

WORKSHOP MEETING – MAY 10, 2012

The School Board of Okaloosa County met in Workshop Session on May 10, 2012 in the School District Administration Building, 120 Lowery Place, SE, Fort Walton Beach, Florida.

PRESENT: Rodney L. Walker, Chairman
Cathy Thigpen, Vice-Chairman
Cindy Frakes
Chuck Kelley
Melissa Thrush

Alexis Tibbetts, Superintendent
C. Jeffrey McInnis, Esq., Attorney to the Board

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., the purpose of the meeting being to review Agenda items, thereby expediting the Regular Meeting. Items may be considered in random order to accommodate visitors and presenters. Routine items not discussed during the Workshop were reviewed prior to the meeting with no further questions or comments by the Board.

The Chairman added as Consent #27, CHOICE Technical Center LPN Summer Calendar 2012.

A report on the impact of the new school grading system was provided by Steve McLaughlin and Guyla Hendricks. Mr. McLaughlin identified and explained the changes in the grading system and Mrs. Hendricks reviewed the major impact of those changes which will include an increase in cut scores, changes in graduation criteria, and transition of student assessment from FCAT to PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) in 2014-2015. The goal of the changes is to ensure students are college and career ready upon graduation and prepared to compete globally.

Mrs. Frakes asked if the balance of funds allocated to Plew Elementary School from the exchange of property with Ruckel Properties in December 2008 were allocated to the District's General Fund or Capital Outlay Funds. Rita Scallan responded that the funds were allocated to the District's Capital Outlay Funds. State law requires that proceeds from the sale of real property be used for capital expenditures.

Mrs. Frakes asked Ms. Thrush, as the board member for the central area, if she was in agreement with the proposed expenditure of the funds by Plew Elementary School. Ms. Thrush stated that the funds were initially allocated for fencing and playground improvements at the schools. Most of the expense for those improvements was covered by the Plew Parent Leadership Association. She stated that the proposed carpet and floor replacement and sprinkler system upgrades are much needed improvements and stated her support of the proposal to use the remaining funds to make these improvements at the school.

Mr. Kelley noted that the board members are allocated funds each year for projects such as these proposed for Plew Elementary School and Ms. Thrush has taken the position that she does not want to spend her allocated money for these type projects. He asked what will happen at the end of the fiscal year to the board member allocation that has not been utilized for this purpose. Mrs. Scallan responded that it would be a decision for the board to make. If no action is taken, the funds will remain allocated to Ms. Thrush's capital outlay account.

Mrs. Thrush stated that it is her position that the board allocated the funds to Plew Elementary School in 2008 and the proposal is to reallocate the funds to improvements other than those initially identified.

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In response to Mrs. Frakes' inquiry, Bill Smith explained that the portable identified for disposal was given to the district in 1964 by the Department of Education. It is in poor condition and not worth the cost of moving to a different location.

Mr. Al Gardner stated that the Driver's Education Program is being provided through Community Education because it is too expensive for the high schools to offer. It is a non-credit class offered to students during the summer at each high school location and is self-supporting.

Mary Beth Jackson stated that the agreement with Project Lead the Way is for continuation of the program at Fort Walton Beach High School for the third year and the program is funded through the Perkins Grant. She noted that the program is offered at the high school level only and that the reference to middle school should be removed from the agenda item.

Mrs. Frakes noted that Appendix A and Appendix B of the Education Partnership Agreement with the Air Force Research Lab are incomplete. Dr. Tibbetts stated that Appendix A & B will be a list of the equipment to be donated or loaned to the district but the exact equipment needs have not yet been determined.

Rodney Nobles stated that a Request For Proposals (RFP) for a dropout prevention school was solicited from the private market. A financial agreement could not be reached with the top ranked firm and the selection committee did not endorse the curriculum delivery process offered by the second ranked proposer. At this time the committee's recommendation is to close negotiations and to cancel the RFP without an award. He stated that the staff will be considering other ways to offer the program in the future.

Dr. Tibbetts stated that May 15, 2012 has been established as Digital Learning Day and Dolores Noechel will be sending the board members additional information.

Dr. Tibbetts stated that the Tech Bowl was held on Saturday, May 5, at the Niceville Community Center and Governor Scott presented some of the awards. In the elementary division Destin Elementary was first place, Edge Elementary was second place and third place went to Shalimar Elementary School. In the middle school division Ruckel Middle School was first place and Pryor Middle School placed second. Niceville High School was first place in the high school division.

Dr. Tibbetts announced that the Niceville High School softball team won their game (8-4) last night and has advanced to the state finals today.

Dr. Tibbetts announced that Pryor Middle School ranked fourth in the state, Niceville High School ranked third in the state and Choctawhatchee High School ranked sixth in the state in the Knowledge Masters Open Competition.

Mrs. Frakes stated that Blessings in a Backpack is a program that was initiated in January in the south county elementary schools. Students on free and reduced lunch who are hungry are given food for the weekend in their backpack on Friday. Food is also provided for their preschool siblings. The program is now being expanded to elementary schools in the north end and middle schools may be included in the fall. The program is sponsored by the Bay Area Food Bank. Organizations can partner with them in this program at a cost of \$2.72 per child.

Mr. Kelley stated that the Annual Anne T. Mitchell Honors Assembly was a success this year. He noted that the increased rigor in academics is evidenced by the decline in the number of students receiving these honors.

Ms. Thrush reminded everyone of the Okaloosa Arts K-12 Student Exhibits at the Northwest Florida Fairgrounds.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Teresa Epperson, Recorder

ALEXIS TIBBETTS, Ed.D.
SUPERINTENDENT AND
CORPORATE SECRETARY

RODNEY L. WALKER
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD