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THE SCHOOL BOARD OF LEE COUNTY
School Board Briefing Meeting – M I N U T E S (Approval 7/31/07)
Tuesday – June 19, 2007 / 2:30 p.m.

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

A. BOARD MEMBERS (*Mr. Teuber called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.*)

2. Board Committee Chair Reports (done first) – Dick Young (Compliance) read his update (copy on file), noting their extensive work on the Call Center. Alternative Learning Center (ALC) program was selected next, with staff updating the committee on the depth of that program in addition to ESE operations. Mr. Young noted the previous chair's retirement whose leadership/knowledge is greatly missed (he was very valuable and enthusiastic). Donna Butts (DAC) read from her handout (copy on file). Different topics through the year covered the Call Center, security, cumulative (cum) folders, funding/budgeting, ESE, curriculum, Pupil Progression Plan, STAR and A++ initiative, technology, substitute teacher training, and Housing Authority (latter for Michigan Court demolition impact on students there). Other issues discussed (through SACs/DAC) besides the topics were: bullying, gangs, overcrowding/FTE, majors, ESE, reading, scheduling, graduation rate, dropout prevention, FCAT, teacher retention, transportation, parent involvement, Parent Link, translators, health, athletics/NCAA. David Hall (Finance) read from his letter, noting thanks to District staff. The past quarter was a review of input for the 07-08 budget. There was concern about the recent decline in real estate values and potential for assessed values' and tax revenue declines. Mr. Hall talked with the Property Appraiser Wilkinson and the latter's process in evaluating property (May/June). The tax bill in November pays 2007-08 year (though looked at 12/06 real estate sales). The committee prepared a 2007 Position Paper on Property Tax and Revenue for Education (attached). Connie Dennis (Curriculum) read from her handout. She noted the reason for the safety blurb is that all students may not be aware of safety concerns. Close captioning has helped with fluency. Re mentoring, someone in high school works with gifted and it may be good for someone with language difficulties to keep in touch with the home. Presentations or discussions were on ESE (Dr. Brunick presented), Comprehensive Career & Technical Education (Dwayne Alton, Patti Elkin, Dr. Tihen), funding, dropout prevention, intensive reading, etc. Mrs. Dozier (for Construction) noted work/lively discussions on safety, hurricane preparedness, and obtaining land. Topics have been laid out for the year; the prototype will be looked at (may be some pre-k or other issues; also, how we comply with ESE), with possible recommendations. Re the legislative session and what came out of it, the effects on the building program will be reviewed. The committee's impressed with manual Dr. Browder and staff put in place. Fire drills discussed vs. emergency drills; something may be suggested for legislation.

1. Special Areas of Board Involvement/Reports – Mr. Chilmonik noted the Foundation dinner with Golden Apple teachers; they send congratulations to Mrs. Dozier on her FSBA Presidential swearing-in (same day as Collegium dinner). He noted his upcoming out-of-country visit with daughter in Peace Corps (latter teaches English). Dr. Scricca noted personally, as Board/friend/colleague, congratulating Mrs. Dozier; the privilege to attend the installation; and applauding of the Tools for Schools theme. She feels Mrs. Dozier will rise to the occasion and bring awareness to Lee. Dr. Scricca also congratulated the Superintendent on his evaluation, noting it's reflective of how the Board feels re the great job Dr. Browder's doing; she noted it's a primary responsibility of a Board Member to set policy for District operations, review/consider recommendations of Superintendent, and supervise their employees. In response to an inquiry, Mr. Martin confirmed evaluating the Superintendent is one responsibility of a Board Member in addition to hiring and decisions to hire. Dr. Kuckel noted the Sanibel graduation/open house; she hopes some will attend the government tour sessions on Sanibel. Dr. Kuckel attended the Pace Center open house, Hispanic Scholarship awards banquet (at Harborside) where 25 received scholarships, and the Value Adjustment Board (with Mr. Teuber); she expressed personal congratulations to Mrs. Dozier, noting we're fortunate/proud to have her represent us. Dr. Kuckel attended the Friday Collegium event with teachers.

