

**SCHOOL BOARD OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA
WORKSHOP – March 20, 2018**

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, conducted a workshop on Tuesday, March 20, 2018, at 9:00 a.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 topics were discussed:

- **Budget:** Mr. Kevin Smith, associate superintendent, finance and business services, reviewed the following documents: *Public School Funding, The Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) Fiscal Year 2018-2019, Final Conference Report for House Bill 5001, March 8, 2018;* and, *Florida Education Finance Program Final Conference Report 2018/19 Analysis*. Mr. Smith distributed the analysis report and shared his disappointment with the funding. The state rolled back the required local effort by .217 which is minimal. The increase in base student allocation (BSA) is 47 cents for Pinellas; this is our flexible spending; money that is used to operate the district. One example of the use of BSA funds are our energy costs; which continually increase due to inflation. Calculating our budget for 2018-2019, without addressing the increase in health insurance costs or employee pay raises; the district estimates a \$5.2 million deficit. The majority of the increase in state funding is in categoricals. Pinellas will receive \$2.9 million from the safe schools funding and \$2.3 million for mental health funding. This will not cover our costs. Without the increase in flexible spending monies we are not in a good beginning position. The state funds districts with less revenue opportunities through other districts; this money is not allocated to Pinellas, it is given to other districts. Mrs. Lerner stated that our district has certified clinical social workers and they can deliver mental health counseling. We also have a wonderful partnership with the Juvenile Welfare Board. Ms. Flowers added that we have expanded many partnerships in our community to assist students and families. Dr. Grego shared that we need to continue to advise legislators and have conversations with other elected officials as to how this is going to negatively impact our district. Mrs. Long asked about all the new construction and how that will affect us. Mr. Smith said that our numbers have remained flat. Mrs. Lerner said we send letters to legislators about issues they already know; maybe we could ask for an answer. Mrs. O’Shea said they don’t completely understand the impact. Mrs. Cook said that perhaps in the future instead of a legislative breakfast; it should be more like a workshop and we can educate them on how their legislation impacts districts. Ms. Flowers said she attended the CONA leadership program and staff from the property appraiser’s office were present. They understood exactly what is going on and how harmful it is to the community.

- **Legislative issues:** Mr. Steve Swartzel, legislative liaison, reviewed the document: *2018 Session Summary, Operating Budget 2018-19*. Mr. Swartzel said that Pinellas was at a disadvantage because it lost the representation of Senator Jack Latvala. Also, the legislative session changed following the February 14th Parkland incident; the budget conversation changed to school safety and mental health. The House wanted to cut required local effort funding and won. The millage compression and funding compression is a political strategy to help certain districts; Pinellas County receives no funds from these categoricals. The state now authorizes five voucher programs; two are new. They are Hope Schools voucher and Reading voucher. Both are awarded on a first come/ first served basis. For 2018-2019, \$57.7 million has been allocated statewide for Hope Schools; and, \$9.7 million for reading. In the Hope Schools legislation, if a complaint is filed at a school there are 15 days to respond. Even if the complaint is not substantiated, a voucher can be awarded. Tutoring services for reading can be paid to the private sector. The trend is continuing for the Florida legislator to privatize schools. He spoke about the School Guardian Program. Mr. Swartzel said that he is not aware of any districts that are completely on board with this idea; and, the \$67 million allocated statewide are non-recurring funds. Ms. Lentino shared her concern with not having enough officers ready for the school year. Mr. Koperski stated that the law requires there be a school resource officer in every school beginning the 2018-2019 school year. Mrs. O'Shea stated that she served on a panel with Sheriff Gualtieri on Monday evening, and he shared his concerns with the funding. A few of the concerns include training, equipment, and substitutes. A referendum was suggested to cover some of these costs; but that won't happen for this coming school year. There are many unfunded mandates that go along with this new legislation. Every school must do a safety assessment; and there is a cost with that; but, that cost is not funded. Our district has been hardening facilities for years; adding locks, doors, windows, fencing etc. Mr. Swartzel spoke about changes to charter school operation and oversight. The legislators have taken away constitutional authority over charters and moved it to DOAH (Division Of Administrative Hearings). Charter Schools will received capital outlay funds directly from the state. Mrs. Cook asked if funding is not equitable across all public schools; if there is a legal case, because they are not funding uniformly. Mr. Koperski said there has been discussion on this topic. Ms. Flowers asked about the money given to charter schools; and, what recourse is there if they don't open or if they fail. Mr. Koperski said the funds are supposed to be returned; but, typically part of the reason they are unsuccessful is poor money management. It happened in Miami-Dade. A charter school that they knew was going to close down by the time they were required to distribute monies to them; and when they asked the state; the state said the law required that they send the money to the charter. Ms. Flowers requested a list be sent to the board members noting the charter schools operating in our district and the funds we sent them. Mr. Swartzel spoke about HB 1279, school district accountability. He said it is a poorly written bill and has been delayed until July 1, 2019.
- **Middle School Update-Health Education/Physical Education:** Mr. Kevin Hendrick, associate superintendent, teaching and learning services, and Dr. Dywayne Hinds, executive director, middle school education, reviewed the following document: *Middle*

