

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
February 5, 2013

Dr. McNealy:

- congratulated former students who have signed to play football: Keith Kelsey, University of Louisville; Chris Thompson, University of Florida; and Rafael Webb, Vanderbilt.
- reported on her visit to the Open House/Recruitment Day at the Professional Academies at Lofton
- reported on visiting the NJROTC and Academy of Health Professions classrooms, while at GHS during the visit of Governor Rick Scott.

Mrs. Griffin:

- attended the Open House for Newberry High School Law Enforcement Academy. Would like to see how magnet programs might be expanded.
- visited twenty Beginning Teachers in one day on the 100th day of school.
- will have visited every school and center in the district by next week.
- reported that Education Foundation Director Judy Boles has developed a Public Service Announcement for the Take Stock in Children program. It can be seen on YouTube.
- provided an itinerary to Board members for a luncheon on February 22 with members of a delegation visiting from Gainesville's Sister City Rzeszow, Poland.
- Reported that at a recent meeting of *Alachua County Children's Alliance*, Jack Levine, founder of Tallahassee-based *4Generations Institute* stated that research with UF shows that, for the first time, over 4,000 Alachua County citizens are 85 or more years of age.

Mrs. Oyenarte commended Mrs. Griffin for working so diligently to get everyone scheduled to meet with the Polish delegation.

Mrs. Roy:

- highly praised the recent Honors Band Concert performance and commended students and band leaders.
- complimented Ms. Jeanine Plavac and her students for bringing great distinction to the District through the AHP program.
- congratulated Education Support Professional of the year, Ms. Deloris Golston from Lincoln Middle School, stating that Ms. Golston is very deserving of this award.

CITIZEN INPUT

ACEA President Karen McCann addressed the Board concerning the 2013-14 school calendar draft, explaining why she felt that the process was flawed. She also explained why she believed that childcare would not be an issue for parents and provided further information on why she believes having the full Thanksgiving week off is preferable.

A teacher addressed the Board in support of the full week off at Thanksgiving.

A school crossing guard spoke about why she feels there would be hardship for children from low socioeconomic circumstances.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Oyenarte

Seconded by Dr. McNealy

Moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the Consent Agenda as described in items 1-7.

Staff responded to questions from Dr. Paulson and Dr. McNealy concerning Item H.5., Certificate of Final Inspection for Project SBAC G1102 – Newberry High School Track Resurfacing. Information will be provided concerning Dr. Paulson's inquiry about the cost of a rubberized track.

Mrs. Roy expressed her pleasure that the process is beginning for new AC systems in BHS, EHS, and NHS kitchens. Mr. Keith Birkett, Assistant Superintendent for Planning and Budget, responded to Mrs. Oyenarte's question about the source of funding for these projects.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

2013-14 SCHOOL CALENDAR
SECOND READING

A public hearing was held January 15, 2013, to consider the proposed 2013-14 School Calendar—Original Draft and ACEA Draft.

Motion by Mrs. Oyenarte

Seconded by Mrs. Griffin

Moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the 2013-14 Original Draft Calendar, as presented.

Citing a voting situation on the calendar last year, Dr. Paulson stated that he wished to make an amendment that the Original Draft Calendar be replaced by the ACEA calendar.

Motion by Dr. Paulson

Seconded by Dr. McNealy

Moved to replace the Original Draft Calendar with the ACEA Calendar.

Board Attorney Susan Seigle explained that the calendar situation differs from the one referred to by Dr. Paulson, since the Board would now actually be replacing a Superintendent's recommendation. In addition, notice to the public is also involved. Staff Attorney Brian Moore concurred with Mrs. Seigle's comments.

Dr. Paulson's requested the following Amendment to the Minutes:

Dr. Paulson disagreed with Ms. Seigle's explanation and provided the following explanation: He explained that after viewing the video of the February 21, 2012, School Board meeting, it was clear that Mrs. Seigle and Mr. Wittmer advised Board Member Griffin that it would be appropriate to amend the Superintendent's Recommendation for the calendar and then vote on the Amendment. If the Amendment passed, the Board would then vote on the Amendment and this would be the approved calendar. Their reasoning was the two calendars had been discussed in the First Reading and the Public Hearing. This was exactly what was being proposed at the February 5, 2013, meeting of the Board.

Dr. Boyd stated that if the Original Calendar, which he recommends, is voted down at this meeting, he will bring a recommendation for the ACEA Calendar to the next meeting. That would meet the intent of the law. Dr. Paulson then withdrew his amendment to the motion.

Mrs. Oyenarte felt there is a misconception that the Thanksgiving days have implications only for K-12. Therefore, she noted that 778 children in Pre-K, ESE and Head Start are all affected. She also pointed out that there are many industries where employees cannot take time off and that the beginning of the retail season presents further difficulties.

Dr. McNealy:

- stated that her decision on the calendar will be based on the emails, phone calls and surveys she has received.
- expressed that she is uncomfortable with contentious attitudes on the Board and suggested to Ms. Seigle that a discussion be held on how Board members speak to each other.
- expressed her preference for four school days in the last week of school, rather than two, as in the Original Calendar.
- prefers Monday, November 25, for a potential make-up day, as in the ACEA Calendar, rather than Wednesday, November 27, as in the Original Calendar.
- believes that students and teachers need a Fall break
- a full week off would help those who wish to visit out-of-town family.
- does not see anyone saying they would not like to spend more time with their children.

