

**SCHOOL BOARD OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA
WORKSHOP – March 19, 2019**

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, conducted a workshop on Tuesday, March 19, 2019, at 9:00 a.m., in the Cabinet Conference Room, Administration Building, 301 4th Street SW, Largo, Florida.

Present: Ms. Rene Flowers, Chairperson, Mrs. Carol J. Cook, Vice-Chairperson, Mrs. Lisa Cane, Dr. Nicole Carr, and Mrs. Eileen Long, Members; Dr. Michael Grego, Superintendent, Dr. William Corbett, Deputy Superintendent, and Mr. David Koperski, School Board Attorney.

Ms. Joanne Lentino arrived at 9:02 a.m.

Mr. Bill Dudley arrived at 9:07 a.m.

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

The following topics were discussed:

- **2019-2020 School Start Times:** Mr. Clint Herbic, associate superintendent, operational services, reviewed the following documents: *Start Times Notes* and *Proposed Bell Times for 2019-2020*. Mr. Herbic spoke about the process used to examine the feasibility of adjusting school start times. Edulog Routing software was used to analyze route efficiency; the outcome was that the district's routes are highly efficient. This software was also used to determine if high school times could be adjusted without impacting elementary and middle school times; middle school dismissal cannot be later than it is currently based on parent input and traffic concerns. Middle school times are unchanged for the next school year. The district hired School Bus Consultants for further study while considering our Choice and ESE programs; traffic; safety rules; and, bus driver shortage. The consultant's findings indicated that PCS has one of the most extensive safety programs in place and we adhere to those rules. Additionally, a Task Force was created. The decision was made that the district could accommodate a change to 7:25 a.m. start time for the majority of the high schools next year. The four high schools under FLDOE Differentiated Accountability status will begin at 7:10 a.m. to accommodate the extended instructional day. The Task Force will continue their work toward a permanent change for the 2020-2021 school year. Families will be educated on the reasons for the change and will be asked to participate in a survey. Mr. Herbic is also working with Forward Pinellas for up-to-date traffic patterns and meets with PSTA to discuss options. He noted that a two-tier route system requires so many more bus drivers it is unrealistic. Dr. Carr asked if school bus driver pay is competitive locally. Mr. Herbic said it is above other districts in our area and we are not losing drivers to PSTA. Mrs. Cook asked about the hub concept being used in Hillsborough County. Mr. Herbic said the students ride times are long and there is a mix of grade levels on the buses; our district is not comfortable with that option. Dr. Grego shared that the district's focus is efficiency; transportation costs are \$28-30 million and we are budgeted \$12 million. Additionally, he stated that he will not put elementary students at a bus stop at 6:40 a.m., it is just too dangerous. The proposed bell time schedule will come before the board for approval at the March 26, 2019 school board meeting.