Dr. Kuckel noted looking carefully over Dr. Browder's evaluation and it's one of his best; the city and county manager contracts have been noted in newspaper and media. The District has the largest number of employees and budget; she would ask for superintendent salary packages and comparables be looked at and brought back. Mr. Teuber asked, re consensus, for discussion. Dr. Scricca noted support and a possible workshop of such. Mr. Chilmonik noted it's

something to look at and the cost of living re teachers, cost of gas, taxes; he'd suggest cost of living be put on an agenda for teachers (insurance is high). Mr. Chilmonik noted looking at reserve for teachers, support, and administration. Mr. Teuber disagreed, noting Dr. Browder's done an exceptional job and warrants merits within contracts and to go back to contract to renegotiate; he understands other markets. He still thinks of teachers and contract to do sound business, to fiscally run business, and negotiate zealously with reason. Mr. Teuber would not be opposed to construction of contract of certain things—what it means in today's environment, but he'd be hard-pressed. Dr. Kuckel noted not talking about timeline; every year there's opportunity to bring it forward and not get to the last minute. She noted preparing for a year from now, as things won't happen overnight. Dr. Kuckel noted she's not recommending a workshop now; this would be next year, starting preparations for next year and to get groundwork set. In response to Mr. Chilmonik's question, Mr. Martin noted the contract renews 6/15. Dr. Scricca supports comparables being done. Mr. Chilmonik noted he feels it's too early and to have a rational conversation in January next year, as purpose served. Mrs. Dozier noted she will work with the Superintendent on several ideas, she'll ask when that discussion will take place, and she doesn't think it's too early. Mrs. Dozier will have someone in the office prepare a meeting time convenient to all. Dr. Scricca noted a concern read in the paper about Mr. Chilmonik's evaluation as bringing down or reducing the aggregate already reported; in response to her question if a Board Member didn't participate and is there an extension or opportunity to evaluate at another time, Mr. Martin noted the answer as no and not until the next cycle. Thus, the aggregate stays and stands and cannot be altered/added to. Dr. Kuckel noted, with all due respect, to Mr. Chilmonik about his references to research and innuendos of mishandling, wrongdoing, fraud, etc.; she noted areas of research that a full-time auditor has been hired to do. Dr. Kuckel noted hearing another topic gone into, she has concern about staff time, time it takes the Board, and innuendos. She showed the 30+ pound box of research, and she noted requests for data (from a Board Member) from staff may need Board approval so something substantial can be looked at. Dr. Kuckel noted the tone set of wrongdoing, and she resents it at a time when things are going well.

Mr. Chilmonik noted he did give a report on \$25,000 and below and to better have facts straight. He noted having audits now that he feels were withheld. He would suggest Dr. Kuckel analyze the data and she'd come up with the same conclusions. He feels money is not going where it is supposed to—the classroom. He noted the Board comes after him every time. He gave a written report, spending time on policy and requests the audits be looked at; Mr. Chilmonik noted he didn't say fraud. He disagrees with saying we're saving millions and feels information is withheld from him and others; Mr. Chilmonik will come back in August to tighten up the ship. Separately, Mrs. Dozier stated she had the opportunity to meet with Ruth Moon and teachers about the displays at the new public education center. She met with Bernie Dougherty, Cape Charter School Board Chair, and our meetings were complimented and how they run. Mrs. Dozier thanked those attending FSBA as it meant a lot to her and her family; she looks forward to working with FSBA on the Board of Directors, and it won't get in way of her duties here. She noted it her decision, on the Board's behalf, to not fax the Good Cause today since they would be here this afternoon (some would've been in transit). Re the Superintendent's evaluation, she commended and complimented the outstanding evaluation and the past year's leadership.

Mrs. Dozier also talked about policy and spelling out (e.g., evaluations; many boards have); she would like to bring forward and will work with Mr. Martin. The Board came to consensus to use the instrument and she didn't hear contrary and thought all would comply with the responsibility to use. She requests feedback. Mr. Chilmonik noted interest in looking at the form and modeling other areas; he agreed to her working with Mr. Martin and bringing back for discussion. Mr. Teuber noted never thinking we needed a policy but apparently we do; separately, he appreciates efficiency in not faxing. Mr. Teuber commended Dr. Browder on his review but was taken back by Mr. Chilmonik's two paragraphs written, spotting a lot of negative statements he feels aren't backed up by data or facts. Mr. Teuber noted, to this point, he does agree with Dr. Kuckel re negative discussion/innuendos; he did respond in detail to Mr. Chilmonik's report, noting it was very poorly written and referencing copies of previous audits seen year before. Mr. Teuber noted wrongdoing not contrarily done but do things better. Procedures are put in place; it was a wise move to copy from other districts using Cuthill & Eddy. Mr. Teuber noted spinning wheels is not Mr. Chilmonik's job but doing an evaluation is, and the latter reflects on job performance (a Board Member's); he noted our three employees earn the right to get a review, and everyone is to have input and not be derelict on their part. The Board agreed to work with Mr. Martin and several have brought things to him; it's not an ordainment—all can do. Lastly, Mr. Teuber noted it was an honor to participate in the FSBA presidential election and it's very important; he noted the News-Press put it very small and far back in the newspaper. There is an impact to our county and the state for our Board Chair to be FSBA President; direction will be set, and this county is a trendsetter. He was pleased people from the District attended and showed respect to Mrs. Dozier.

