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To be a world-class school system.

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF LEE COUNTY**  
**School Board Briefing Meeting – M I N U T E S** (Approval 2/12/08)  
**Tuesday – January 22, 2008 / 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  
Dr. Jane E. Kuckel, Board Vice Chair  
Mr. Steven K. Teuber, J.D., Board Member  
Dr. Elinor C. Scricca, Board Member  
Mrs. Denise Mangus, Recording Secretary

*(Dr. Kuckel called the meeting to order at 2:49 p.m.)*

**A. BOARD MEMBERS**

**1. Special Areas of Board Involvement/Reports** – Mr. Chilmonik attended the Dr. Martin Luther King celebration at Centennial Park; he walked in part of the march and thanked/congratulated Dr. Lohmeyer for her good presentation. He noted running in the Pine Island 5K race where District schools' staff participated; he ran in Naples' Sunday 13-mile race and acknowledged Dr. Greg Adkins' participation as well as students. He also mentioned Eddie Felton and the "Fathers Can Make a Difference" program at Lee Middle. Mrs. Dozier attended the recent Tampa joint FSBA Executive Directors and League of Cities/Counties meeting to develop a common mission statement/position re Amendment #1 on Florida's 1/29 ballot; she noted if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is and to become informed/educated before making the vote as it's critical to public service entities serving cities/counties. Mrs. Dozier also noted the Foundation's Board of Directors meeting; re Golden Apple, there are more Teachers of Distinction due to more applicants, and she wrote on behalf of the Board. Also discussed at that meeting were the classroom dance programs, their upcoming competition and finales, and Marshall Bowers' talk about the students being polite/following guidelines; increased student achievement has been seen around the country where there is this program. The School Board will be invited to one of the A-Team tapings in this building, and accolades have been given to our TV studio. There are more Bonita Middle scholarships this year, with 6<sup>th</sup> graders receiving (had to be 9<sup>th</sup> grade prior for Take Stock in Children) as it peaks the latter's interest and can help these students by keeping them in school and excelling. Mrs. Dozier shared with a women's club yesterday FSBA information, budget shortfalls, and some things being looked at; separately, she noted High Tech Central's opening of new cosmetology school facility as she was there taking an individual on a tour of the school. Dr. Kuckel noted representing Mrs. Dozier at Allen Park Elementary for their geographic bee; some of the questions were college and high school level but the students knew answers and it was a very nice event where winners were arrived at. Compliance Advisory Committee met last week and they're interested in the Internal Auditor to the Board replacement. She and Mr. Teuber attended last week's Value Adjustment Board meeting. Dr. Kuckel attended yesterday's Dr. Martin Luther King Unity breakfast at Dunbar High where Dr. Lohmeyer spoke and gave the Board and Dr. Browder recognition.

**2. Discussion/Timeline for Issues Related to Position of Superintendent** – Mrs. Dozier distributed a timeline (January-April; copy on file); she noted 2/11/08 (date Board Members available) workshops from 1-3:30 p.m. on a District compensation package for superintendent(s) and from 4-5:00 p.m. to discuss process documents. Mrs. Dozier thanked Georgianna McDaniel for helping on process documents drafts for Superintendent, Board Attorney, and Board Auditor. In response to Dr. Kuckel's inquiry to receive other Superintendent salaries from Florida districts with 60,000-120,000 enrollment in addition to those we compare ourselves with, Mrs. Dozier noted several items and background materials have been requested—e.g., sample contracts—but the scope can be increased to include up to 120,000 students. Mr. Dodig will cover for Mr. Martin that day, as the latter is out that week. Mr. Chilmonik noted just finishing a profile; he'll gather additional info but has Pasco, Seminole, Volusia, and Collier counties and when he gets it in a better format, there'll be data on salary, ratios, and performance.

