget issues.

- **Transportation** – Mr. Michael Bessette, Associate Superintendent for Facilities, Operations, Safety and Security, presented the proposed changes for the Transportation Department. Mrs. Lerner requested that the \$8 million figure proposed from Transportation be broken down; and, questioned what will be proposed for students attending magnet, career academies and fundamental programs. Mrs. Cook requested information as to how many students receive arterial transportation and to what schools/programs are they transported. Mrs. Lerner requested that the Board receive “impact” data; and, data on the cost of transportation that is not mandated.
- **Energy Spending** – Mr. Bessette presented the proposed areas for reducing costs.
- **Staffing** – Mr. Madden and Mr. Kevin Hendricks presented information on the proposals for staffing model changes. Mr. Williams expressed concern that an across-the-board reduction could eliminate positions that are needed in some schools for supervision that are not as necessary in others. Mrs. Cook expressed concern that guidance counselors are being used to perform clerical duties; thus, not able to truly work with the needs of students. Ms. Clark emphasized the need for flexibility in the model; and, questioned whether it is necessary to the operations of a school to have assistant principals as twelve-month employees. Ms. Clark requested that consideration be given to moving twelve-month employees to 11.5 months and eleven-month employees to 10.5 months throughout the district. Mrs. Cook requested that the information to be brought back to the Board reflect reducing the employees by one week, by two weeks and by one month. All questions presented by the Board will be returned to them with staff's responses.

➤ **Real Property-**

- **The Learning Village of Pinellas County, FL** - A presentation of the proposal for a lease/option of the Southside Fundamental School facility for a charter school was presented by Goliath Davis, Guy Burns and Linda Benware. Mr. Robinson stated that there is agreement that the district would entertain charters that meet the criteria noted in the MOU for the Crowley case; and, that Mr. Burns had expressed interest in the Southside Fundamental property as a lease/purchase to provide such a charter. Mrs. Lerner, noting that Plato Academy had approached the district to use a vacated facility, emphasized the need to be consistent with all charters that approach the Board with such a request. Mr. Robinson assured the Board that Administration will be fair and open-minded; and, do whatever is the best interest of the district. Ms. Clark expressed her concern with approving a lease/purchase for this charter before reviewing and taking action on the charter itself. Mrs. O'Shea requested information, as follows: What is the cost for the district to maintain the property; how much of this

program relates specifically to the Crowley MOU; and, because it is a C-3 school, does that impact what dollars could be used by the charter to improve the facility. Mrs. Wikle joined Mrs. O’Shea in her questions, adding that she would also like to know the size of the property and the current appraisal of the property. Mrs. Wikle stated that she, too, is concerned that this is a total “flip-flop” from what has been done in the past with similar requests; and, that this, if approved, would be setting a precedent. Mrs. Cook also shared her concern that this proposal is contrary to previous reactions to similar requests. Mr. Robinson stated that this charter does meet the goal in the MOU of providing seats for five-hundred African/American students. Ms. Clark questioned whether we have a process in place for outside entities to approach the Board to purchase properties; and, expressed concern that having these individuals at the table is not the normal practice of the Board. Mrs. O’Shea expressed concern that, during a time when the Board is slashing budgets, they are being asked to hand over property at a low cost which will not produce an income for the district during the lease; and, that this action, should it be approved, will be setting a precedent. Mrs. Lerner stated that this will be setting a precedent; but, noted that, with the large achievement gap in Pinellas, the Board’s decision needs to be based on what is best for kids. Mr. Williams stated that his concern is that the Board, on one hand, is talking about the need to make money and on the other hand, the Board needs to do what they can to help a group of struggling students. Ms. Clark questioned whether Doug Tuthill was involved in this venture. Mr. Davis responded in the affirmative. Mrs. Cook suggested that this request could be granted and then the charter not be approved by the Board; and, questioned what would happen in that case. Mr. Burns stated that the lease would not commence until the Board has approved the charter. The consensus of the Board was to allow this to move forward, with Board Members submitting their questions to the Superintendent immediately.