- **Charter School Update:** Mr. Rick Wolfe, director, charter schools and home education, Ms. Lori Matway, associate superintendent, student and community services, and Ms. Amy Hayes, senior coordinator, charter schools and home education, reviewed the following agenda items: *Request Approval of the Amendment to the Charter School Contracts for Plato Academy to Change the Primary Science Curriculum*; *Request Approval of a Two-Year Charter Renewal for Plato Academy Pinellas Park Charter School*; and, *Request Approval of a Two-Year Charter Renewal for MYcroSchool Pinellas Charter School*. Mr. Wolfe spoke about the request from Plato Academy for a curriculum change; they are following the required process and their selection “meets the standard”. The charter renewal for Plato Academy Pinellas Park is for a two-year renewal instead of the standard five years because they received a “D” grade for 2017-2018; grades for 2018-2019 are not yet available. They are currently under a School Improvement Plan (SIP). Ms. Flowers expressed concern regarding their request to add an 8th grade under the circumstances. Mr. Wolfe advised that they are being closely monitored and initial data has indicated improvements. Mr. Wolfe spoke about MYcroSchool’ s request, also for two years instead of five, because the district is monitoring student outcomes. They work with a challenging at-risk high school population. Ms. Flowers advised that mentors have shown to have a positive impact with an at-risk population and shared that she is glad to see some improvements being made in student achievement at their school. Dr. Carr thanked Mr. Wolfe for his oversight. The board will vote on these requests for approval at the April 9, 2019, school board meeting.
- **Naming of New Site:** Mr. Ward Kennedy, area superintendent, reviewed the following agenda item: *Request Approval of the Naming of the former Palm Harbor Elementary School Site*. Dr. Grego opened this topic by sharing that the process for the school name selection will be shared today; our office of strategic communications will be giving board members a notebook with all the input about the name itself. Mr. Ward Kennedy, area superintendent, introduced Principal Hema Adhia. She shared that a parent open house will be held on April 9, 2019, 6:00-7:30 p.m., at Palm Harbor University High School to meet and greet parents of students registered to attend the school. Mrs. Cook asked about the naming process. It was stated that each board member will complete a ballot; ballots will be tallied; and, if a majority vote is obtained in the first round that will complete the process. If for example, seven names are recommended, then those seven will go through the ballot process, until a majority have agreed on one name. Mr. Koperski stated that a motion will be made for approval of a name only after the name selection process has been completed; then one name will come before the board for approval. The notebooks will be given to board members after the workshop.
- **Summer Bridge Update:** Mr. Kevin Hendrick, associate superintendent, teaching and learning services, reviewed the following document: *2019 Summer Bridge Information, Elementary Summer Bridge Feeder Patterns 2019 Draft*; and, *Elementary Summer Bridge, Middle School Summer Bridge, and Freshmen Prep* flyers. Mr. Hendrick stated that the Summer Bridge program was started seven years ago to prevent summer learning loss for our most at-risk students. The program will run for 22 days with four hours of instruction per day. All programs will run from Monday through Thursday except for VPK which has a five day requirement. There will be 40 sites this summer. This year

July 4 is on a Thursday, so the program will run Monday – Wednesday of that week. Registration begins on March 25, 2019. The district reviews data of underperforming students and uses that information to help determine the sites. The Juvenile Welfare Board allotted an additional \$1 million, above last year's allocation, for before and after care scholarship opportunities. Both Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI) and Title I funds are used pay for this program. Our district strategic plan goal 2.9 states: Ensure at least 60% of the students in grades 1-5 who are below grade level in reading enroll in and attend Summer Bridge. The parameter for attendance is 70%. Mr. Hendrick shared that in addition to this summer program there is also third grade reading camp, freshman prep, and high school credit recovery. He said principals are working to get the most qualified teachers for these programs and have added the attractor of job sharing. Many instructional staff professional development opportunities held in the summer will start at 1:30 p.m. to accommodate Summer Bridge instructors. Dr. Grego publicly thanked JWB for their funding of child care; our enrollment would dramatically drop without that support. He also said that the week of July 4 he sends a connect-ed message encouraging students and families to continue with the program to its completion; attendance typically drops off after the holiday. Ms. Flowers echoed her thanks for the support of JWB; many children that are overseen by the department of children and families need their children to be in a structured daytime setting and these funds make it possible. Mr. Hendrick shared that the freshman prep program will be for two weeks this summer; three sessions will be offered. It was determined that this will improve attendance in this valuable program.

