

THERESA AXFORD
Superintendent of Schools



Members of the Board

District #4
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Chairperson

District # 2
ANDY GRIFFITHS
Vice-Chairperson

District # 1
BOBBY HIGHSMITH

District # 3
MINDY CONN

District # 5
DR. SUE WOLTANSKI

Monroe County School Board Meeting Minutes

Host Location: Coral Shores High School – Media Center
89901 US 1, Tavernier, FL 33070
Tuesday, December 15, 2020

A video broadcast of the meeting is available at <https://monroe-k12.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Bobby Highsmith
Mr. Andy Griffiths
Mrs. Mindy Conn
Mr. John Dick
Dr. Sue Woltanski

Mrs. Theresa Axford, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Dirk Smits, Board Attorney

WORKSHOP AGENDA – TIME ACTUAL 4:00 P.M.

1. Sugarloaf Workforce Housing, Gorman and Company, LLC

John Lerdahl, Joel Reed, and Patrick Patrello from Gorman and Company, LLC presented, via video conference, an update on the project. The presentation included the first design charrette/drawings, review of the project schedule, and budget review. Board Attorney, Gaelan Jones, also participated in the discussion via video conference.

Extensive discussion from the Board members included:

- a) Specific design suggestions for function and comfort of tenants*
- b) What size apartments would be most beneficial and the possibility of a 2 bedroom with a lock-off option*
- c) Rent differentials*
- d) Whether or not additional amenities would be cost effective*
- e) Possible safety considerations of additional amenities*
- f) A specified staff survey – Gaelan Jones and Harry Russell will work together to complete this.*
- g) Build and they will come, versus, gather interest before building*
- h) Overall the plan looked good, comes down to what would draw the interest of District employees*

(5 Minute Recess)

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA – TIME CERTAIN 5:04 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pledge of Allegiance led by Coral Shores High School students - Emma Kost and Alison Woltanski

B. ADOPT AGENDA AND FORMAT – Superintendent’s and/or School Board Members’ requests to amend the agenda or remove items from the consent agenda.

*The Superintendent made recommendation for approval
Motioned: Mr. Highsmith
Seconded: Mrs. Conn
Vote: Passed*

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*The Superintendent made recommendation for approval
Motioned: Dr. Woltanski
Seconded: Mr. Highsmith
Vote: Passed*

D. RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE IN MONROE COUNTY SCHOOLS

1. GEMS - Great Educational Moments for Students

Community GEMS – Ocean Reef Community Foundation

Coral Shores High School students GEMS – Emma Kost and Alison Woltanski

Plantation Key School GEMS – PBIS Program: Trinity Acs, Jennille Arias, Hector Barrios, Kyra Boalch, Su-Naaya Martin, Kallen Martinez, Sofia Jans, Addy McNew, Amanda Tillman, Travis Ruff, Connor Schmitt, Chloe Stanley, Kara Sullivan, Mrs. Patterson. Community member: Carla Goodwin.

CITIZEN INPUT/REQUEST(S) TO ADDRESS THE SCHOOL BOARD

Presentations to the Board are limited to three (3) minutes for each individual speaker and five (5) minutes for the representative of a designated group. Transfer of time between individuals and/or groups is not permitted. Letters submitted to each Board Member and/or Board Secretary prior to a Board Meeting will not additionally be read into the record at the meeting.

PLEASE CALL 305-293-1400, EXT. 53392 BEFORE 5:00 P.M. TO SPEAK DURING OUR CITIZEN INPUT SEGMENT.

If signing, special seating, or other accommodations are needed, please call 305 293 1400 ext. 53323 no less than three (3) business days prior the meeting.

No citizen input

E. CONSENT AGENDA

All items listed as consent agenda items are considered routine and noncontroversial by the School Board and will be approved by a single motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items. Prior to this meeting, Board Members have had the opportunity to review each of these items and may request that any item be moved to an Action Item for individual consideration.

1. Approval of Personnel Recommendations for 2020-2021 School Year
2. Approval of Legal Services October 2020 Invoices Vernis and Bowling
3. Approval of Fees for Employee Benefits Section 125 and Voluntary Benefits Administration fees with FBMC Benefits Management, Inc. (FBMC) for CY 2021
4. Approval of Fees to Gallagher Benefits Services for Consulting Services for CY 2021
5. Approval of Out of County Travel for School District Staff
6. Approve Head Start Monthly Update (Sept.)
7. Approval of Contract Renewal with Addendum for Public Information Officer Contracted Services
8. Approval of Contract Renewal 1 of 3 with Optum Rx for Prescription Benefit Management Services for PY 2021
9. Approval of Laptop computer purchase through CDW G to be assigned to CTE Students for virtual instruction.
10. Approval of Contract Extension with Brightview Landscape Services, Inc.
11. Approval of Addendum #1 to BrightView landscape Services, Inc. contract to include the Transportation and Internal Services Facility.
12. Approval of Castaldi Report for Trumbo Road Buildings No. #1, #5 and #6
13. Approve Short term Lease with the College of the Florida Keys for Use of Key Largo School

