

**Special School Board Meeting Minutes  
High School Redistricting  
Monday, September 15, 2003 – 6:00 p.m.  
School Board Meeting Room  
Stuart, FL 34994**

**Members Present**

Dr. David Anderson, Chairman  
Vicki Davis, Vice-Chair  
Susan Hershey  
Laurie Gaylord  
Lorie Shekailo  
Dr. Sara A. Wilcox, Superintendent  
Tom Elfers, School Board Attorney  
Matt Rudling, Student Representative (SFHS)

**Members Absent**

None

**Staff Present**

Hank Salzler, Lori McWilliams, Rosemarie Taylor, Darrell Miller, Darla Miloszewski, Rodger Osborne, Dr. Frank Raffone, Marshall Skinner, Ray Parrish

**Public**

James Christie, Debbie Taylor, Amy Alpert, Scott Chalmers

**Press**

PBPost – Rani Gupta

Stuart News – Michael Samuels

**MCEA** – No Representation

**AFSCME** – No Representation

Call to Order by the Chairman at 6:07 p.m. and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States.

Dr. Anderson explained the purpose of the meeting is to finalize the redistricting plan with the new high school coming online. He recognized the members of the Long Range Planning Committee in attendance. He discussed the difficult decisions that have to be made in order to balance the school population due to growth. This is a result of public outcry over schools being overcrowded and requesting a new school, at which time the State determined the need for a new high school. He stated that within the next four to five years he feels the Board would be redistricting again due to the need for yet another high school and discussed the strong commitment of the school board to provide a quality education. Dr. Wilcox echoed Dr. Anderson's comments that change is not easy and it is difficult to move and discussed the benefits of having another high school and the quality programs available at each of the schools. She explained they have listened to the recommendations and public input and some changes have been reflected in the recommendations this evening as a result of the input received - primarily driving time from one school to another and giving the new school time to populate over time. She commented that the first year the school opens, there would not be seniors, thereby creating a smaller population. She reiterated that students are not just numbers to the Board and that they truly understand.

Dr. Wilcox outlined the initial recommendation by the Long Range Planning Committee and explained there are natural barriers with the river, which creates difficulty in going east and west. She delineated the staff's recommendation, which is a minor modification from the Long Range Planning Committee's recommendation. She presented the staff proposal and commented that in two to three years from now changes may need to be made again. She reminded the Board and public that the 1,342 figure is based on having seniors at the school, and first year enrollment there would be lower. In addition to the modifications, she reviewed the high school choice options and the signature programs available.

**4. Open to the Board:\***

Mrs. Shekailo asked if any consideration has been give for open choice into AAA and Dr. Wilcox stated there would be free open choice to anyone who wanted to attend AAA.

Mrs. Hershey asked what Advanced Placement courses would be offered at AAA and Dr. Wilcox explained it is the Board intention to have a full range of basic Advanced Placement courses. Dr. Wilcox explained AP classes vary from school to school, however reiterated a full range of basic courses would be offered. She discussed providing a small school supplement to let AAA grow into its programs.

Mrs. Davis stated this choice plan is inline with what was been done a couple years ago with the middle school redistricting.

**Special School Board Meeting Minutes**  
**High School Redistricting**  
**Monday, September 15, 2003 – 6:00 p.m.**  
**Page 2 of 4**