- **Wide-Area (WAN) Network:** Mr. Tom Lechner, assistant superintendent, technology and information systems, Mr. Dave Galvin, director, network and telecommunications, and Mr. Brian Doughty, network administrator, reviewed the following agenda item: *Request Approval of the Contract With Southern Light d/b/a Uniti Fiber for Dedicated Wide-Area Network (WAN) Fiber Connectivity.* Dr. Bill Corbett began the conversation by sharing that bandwidth needs to continually expand to meet the needs of instruction. Each year the amount of online learning and testing expands. The district is not behind in this task, but must stay current to meet the needs of their students and staff. Mr. Lechner stated that upgrading is necessary and the district wants their own dedicated fiber network for all sites. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued in December 2018. The intent was to secure pricing to be eligible for the E-rate reimbursement provided for libraries and students. This vendor is very familiar with E-rate eligibility. The proposed bandwidth capability is 10 Gbps to each school and 750 Gbps to each data center. The net cost of the proposed contract, over 10 years, is \$2,824,840. This proposal will eliminate our limitations. Dr. Carr asked about the number of bids received; she was advised that there were eight that went through the review process. This contract will come before the board for approval at the March 26, 2019, school board meeting.
- **ESE Service Delivery Options:** Ms. Lynne Mowatt, executive director, exceptional student education, reviewed the following document: *Exceptional Student Education, Question and Answer Document-Services in Zoned Schools.* Dr. Grego shared that this restructuring is in the interest of keeping students closest to their community, close to

home, and delivering services to students. He said that Ms. Mowatt has done an outstanding job. Mr. Hendrick said that this is about student achievement. One of the largest opportunities to improve learning gains is in the ESE student population, more specifically, what is happening in the classroom. Varying Exceptionalities (VE) students are served in their zoned schools and it works well. Students are not separated in the world by their disability so the appropriate setting is to teach the students as others are taught with supports available to them at their zoned schools. There will be some cluster schools for some disabilities, they will not all be eliminated, but there will be fewer self-contained classrooms. Ms. Mowatt met with principals and parents about this plan for next year's incoming students. ASD and EBD students will be served on their zoned school campus; students will be better distributed. Students currently at schools other than their zoned schools will be grandfathered in, if they choose to stay. Also, McKay scholarships are still available for a student to receive services at any school. Students currently in the Access Points plan will continue with that plan. Mr. Hendrick shared that every high school has a behavior specialist or trained associate; they work with all students with behavior concerns, not just EBD. Ms. Mowatt said there is an online training component to help all staff understand different disability types; we are working toward getting away from labels and more how to address a certain behavior. Ms. Flowers asked how this is managed when a substitute is in the classroom. She was advised that a behavior specialist, VE specialist, or case manager are at the school to assist. Ms. Mowatt shared that our middle school team is reviewing the needs of each of these students to determine the best instructional circumstance for them. There are also some co-teacher models. Mr. Hendrick said this model works best in middle and high school; this is where it is being done. Elementary students will have traditional clusters; students need time to mature, they change so rapidly at the elementary level. Ms. Lentino, whose experience is at the elementary level, spoke about how each child is different and how teachers work toward managing these behaviors at the elementary level. Ms. Flowers shared that we need to work with families to continue the model at home; we have the students during the school day, but are students replicating what they see at home or are negative behaviors being ignored at home. Elementary age students don't always understand what they are doing wrong. Mental health counseling is helpful in some cases. Mr. Hendrick assured the board that principals are aware of their student population that need additional supports and they reach out to them and their families. Dr. Carr asked if the caseload number and intensity of need are considered. Ms. Mowatt stated that inclusive scheduling is reviewed; there is a team teaching model with general education and ESE; ELA and Math needs are reviewed; they examine the skill set of each teacher; then, the caseloads are determined by units. Each school may look different in the delivery of the supports.

➤ **Leadership Discussion:**

○ **Dr. Grego:**

- The board members reviewed the graduation schedule and signed up to attend.
- He shared information about the cost of the dual enrollment program and distributed a document outlining the cost for the 2017-2018 school year. He

met previously with Dr. Law on this topic and they determined that it was cost neutral. The analysis indicates a difference of \$37,000 between our cost and the tuition paid to SPC; in their favor. Recently St. Petersburg College President, Dr. Tonjua Williams, brought forward the same topic. Dr. Grego stated that the district is following the law, and SPC receives the FTE for these students. The district will continue this dialogue with Dr. Williams and explain our costs incurred to manage this program. He also shared that we are exploring programs with the University of Florida and University of South Florida.