The Superintendent made recommendation for approval

Motioned: Mr. Griffiths

Seconded: Dr. Woltanski

VOTE: Passed

F. REPORTS

GOAL 1: Student Success

1. *Student Progression Plan, D. Murphy*

Dr. Murphy explained that the state of Florida requires Board approval of the Student Progression Plan. There were very few statutory changes. This year we used breakout groups, meeting via Microsoft Teams. The groups were facilitated by Dr. Larry Schmiegel (Elementary Plan), Ms. Lisa Taylor (Middle School Plan), and Ms. Wendy McPherson (High School Plan). The breakout groups allowed for wider participation – we were able to include teachers because of this. Although the Board will not vote on the Student Progression Plan today, we would like any Board feedback.

Dr. Schmiegel presented Elementary Plan. He discussed the EL Legislation Updates, Excused Absences – addition of Covid-19 related details, and the Awards and Recognition.

Mr. Darren Pais presented the Middle School Plan. He discussed the Updates, and the Clarifications or Removals.

Ms. Wendy McPherson presented the High School Plan. She discussed the Updates, and the Clarifications or Removals.

Mrs. Conn asked if help for students to manage grades during online learning was still available – as done last year during Covid. – Dr. Murphy explained that teachers felt there should be greater accountability this year so we are working with teachers on best practices and fair grading Teachers are, taking in

considerations, monitoring students, and working with them. The Superintendent affirmed that teachers are working to give students the opportunity to be successful.

Dr. Woltanski said that she wishes to see the Middle School Marh Acceleration language to include the actual process, which relies on teacher and parental input. – Dr. Murphy said that he believes that is actionable.

2. Student Achievement Update, D. Murphy and F. Herrin

a.) Dr. Murphy presented an update on progress and monitoring. He explained that historically the District used STAR Renaissance as the monitoring/assessment tool, however the CARES Act money allowed for the state of Florida to contract with Cambium – this data reports a little differently.

b.) Dr. Herrin presented the District's supports that are in place to mitigate the Covid-19 related losses and to support our students. The Superintendent affirmed that the District is considering two 4 week summer programs to support students.

3. Spring 2021 Educational Plan and Assurances, F. Herrin

Assurance 1: All schools will remain open

Assurance 2: Continue the full panoply of services

Assurance 3: Continue progress monitoring and interventions

Assurance 4: Continue charter school flexibility

Assurance 5: Innovative learning modality

Assurance 6: Truancy/Attendance of students

Assurance 7: Continue professional development

Interventions: Before and after school, weekends

Summer Remediation Programs: This year we are proposing two 4-week summer sessions

It was explained by Dr. Herrin that the state of Florida's deadline to submit the Spring 2021 Educational Plan and Assurances was December 14.

GOAL 2: The Whole Child

1. Head Start Annual Report 2019-2020, M. Russell - via video conference

Mrs. Russell shared funding, enrollment, medical and health, family engagement, and the program goals.

2. Head Start SF425 Federal Financial Report, M. Russell - via video conference

The Superintendent reaffirmed that our program has never had an audit finding, in-turn it never had the threat of discontinuation.

Dr. Woltanski asked the District to explore how we can encourage the continuation of parent engagement from Head Start into Elementary, Middle and High School. – Dr. Herrin affirmed that we would look into this.

GOAL 4: Safety and Security

1. Overview of New Title IX Regulation, H. Russell

Mr. Russell presented the updates to the Title IX Law, explaining that the biggest change to the law is that we are all mandatory reporters for both students and employees. Training is a federal mandate – there are multiple training levels. He also discussed Implementation requirement - separate teams for employee and

student cases, the USDOE/OCR Audits, and finally shared what the District has done to come into compliance.

LEGAL

No report

SUPERINTENDENT

Mrs. Axford shared the District's accomplishments to date for the school year. Most importantly, we got the students back to school safely. We learned one of our strengths and weaknesses is communication. Efforts to polish this: Employee Spotlight – has been very encouraging, Community GEMS, staff survey to learn how staff preferred to receive communication, our PIO sent out extensive press releases, we're doing daily up-keep of our social media and District website, the Superintendent's extensive communications – blog posts, Morning Magazine radio spots, Evening Edition radio spots, Keys Talk radio spots, Facebook Live sessions, BOLT newsletters, and extensive email correspondence.