B. ACADEMIC SERVICES (none)**C. HUMAN RESOURCES** (none)**D. ADMINISTRATIVE/SUPPORT SERVICES**

1. **SREF for 2006/07** – Dr. Browder updated that of 61 serious life safety, 20 issues are resolved; 18 in hands of glass companies; 5 no longer required; 1 item changed from serious to less; and to see his memo on 11. Re process used now, it's computerized; we've come a long way in reporting/dealing with these. Dr. Browder thinks it's important to understand the issue brought tonight is contractors go into 3 zones and complete; cost is about half of the year before because of the progress made. He is confident of all items for school to open. One item (5-year plan)—handling door openers (knobs) and safety issue now. If life safety code used that was in place, it wasn't unsafe and going to change the door knobs now isn't going to change inside of facility. Dr. Browder noted the memo 2-3 weeks ago. Dr. Scricca inquired as to this going out to the media and being released; this is hot off the press so the Board could have understanding of 61 serious issues (other 2/3 by opening of school). Mr. Chilmonik thanked Dr. Browder and the Cape fire department for help in identifying, as the primary is safety of children. Dr. Browder noted the Cape F.D. didn't report this—it was done with our staff, Health Department, and done with all 17 that have schools in them. For the Board and the public, the Health Department has been included (not done before). Besides staff and building supervisors, principals are required to be a part. We continue to work on this and it's not sure all issues will be resolved; e.g., a person plugging more than one thing in an extension code is an issue but fixed the next minute or if a wedge or chair's holding a door, it's fixed immediately. Over half are immediately corrected; of 13,000 issues, 61 are life safety though responsibility to work on all. In new schools, 90% of issues go away when building sprinkled. All fire authorities do the same thing and all in fire community are working collaboratively to make happen. Dr. Browder further noted the fire folks have been supportive in the last three years, and the District is one they hold up in how you work together (it's a plus for all 17). Mrs. Dozier noted an example of air conditioning going on and someone uses a desk to prop a door for ventilation (the desk is violation); it is reported and immediately corrected. Another example would be bad caulking. Mr. Chilmonik noted thanking all departments in his letter to the editor; he noted trying to say we're trying to minimize, and these are trained individuals who look at all. There's \$20 million given to do fire safety; he's not criticizing what Dr. Browder's doing. Mr. Chilmonik's not taking it minimally but laying out and thanking people. Dr. Browder noted of the \$20 million estimate, \$10-12 million used (about 60% used); we were under state watch under commissioner, and this District came to a point of working well. Dr. Browder takes it very seriously and doesn't want to minimize; our people are certified and noted what we've done in correcting building deficiencies (feels it's better due to staff and fire authority). Mr. Teuber noted sitting with Dr. Browder on the Fire Task Force, and Mr. Gomez saying we had things under control (there's knowledge and experience before it occurs); Mr. Teuber noted letters can be sent via mail instead of editorials and 61 of 13,000 is commendable.

2. **Internal Audit Reports for 2005/06** – Bob Brown noted internal fund audit reports and summaries are completed for 81 locations, with 7/31 Board approval anticipated. When book is received, review audit report will give more info. With 8,000 new students, more checks are generated and written—more purchase orders, new fundraisers, etc. with creativity within bounds. Dr. Kuckel re-confirmed \$21 million in fundraising, commending the students who make sales; Dr. Browder added that much is raised and spent on children in schools (it's philosophical and positive). Dr. Scricca noted it's a reflection of the community; it was also confirmed that no one stole or absconded. Mr. Teuber noted these audit reports as a daunting yearly task and our growth doesn't make it easier.