**1. Open to the Public**

- Mark Moss, Woodlands resident, selected this area due to the school system. His daughter has had to go through a life change when they moved a few years ago and shouldn't have to go through it again.
- Kelly McClements and Sara Oldfield, students, asked the Board why they would take the juniors out of their school and place them in a rival school. If they are drivers, why can't they stay?
- James Christie, East Stuart resident, asked the Board to allow the East Stuart students to remain at Martin County High School (MCHS) and reiterated his previous comments on the natural flow from J. D. Parker School of Science, Math and Technology to Stuart Middle School and then to MCHS. He submitted a petition and asked if this could be legally challenged once a decision has been made. Tom Elfers, Board Attorney, advised the final authority resides with the Board. Dr. Anderson stated anything could be challenged but the Board has the final decision.
- Jessica Chuty and Kristine Law (students) – asked if there would be programs and activities, such as prom, powderpuff, SGA, chorus, band and football and Dr. Wilcox stated yes and Dr. Anderson stated they would be fully established. They feel juniors should have a choice of where they attend school.
- Lauren Moss (student) discussed school rivalry and has had to make new friends once already.
- Gary Minsdoor, a New Monrovia resident, asked if any of the Board Members have children involved in these changes. Mrs. Shekailo stated her child is currently a sophomore in high school and would possibly have to move to the new school. Mr. Minsdoor moved to this area for his son to attend SFHS and stated his son is in the band and he would not continue to play his instrument if he is sent to MCHS. He feels the Board is only recognizing numbers and traffic patterns rather than the emotional value involved.
- Cindy Owens stated her son is a sophomore at MCHS and is not opposed to rezoning, however her son was selected for OPUS, an honors class, and asked if this would be considered a signature program. She asked that this be included within the choice plan and understands there would be a chorus at the new high school and the director is a former student of Mr. Corbin's, however she wants her son to remain under the instruction of Mr. Corbin.
- Jackie Jackson reminded the Board of the purpose given the Long Range Planning Committee, which was to research the situation, consider free and reduced lunch, and not blatantly divide communities. In the end, they devised a plan to best fit the situation. In the meantime, it has been asked that the new high school be opened at a lower capacity and the purpose of opening a new high school is to relieve overcrowding at the existing schools and stated that Jensen is not the only community growing, and questioned if it is even the fastest growing neighborhood. She discussed free choice, or signature programs, and needs further clarification. She feels parents are going to enroll their children in the signature programs specifically to remain at their current schools. She reiterated the purpose of building a new high school was to alleviate overcrowding. She stated resolutions based on emotions has the potential to create a much bigger issue and reminded the Board that they represent all of Martin County and are responsible for making the best choice possible based on factual information.
- Gail Kiernante, a Palm City resident, has a student in the pre-IB program at SFHS who is considering discontinuing the program. She stated Palm City is split and believes the choice program balances the district and asked the district to continue with the current choice program.
- Cheryl Garren, a Martin Meadows resident, has children that attend SFHS and asked why sibling preferences are not being made. She stated parent teacher conferences would be difficult for parents involved in two high schools. Dr. Anderson explained that if exceptions are made for siblings, the school would never be populated correctly and would continue to be over capacity. She heard that Hammock Creek would be moved to SFHS and feels they should remain as well as Martin Meadows. Dr. Anderson advised Ms. Garren the information she has is incorrect and stated Hammock Creek is not being rezoned.
- Sherry Lang discussed rivalry between the two schools and school pride. She believes juniors and seniors should be given a choice if they can provide their own transportation.
- Carl Stewart stated he is in an odd zone north of Monterey and west of US1, a small community within a mile and half of MCHS. His community was surprised when they were slated to attend AAA and asked why they are being rezoned when they are so close to MCHS? It seems arbitrary at this point to not allow school choice when the Board does not know how many students would choice into the new school. There hasn't been a questionnaire circulated to the student body to find out their preferences. These are young adults in a democratic society and they should be heard from.
- Mariliz Carey, a Sewalls Point resident whose daughter will be a junior next year at MCHS, requested the Board and administration ensure that the best classes are taught in the new school. She stated there are tremendous advantages for a school without a senior class, however there are disadvantages as well. She again asked that students are provided with the best teachers and programs available.
- Darlene Papieto, a Martin Meadows resident, presented a last minute petition and would like these children to remain at SFHS.
- Liz Bamburg (student), a sophomore at SFHS, stated she will be a junior next year who drives her freshman brother to school and wants the Rocky Point area to remain at SFHS.
- Danielle LeCombe, SFHS sophomore, asked if Jensen Beach is the fastest growing population, why not leave it open for future growth? Dr. Anderson advised Ms. Bamburg she is not being affected because she lives in Rocky Point, which is not being moved. He stated they have left space for growth at the new school and that they cannot consider everybody's exemption. He explained that he had to split his children between Murray Middle School and Hidden Oaks Middle School when HOMS opened.

**Special School Board Meeting Minutes**  
**High School Redistricting**  
**Monday, September 15, 2003 – 6:00 p.m.**  
**Page 3 of 4**

- Lele Bardoni's son attends SFHS on school choice and does not want her son moved. She stated if the Board indulged themselves in doing more work and other options, these issues would work themselves out on its own.
- Tara Powers a senior at SFHS urged the Board to reconsider the sibling issue and feels families are split enough these days.

**2. Approve High School Attendance Zones to Begin August 2004:\***

Mrs. Hershey does not want students viewed as consumables to fill a school and then after two or three years they have to be moved back. She asked for reassurance that students that enter the new high school would be able to conclude their academic career at that school and Dr. Anderson stated that is the intent of the Board. Dr. Wilcox explained that is the purpose of starting with a lower enrollment. She reiterated Dr. Anderson's earlier comments that within five years another high school would have to be considered. She discussed the Advanced Learning Center that would open in August of 2004 with 200 students.