Mrs. Griffin:

- stated that she represents teachers, but also parents from many other areas of employment.
- believes there will be many personal hardships if a parent is unable to work for five days.
- believes childcare is an issue for many parents.
- believes it is in the best interest of students in Alachua County to be in class as much as possible before the FCAT, and that being out two extra days is problematic.
- Stated that the majority of those she talked to during school visits said they want students in the classroom the first two days of Thanksgiving week.

Mrs. Oyenarte stated that she respects the great amount of work that Ms. McCann put into the survey. She also stated that she thinks all Board members are doing their job, that nothing is personal, and they can agree to disagree.

Dr. McNealy would still like some sort of forum on Board etiquette.

Mrs. McCann conveyed her personal experience with securing daycare, stating it was her responsibility as a parent. She suggested some options that might be planned for ahead of time.

NAACP President Ms. Evelyn Foxx addressed the Board:

- It's a bad idea for children to be out of school for a week at Thanksgiving.
- Concerned about increase in crime rate during that week.
- Working poor have no money for daycare, and free daycare still requires transportation.
- A full week off would be a real burden on many people.
- Survey was not accurate enough or sent to a broad enough group.
- Would like the Board to reconsider and talk to some of the parents in east Gainesville.

A School Board employee conveyed a successful experience with an out-of-county school system, where the full week off allowed time to visit with his children over Thanksgiving. He stressed parent responsibility.

A Westwood Middle School teacher and ACEA member spoke on behalf of a group of teachers:

- Many students have little to look forward to during the Holiday season. Many have only their school lunches to provide a turkey dinner.
- They are often depressed at the long stretch of time they have to spend at home, and Christmas holidays are looming.
- In teaching art and humanities, she discusses with the children the traditions that bind our culture.
- It is much easier to keep the students busy during the first two days of Thanksgiving week than at the end of the year when they are looking forward to summer vacation.
- Two breaks so close together will break the rhythm and routine that contribute to student success.
- Students and faculty members who want to take extra time at Thanksgiving are already accommodated.

A citizen spoke against the full week Thanksgiving break, based on student needs, when they have difficult family situations.

Ms. Roy felt an inordinate amount of time has been spent on this issue involving two school days. She stated that teachers have had no raises, have lost their tenure, have to contend with many difficult mandates, have to pay into their retirement system, and new teachers cannot even take advantage of the retirement system. They have received nothing to make them know they are appreciated and she would like to be able to give them the Fall Break they have asked for. Ms. Roy also pointed out that 12-month employees are not required to take vacation on these two days.

The Superintendent's recommendation was read.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion failed 2 - 3

Yes: Griffin
Oyenarte
No: McNealy
Paulson
Roy

2012-13 CLASS SIZE
REDUCTION COMPLIANCE
PLAN

Dr. Steven Stark, Director, Research and Evaluation, provided background on the Class Size Amendment. The amendment requires no more than 18 students in grades K-3, 22 in grades 4-8, and 25 in grades 9-12 (in core courses). To better meet the needs of the students in Alachua County, the District was out of compliance with the class-size amendment for the October 2012 survey. This imposed a financial penalty on the district and required submission of a plan establishing specific actions the District will take to be in compliance by October 2013. Submission of the certified plan to the DOE and subsequent acceptance will result in restoration of a portion of the financial penalty.

Motion by Mrs. Griffin

Seconded by Mrs. Oyenarte

Moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the plan for meeting class-size requirements, as presented, and submit to the Department of Education for approval.

Dr. Stark explained that the term 'logically stacked', indicates Honors and regular classes in the same classroom at the same time. This is a possible solution, if needed to alleviate a problem at the school.

Dr. Paulson commended Ms. Karen Clarke, Secondary Curriculum Director, on the extensive work she put into the Class Size Amendment process.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CITIZEN INPUT

A teacher addressed the Board about the student day being fifteen minutes longer in the five city middle schools than in elementary and high schools. She believes this is due to busing schedules and requested problems specific to middle schools be considered prior to development of next year's busing schedule.

INFORMATION ITEM –
SCHOOL SECURITY

Mr. Philoron Wright, Assistant to the Superintendent, conducted a presentation on school security. He stated that the recent series of meetings with law enforcement agencies have been very productive.

Mrs. Oyenarte expressed that she was pleased to see Mr. Shelnutt on the crisis team, since he had direct experience at GHS last year. She also stated that she appreciates Mr. Wright and the whole team being cautious about revealing security details.

Dr. Paulson expressed appreciation to Mr. Wright and Mr. Lyons for their diligence about security.

Dr. Boyd also expressed appreciation to Mr. Wright for doing a great job with the security project and commended him on working so well with all law enforcement agencies in the county.

Mrs. Roy thanked Mr. Wright for the report, stating that the community wants to know that the school system understands the importance of this issue and is exploring all the possibilities.

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
REQUESTS

Mrs. Oyenarte suggested that a signal of some kind be considered to help increase awareness of citizen input timelines.

Mrs. Roy pointed out highlights of the report from Mixon and Associates, including:

- Governor Scott is requesting that charter schools get \$100 million in PECO money this year, an increase from \$55 million in past years. She pointed out that public schools have not received any PECO funding during the same period of time.
- There is a proposed bill to reduce the amount of money going to virtual education; the major impact would be to the Florida Virtual School and its franchisees. It seems the intent would be to make more money available to private virtual schools.

Mrs. Roy stated that these issues need to be brought to the attention of legislators.

In response to Dr. McNealy's inquiry, clarification was made on citizen input procedures. Dr. McNealy would like to speak further on the matter with Mrs. Seigle and Mr. Moore.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman announced upcoming meetings and declared the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.