- **Planet Green Group** – Mr. Bessette and Ms. Ginny Pannill presented an update on the proposal submitted by the Planet Green Group to purchase the Euclid facility. Mr. Bessette stated that the same group is interested in the North Ward site, but that nothing has been brought forward at this point. The Board provided direction to Mr. Bessette and Ms. Pannill to continue exploring both opportunities. At the direction of the Board, Dr. Janssen stated that a plan for all vacated properties owned by the district will be brought back to the Board with the district’s goals for further discussion.
- **Budget Reduction Model** - Dr. Janssen and various staff members presented the proposed budget reduction model.
- **Staffing Model - Middle School, Elementary, High, Centers, Art & Music, Centers, C&I, Human Resources** – Mr. Williams and Mrs. Lerner expressed concern with the change in the EEO position, formerly held by Solomon Stephens, stating that employees need someone they feel they can go to in trust to discuss a concern. A further discussion on the position of EEO will be scheduled for the Board. Discussion continued on the proposed reductions for **Superintendent, Budget & Finance, MIS, Institutional Services, Unpaid Leave.**
- **Wrap Up/Questions to be answered by staff:**

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- a) Provide information on cost savings if work days were reduced for all employees —12-month to 11.5 and 11-month to 10.5, by position, information broken down by employee groups.
- b) Make sure that all suggestions from committees, staff and citizens have been considered.
- c) Provide information regarding the costs of sports and proposed savings, if any, for moving events to daytime.
- d) What assistance is being provided for core subjects?
- e) Explore all ways of reducing expenditures, including the cost of blackberries, the use of iPads, etc.
- f) Provide more information on the impact of reducing services provided by Diagnosticians, School Psychologists, School Social Workers, etc. -- how many will be reduced, where will those cuts be and how will needed services continue to be provided.
- g) EEO Specialist – what is the caseload for this position, what training is offered to those responsible for that office, etc.
- h) What is the total amount expended on extended duty days for Guidance Counselors?
- i) Explain in detail the proposed cuts in MIS.
- j) Provide a plan that will ensure equity of technology resources district wide.
- k) Identify ways to generate income (from budget subcommittees and school feedback).
- l) What is the anticipated annual cost for maintaining the vacated facilities in the district?
- m) Provide the anticipated impact of losing the STARS assistants.
- n) Provide feedback on the possibility of consolidating regional offices, including the possibility of bringing them all to the Administration Building.
- o) Discuss the audit of programs done several years ago – and, provide information regarding the effectiveness of those programs.
- p) Can the use of extended learning programs possibly help the district in keeping positions?
- q) Would the implementation of a flexible schedule for students have positive impact on the class size requirements?
- r) What cuts/reductions are planned for PCCA and other magnet programs within the district? What will continue for these programs?
- s) Can there be a reduction in contracted services? In what areas are these services presently being used and what is the cost?
- t) What is the P.E. staffing model for elementary schools?
- u) What is the AYP status of schools with ESOL programs for the ELL subgroup at each school?
- v) How much is the Extended Learning budget? How can it be spent?

- w) Provide information about health insurance options, i.e., if board pays 100% for employee and then 50% for family members.
- x) What is the cost of the Masters Degree program offered through UF Lastinger? How many teachers have graduated from this program? How many of them work in Title I schools? If not to be paid from Title I, how will it be funded?
- y) Provide a breakdown of the non-mandated transportation items. Indicate how many students are impacted by each of the items. Indicate the cost of transportation for the teen parent program housed at Harris Tips.

➤ **Executive Session on Bargaining – 3:31 p.m. to 4:24 p.m.**

- **Board Meeting Procedures** - Ms. Clark presented the a brief overview of the proposal from the subcommittee comprised of Ms. Clark, Mrs. Cook and Mrs. O’Shea to arrange the meeting agenda differently in order to allow for a more efficient meeting. This change in procedure will be brought to the Board for a first reading. If needed, further discussion will be scheduled. Ms. Clark also shared that the subcommittee was also suggesting that the Board consider holding a separate meeting for recognition of students three- to four-times per year. The Board requested that Dr. Janssen bring back to the Board a plan to begin scheduling the student recognition meetings.