- Ms. Flowers stated that the board will need to review cost recommendations at a workshop. When SPC applied to the district for another charter school, we supported that request. She asked how the dual enrollment is paid. Mr. Kevin Smith, associate superintendent, finance and business services, said it is paid through our instructional money.
- The district received a letter from AdvancED allowing our district to retain its accreditation until June 2021. AdvancED is working on redesigning the accreditation process; and, our district is no longer required to be evaluated every five years. Ms. Jennifer Dull, director, strategic planning and policy, stated that the district will therefore not move forward with their plans for a site visit and wait until AdvancED designs their process.
- He spoke about SB7030: School Safety and Security. On March 13, 2018, this board determined only trained law enforcement officers would carry firearms in our schools; and, on May 22, 2018, this board voted to authorize school safety officers to satisfy the requirements of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act. Sheriff Gualtieri has been addressing the public in favor of arming teachers. Dr. Grego shared that the Sheriff is open to speaking with this board at a workshop.
 - Ms. Flowers expressed her concern that Sheriff Gualtieri is lumping all districts together in his comments regarding lack of school security. Our district has law enforcement and trained school safety officers that were trained by the sheriff's office.
 - Mrs. Cook spoke in favor of the Sheriff's presentation; then our district will have on record that we are already doing the right thing.
 - Ms. Flowers asked for the will of the board to support the Sheriff's presentation; the board agreed 5-2. She asked that the time allotted be no more than two hours.
- **Mr. Koperski:**
 - He spoke about the Parkland Commission's findings and the response by Governor DeSantis to request the Florida Supreme Court to impanel a statewide grand jury to examine school safety measures in Broward County and across the state. He shared that he has had discussions with Joy Frank, FADSS, and twenty other school board attorneys. The focus of

the grand jury's work, beginning February 25, 2019, will be to determine if school districts are complying with the safety requirements established in the MSDPSA. This will be housed in Broward County.

- He cautioned the board to avoid using "reply all" in emails as it may be misconstrued as a "conversation."
- He stated that HB 1279 has a provision regarding school board members travel to require an agenda item approving travel for more than \$500.00 and all out-of-state travel. This provision will take effect July 1, 2019.
- **Mrs. Cook:** She shared that while visiting with another school board, she was told that Mr. Koperski is a very well respected school board attorney and she wanted to compliment his work.
- **Ms. Flowers:** She advised the board that she travelled to Tallahassee to visit with legislators on March 14th; she met with Senators Brandes, Rouson, and Hooper and Representative Webb; and, with Capital City Consulting.
- **Dr. Grego:**
 - He said there have been proposals by the House and Senate to increase the base student allocation (BSA) in the budget.
 - He advised the board that phase one of the Melrose Elementary project, new classrooms, is completed. The entire project is scheduled to be completed in summer 2020.
- **Mrs. Cook:**
 - She reported that FSBA Master Board training is confirmed with Pasco and Hillsborough boards for Friday, June 21, 2019, at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
 - She also stated that our board's legislative briefing session (December 7, 2018) held at the Stavros Institute was very valuable; it helped our legislators have a better understanding of education funding.
- **Dr. Carr:**
 - She met with the student rights and responsibilities committee; students shared some student behavior concerns and asked about recycling efforts.
 - She spoke of the Homeless Leadership Board, of which she is a member, and said great work is being done by Christina Fields, HEAT. She spoke with Jacob Merrett, Lakewood High teacher, who shared construction concerns at the school board meeting.
 - Ms. Flowers said that she spoke with Mr. Herbic and the issues the teacher brought forward are on a punch list for the contractor.
- **Mrs. Cane:** She asked some questions about school bus transportation; and, how our guidelines differ from charter schools. She also asked if other transportation options had been explored.
 - Mr. Koperski advised that public schools are regulated by state and federal transportation rules that do not apply to charter schools.

- Dr. Grego noted that efficiency in route structure is key; and, even if we could contract with another service it may not improve that efficiency. Transportation is a very complex issue.

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 2:26 p.m.

Chairperson
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Secretary