School Policy Update, emails to the board on March 9 and 19, 2018. Dr. Hinds shared with the board that he has communicated ideas to the middle schools, on how to schedule the new model for health education; if it is approved. If approved at the April 10 board meeting; he will meet with the assistant principals. Ms. Flowers asked what prompted this change. Mr. Hendrick shared that the district is always trying to allow for the opportunity for students to have more choices; this is what keeps them engaged in their learning. And, that all middle school students in Pinellas County will receive some health education. Under the new plan all seventh grade students will be required to take health education. Mrs. Lerner said that she thinks this is a good model and a step forward. Mr. Hendrick said that with the elimination of the waiver for seventh grade; and, with so few students waiving physical education, he believes that more students will actually receive health education. Ms. Flowers asked that the board be sent a list of schools with the exact numbers of students currently waiving health education. There was conversation about students who now have a double block in math or reading due to their low scores; and how this new plan will affect them. Mr. Hendrick said the data shows that the double block is not improving scores. Students probably need the physical activity more; and, will benefit from PE/Health courses. Dr. Hinds said that one block of reading will be required, except for gifted students. There will be an online component written to allow for students taking electives, to complete health education. The district uses Pinellas Virtual. Dr. Chou, director, Florida Department of Health, Pinellas County, said there are many issues that are addressed in health education that will benefit students; including coping skills that are addressed in these courses. Mr. Hendrick shared that health education is not a required middle school course in the state; it says health education is necessary but does not specify the delivery model.

- **Midtown Academy Update:** Dr. Bill Corbett, and Ms. Patricia Wright, area superintendent, reviewed the following documents: *Midtown Academy, Center for Cultural Arts and Gifted Studies Schoolwide Enrichment Model; 2018 Proposal for Midtown Academy Center for Cultural Arts and Gifted Studies; Proposal for Midtown Academy power point presentation; and, Request for Approval: Setting a Public Hearing and Authorizing the Advertisement of the Public Hearing to Consider the Amendment to Policy 2250-FUNDAMENTAL SCHOOLS, MAGNET PROGRAMS, and CAREER ACADEMIES, April 10, 2018.* Dr. Corbett began with a recap of the history of Midtown Academy. The school was formerly University Preparatory Academy charter school, which closed its doors in summer 2016; two weeks prior to the start of the 2016-17 school year. The district took over the school and renamed it Midtown Academy. Enrollment in their middle school grades is low. The district met with the current middle school students' families and have reassigned the students to other district schools. It has been decided that the school will rebrand with the schoolwide enrichment model (Dr. Renzulli's model) and a center for full-time elementary gifted. Ms. Coral Marsh, gifted education specialist, shared that one day a week, all students will have the opportunity to select an interest and come together under the enrichment model. Teachers at the school must have their gifted endorsement or be working on it; it is a two year program. If a teacher is not interested in remaining at the school with this requirement for the gifted endorsement, they will be offered other opportunities. Ms. Sue

Castleman, prek-12 visual arts specialist, shared that there are a wide variety of museums within a three mile radius of the school. The district has great partnerships with them. Referendum funds can be accessed for field trip opportunities. Ms. Marsh shared that with the aggressive approach the district has taken to increase gifted screening, there are about 4,500 gifted students in the k-5 population. Mrs. Lerner, Mrs. O'Shea, and Ms. Lentino voiced their support of this model. Mrs. Long asked how students will be assigned to this school. Dr. Grego shared that it will be 100% school of choice. Current students will be grandfathered in, unless the parents want a different option. Mrs. Lerner asked about the proximity placement for students. Dr. Corbett shared that they will be recommending 50% proximity priority at the school. Dr. Corbett also shared that the students in the gifted program will have a feeder pattern priority to Thurgood Marshall Middle and the cultural arts program students will have a feeder pattern priority to John Hopkins Middle. Ms. Flowers said that the district has done a great job of keeping this school open. This will be a great option in south county along with Perkins Elementary and James B. Sanderlin. She echoed the rich resources in the area of the school. Mr. Bill Lawrence, director, student assignment, shared that from April 10-May 8, a second application program will open for this school. Approval will come before the board at the April 10, 2018, school board meeting.