➤ **Leadership Discussion**

- Superintendent’s Evaluation Instrument – A subcommittee was formed of Mrs. O’Shea, Mrs. Lerner and Mrs. Krassner to review possible instruments and return to the whole Board with a recommendation.
- Master Board Training/Introduction – A subcommittee was formed of Ms. Clark, Mrs. Cook and Mrs. Wikle to put together the skit/introduction for the upcoming Master Board Training in Ocala.
- Ford Grant – Mrs. Lerner stated that the Education Foundation and the district are working together on this initiative and that the Board Members will receive an invitation for a strategic planning session on May 9th at Stavros. More information will be sent to the Board from the Foundation.
- Mrs. Cook stated that she has been asked for letters of support – 1) Education Foundation’s application for the Youth Workforce Development proposal offered through WorkNet Pinellas, Inc. and 2) Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority, or TBARTA, (formerly Bay Area Commuter Services) application for a federal grant which will allow parents to input data for their commuter services. The Board agreed to have Mrs. Cook, as Chairperson, sign a letter of support for the Youth Workforce Development proposal; but, requested further information regarding the TBARTA request.
- Climate Survey – Mrs. Krassner stated that a climate survey on the Superintendent and the district needs to be done every year and questioned when one will be sent out for this year. Mrs. Lerner, Mrs. Wikle and Ms. Clark indicated their support of this request. Dr. Janssen stated that one was done and that the instrument only allowed for negative feedback. Mrs. O’Shea stressed the importance of confidentiality for employees responding to surveys. Dr. Janssen stated that she will ask Dr. Ahmadi to provide her with a new instrument; and, that a survey will be sent out for this year. Mrs. Lerner stressed that the instrument should allow for comments. Mrs. Wikle stated that the survey needs to be sent out before school is out for the summer; that, for the sake of time, staff should send the existing instrument out to all employees; and, that the results of those surveys should be used to improve relevant areas.

Dr. Janssen expressed concern with the instrument that was used. Mrs. Lerner stated that she, too, felt we should use the present instrument and then work on developing a new one for next year. Board Members agreed to allow the Superintendent to bring forth a new instrument; but, stressed the importance of having the survey distributed before the school is out and the need to let employees know their responses will be anonymous/confidential.

- Communications Audit – Mrs. Krassner questioned whether the Board would be receiving a hard copy of the report. Dr. Janssen responded that the Board will receive a copy of this report; and, that the report will assist her in restructuring that department.
- BP Oil Spill Litigation – Mr. Robinson stated that he is recommending against the Board joining the short-form claim that some districts have joined, mainly due to the fact that Franklin Harrison and a team of experts are recommending against that for valid reasons, those reason sent to the Board by Mr. Robinson today in an e-mail . Mr. Robinson stated that Mr. Harrison has agreed to take Pinellas as a client; and, that he will bring a contract back to the Board before going forward.
- Performance Auditor – Mrs. Wikle stated that this topic can be postponed until the next workshop.
- AON Contract – Mrs. Krassner stated that this contract was pulled from an earlier meeting agenda and asked for an update as to when it will be brought back to the Board. Mr. Robinson stated that he and Laurie Dart did a very thorough memo to the Superintendent with their findings; that possibly this has slipped through the cracks; and, that, if the Superintendent is satisfied, he would recommend that this contract be walked into the next Board meeting. Dr. Janssen agreed to do so. Dr. Janssen added that Mr. Madden, Mrs. Cook and she met with Mr. Craig Sher from the Foundation to discuss bringing in volunteers from the business community who are considered experts in various aspects of business to work with our business staff to see if there are any improvements that could be made. Mrs. Wikle stated that she had a conversation with Mr. Sher regarding the potential requirements the Board should look for in a performance auditor and whether these same business professionals would have the same expertise as what the Board would be looking for in an auditor. This discussion will be brought back to the next workshop for further discussion on the business partnerships and the performance auditor concept.
- Bowers-Whitley Career Center, Tampa - Mrs. Wikle, expressing concern with the number of dropouts we have, requested that the Board Members join her and some members from the Education Foundation in a visit to the Bowers-Whitley Career Center in Tampa. Mrs. Wikle stated that the Foundation members who are available suggested May 16 or May 19 for this visit. This information will be forwarded to the Board and the visit will be coordinated for those who wish to visit this career/technical high school.
- Mrs. Lerner stated that she has brought this up before regarding the pilot teacher evaluation system that has been implemented in Pinellas; that as of February 2, 2011, teachers who have students who don't take the FCAT will receive their evaluation based on the grade of the school; and, that she spoke with Mr. Robinson who has affirmed her concern that any change to the approved pilot teacher evaluation system is to be brought to the Board for their action. Mr. Robinson stated that it is correct that the Board does need to take action on any significant changes to their approved appraisal system; however, due to the constant changes, he is not sure the Board has an actual item on which to take action. Donna Winchester stated that Lisa Grant is staying on top of this and that she will keep the Board updated in Friday Update. Mrs. Lerner stated that this is to be done before the change is implemented for

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teachers whose students do not take the FCAT. This topic will be placed on our next workshop agenda for a complete discussion.

- Identify an Additional May Workshop – May 3, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. - Topics to be scheduled are as follows: Budget, Procedures for Public Participation – any concerns following the first reading of the proposed policy, Performance Auditor & Business Partnerships, Teacher Evaluation System Pilot – update.

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 5:33 p.m.

Chairperson

Secretary

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