

MINUTES OF THE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF PUTNAM COUNTY, FLORIDA

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2009 - 3:30 P.M.

The District School Board of Putnam County, Florida met in official session on Tuesday, February 17, 2009, at 3:30 P.M., in the Board Room of the Campbell School Administration Building, located at 200 South Seventh Street, Palatka, Florida. The following School Board Members were present: Mr. John D. Milton, Mr. Terry Wright, Mrs. Lisa Parsons, Chairperson, Mr. C. L. Overturf, Jr., Vice Chairman, and Mrs. Joann Barber. Also present were Superintendent Thomas D. Townsend and Mr. James D. Padgett, School Board Attorney.

The meeting was opened, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and observance of a moment of silence.

Chairperson Parsons welcomed everyone and instructed the public on Board policy and procedure concerning public comments.

Mr. Charles Buresch, Consultant, at the request of the Superintendent, shared information on recent grant applications and continued efforts to secure additional funding through the same.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Consent Agenda items were considered. Prior to Board action, the Board and public were given the opportunity to request items be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate consideration. Item 1., f., was removed from consideration and item 5., f., was pulled for separate consideration.

Approve  
Consent  
Agenda

Mr. Milton moved and Mr. Wright seconded the motion to approve the Consent Agenda, items numbered 1 through 7, with item 1., f., removed from consideration and item 5., f., removed for separate consideration, as presented and recommended by the Superintendent, as follows:

1. School Board - Superintendent Thomas D. Townsend
  - a. Approval of Listing of School Volunteers (as submitted by Communities in Schools).
  - b. Approval of Consultant for Palatka High School.
  - c. Approval of Two School Trips (1-Crescent City Jr.-Sr. High School 1-Palatka High School)
  - d. After-the-Fact approval for out-of-state travel for Interlachen High School JRTOC Staff.
  - e. Approval of Invoice from James L. Padgett, School Board Attorney.
  - f. Approval of School Board Meeting Minutes. - Item pulled from Consideration.
2. Support Services - Mr. Sam Foerster
  - a. Approval of 2009 Summer Work Hours for School Board Employees.
  - b. Approval of the following for the Purchasing Department - (Mrs. Sandy Scranton)
    - (1) Purchase of above ground storage tank for Interlachen Bus Compound.  
RFBP 54042929
3. Human Resources - Mr. Werner Holloway
  - a. Approval of Personnel Matters.
4. Finance - Mrs. Rhonda Odom
  - a. Approval of financial reports through January 31, 2009 (available prior to board meeting).

- b. Approval of authorization to pay vouchers for March, 2009.
  - c. Approval of 2008-2009 Personnel Allocations Change Number 12.
5. Instructional/Curriculum Services - Dr. Grace Thomas
- a. Approval of proposed dates and times for Putnam County High School graduation ceremonies {Ms. Grace Thomas}.
  - b. Approval of proposed dates as last day for seniors for Crescent City Jr.-Sr. High School and Palatka High School {Ms. Grace Thomas}.
  - c. Approval of stipends to five (5) Mellon Elementary School teachers for ten (10) hours each to tutor 3rd-5th grade students at FCAT minicamp after school from February 17-March 3, 2009 {Ms. Mary Beth Hedstrom}.
  - d. Approval of stipends to instructional personnel at Browning-Pearce Elementary School to work collaboratively on data analysis and curriculum mapping on June 10 & 11, 2009 {for Ms. Mary Beth Hedstrom}.
  - e. Approval of stipends to three (3) teachers for providing Aiming for 6 workshops for students at Kelley Smith Elementary School {Ms. Janice Pounds}.
  - f. Item removed for separate consideration.
6. Student Services - Ms. Constance Schneider
- a. Approval of Recommendations concerning School Transfer Requests including transfers to or from the alternative classes housed at home schools.
  - b. Approval of request for students to attend school in another county for the 2008-2009 school year.
  - c. Approval of Recommended Orders from Expulsion Committee.  
Student A, ninth grade student at Palatka High School, was expelled from the Putnam County School System and Transportation for the remainder of the 2008-2009 School Year, for violation of School Board Policy 6GX54-5.10, VII,1: A. Rule 1, D., Rule 4, F., Rule 6 and L. Rule 12.  
Student B, sixth grade student at Beasley Middle School, was expelled from the Putnam County School Transportation System for the remainder of the 2008-2009 School Year, for violation of School Board Policy 6GX54-5.10, VII,1: A. Rule 1, D., Rule 4, G Rule 7 and L. Rule 12.
7. North East Florida Educational Consortium - Mr. Robert Smith  
[Items Affecting Putnam County are identified with (P)]
- a. Approval of out-of-state travel for Ulysees Gilbert to attend the Jackson State University Teacher Recruitment Job Fair on March 31, 2009, in Jackson, Mississippi, and to include travel March 30-31 and the Mississippi State University Job Fair on April 6-8, 2009, in Starkville, Mississippi, and to include travel April 5-9, 2009. Reimbursement of all expenses is also requested.
  - b. Approval of a concept paper for Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant proposal in the amount of \$2,250,000.00 each year for four years.
  - c. Approval of Letter of Agreement #757-09-349 with Justin Gaddis, an independent contractor who will provide services for the Early Reading First project.
  - d. Approval of Letter of Agreement #739-09-027 with Paula Forsyth, an independent contractor who will provide services for the revision of the NEFEC ESOL program.