**B. ACADEMIC SERVICES** – none

**C. ADMINISTRATIVE/SUPPORT SERVICES** – none

**D. BUSINESS SERVICES**

**1. FTE Projections and Budget Issues for FY09** – Ami Desamours noted (see back-up information copy on file) being here to discuss FTE projections and the recommendations so far of Governor Crist. FTE week is 2/4-2/8/08; it's 2% overall if we hit the 1,665 mark in '07/08 but the actual DOE '08/09 models gave Lee 3,300 growth (4.2%). We use

model software DOE provides; model 999 is the most conservative of several scenarios. Information DOE has built in is from the '06/07 year (over 4%), but was felt the model estimate was too aggressive. It was backed off for Lee of over 1,300 students—81,732 for '08/09 but amounts will be held back for 1,000 re FTE shortfall; DOE hasn't accepted this estimate yet. There are forecasting conferences to attend where questions are asked; once DOE is comfortable, they let the District know if accepted and what the Governor's budget will be based on. The upcoming conference is next week but there haven't been any questions from DOE yet; District should know in the next couple of weeks. Dr. Browder noted in developing next year's budget, numbers need to have a realistic look. Mrs. Desamours noted this past week's press release from the Governor; she will provide some highlights today. The state is allocating about 69% of funds to prek-12; she noted the handout page of k-12 funding (from state) for the classroom. She commented that although the proposal may look good on the surface, she'll point out a few things. The state rid of two categoricals within FEFP—instruction materials and transportation; dollars were moved from one place in the budget, and what was given in categoricals is smaller (evened out). Mrs. Desamours noted there is a very slight increase (class size reduction costs, additional mandates, middle school, and career ed), reflective of the economy decline. The press release had sounded optimistic. Dr. Browder clarified the increase is less than 1%. There is concern about a perception of a lot of money out there. Trying to maintain where the District is at now was mentioned. Dr. Kuckel inquired about covering contracts and no discretionary money; Dr. Browder noted Cabinet will discuss tomorrow and study every possible avenue. His commitment is to teachers and staff of the District; Dr. Browder's feels there'll be reductions inside. It's anticipated a timeline will be shared at the next Briefing as well as a plan so that the Board is engaged. (Dr. Browder told Mr. Chilmonik that what they talked about has nothing to do with the budget.)

Mrs. Desamours noted, in the Governor's budget, it looks like discretionary millage is going away but at the bottom of the page, there's \$900 million districts will be receiving; it's believed the state won't eradicate discretionary millage. MAP (Merit Award Program) isn't listed but it's referenced in documentation so it's hoped to be funded as the state indicated it would; an eye will be kept on this. Dr. Browder noted we've communicated with Bob Cerra who feels it's a mistake listed and that it will balance; data will be obtained as we move forward. Per Dr. Kuckel's question on funding for National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT), Mrs. Desamours noted it's in this proposal (referenced in same place as MAP) but not listed separately but there's confidence it will be there. Dr. Browder noted the February payroll will contain those dollars for applicable teachers. Mrs. Dozier stated the fund for NBCT has been identified as this year's fund (not touched) but doesn't feel we'll be as lucky later, as the state is looking at millions of dollars they can get to; she further added that education is being identified as an area to garner a lot of money quickly, and Mrs. Dozier encourages talk with legislators. The state is expected to grow by only 981 students overall (all districts combined), thus resulting in declining FTE; Dr. Browder noted three years that the state projected 50,000 students re growth. Dr. Kuckel thanked Mrs. Desamours for a presentation that was good and succinct.

## **E. HUMAN RESOURCES**

1. **Gallup Organization/Educational Engagement Program** – Dr. Browder's excited with what we're doing inside this program; he feels as we look back, we have a real positive warehouse of data as we study what makes good student achievement. Dr Adkins's equally excited; the Board has taken up the goal of teacher retention. There is much work in this area—e.g., notifying teachers of expiring certificates, temporary certificates. It helps retain but takes much work and effort; Dr. Adkins commended Personnel. This is done with highly qualified teachers and makes a difference. He's excited with the mentor teacher program and acknowledged Michelle Cort-Mora. He held a book up (distributed prior to Board), noting it will be used to help us with this project (Dr. Adkins proceeded with a PowerPoint). Dr. Adkins noted that what fuels achievement gains in students is the teacher and that the majority of the operational budget is allocated for teacher salaries (very important). The impact of the teacher on a student in the classroom is not just residual but cumulative; gains achieved by a good teacher are larger than expected. The gain (or loss) has a residual impact on a student two years or more; having great teachers is critically important. The Tennessee study (University of Tennessee, Knoxville) references teachers who gained in the top (50-54% more than those in bottom). Classroom size and materials don't make up for a teacher and the difference the latter makes. Dr. Adkins noted, in his opinion, that it may be more important for us to retain good teachers than class size. The District is doing better job re retention; he commended Staffing, Recruiting, and Personnel for their time/effort.

