



VISION  
*To be a world-class school system.*

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF LEE COUNTY**  
**School Board Briefing Meeting – M I N U T E S** (Approved 3/13/07)  
**Tuesday – February 13, 2007 / 3:30 p.m.**

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**Attendees:** Mrs. Jeanne S. Dozier, Board Chairman  
Mr. Robert D. Chilmonik, Board Member  
Dr. James W. Browder, Secretary & District Superintendent  
Mrs. Julie Nieminski, Board Internal Auditor  
Dr. Jane E. Kuckel, Board Vice Chair  
Mr. Steven K. Teuber, Board Member  
Mr. Keith Martin, Board Attorney  
Mrs. Denise Mangus, Recording Secretary

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**A. BOARD MEMBERS** (*Mr. Teuber, acting Meeting Chair for Dr. Scricca, called the Briefing to order at 3:30 p.m.*)

- 1. Special Areas of Board Involvement/Reports** – Mr. Chilmonik noted: the Senator Aronberg and Foundation event of Teens Take Tallahassee; Art Festival downtown (student entries); his technology presentation given at Curriculum Meeting; and the Edison Junior Parade.
- 2. Discussion/Opportunities to Replace or Reform State and Local Government Tax System** – Mrs. Dozier called on Dr. Browder re the Jack Tanner tax informational handout distributed prior; Dr. Browder noted data is still being collected (future Briefing). In response to Mr. Chilmonik's question on FSBA discussions on homestead exemptions doubling, Mrs. Dozier noted it's not official yet and Dr. Blanton has met in Tallahassee, with being told there's a difference and schools will taxed on same rate (not after doubling). Dr. Browder noted Ms. Desamours and Mr. Legutko talked about a negative effect, if to happen (\$20 million); it's understood education will remain constant without a deficit re exemptions. Dr. Browder noted, to Mr. Chilmonik's question about next year's taxing and any dramatic effects, that it's done in the summer and we won't have yet; Mr. Chilmonik is concerned about revenues coming into the District and home evaluations dropping. Mrs. Dozier said Governor Crist noted there'll be a lot of conversation (re industry and state).
- 3. Employment Contract with Support Services Attorney** – Mr. Martin noted Heather Hawkins' employment contract term expires March 5<sup>th</sup> (for renewal next month); District substantially saved \$200,000+ in outside counsel last year. She's done concurrency/school construction and Support Services is very complimentary of Ms. Hawkins' work. The amount of compensation proposed is in line with factors of the contracts for Board Auditor and Superintendent—average percentage increase/like instructional step (Board Members concurred).

**B. ACADEMIC SERVICES**

- 1. Revisions to 2006-07 Code of Conduct for Students/Grades 6-12 (2/27)** – Dr. Browder noted the typo is being corrected re tardies to school (versus classes); all middle and high school principals have been talked to (the mistake was understood but things were done appropriately). Dr. Browder sent out directives on tardies so all had understanding of what's supposed to be done.
- 2. 5-10-20 Year Security Plan (Draft)** – Richard Shaffer noted (prior to his Student Services' arrival) Patrick Hayhurst's drafted document outline; the plan's been worked with about 6 months, and Dr. Browder reviewed/tweaked it. What we're doing/hope to is 5-year; 10-year plan can be worked with (as 20) if Board sees fit. Mr. Shaffer visited Columbine last weekend; he feels District is on the cutting edge. Dr. Kuckel is pleased re cameras for security and discipline, noting APs spend much time on "he said/she said" vs. being able to counsel/instruct students; she's also noted school entries, especially elementary (playground and classroom entry) as it's critical all enter through office, with recognition of who's there (and not pass through). Mrs. Dozier complimented all involved but questioned how this affects the work and recommendations of Board advisory committees who have talked about this seriously. Dr. Browder noted CAC's work and he looks forward to those recommendations. The Superintendent explained there has to be a beginning, and he would expect this document to evolve as we move forward. Mr. Chilmonik noted it's good that it's been put together and to have law enforcement experience (i.e., Mr. Hayhurst); he asked about training for the human side. Principals will be trained over the summer again and schools/Education Center will be by certified trainers (on incidents and dealing with people). Dr. Browder noted the importance of meeting with the sheriff and police to have consolidated standard operating procedures. Messrs. Shaffer and Hayhurst were commended.