- e. Approval of Letter of Agreement #739-09-026 with Tracy Taylor, an independent contractor who will provide services for the Distance Learning Program.
- f. Approval of Letter of Agreement #762-09-022 with Colvin Carter, an independent contractor who will provide training for Reading Endorsement to selected Florida Reading Initiative schools
- g. Approval of Letter of Agreement #763-09-002 with Florida State University on behalf of its Board of Trustees and on behalf of the Florida Center for Interactive Media, an independent contractor who will provide deliverables for the Literacy Essentials and Reading Network.
- h. Approval of Amendment #1 to the Professional Consulting Services Contractual Agreement with Bumpers Consulting Services, LLC dba Whetstone Consulting Group, an independent contractor who will provide services for the Tri-County Career Academy Project.
- i. Approval of the attached Engagement Letter Agreement with Foley & Lardner LLP, an independent contractor who will provide legal services regarding the document request concerning NEFEC's review of Skyward Software.
- j. Approval of Letter of Agreement #765-09-01 with Mike Kaht, an independent contractor who will provide services as outlined in the agreement.
- k. Approval of Agreements with the following education providers who will participate in the NEFEC Dropout Prevention/Credit Recovery Program: District School Boards of Miami-Dade, Pinellas, Polk and Lee, and PACE - Orlando.

Motion unanimously carried.

As to item 5., f., *Approval of Consultant for Federal Programs*, Mrs. Barber had questions. Mr. Townsend gave explanation and stated there would be no problem with a cap of ten thousand dollars.

After discussion, Mrs. Barber moved and Mr. Milton seconded a motion for Approval of Consultant for Federal Programs, not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00). Motion unanimously carried.

Approve  
Federal  
Programs  
Consultant

Prior to public comments, Chairperson Parsons requested Superintendent Townsend give some comments regarding possible recommendations on school closings. After comments by the Superintendent, Mr. Sam Foerster gave a presentation on cost vs. revenue by school on the following schools: William D. Moseley Elementary, Mellon Elementary, Melrose Elementary, Q.I. Roberts Middle, and Beasley Middle School. Much discussion followed.

School  
Closing  
Comments

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

The following individuals spoke regarding closing schools: Laura Blackburn, 113 Riverside Blvd., East Palatka, Florida 32131; Nikki Gance, 103 Etoniah Cemetery Road, Palatka, Florida, 32177; Laura Godwin, 201 Hiawatha Court, East Palatka, Florida 32131; Holly English, 120 Plantation Circle, Palatka, Florida 32177; Annie Svetlik, 511 North 3rd Street, Palatka, Florida, 32177; Robert Stephenson, 415 Jackson Avenue, Palatka, Florida, 32177; Beth Wilkinson, 108 Ray Lane, East Palatka, Florida, 32177.