Mrs. Hershey has heard concerns that some walkers are going to be bussed, such as the Palm City Road students who currently walk to MCHS. Dr. Wilcox stated that is new information and believed they were currently bussed to MCHS and asked staff to investigate this area.

Mrs. Shekailo has heard many juniors say they do not want to move to AAA and want to remain at their current school and asked if choice was to remain open for juniors, what would that do the programs at AAA. Would a fair spectrum of programs be offered to the students moving to AAA without juniors and seniors? Dr. Anderson stated he does not believe so and asked her to look at the complexity of the project.

Mrs. Gaylord clarified that students that are already on school choice would be grandfathered in and Dr. Wilcox agreed. Mr. Salzler explained that once the choice and boundaries are approved, only those students currently on school choice and / or in a "signature program" would be able to remain so that students do not arbitrarily move in order to not leave a school. A list would be made of who is in what school and program as of today.

Mrs. Davis commented that change is inevitable and agreed with the recommendation as presented.

Matt Rudling asked if the Nursing Gold Seal program would be offered at AAA and Mr. Skinner stated this program would be offered at all three high schools. As a student, he realizes change is hard to accept, however change has to be made to make this work. He stated the Board does not have an easy decision, but trusts they would make the right decision.

Mrs. Hershey asked for clarification on the Palm City Road corridor prior to the vote and Dr. Wilcox recommended the Board proceed with the vote as the proposal stands with the caveat that this issue be investigated and if they are in fact walkers, they would then remain at MCHS.

*Mrs. Davis moved approval of the High School Attendance Zones as recommended by the Long Range Planning Committee with the modifications made by staff and the caveat that the Palm City Road students would remain at MCHS if they are currently walkers, Mrs. Hershey seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Dr. Anderson directed staff to make technical adjustments are necessary only for tweaking purposes.

**3. Approve School Choice Procedures for High School for School Year 2004-2005:\***

Dr. Wilcox reminded the Board to add number 7 – Open Choice into AAA High School to the list. Mrs. Hershey clarified that students currently approved for school choice are grandfathered in and Dr. Wilcox advised all students on an approved school choice form and those that are in the signature programs as of today.

*Mrs. Hershey moved approval of the High School Choice Plan as presented with the inclusion of open choice into AAA, Mrs. Gaylord seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Dr. Wilcox discussed public input during the Long Range Planning Committee meetings about students attending Martin County schools from other counties. She explained the principals and staff have made every effort to determine who these students are. She discussed a new requirement implemented this year requiring proof of residency with approximately 1800 students in non-compliance. She explained notification was given prior to the end of school last year, and again at the beginning of this school year. The schools have continued to notify parents through phone calls.

*Mrs. Davis made a motion requiring students to provide an FPL electric bill by Friday, September 19, 2003 in order to remain in school and if not turned in by this date, the student could not attend school on Monday, Mrs. Hershey seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Dr. Wilcox explained the challenge to the Long Range Planning Committee for the elementary boundary changes would be the need to adjust and shift populations to the south. She discussed the need to be creative with the

**Special School Board Meeting Minutes**  
**High School Redistricting**  
**Monday, September 15, 2003 – 6:00 p.m.**  
**Page 4 of 4**

population at Hobe Sound Elementary in order to bring students in. They would also have to look at possible spaces near the school and relocatables while the school is under construction.

Mrs. Shekailo discussed the difficulties involved with redistricting and the emotional toll it has taken on all involved. As a parent whose child will have to move in his junior year, she has emphasized the positives and stated change is not always bad. She explained it is now up to her, as a parent, to help her child through the transition and the school would help as much as they could. She urged parents to do what they can to make these moves as easy as possible on their children.

Mrs. Gaylord discussed the oath each board member took requiring them to represent all the students and schools of Martin County. She stated the Board cannot keep up with the counties growth without making changes in the schools. She has heard the argument that real estate values are going to go down because of the school they have been assigned and begs to differ. She hasn't seen Forbes or Money magazine come forward and say that Jupiter Island property values have decreased due to the schools they have been assigned.

There being no further business to bring before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

---

**CHAIRMAN (Dr. David L. Anderson)**

---

**SECRETARY (Sara A. Wilcox, Ph.D.)**