- 3. New School Grading System** – Dr. Itzen gave a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file). Re school grades/what's new, there are 8 measures: 1) percentage of students meeting high standards on FCAT in 1) reading; 2) math; 3) writing; 4) science (new); 5), 6) percent of all students making annual learn gains in reading and math; 7) percent of low performing students making learning gains in reading; and 8) percent of low performing students making learning gains in math (new). Re FCAT writing, it's completed (2/6-8); FCAT reading, math, and science is 2/26-3/9 with results anticipated in late April through late May (school grades—first week in June). Science will make impact on District as a whole and in schools; re SIPs and alignment of measures last summer, schools are aware of estimates. Re Dr. Kuckel's question of District comparing to state, we compare similarly. Dr. Itzen noted not unusual first time around—like education in early 1990's, students meeting writing averages fairly low; we expect same increases in science percentages. Dr. Browder noted his memo last week; information just received from state but Drs. Itzen and Jones prepared last August those at schools for this. It's being done through the year with Mrs. Boyle also.

Dr. Itzen noted update on writing plus/FCAT writing that passing will be a 2010 requirement; 1<sup>st</sup> time to be taken is next year 10<sup>th</sup> graders (same type of re-testing as has for reading and math). On essay, it's same as since '92-93 (chart was shown of FCAT writing/average essay scores by grade chart); a large percentage of students doing well on the essay portion. Re FCAT writing scores, there's a score of 1-6 and score on multiple choice (focus, organization, support, etc.—ways essay set up on; students are asked to recognize these things in others' writings). In response to Mr. Teuber, composite scores are equally weighted between the two. There are five achievement levels for writing. Re FCAT writing and standard setting timeline—educators got to look at essay and multiple of what's acceptable or not re standards. Dr. Itzen went over the achievement levels' chart; Dr. Itzen responded to Mr. Teuber on adjusting/scaled scores re aggregates (if falling in 300-400 range, one would be level three). Re high school passing score benchmark, Dr. Itzen noted educators recommend 295 (committee recommends 300); it corresponds to the bottom score of level 3 in 10<sup>th</sup> grade (one has to make it in level 3 or higher to pass). A better idea of higher percentages will be after this spring administration of tests.

On graduation standard, state did publish data along ethnic lines. Mr. Chilmonik asked re other states' comparison summaries using FCAT/region-like tests; Dr. Itzen's unaware of other states having FCAT but there are national norm tests. There's been focus shift recognizing students, others' writing, and integration of skills across curriculum. Separately, CELLA testing is brand new (once in fall and again in April); will be once yearly from now on; and it's required by NCLB and the purpose is to monitor English language learning from year to year (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). All ESOL students participate (7,000—8,000/enormous task of individually administering); it should help out in recent Board goals of speaking/writing in English upon graduation. Much discussion was spent with Dr. Clark and a good plan was put together with coordinators to form assessment team and hopefully bring in sub teachers (sending to schools that have 300-400 to test). Dr. Jones noted getting on this the beginning of the year and there was a standing block on agenda to look at data/strategies; she pointed out writing/different way of assessing/understanding students (re not adding writing remedial class)—summer cadre will enable getting at issue of vocabulary (this commitment integrated into actual courses). Dr. Browder noted in looking at data and the huge pressure on instructors—reading into content, writing into such plus teaching skills inside those areas that all them to be successful when leaving high school; he encourages thanking teachers every chance possible for help with children.