E. BUSINESS SERVICES

1. **FY08 Preliminary Budget** – Presentation is to share impact of the total budget--\$1.5 million (we're the biggest game in town) and the process gone through for FY08 (see PowerPoint copy on file). Budget/Choice/Personnel committee convened in December (meetings over three months). There are new aspects to the allocation method (included units for self-contained ESE clusters), with the latter released in March to coincide with personnel renewals/non deadlines. The allocation took a step towards class size average (to be closer this year/meet state average). Mr. Teuber clarified the class size requirement's coming in FY09 but we're talking structures next year so to meet. Re allocation, principals would know how to budget for coming year vs. if done later; it affects personnel allocations (we coincide with personnel recommendations' timeline). The department process began in February. The new base budget called for departments to take 3-year average of expenditures as opposed to prior year's approved budget. In projecting budgets, it's done very well this way. All requests go through Division Heads before submitted to Budget Department. The Budget Committee reviews all department requests. Mr. Teuber inquired as to how was turned back vs. approved; Dr. Scricca noted interest also and Division Head's criteria to turn back/negate. Each Division Head was met with and all discussed new positions/reclassifications and justifications/job descriptions fitting new requirement. In looking at

workloads, phenomenal growth is seen. Each Division Head asked if it's something absolutely needed, critical to operations, fit in strategic plan, and/or priority for coming year. Division Heads and Department Heads met, deciding to go forward or not. Dr. Browder met with Division Heads and Budget in the beginning, setting the tone re: if to students, strategic plan, Board and whether to bring (it's a huge process). Originally, we were \$17 million out of alignment; by the time the process gone through, it was balanced and may have had \$1 million to look at other things to accomplish what came up. Re unappropriated fund balance; it comes under reserves (response to Mr. Chilmonik). Budget has to be balanced, per Mrs. Desamours. Re denials, Mrs. Dozier noted this not done as much previously and is a quality initiative. Board and District goals have to be aligned with; we're data-driven organization in building budget. The total preliminary budget [\$1,501,865,293] is: general fund--\$765,360,768; debt service--\$50,238,222; capital projects--\$506,122,727; federal projects--\$37,881,085; internal service--\$110,150,700; and food service--\$32,111,791. Debt service is \$50.2 million, including \$24 million in principal payments and \$26 million in interest payments; District policy encourages debt service payments are no more than 50% of 2 mill proceeds, and projected debt service payments for FY08 equal 53% of that amount. Dr. Browder noted we wouldn't go above \$1 million (we're at half a mill). Total interest is \$258,192,067 and principal is \$593,820,000. Re the capital budget, there's: \$15.3 million of PECO new construction; \$30 mill budget of impact fees; \$35 million in Classroom for Kids (less than half of prior year); 3 elementary, 1 middle, and 1 high (9th grade only to start—Island Coast) to open in August 07. Major FY08 construction includes: 2 elementary, 1 elementary remodel, 1 middle, and 1 high (Island Coast permanent). Impact fees field 11% of revenue coming in, with the state at 22% and 2 mill monies for 67%. The property appraiser has estimates at \$96 billion worth. Mrs. Dozier asked if a decrease in impact fees allowed for, of which the answer is yes--\$50 million last year and now \$30 million. We get the numbers monthly and they've steadily been decreasing. At 3rd quarter of what we bring, we're at \$25.9 million; the numbers are looked and revised quarterly if need be. There's care on impact fee budgeting; as many fees used around impact fees so as to be conservative.

The Capital Committee meets (Mike Smith, Mrs. Desamours, etc.), per Dr. Browder, and is similar to the strategic plan in it changes; next year at this time is expected to be very different. Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach are projected to lose 15,000 students; we're to gain 3,000+. In response to Mr. Chilmonik's question, Dr. Browder noted we're not expected to borrow. We collected more dollars than anywhere, with the East zone at 50+%; Dr. Browder noted it will be in FY09 where we see issues (one proposed 500-600 home development has been put for sale (probably didn't get the money). Mrs. Dozier noted in a survey of people getting ready to retire in 5 years that only 2% would relocate to Florida with the current tax structure (if tax structure different, figure increased to 70%). These are probably individuals of retirement age and not probably going to bring children though many raise grandchildren today and have family members residing with them. It was noted again that our growth is anticipated to be 3,000-4,000 new students. Dr. Browder noted we set money aside in the beginning for FTE shortfall so as to not go into reserve; it's about planning. Dr. Browder noted signing the document that we want money up front and if we come up short, we pay back but generate interest now. The General Fund budget is \$765.3 million (based on anticipated enrollment of 82,100 students; FTE shortfall set aside for 1,300 students). District RLE millage rate is at an all-time low due to property values and 90% limitation; however, all indications are that taxable value used at final legislative conference will be higher than the actual. Re school allocations, it's over \$450.7 million and growing (need to ensure allocation meets class size); summer school allocation increased considerably to coincide with dropout prevention (larger number of intensive reading classes taken during regular year). School budgets will increase with carryover; 73.7% of the general fund budget (not including fund balance) is currently budgeted in direct support of schools.