Disengaged employees are expensive to an organization (higher absenteeism rate) and can mean lower student achievement and higher turnover. The longer with an organization, there's the tendency to become a little less engaged. In an organization having highly engaged employees, there is up to 51% less turnover and 62% less safety incidents, as an example. There were school districts in the studies and they were looked at individually; student achievement is affected at lower engaged schools versus higher. After the first year, intervention is done (survey, training, etc.). All schools start to rise over a three-year period of time due to higher level of engagement (increasing achievement). In a

Q12 online survey received by teachers, there were particular areas to complete anonymously. Basic needs start the pyramid; management/support is next, followed by teamwork and then growth (latter to learn and grow). Currently, there's work on program design and then there'll be a Q12 survey (like Zoomerang). Principals are interested how they're doing/doing better. Anonymity and gathering aggregate information was confirmed to Dr. Kuckel; if work group is too small, that particular data won't be used. An action plan would be done based on results. Re Dr. Kuckel's question if we'll tie to student achievement and aggregate for those particular schools, we will be doing data analysis (yes) of achievement along with survey. Dr. Browder noted we'll know the data; we'll do implementation, etc. The District will know how well a principal is doing to create an environment we're looking for. Dr. Adkins noted we can put graphs together like here (to track over three-year period of time). The track record of working with schools has been good; he noted potential benefits (greatest factor of retention is principal, when in our control; focus on work environment). Noted was: improve teacher retention and reduce turnover; reduce absenteeism; improve productivity; improve service to customer/community; and improve student achievement. The three-year agreement would be \$57,000. In response to Dr. Scricca's question re schools achieving appreciable student achievement, Dr. Adkins explained the data shared is actual schools/districts but he can get more specific information. Re a question on a possible penalty if withdrawing from the third year of the contract, Dr. Adkins noted working with Messrs. Martin and Dodig (they reviewed); we'd only have to pay for any unpaid services used up to the point of withdrawal. This Board enters into one-year agreements and if this Board chose to go another direction, they can. Grant funding is used (every year); the Board couldn't make a three-year promise in case the grant monies cease.

To sum up program advantages (Mrs. Dozier asked), Dr. Adkins noted it provides principals with extremely important info on how they're doing in supporting teachers—latter is backbone of achievement and provides much feedback and ability to plan over three years to improve school working conditions and retain/support teachers. Re tracking District employees, data can follow a principal from school to school; if teacher lost due to transfer to another school (or other district), we won't see. Dr. Browder feels Mrs. Dozier's questioning the impact on teachers. Via design, it's a prescription for schools by going in/helping teachers to be more successful; it's a prescription of how we'd implement changes school to school. Dr. Adkins sees teachers benefiting from this; teachers disengaged may feel not recognized for their work (the boss will see that they may need to acknowledge what's being done for kids). Mrs. Dozier commented, re costs, of the necessity for us to look very critically over the next year and she's not sure if this program is necessary. Dr. Browder explained it can be put in a list of items that come inside the budget where it will stand or not. Dr. Adkins noted it would be out of grant dollars though he realizes it's still dollars; these are dollars to be expended in specific areas such as teacher retention and recruitment (or the monies will be sent back). He noted that teacher cost re turnover is about \$12,000 to \$15,000 each; if conservatively estimating, 10 teachers lost can amount up to \$120,000—significant cost of turnover. Total turnover is costing the District \$5 million; some do retire and move out of area (out of our control) but if we make dent in this and save, this program can be part of it. Dr. Kuckel likes that it's research-based and is glad other districts benefit; in keeping our data, it will affect decisions made.

