

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
APPROVED MINUTES - **BUDGET** WORKSHOP  
January 21, 2014

The Board met in workshop session duly called at 1 p.m. in the Boardroom, 620 East University Ave., Gainesville, Florida. Present were: Gunnar Paulson, Chairman; Leanetta McNealy, Vice-Chairman; April Griffin, Carol Oyenarte, and Eileen Roy members; Hershel Lyons, Interim Superintendent; and staff members.

This workshop was scheduled to update the Board on the 2014-15 Budget. Chairman Paulson called the meeting to order and Mr. Lyons made introductions.

Dr. Paulson began the meeting with an opening statement [SEE SUPPLEMENTARY MINUTES]:

He noted that two significant grants are being lost this year: School Improvement Grants at three schools and the Race to the Top Grant. He continued by stating what he would like to see in the 2014-15 budget process: 1) a budget where revenue exceeds expenditures, 2) funds are ensured to continue current programs, 3) resources that are needed to help those schools in need of assistance.

With state funding unknown, Dr. Paulson would like to have a process in place where any scenario can be met, while making sure the highest priority is the classroom. Dr. Paulson encouraged staff to make suggestions regarding areas where money can be saved.

Dr. Paulson pointed out that in June of 2013, he suggested a plan which could save about \$1 million by reducing approximately 20 positions through attrition, away from the classroom. He explained why he was confident this could be done. At this time, Dr. Paulson suggests that savings in excess of \$3 million be looked at, with personnel reduction, savings in other areas, a combination of both or a reorganization of the District. All decisions should be in line with the Strategic Plan.

Dr. Paulson suggests surveying employees for savings ideas and looking at all possible areas of revenue. He would also like to again address 1) DES and 2) teachers in Extended DROP.

Regarding Dr. Paulson's suggested plan of reducing positions, Mrs. Oyenarte stated that the Student Services area has been cut to the point that it is impacting the classroom. In the midst of any discussion of cuts, she would like to keep the door open to put key personnel in areas where there are desperate needs. With enrollments rising, she also cautioned against beginning the school year with so few teachers that students are excessively impacted with classroom changes.

Mr. Scott Ward, Assistant Superintendent, Planning/Budget and Systems Accountability, agreed that an earlier start for budget discussion will help plan for various scenarios. Since budget development relies so much on external information, however, he stated that building the budget faster would result in diminished accuracy. To help explain this, Mr. Ward reviewed the General Budgetary Timeline, the General Staffing Timeline, and TRIM calendar, which shows the required interaction with the Property Appraiser. Mr. Ward reported that Dr. Paulson has given some ideas to research, which he will report on later. The next Budget Workshop will be scheduled for February.

Noting that general administration has been reduced by 1.77% from last year and the school staff increased by only .09%, even with adding a new school, Mrs. Griffin agreed with Mrs. Oyenarte's concern about excessive administrative cuts.

The Workshop was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.