New positions requested totaled \$6.4 million (ones that made it to Budget Department) but now are \$2.9 million. Reclases requested totaled \$387,000 and ones approved total \$143,000. There's recommended 62.26 new positions for 08, with 34.26 from the general fund (25 are bus drivers); there are 18 recommended reclases, with 12 from the general fund (includes Superintendent's succession plan). Other than bus drivers, we're adding 9 people. Major budget increases are: \$21.7 million for salaries to provide increases; health insurance cost increase of 7.5% over last year's budget (over \$4 million for existing employees); utilities amounting to 18% increase (\$4.5 million); mandates—STAR, class size; and every penny gas increase costs transportation \$17,000. Re fund balance analysis, it's \$82.9 million and includes a reserve for balance forward and encumbrances of \$42 million which will be released to other functions; reserve for FTE shortfall of \$6 million; and \$25 million contingency (3.8% of new revenue). In response to Mr. Chilmonik, it was confirmed that contingency is for emergencies and Board permission must be sought to use (latter highly discouraged); it's not good financial practice to be below 3-5%. Dr. Browder noted the process to get it there (4 years ago it was \$10 million); it gives us better market stand in how the District's rated and is there for a storm/emergency. If we had zero growth, that money would have to be used to pay back FTE. Mr. Teuber noted the printout pictorial on page 4 showing where it comes from and where it's broken out. Mr. Legutko noted that all comments seem to be covered.

F. EXECUTIVE SERVICES

- 1. **Rules / Chapter 1, Governance (7/31)** – This will be brought in July.
- 2. **Rule / Field Trip Guidelines (7/31)** – The manual was eliminated 8 years ago but it's been operated under administratively. Mr. Wiseman met with others and got back together (plan to bring 7/31 also).
- 3. **Policy 2.5, Animals on School Property (7/31)** – Dr. Browder noted the pet policy/shelters (long requested).
- 4. **Update/Gwynne Building** – Foundation's requesting to long-term lease for nominal fee, with them raising capital funds to renovate/do work on it; Dr. Browder's talked with Marshall Bower. Maintenance will paint the first floor (bright) and then monies raised for other floors. The Edison Foundation and Uncommon Friends may be looking for a home. Dr. Browder will put together and bring back for July discussion if all okay for Foundation to use monies to update the building. Per Dr. Kuckel's question on them previously moving to the new education center, this is a gem location for the Foundation to call home. Dr. Clark's area will be converted into storage; Dr. Browder's willing to put minimal dollars to upgrade at a standpoint and we can move forward with the lease. Mr. Chilmonik noted this is good job/good news and saving building older than 50 years. Dr. Scricca asked for a memo re liability to the Board; Mr. Martin and Ms. Hawkins will work with the Foundation to ensure Board harmless if possible.

G. PUBLIC COMMENT – none

H. BOARD ATTORNEY / BOARD INTERNAL AUDITOR / SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS – The final consultant contract report was distributed by Mrs. Nieminski (it was part of annual plan agreed to last year); there are five recommendations management responded to and it's currently in implementation phase now. It can be discussed at the 7/31 regular Board Meeting (see backup on file). Separately, Dr. Browder noted the honor to be part of Mrs. Dozier taking over the reigns; it was a great day for Lee County and her family. Only 5 in the last 100 years from here have held office, and we're honored she took on this role for the County. Next, Dr. Browder noted etiquette requires him to be respectful and to take things like a grown man. In looking at Budget, Ms. Mutzenard, and Messrs. Rushlow and Castellanos, dollars are going to classrooms; and for one to imply we're not doing that, it is a slap in the face to the process. This Board gets more information than in history and he and Mr. Brown hold people accountable but a continue throttle of his staff isn't required—nothing is withheld. There have been cheap shots at District staff who are working their tails off. Our academic gains are not window dressing and if this were understood, that inappropriate statement wouldn't be made. Ms. Mutzenard knows teachers kill themselves for children. He's tired of the slap in the face and will speak up as he was hired to do for children. Everyone needs to understand the unsubstantiated remarks and to continue to talk without proof is opportunity for the media to put it in the paper. Construction people work long hours; ask other people in the state what they're going through and we'd be proud. Dr. Browder further added that our Maintenance Department is second to none. The Board has a role—set policy and hires the three employees. He's proud to work with all but for one to continue is a slap in the face. Meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

/dwm

MINUTES BOOK NO. 44 - FY07

Steven K. Teuber, J.D., Meeting Chair

ATTEST:

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

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