We recently conducted a Teacher wellness survey in order to support morale - we have removed PGP requirement and eliminated pre-observation form for this school year. We also conducted a student wellness survey as many students are hurting and are worried – we've taken the emphasis off penalizing and have strengthened support. We're building our Substitute Teacher program, and our Grow Your Own program. We've partnered with the College of the Florida Keys to provide over 40 hours tutoring in the District's virtual programs and we will continue to grow this program. As part of her many initiatives, Mrs. Anders has overhauled the Risk Management department saving the District \$141K this year, and an expected \$216K next year.

Mrs. Axford pays tribute to the teachers and support staff for the many successes this first semester, and continuing to "grow during difficult times".

BOARD

Dr. Woltanski expressed that the District has had an impressive response to disruption due to Covid-19, and she shared FSBA updates. Additionally, she discussed advocating for teachers, bus drivers, and food service employees to be moved up in priority to receive the Covid vaccine. Like the FSBA and the Superintendent have done, does the Board want to send a letter to Governor?

Mr. Highsmith – no report

Mr. Griffiths – Appreciated the Superintendent's report tonight for achievements.

Mrs. Conn - Thanks to all.

Mr. Dick – Supportive advocating for teachers, bus drivers, and food service employees to be moved up in priority to receive the Covid vaccine and has already signed the Superintendent's letter.

Recess

G. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Job Description First Reading: 77208 Coordinator of Professional Growth / Community Relations

The Superintendent explained that this job description is supported by strategic analysis to support non-instructional staff training. Additionally, there is need for extensive community relations that have not been attended to. Mrs. Anders has found the money to fund this position – this is a neutral financial commitment.

Mr. Highsmith asked if this would replace the current contracted PIO? - Yes, with added responsibility as this is a consolidated position, however we would continue to work with the specialist in Crisis Communication for Covid. Mr. Highsmith further asked if there was further budget discussion to be had in relation to this. – The Superintendent referred back to the savings made in the Risk Management department supporting this salary cost.

Mr. Griffiths expressed that he would like to revisit the policy on the Fund Balance and that he'd like to see a line item "fund balance replenishment" added to the budget. – The Superintendent suggested that Mrs. Anders could give a budget forecast at the next meeting, and that the line item was an excellent suggestion.

2. Policies First Reading

PO124 Standards of Ethical Conduct Revised Bylaw

PO141.2 Conflict of Interest Revised Bylaw

PO2266 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs and Activities Special Update Title IX Regulations

PO4162 Drug and Alcohol Testing of CDL License Holders and Other Employees Who Perform Safety Sensitive Functions Revised Policy

PO7430.01 Environmental Health Program Revised Policy

PO8406 School Safety Reports of Suspicious Activity and Potential Threats to Schools New Policy

PO8500 Food Service Program Revised Policy

There was extensive discussion between the Board members and Board Attorney, Dirk Smits, regarding clarification on some policies and the adoption procedure.

Dr. Woltanski mentioned that although the Neola policies include the statute, she would like to see the bill. – The Superintendent requested the Board Administrative Aide to follow up with Neola on this. On the policy 8500: Food Service she asked that this be edited so board approval would be required before any legal actions were taken in response to negative school lunch balances.

Reconvene

H. ACTION ITEMS

1. Acceptance of the Monroe County School District Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2020.

The Superintendent made recommendation for approval

Motioned: Dr. Woltanski

Seconded: Mrs. Conn

VOTE: Passed

2. Approval of Upper Keys Maintenance/Transportation Annex Final Change Order #4 to Burke Construction Group, Inc.

*The Superintendent made recommendation for approval
Motioned: Dr. Woltanski
Seconded: Mr. Griffiths
VOTE: Passed*

3. Approval of Spring 2021 Education Plan and Assurances - Florida Department of Education

*The Superintendent made recommendation for approval
Motioned: Mrs. Conn
Seconded: Dr. Woltanski
ROLL CALL VOTE:*

*Mr. Highsmith – no
Mr. Griffiths – yes
Mrs. Conn – yes
Dr. Woltanski – yes
Mr. Dick - yes*

Mr. Highsmith stated that in future, he would like the Board to have the opportunity to review ahead of time. He was unsupportive due to insufficient time to review.

Dr. Woltanski suggested using the wording “accept” rather than “approve”.

Mr. Dick suggested that we email the documents to the Board in future.

ADJOURMENT 7:20 P.M.