## C. HUMAN RESOURCES

- 1. Employee Retention** – Dr. Adkins gave a PowerPoint (copy on file). Recruiting & Staffing sent a packet which included a book for Board Members (he noted Chapter 9 as good). He noted focusing on talents of students and staff members and was excited to hear retention—a critical issue—as a Board goal. When there's talk about attracting/retaining high quality, enough can't be done. Re cumulative percentage of beginning teachers leaving teaching, 46% are lost before fifth year (variety of reasons; Florida is not different) and half of hiring is done to replace. Retention efforts don't seem to be improving; small group is due to retirement, with 271 departing from '06 year due to a variety of other reasons—contract expires, involuntary terminations, certification requirements, resign, etc.). It's hoped to improve our exit survey for obtaining more data on employees leaving. In impacting kids, there were 4,002 teachers with no transition (8%--428 departed and 16% entered—836). Mrs. Dozier would like to see stats broken down by elementary, middle, and high levels (to see if a need not being provided and specific reasons/groups); Dr. Browder will get this data. On top of the Personnel load are 500 internal transfers (another 10% of classrooms seeing change). TALC was worked with this year and the transfer policy changed (moved back into summer); work with principals also re district-wide

expectations to improve. Turnover for FY05 was 9%; FY06 was 12%. Class size amendment put pressure on District to hire teachers though pool not as strong as once was. Issues on certification have to be dealt with.

Dr. Adkins noted the national average cost to replace a teacher is \$11,000; Lee figures it as \$12,500 (FY06 District costs re replace 573 employees is \$6.4 million; not uncommon across country). Strategies are being studied/used; Society of Resource Management notes perceived effectiveness of retention top six are: career development strategy; competitive salary; flexible work schedules; promotion of qualified employees; bonuses; and competitive merit increases (see chart for other lower seven). Lee County is ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in average beginning teacher salary (\$36,000) across state; average is \$36,600 (and people come to us with supplements—e.g., degrees). Dr. Browder noted credit to the Board, Dr. Adkins, and the bargaining units. Re current retention efforts on insurance and benefits, ours is one of richest in state (benefit bank, 4 PPO plans); Insurance Task Force has employees involved (good retention strategy). Other additions are employee wellness, flexible benefits, EAP, tax-sheltered accounts, benefit & wellness newsletter, employee medical spending, etc.). Separately—on Teacher Insight—all new applicants receive score; those ranked high have higher success in classroom and higher probability of being retained.

Michelle Cort-Mora talked, re Grants, about TIP-1 (retention tool for existing teachers having 30-40 participants), TIP-2 (grown your own paraprofessional having 30-40), TIP-3 (degree career changers—40 participants); and COPE (paraprofessionals with AA degree or 36 credits in education—30 to 40 participants). If teachers live here, they're more vested. Teachers can receive 6 course hours' reimbursement for reading endorsements; they go above and beyond to take alternative tests and seek Masters. Re aggressively recruiting, e-mail blasts are sent, communication with job fair participants (weekly updates and missing documents noted), phone call follow-ups, work with housing and numerous apartment complexes. A recruitment strategy for FY08 is to increase 25%; local job fairs were successful (276 career changers hired) and individuals found for critical shortage areas (e.g., chemists can move easily into science).

Susan Carnwath talked about strategic plan goals and working conditions to retain staff. Various retention efforts begin as teacher offered job; special checks credentials and tracks/monitors progress. Personnel Services is important due to temporary certificates, NCLB requirements, and teachers need support. Specialists use formal and information communication and other resources (analyst positions recruit/retain highly qualified re NCLB grants); state website accessed daily and specialists are advocate for teacher. There are multiple departments at orientation; teachers should expect support at sites via peer teachers and APPLES. Essential to retention is a teacher maintaining and retaining certification; much data is given about exams (format, test prep aides, dates, locations along with coursework info). Alternative certification provides options (e.g., Edison's education prep institute and FGCU's program). Contact and web info is given as well as priority list (put into context timeframe and what to do in the next couple of years).