Re pilot schools' question, Dr. Adkins noted it's for all teachers over three-year period; TALC and SPALC have been included (as FYI). Re question on if the training is to be the same regardless of survey results or customized as to findings, Dr. Adkins noted the answer as both—training on how instrument works and then specific training to schools based on their own data. Dr. Kuckel asked about exit interviews for teachers and administrators leaving; Dr. Adkins is glad she asked. Recently, Ms. Cort-Mora/staff put together a comprehensive survey being used this year (for teachers; will get data). Dr. Adkins does have information we get from our own records (turned into the state: moving out of area, retiring, certification issues). We wanted to dig deeper (qualitative) but we'll collect as we move forward/build better pictures. Dr. Kuckel requested a copy of the survey. Dr. Scricca requested periodic reports (not one at end of year, but every 3-4 months to see trend); Dr. Browder noted this could be tied to the quarterly Strategic Plan update. He asked that he, Dr. Adkins, and staff meet and bring back more data in an update (quarterly). Dr. Kuckel thinks it's a good idea for more info on other districts. Dr. Scricca appreciates the remark—re the budget—even if it's grant money, it's still money; she'd ask the Superintendent to have this as a priority though hers may be different from other Board Members. Dr. Kuckel summarized the next steps heard and thanked Dr. Adkins for the nice presentation. It's good to be proactive about the topic and helps with solutions to teachers leaving, noting to continue to reflect with the Board. She would like to see how mentoring fits in this process; Dr. Kuckel commented that with properly trained mentors, many districts have seen this help teacher retention. Dr. Scricca noted importance of retaining good teachers and those showing promise; if those identified quickly as being in the wrong field, it may save money.

2. **Job Descriptions/Emergency Medical Treatment (add-on):** *Clinic Assistant; Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN); School Nurse; Trainer, Assistant Athletic; Trainer, Athletic District; Head Coach (High School); Head Coach (Middle School); and Coordinator, Health Services* – Dr. Browder noted #9 of Essential Functions for the job

descriptions is an addition of “From time to time, provides emergency medical treatment to students/employees as needed in the course and scope of employment.” Dr. Kuckel expressed kudos for the essential functions having measurable language—i.e., very specifics on whether the job is being accomplished and the continuance of monitoring; she noted even having more in some when brought back in the future. Dr. Scricca mentioned obtaining grammatical consistency; Dr. Browder noted we’ll continue to work on descriptions.

**F. EXECUTIVE SERVICES**

**1. Policy 7.04, Driving & Replacing District Vehicles (2/12)** – Dr. Browder noted this is the policy that’s been discussed; it outlines the use of driver’s ed vehicles and ensures we’re treating all the same way and that the principals are informed. It will be for the 2/12/08 Public Hearing.

**G. PUBLIC COMMENT** – Mark Castellano (TALC) talked about the budget/Governor’s budget; it may be “smoke and mirrors” but the Legislature may approve the same. He was bothered by feeling class size downplayed in a report today, noting working conditions are important and a teacher may be motivated to stay in an environment re class size; keep this in mind, please. A point made by Dr. Adkins was about administrators; Mr. Castellano commented on his fortune of having good ones (motivating factor). Dr. Kuckel noted these are good points.

**H. BOARD ATTORNEY / SUPERINTENDENT’S COMMENTS** – Mr. Martin provided a School Law minute about the provision of related services for individuals with disabilities—e.g., audiology, physical therapy, therapeutic recreation, school nurse, counseling services; just because it’s listed in a regulation doesn’t mean it’s available on demand—IDEA dictates. A physician requested for medical treatment isn’t required under IDEA to receive free, appropriate education if service is able to be provided by a non-physician. Under IDEA, lack of funding is never an excuse to not fund. Dr. Browder noted a memo updating an item for tonight; the cost of the site was omitted and he apologized. Dr. Browder noted there is interest by the City of Fort Myers in the Adams Building; discussion will start with the Council and City Manager. We’re getting appraisals of land that they want to bring into the discussion (e.g., Ortiz and Martin Luther King Boulevard; Bonita Bay has a development going there with 600-700 homes), and information will be brought (as it’s developed). Separately, Dr. Browder noted submitting again March 1<sup>st</sup> for Exclusive Authority; he noted we’ll resubmit the plan as we’ve developed and keep our options open on how the state will proceed. There have been 2-3 districts granted that authority, and the Superintendent believes we need to keep submitting. The meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

/dwm

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MINUTES BOOK NO. 44 - FY08

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**Jane E. Kuckel, Ph.D.**, Meeting Chair

ATTEST:

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

*An audio/visual tape of this meeting has been produced to provide a verbatim record of the proceedings. Members of the public may obtain a copy of the tape of any meeting by making a request for such through the Communications Department and paying the actual cost of copying the tape. Members of the public may view any Board meeting tape at the Communications Department at no cost. Anyone wishing to view a Board meeting tape should contact the Communications Department at 337-8327 to make such a request.*