



VISION
To be a world-class school system.

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF LEE COUNTY
School Board Briefing Meeting (Legislative) – M I N U T E S (Approval 7/31/07)
Monday – May 21, 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
Mr. Bob Cerra, Legislative Consultant
Mrs. Denise Mangus, Recording Secretary

- 1. OPENING COMMENTS** – Mrs. Dozier called the meeting to order at 2:30. Last week DOE chose our site for a region (global approach). There was a wonderful legislative session, and thanks were given to the Cerras for their Tallahassee work and the Washington D.C. appointment; all were accommodated in getting around to the delegation. Staff worked closely with Mr. Bob Cerra during this legislative session, and the turnaround on both sides was very quickly done.
- 2. 2007 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW** – Mr. Cerra noted he and his brother are proud of their District relationship. He expressed thanks to the delegation for their leadership and priorities' handling. Mr. Cerra proceeded with a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file); he noted he was elected President of the association of representatives for school district lobbyists. The session this year was about property taxes; decisions made were influenced by how this is progressing. There is a special session in the near coming weeks to talk this. There is a start to framework for solution of problems; a joint committee hearing is today of the House and Senate; Mr. Cerra will send materials later this week. Major issues are the budget but legislators have to do (constitutional). Property/casualty is a hangover issue. Re auto insurance/PIP, this may relate to school buses; PIP expires in October, and this may have to be considered in the 10-day upcoming session. On statewide cable licensing (not all lobbyists), there may be an overlap in our area. Re education budget issues and in the last 10 years, there'd be education. Re education budget issues, there's operations and capital outlay. For educational budget issues, the 6.84% increase isn't as big as last year; healthy increase still since state budget went down. Re 6.65%, this includes class size reduction but doesn't reflect an increase for salary increases. For Base student allocation, weighted FTE is funded but went down .5% though number of students goes up. Most districts will see in 4% range or little less on inflation. Ours is the largest in state and in raw number (5.17% of 11.71% due to our growth); Lee practically has the entire state growth while others declined (Dade and Broward lost more than we gained).

Re RLE (required local effort), Lee is a property-rich district and statewide is 5.010 (local RLE, because of 90%, is 4.222), with results in reduction in tax rate being paid. \$65.6 million is less than what was provided; last year we were looking at billions. Sparsity increased by \$5 million (we don't share); about \$150,000 we would've had if put in base student allocation. Safe schools and reading allocations slightly impacted Lee (about \$100,000). Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) programs weren't participating in class size reduction; \$242,000 included in total potential (mandated state expense). Overall, our increase is 5th largest in state (though we're 9th largest in state); we received more than Palm Beach County (twice our size), Polk, Duval, etc. Budget process reasonably fair to us and to make sure growth funded (as percentage, we were 3rd fastest growing). Re capital outlay, there's PECO maintenance which is slightly more than last year. There's PECO new construction; \$54 million on top of this solely for charter school outlay. One disappointment on a major level is the appropriations provided for capital outlay; DOE last year established \$2 billion and figured there'd be settlement of \$1.2 billion but they settled on \$150 million. Declining enrollment was seen in 27 districts. There was a move to try to reduce class size (65% of allocation) with it wanting to be turned out to number of students but it was defeated (we were in minority and difficult to win). It's a 50% difference of what we'd receive if their proposal had happened. Not provided until June, we should be in general area; we may be 60% of \$79 million (we're in state growth figures). Polk and Flagler were trying to get high growth funding (in meeting classroom space needs); tried to set aside \$30 million recurring (tried to keep list at 6-7; made sure Lee couldn't be in program so it failed again). Our delegation was aware, and legislators felt Lee deserved share for capital outlay appropriation needs.