Following a teacher's orientation, there's ongoing contact. Formal notification (specifically addressed to teacher) is done—825 with expiring certificates, 200 for list of certificate requirements, 250 for exam deadlines, 100 for out-of-field requirements and 500 for highly qualified teacher plans. E-mail is also used as well as phones and meetings. Dr. Adkins noted Ms. Carnwath giving principals scenarios of what teachers go through and on their plat (many administrators may have entered with professional certificate vs. temporary). Re current retention efforts, site visits are desired as well as coming up with an action plan of accomplishments in a timeline; it's also wanted to have analysts work on highly qualified teacher requirements with site visits as goal towards retention. Teachers are kept informed as to ongoing assistance, test prep classes, and staff development. It was noted 720 teachers have completed APPLES since October 2005.

Dr. Adkins noted, as a former principal, test prep courses implemented to help retain teachers (endorsements—reading, ESOL, and gifted courses provided); he complimented Mrs. Mutzenard re \$500 bonus for reading endorsement which may go back to folks last year done. There are other opportunities for teacher support, growth and development—coaching and mentoring from other teachers, professional development, NBCT, etc. Re proposed retention effort, proactive measures include expansion of mentoring beyond peer; support can help those stay in profession. Gallup research indicates employees don't leave organization but leave supervisors (90% retention issue has a lot to do with principal re mission alignment). Principals are key to lowering teacher turnover. Great principals generally have higher teacher engagement, leading to improved teacher retention and student achievement. Better training may be needed for principals; great principals communicate clear

mission, foster collaboration, encourage teacher involvement in decision making, set high expectations, develop teamwork and trust, and stimulate thinking.

Dr. Kuckel complimented District efforts re recruitment, certification, mentoring, principals' roles, etc.; she's read studies of districts reducing rates, centering around how teachers feel (paying trained mentors is critical factor) and when teachers surveyed, lack of support noted. She appreciates the goals set as noted today. It's important to accomplish as much mentor teacher programs (training/paid in coaching, feedback, and support). Dr. Adkins noted differentiated pay structure requirements (re paying mentors); folks inside the system are critical even though retirees can be used. Dr. Kuckel thinks it's very important to survey teachers leaving (PDK and Gallup has surveys) and exit interviews. Mrs. Dozier noted important follow-up and getting teachers out in community; she's talked with Steve Scott (SWFL Chamber) re Leadership Lee and getting new hires to know community, as one who's involved/connected is more likely to stay. Mr. Scott has done a series as well as Ms. Cort-Mora doing a variety of programs (she did one at a condo facility—Brantley). There's an opportunity within the Foundation (new leadership there) to look at (e.g., committee); a young professionals' organization will be a vendor at the District recruitment fair. Mr. Teuber concurred with Mrs. Dozier re connections/civic groups. Dr. Browder thanked Human Resources and Personnel for their energy.

#### **D. ADMINISTRATIVE/SUPPORT SERVICES**

1. **Change Orders/January 2007** (3 pages on file; Dr. Browder noted FYI.)

#### **E. BUSINESS SERVICES**

1. **Discussion/Governor's Budget** – Mr. Legutko's bringing us up-to-date on where before. DOE released a budget in December and issues/assumptions were come up with to talk. The Governor's budget was released last Friday. (See the one-page Lee County School District Funding Summary page on file with minutes.) Ami Desamours noted the unweighted FTE is close to ours. School taxable value is 9.33% increase (estimated we will use for now). There may be impact due to Save Our Homes amendment and capping of taxable value for those not eligible for SOH (eye being kept on this). The base student allocation is increasing. The Governor suggested STAR double next year. There's two additional categories for funding (included in Governor's budget—fuel and utilities). There's a 9% increase over our current budget this year, which is not bad for a first run (an increase of 35% for class size). Ms. Desamours noted to Mr. Chilmonik's question that we've a three-year contract in place for teachers (salary increases set for next two). Dr. Browder noted there'd be a review at the end, with recommendations through labor relations groups if to be done. Of the 11.7% breakdown, \$12.6 million is to cover inflation; those increases are put into place. Last year's salary increases were \$24 million with benefits (Dr. Browder noted categoricals re move elsewhere; would provide unrealistic expectation). Mrs. Dozier noted as long as class size legislation is there to comply with, a 35% increase will continue to be seen for spending on capital and teachers. Only 2.3% is not in categoricals; 3,900 additional students/services are anticipated. Most of \$39 million is inside class size; there's a big chunk inside STAR, which must buy teachers, pay salaries, and be used for teacher incentive pay. District is at 90% limit re property taxes.

