



WORKSHOP MINUTES

Tuesday, November 17, 2009 – 9:00 a.m.
School Board Meeting Room
500 E. Ocean Boulevard
Stuart, FL 34994

Members Present

Lorie Shekailo, Chair
Susan Hershey, Vice Chair
Dr. David Anderson
Maura Barry-Sorenson
Laurie Gaylord
Nancy Kline, Superintendent
Doug Griffin, Board Attorney

AFSCME: Lisa Edwards

MCEA: Dianne Falvo

Call to Order by the Chair and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Mr. Wayne Blanton, Executive Director of the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA), and Mr. Bill Montford, CEO of the Florida Association of District School Superintendents (FADSS), presented a PowerPoint which outlined the basic principles of Board/Superintendent relations. The presentation contained principles as follows:

- Principle #1: The education of the children of the district must come first.
- Principle #2: A School Board is responsible for ensuring that the schools are well-managed; but it does not directly manage them.
- Principle #3: School Board members function as a Board and not individually. It is a Board member's vote along with other Board members' votes, which has power.
- Principle #4: A primary function of the School Board is to establish policies to achieve the District's mission and strategic goals and to reach the objectives desired by the public they serve.
- Principle #5: The school system should operate as a team, with each member respected and given an opportunity to be heard.
- Principle #6: Observe lines of authority – the Superintendent is responsible to the Board, Principals are responsible to the Superintendent, and teachers/schools staff members are responsible to a Principal.
- Principle #7: School Board should be progressive, but changes or innovations should be initiated only after careful consideration of their ultimate effect on the school district.
- Principle #8: Board members should consider the recommendations of the Superintendent before making any commitments.

- Principle #9: Board members should be tactful and understanding in dealing with citizens' complaints/concerns. Help them to understand the nature of a Board member's authority and the avenues available to resolve their concerns.

The group discussed problems with communication, dialogue and trust, and ways to remedy the problems. Regarding the Superintendent speaking at Board meetings - Mr. Blanton and Mr. Montford indicated that the Superintendent has the right and authority to make recommendations to the Board, and the Board can accept, reject or amend the Superintendent's recommendations. Discussion regarding the recommendation should take place amongst the five Board Members, with the Superintendent answering questions; providing guidance, advice and clarification; and speaking when she notes the Board is "going down a path" that is not in the best interest of the District.

Mr. Blanton indicated that Board members should be meeting with the Superintendent at least once prior to every Board meeting. He reported that the Agenda should not change after it has been released seven days prior to the meeting except in the case of an emergency. Adding a memorandum providing the rationale and a staff recommendation for the Agenda item was discussed. Regarding information coming to the Board after the Agenda has been distributed, Mrs. Kline questioned if there was some information the Board did want brought forward, noting that often times field trips or travel requests are received after the Agenda has been distributed. The consensus was that students should not be denied a field trip because the request was submitted late. Mr. Blanton questioned these items coming before the Board, and suggested that items may have "creeped" into Policies that should go back to administration.

Regarding personnel, Mr. Blanton noted that personnel who do not meet the minimum job qualifications should not be brought forward. The Board requested they be provided with job descriptions and resumes. When items are distributed, whatever is given to one Board member should be supplied to all Board members. Requests for information should continue to go through the Superintendent per policy.

Negative press was discussed. Mr. Blanton noted that as long as the Board is voting the Superintendent down on a regular basis, the press will see it as a "feud."

The Board's attorney being included as part of the Leadership Team was discussed. Some Board members indicated they rely on Mr. Griffin for information. Mr. Blanton reported that the role of the School Board's attorney is to provide legal advice to the Board and the Superintendent. It was suggested that Mr. Griffin and Mrs. Kline schedule regular meetings to exchange information.


Regarding public comments at Board meetings, Mr. Blanton indicated that the Chair sets the professional decorum of the meeting. Members of the public should not be permitted to make slanderous remarks or name staff members. He believed that, going forward, as the Board becomes more functional, the public will "settle themselves down." Mr. Montford indicated that "sometimes the public feeds off of what it sees." Mr. Blanton suggested that the Board consider moving "Open to the Public" to one hour prior to the meeting and not have it televised. He indicated that the televised Board meeting should be to conduct the business of the District.

As a recap to the meeting, the consensus of the Board was as follows:

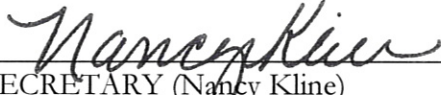
- Every Board Member will meet with the Superintendent for one hour at least every two weeks.
- Resumes and job descriptions for new hires will be supplied to the Board Members.
- Board Members will tell the Superintendent philosophically what they would like for the District.
- Board policies are in the process of being reviewed by NEOLA. A time line should be established. Mr. Blanton and Mr. Montford indicated that the Policies should be developed to develop the Organizational Chart.
- A brief rational/summary and a recommendation will be included with Agenda items.

Mr. Blanton and Mr. Montford will arrange a follow-up visit within the next three to four months.

There being no further business, the workshop was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.



CHAIR (Lorie Shekailo)



SECRETARY (Nancy Kline)