Mr. Cerra noted reviewing 12 major bills very quickly. Re SB 1226, the STAR plan was revised the previous year, clearly putting it into statute. Many STAR aspects will exist but there's some flexibility (ability to score teachers in teams; providing 60% had to be on student performance—pre and post test—but 40% could be handled up to evaluations: managing classroom). It was considered a good bill and passed early. Re HB 511, our Board asked for years and others (each of the last 9 sessions); We'd have to certify we can meet class size, with a certain kind of financial statement

previous year, and that we can meet space requirements in the next 5 years. There's more flexibility than we had; one has to be an A district two years in a row (we've been in high 5). Re SB 1046, the budget's conforming, capping high school gifted at current spending level. IB primarily is 11th and 12th grade. There was a study of gifted programs and OPPAGA. Team and co-teaching is defined re separating inclusion re class size. The bill allows new casino dollars (e.g., Broward), and DJJ is covered. Re 1060 and education facilities, the statutory requirement was deleted (\$105 million in recurring from a named tax source); however, provision ignored anyway but now being made permanent. Department of Revenue pays PECO trust fund (utility taxes) from last day of the month to 20th (going to pay money in month collected). They felt advancing whole month's trust fund early. Modular buildings count toward permanent capacity; McKay scholarships or charter schools not counted in capital outlay for District (DOE claimed their process anyway).

Re 2092 and becoming the education train, it was hoped to address the school calendar issue but able to handle reinstated school board salary into statute (won't have to be done very year). Re amended grad requirements, fine arts' one hour expanded to fine/performing arts and includes debate. On PE requirements, two years in extra curricular sports now counted; also: marching band; dance class; ROTC. We enticed middle school to take high school classes (needing to make sure they had greater opportunities to replace and not carry on transcripts to college). Placement able to be done of C's (re A++ Bill) and clarification. Main part of bill to extend charters (mainly Palm Beach and Volusia). This clarifies a retiree at end of school year can get check in September. Re SB 450, \$250 provided per student for supplies, with ESE and pre-k teachers included; charter school teachers also included or job share teachers (can share \$250 between two). Re SB 2512 and ESOL teacher reading requirements, agreement made to go from 300 (around 15 years) to 60 hours. HB 967 is one of Governor Crist's top priorities; PE bill requires 150 minutes weekly for grades k-5 but doesn't have to be taught by certified PE teachers (but by a teacher who can lead activity). The results on the arts will be studied as a result of this requirement. RE SB 1232/career and RPF education, Senator Gates (former superintendent) modeled this after his county; he really wants done for programs to tie into national certifications relating to that career. We already have a head start in this kind of reform (Volusia to serve as model; additional weighted funding for those adding national certification to their programs). Those who get on earlier may get larger portion of money (in first couple of years).

Re HB 988/contractor's fingerprinting, it was 2 years overdue; it cleans up Lunsford act, defines which contractors to fingerprint. Instructional contractors not treated same re access. There's free internet searches, saving about \$75/person. We've a transient workforce, and the safety for students is still at a high level. In response to Dr. Kuckel's question, Mr. Cerra noted it's hard to estimate monies since contractors pay fees. Bidding may have to put out there specifically; a lot's been cleaned up (driver's license swiped and run through internet). Our recommendations were taken and made good. Re HB 7123, it's primarily not an education bill but a state energy bill but there's some provisions relating to schools; re green schools, only \$3.5 million set aside for 3 districts (one small, large, and medium). The main part is in January 2008 when districts are going to have show 20% of diesel is bio-diesel, based on rating and subject to availability; this will change our business practices (hopefully supply will be there for pushed demands). Re HB 529 and statewide cable franchising/public education access channel, it's thought we'll be able to comply (10 hrs day action programming and 5 hours non-repeat programming, based on quarter of average). Some may be countywide or in particular region. In particular households, there would be choice of 2+ vendors for cable services; the belief is rates will come down with competition. We may have license to broadcast in geographical region (if company broadcast in mass, where would it be). ITV's been talked with and how we'll monitor/make some suggestions for vendors when they get on-line.

Other issues were: HB 509/comprehensive state vision in making safe for children; HB 461/only \$100,000 and 400 tests statewide to be tested (results not public records); and SB 108/IB and other programs promoted (when they've chose not to participate); SB 1126/mandating how state's going to administer tobacco education and prey (after-school programs to be utilized primarily re Department of Health); HB 1161/districts and partners providing for internships (help re previous workers compensation problems); HB 1375/affordable housing, it goes with effort last year; SB 1760/custodians naming designee and trying to respond in a timely manner when requests come in; and HB 7085/FRS retirement rates established at last year's same rate, with impact nil to budget. (Mr. Cerra noted summarizing 60 days of work in 47 minutes).