#### **F. EXECUTIVE SERVICES**

1. **Board Policies / New Format (2/27)** – Dr. Browder asked the Board to review nine areas for comment. On Board Policies, step 2 is to review each, merge the Administration Regulations (ARs), and put into groups; it will probably take a full year to get through all. Mr. Chilmonik is pleased to see all in one place; he's preparing several policy recommendations which can be decided on, if to do anything. Dr. Browder noted bringing the Chapter 1 group in systematic fashion (to stay on track) unless the Board feels a need to address in the short term. Mrs. Dozier noted the index now is user-friendly; she's met with individuals who write policy for schools districts (thousands of dollars+ can be spent), and Dade is paying a huge amount. With the Superintendent and staff members doing this, it's saving megabucks. Mrs. Dozier suggested, with Mr. Martin at our disposal, considering (e.g., Mr. Chilmonik) to work through him as he's looking at these and knows statutes. Dr. Browder plans to bring this format on 2/27 and disseminate to school sites, with all to start operating out of this and start the revision phase. Dr. Kuckel echoed the accolades/thoroughness; she noted boilerplate policy is sometimes received from firms, with a lot of work to customize. Every department will be reviewing and one to maybe eight will be presented at a time. Mrs. Dozier noted a prior Board.
2. **Board Room / New Administration Building** – Dr. Browder noted the seating of the Board, Attorney, and Superintendent; he'll do what's wanted (there's plenty of room at the table). Dr. Kuckel noted being resistant at first to Dr. Browder separate but she kind of likes him sitting with staff when presentations are made; her one

suggestion is all be at the same height/eye level. Mrs. Dozier noted with the tour/configuration, there's enough room at table for all but there's pluses and minuses of the current seating; she likes to look straight into the eye of the Attorney, staff, and Dr. Browder but either way she's okay with what all decide. Mrs. Dozier noted bringing up the offices of Board Members and seating at the table. Mr. Chilmonik would like to have Dr. Browder at the table with him. Mr. Teuber agrees with Mrs. Dozier but doesn't want up or down; he would like tiers in front for pictures though. Re the offices, Mrs. Dozier suggested them in order with brass plates in order of district number (1,2,3,4,5) and sit at the table the same.

**G. PUBLIC COMMENT** – none

**H. BOARD ATTORNEY/BOARD AUDITOR/SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS** – Mr. Martin had none. Julie Nieminski noted her completed draft and upcoming Friday discussion with Dr. Browder; there will probably be meetings with other staff and then it'll be 10-15 days (possibly at mid-March meeting). It can be at a Briefing or Action Meeting; Mr. Teuber and Dr. Kuckel noted being okay with a Briefing. Mrs. Nieminski noted we haven't gone through the whole process yet; if any action comes out, it will come out at Briefing. Dr. Browder recognized Donna Mutzenard's selection as the lead person in charge of Island Coast Uniserve (taking Mr. Bernier's place); elections will be in March for a new TALC president. The meeting adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

/dwm

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MINUTES BOOK NO. 41 - FY07

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**Steven K. Teuber, J.D.**, Meeting Chair (for Dr. Elinor C. Scricca, Board Member, who was absent)

ATTEST:

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**James W. Browder, Ed.D.**, Secretary and District Superintendent

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