Superintendent Townsend stated at this time, it is his recommendation to close Mellon Elementary, William D. Moseley Elementary and Q.I. Roberts Elementary. He stated he will give the Board a month before he officially puts the recommendation on the agenda for a vote. During this time, he will meet with staff and parents of these schools. More discussion followed.

Mr. Overturf passed out copies of a memo to the Superintendent requesting information. (See Supplementary File) He also read into the minutes a letter he is sending to Florida Legislators regarding inadequate educational funding. (See Supplementary File) Discussion followed.

**DISCUSSION AGENDA:**

1. Discussion, Input and Approval to change Putnam County School Board Meeting date from March 17, 2009 to March 24, 2009.

Mrs. Barber moved and Mr. Milton seconded a motion to change the Putnam County School Board Meeting date from March 17, 2009 to March 24, 2009. Motion unanimously carried.

Approve Change of School Board Meeting Date

2 Discussion and Input on Recommendation Regarding Impact Fees. Board Members discussed impact fees and possible recommendations to the Putnam County Board of County Commissioners.

After discussion, Mr. Milton moved and Mrs. Barber seconded a motion to recommend to the Putnam County Board of County Commissioners that impact fees be kept at the current rate but, a moratorium to possibly boost the economy, be enacted for a period of six months to one year. Motion unanimously carried.

Recommendation on Impact Fees

3. Approval of Budget Amendments through January 31, 2009. - Item removed from consideration.

**REPORTS:**

1. School Board Members

Mrs. Barber requested Superintendent Townsend consider closing W. H. Beasley a much older facility rather than Q.I. Roberts, a relatively new facility. Discussion followed.

Mr. Wright thanked everyone for their support of the family of Haleigh Cummings, a Browning Pearce Elementary student who is missing. He also appealed to the Superintendent to wait as long as possible to make decisions such as school closings. Mr. Wright stated he believes we owe the community an explanation for our actions and that we should be sure we have left no stone unturned and have looked at every funding opportunity. Discussion followed on possible timelines for funding information from Tallahassee.

Mr. Milton stated he believes other avenues need to be investigated before closing schools. He discussed the possibility of looking at shifting the E.H. Miller School population to another campus and repurposing the E.H. Miller building for perhaps the new Maintenance and Transportation facility.

Mr. Overturf asked the Board to join him in sending a resolution to all political representatives in Tallahassee. He encouraged community members to also contact these representatives.

Board Member Wright left the meeting at 5:20 P.M.

Mr. George Williams, Media Services reported to the Board that names and addresses of all legislators would be posted on the District's website and also a sample of possible "talking points" to be included in letters.

Mr. Carl Dennard, 128 Dinkla Lane, Palatka, Florida, 32177 was recognized by the Chair to address the Board even though he had not filled out a public comment card.

Mrs. Michelle Yoxtheimer, P.O. Box 536, Bostwick, Florida was also allowed to speak. She encouraged all Q.I. Roberts Middle School parents to get involved and requested that sample letters to legislators be posted at every school in the District for the use of parents.

Mrs. Parsons requested that the Superintendent and his Administrative team re-evaluate the option of keeping sixth grade at the elementary school level. Discussion followed.

2 Board Attorney

Attorney Padgett reported that at least four groups from around the state are preparing possible litigation against the Governor and Legislators for failure to adequately fund education as called for by the Constitution.

3. Superintendent

Superintendent Townsend stated he wants everyone to realize that the battle is not with each other and we must pull together as a community. He stated the District will move forward to educate the children of Putnam County.

Mrs. Sharon Hughes, President, Putnam Federation of Teacher United, reminded everyone that PFT is sponsoring a Public Forum on February 19, 2009 at 5:30 PM in the Panther Den of Palatka High School. Superintendent Townsend will be there to answer questions.

There being no further business, Mr. Milton moved and Mrs. Barber seconded the motion that the meeting be adjourned at 5:43 P.M. Motion unanimously carried.

---

LISA PARSONS, CHAIRPERSON

---

THOMAS D. TOWNSEND, SECRETARY

A DVD Recording of this meeting is available in the Supplementary Minute File.