3. **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS (Board Members)** – Dr. Scricca asked about PE requirements and a study on arts programs affected (e.g., elementary school); DOE will do. She noted this won't prevent the Superintendent from doing the right thing re arts. Dr. Browder noted, based on discussion (county recess) with elementary principals on Thursday, and issues will be worked through; we will have quality programs in art, music, etc. Mr. Chilmonik asked, re green schools, about applying and existing structures; they will forward fund not backwards. Re two standards, organization would establish what a green building is and would have to meet one of two groups to be rated green building and then apply. On bio-diesel, it's like refined oil from restaurants and a local company would be needed for refining (there's not bio-diesel police). More will be paid for diesel fuel than a month ago. Re fingerprinting contractors and new schools

versus renovating; if there's not direct access; it's very specific, per Mr. Cerra, on fenced-off areas separate from school population. Previously, it was any contractor being fingerprinted. We'll do what's required. DOE gave specific amounts for administrative charges on fingerprinting; it can't be over 30% of costs and we're charging \$61 (costs \$54 to send to FDLE and FBI database). If it changes, we'll be within as we don't make money (\$5 helps staff member cost offset).

Mr. Teuber noted amounts previously to get and lesser actually received. Of people's tax dollars, 46% is not going to education. Mr. Cerra noted what was done is standard operating procedure of how our formula works. During last 25 years, the state has been close in estimating number of students. If more students statewide, just a pro rating. If estimate over, state always takes money back. Lee was close to estimates re 50,000 students statewide. Over \$200 million reverted and the number increased slightly at end of session, holding up conference deal. It's standard operating procedure re the way the formula always worked (even if statewide program and FTEs lost in weighted programs, state recoups money). Budget staff for legislature would not look kindly on something like that; they wouldn't have budget end of year (things constantly changing) and wouldn't know they're passing a budget that's balanced (constitutionally required to do the latter). Mr. Chilmonik asked about financial burden placed on the District; Dr. Browder noted a check is cut (up front you can receive allocation; we take up front and take interest). If shortfall, we pay back but we're fairly accurate, setting aside dollars for possible FTE shortfalls. When FTE sent back, it goes back into the general revenue fund, losing its earmark. Our people closely monitor and build reserve to make sure we're protected. Dr. Scricca inquired re the school calendar; it didn't get on but it's felt the issue is over; this is not parent driven but industry (tourists), and Mr. Cerra thinks we'll be locked in (with Board not having flexibility). Separately, the legislature defines—in a bill—team teaching, co-teaching, inclusion, etc. High School Athletic Association didn't support the drug testing; some legislators wanted it and it's a symbolic act (so few tests to be administered statewide versus the great number in these sports).

Mrs. Dozier commended the delegation, noting growth amendment we were singled out of; members of our delegation stepped up to the plate. We were really going to be affected; please thank legislators when you see them for what they've done. Dr. Browder and Mr. Cerra noted to Mrs. Dozier's question about live entertainment on the public education channel that it's not scroll. The Governor transmittal letter noted concern of pegs and didn't want bill implementation to hurt government and education channels but he'll keep an eye out. Dr. Browder noted there is a weekly legislative conference call, with him, staff, and Mrs. Dozier involved; this helps stay in tune. Bob and John Cerra do an excellent job in keeping us up front. An example was the bill on growth—we got on with another district not allowed to play (some counties didn't want us in there). Dr. Browder thanked all three Cerras and the Consortium/Georgia Slack. It was a positive session, and Dr. Browder looks forward to more; it's a strong delegation locally, and their support is obvious.

- 4. **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS (Staff and Community)** – none
- 5. **BOARD ATTORNEY / BOARD AUDITOR / SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS (none)** – The meeting adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

MINUTES BOOK NO. 44 - FY07

Jeanne S. Dozier, Meeting Chair

ATTEST:

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

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