- **Transportation/Start Times:** Mr. Clint Herbic, associate superintendent, operational services, reviewed the following document: *2018/2019 Bell Times (Proposal B)*. He spoke about the many challenges the district handles in their daily management of transporting students to school, safely and on-time. We have a 3 tier system; high school, elementary, and middle. The tiers, length of the school day, choice options, traffic patterns-all play into the decision making. Other districts are grappling with the same issue. In Boston they swapped elementary and high school start times; and, they are now reversing them back. It created day care problems for families and having young children out at bus stops in the dark was problematic. Hillsborough County Public Schools shortened their instructional day; this is not an option that we will consider. There is also the issue with being able to hire enough bus drivers; though we are working more aggressively to seek out drivers and have had numerous job fairs around the county; between now and the beginning of school, we need to hire 56 drivers. He spoke about using the current software Edulog to continually look at optimizing routes. They are also piloting Best Planner on a trial basis to see if it gives us better results. All these issues play into the bell times. At this time, most high schools will begin at 7:20 am; four will keep the 7:05 am start time (Boca Ciega, Dixie Hollins, Gibbs, and Lakewood). Dr. Grego stated that this is a great first step, not our last step. We will continue to refine efficiencies; try to reduce routes over time. Mr. Herbic said that in speaking with the high school students; they have shared that they don't want to start any later than 7:45 am. They want time in the afternoon to be involved in other activities. Mr. Herbic also shared that the district is considering duplicating some programs around the district; which will shorten bus routes; and ride times. This proposal is for the 2019-2020 school year.
- **Bridging the Gap Second Quarter Report:** Dr. Dan Evans, director, assessment, accountability and research, reviewed the following documents: *Bridging the Gap*,

Pinellas County Schools, quarter 2 update, 2017-18, school board briefing; and, Bridging the Gap Plan, Goal 1-6, quarter 2 update. Dr. Evans shared that every quarter, data is pulled and entered into these documents. The district uses the data for decision making. A key piece in our plan is cultural competence. We continue to train staff and work in these three areas: 1) changing the mindset, 2) restorative practices, and 3) culturally relevant training. Our goal is to train staff in such a way that they practice what is being trained. Our human resources services department are hiring more minority teachers. Dr. Lewis Brinson, minority achievement officer, shared that through these training experiences, teachers understand that they are teachers regardless of the population. You can encourage people to change and self-reflect; self-correct. This equity training has become a way of work. He said that he is encouraged by what he is hearing; there are good things happening. He said we must have high expectations for all students and give all students the opportunity to learn. These documents are posted on our website.

- **Safety Plan:** Mr. Clint Herbic, associate superintendent, operational services, reviewed the document: *Pinellas County Schools Cost of Additional School Resource Officers*. He began by saying that everything the school board has approved in the past to keep our schools safe; badge pass, fencing, securing school entryways, etc., is helping us to harden our schools. The passing of Senate Bill 7026 Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act, has mandated items that must be included in our safety plans. The current Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool will have changes. The law states that threats concerning mass violence and transmission of those threats are punishable as a second degree felony. There is a framework for emergency procedures and drills; including active shooter drills. Guidelines are set for sharing information with local first responders. Many of the recommendations are already being done in Pinellas County Schools. He said that by August 1, 2018, all schools will have a single point of entry. The maintenance department has established a practice for prompt repair to gates, doors, fences and cameras. Police departments will tour our schools and offer safety ideas. Three schools are piloting a live camera program; and, if successful it will be put in place across the district. His department has been contacted by many vendors regarding safety products; they research the company, and if it has merit, they explore it. All administrators will receive training on new safety procedures. Some schools have never had a school resource officer on campus; those principals will meet with their new SRO. Mr. Herbic said he is in the process of meeting at all high schools with a group of students about school safety. He wants to be aware of their concerns and their ideas. These older students have discussed how an elementary student may feel with an SRO present, and with the drills. This has been very helpful. We want students and staff to be prepared. Chief Luke Williams, schools police, met with the Pinellas County Sheriff and other Chiefs in the numerous jurisdictions that serve this county. They understand that the training for all law enforcement must be consistent; everyone on the same page with lockouts and lockdowns, including contractors that may be working on-site. They understand that deputies placed at schools need to have a certain relatable manner for students in all schools, especially elementary. He also said that uniformed law enforcement is important; in an emergency situation you don't want to be in the position of trying to determine who has weapons. He reiterated that what the district has done to

