

**SCHOOL BOARD OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA
SPECIAL WORKSHOP – April 10, 2018**

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, conducted a special workshop on Tuesday, April 10, 2018, immediately following the school board meeting. The workshop was called to order at 1:30 p.m., in the Cabinet Conference Room, Administration Building, 301 4th Street SW, Largo, Florida.

Present: Ms. Rene Flowers, Chairperson; Mrs. Peggy L. O’Shea, Vice-Chairperson; Mrs. Carol J. Cook, Mrs. Terry Krassner, Ms. Joanne Lentino, Mrs. Linda Lerner, Mrs. Eileen Long, Members; Dr. Michael Grego, Superintendent; Dr. William Corbett, Deputy Superintendent, and Mr. David Koperski, School Board Attorney.

Review of Agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

The following topic was discussed:

- **Update on HB 7026 and School Safety Issues:** Mr. Clint Herbic, associate superintendent, operational services, and Chief Luke Williams, schools police, reviewed the following documents: *Options for Increasing School Resource Officers in Pinellas County*; and, *Letter from Governor Rick Scott, March 23, 2018 to Superintendents and School Board Members*. Dr. Grego cited the March 9, 2018, signing day when Governor Scott signed into law SB 7026. The legislation creates an Office of Safe Schools under the Department of Education. School districts are required to complete a security risk assessment for each public school campus and submit them by August 1; implement active shooter training; establish a threat assessment team by September 1; have at least one school safety officer at each school beginning the 2018-2019 school year; and, students will have access to a mental health professional at their school. Dr. Grego said we are fortunate that our district has schools police; and, he and Chief Williams have been meeting with the police chiefs of our municipalities and county sheriff. Mr. Kevin Smith, associate superintendent, finance and business services, spoke about the lack of state funding for our operational costs; we are at a minimum \$9.2 million shortfall for the start of 2018-2019 fiscal year. The governor’s increase in funding is designated for specific uses; except for the 47 cent per student allocation which will not meet our operating budget costs. Mr. Smith does not recommend referendum funding as a way to address this shortfall; it is not a consistent funding source. The challenge is the increased need of 82 law enforcement officers. Chief Williams has had many conversations with local law enforcement about the officer requirement. St. Petersburg Police Department Chief Holloway is already working on a plan; Gulfport is ready to go. Covering the cost of this mandate is of great concern. The safe schools allocation of funds that the district receives has always been spent on resource officers and campus monitors; that will continue. Previously, we received \$3.2 million; it will increase to \$6.1 million; but still will not cover the cost for law enforcement at every school. Mrs. Krassner spoke about the different populations in our schools, such as exceptional student centers, and the importance of making the appropriate placement of the resource officer. She has always had a very positive experience with resource officers; they mentor students and build positive

relationships with students and staff. Mr. Herbic stated that he is very pleased so far with all the agencies involved, they understand that student drills have to be appropriate for the age group and population of students. Ms. Lentino asked how officer training will be managed. She was advised that officers have in service days built into their scheduled time. Mrs. Lerner asked about utilizing more schools police; as opposed to other agencies. Chief Williams shared that he feels more comfortable with schools police, especially at elementary and special needs schools. Also, the cost is less. The Chief supports this idea. Mrs. Long said that her experience with schools police is that they are more mature and calmer in situations that occur at schools. Mrs. O'Shea said that she feels, that in the long run we need to look for more schools police. Ms. Flowers spoke of restorative practices; and that she is aware that some officers have taken this training; and to be sure it continues. Various proposed scenarios were discussed to include the numbers of officers hired by outside agencies, staffing for relief officers and supervisors, providing officers for charter schools, and the student population at a school that may suggest the need for more than one officer. Different options impact the cost. Mrs. Krassner asked about the officers contracts. Chief Williams said that officers that work for police departments typically have a three year contract; PCSB officers are considered support staff and they have an annual contract. Our MOU's with the municipalities are also one year contracts. Mr. Kevin Smith shared a letter that is being sent to all of our charter school principals. It discusses the funding challenges and urges them to work with their governing boards to determine how they will cover the cost of the mandates in SB 7026. Dr. Grego advised that we are not out of the woods yet, but we are moving ahead. Ms. Flowers said they will have a conversation with the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners regarding funding concerns. Mrs. Cook shared that we are so fortunate that our county is very cooperative when working with community issues; it is not that way in all counties. The discussion on school safety will continue at the regularly scheduled workshop on Tuesday, April 17.

➤ **Leadership Discussion:**

- **Ms. Flowers:** She reviewed the list of high school graduation ceremonies and asked board members to sign up to attend. She reminded board members that they may attend any graduation; we just try to have at least one board member at each ceremony.

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 2:46 p.m.

Chairperson
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Secretary