put safety measures in place and harden schools; that we are well ahead of the curve. Dr. Grego explained that the options are the school guardians or law enforcement. The superintendent and sheriff must agree on the option. It is a community issue; and ours wants law enforcement. The new law does not specify the number of officers for the size of the campus or student population; but if we want to do it right, this must be considered. The superintendent thanked the chief for having those discussions with law enforcement. Ms. Flowers shared that St. Petersburg Police Chief Holloway's walk and talk program is improving relationships in the community. Police Officers are seen as helpers. Chief Williams spoke about The Great American Teach-In. Many officers speak in classrooms that day; and once that happens students see beyond the uniform. Mrs. Krassner said that every SRO she has ever worked with has been wonderful. Chief Williams acknowledged the work of the SRO. He said that in his experience; school shooters are often students that have been ostracized. Dr. Grego said that what is ahead is not a simple task. This will be an ongoing topic. Mrs. O'Shea said she spoke with Sheriff Gualtieri and the funding issue is a big concern. Ms. Flowers expressed concern at not having enough officers when school starts. Chief Williams assured the board that on August 10th there will be enough officers; training begins in May.

➤ **Leadership Discussion:**

- **Dr. Grego:** 1) He spoke about the election conflict for the August 28, 2018, school board meeting date. He has proposed that the August 21 board workshop date be changed to a 10:00 am board meeting. August 14 can be used for a board workshop, if the board decides they need it. 2) He advised the board that Commissioner Pam Stewart reached out to him to host the State Board of Education meeting on Wednesday, May 16, 2018. He has agreed to have the board meeting here in conference hall. He will keep the board informed. 3) He discussed the Council of Great City Schools resolution on school shootings that was shared with board members. Mrs. O'Shea was part of the board of directors meeting in March. The board was asked if they are interested in supporting the resolution.
- **Ms. Flowers:** She advised the board to contact the administrative assistant by Friday if they are opposed to supporting the resolution or wish to propose other wording. Mrs. Lerner stated that she had no concerns.
- **Mrs. Long:** She shared that she serves on the Homeless Leadership Board and that both she and Ms. Flowers received a letter from them regarding tracking homelessness.
- **Ms. Flowers:** She stated that the letter, signed by Amy Foster, St. Petersburg City Council, spoke of data sharing. She deferred to Mr. Koperski since there are confidentiality issues to consider.
- **Mrs. Krassner:** She shared that she serves on the District Safety and Security Committee. They are meeting again on Thursday.
- **Mrs. Lerner:** 1) She spoke about the FAST Nehemiah Action Assembly that she attended last night. She shared a portion of their handout titled "Youth Concerns Committee Report" that was distributed. She said that she is the eternal optimist and that she and Ms. Lentino tried to represent the district. She shared her opinion that the way the FAST organization is run by their leadership is bothersome. She said

that the district is doing a great job on many issues. 2) She passed out copies of the poetry book “Dreaming America: Voices of Undocumented Youth in Maximum-Security Detention”, by Seth Michelson. She said that many of the poems speak of the hope of our democracy; there is no better country to live in.

- **Ms. Lentino:** Ms. Lentino shared that she attended the FAST Nehemiah Action Assembly Monday evening. She had met with some members of the education committee prior to the assembly. She felt that it went well and she received positive acknowledgement.

- **Mrs. Cook: 1)** She distributed the School Board Office Operating Manual, revised February 2018. 2) She mentioned that she was made aware that some students didn’t have money for caps and gowns to participate in graduation last year and she said that should not be a factor in their participation. She was advised that if principals are aware of that issue; they make it happen. But there may be situations where families don’t share this concern.

- **Mrs. O’Shea:** She shared that she attended the Council of Great City Schools annual legislative/policy conference. She serves on their board of directors; a board meeting was scheduled during the conference. She said there was a lot of conversation about school safety and their interest in changing federal legislation.

- **Ms. Flowers:** 1) She thanked Mrs. Lerner for the FAST information. She said that their education committee met with her and the area superintendents not too long ago in the administration building. She shared data with them at that time and advised how they may access it on our website. 2) She thanked Mrs. Lerner for sharing the book and said the through her work with the Gulf Coast Jewish Community Services she was aware of unaccompanied individuals coming in from Arizona. 3) She said that she wants to see the marketing piece for Midtown Academy before it is rolled out. 4) She asked Dr. Grego when test scores are received. He advised that they are received in June and July.

- **Mr. Koperski:** He said that on April 4, 2018, the courts in Leon County will have a hearing on HB 7069. The court will rule on legal issues; there are no facts in dispute. He will confer with outside counsel the day before; and attend the hearing.

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 2:40 p.m.

Chairperson
w.20March18

Secretary