



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 (Approval 5/6/08)
Tuesday – April 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
Dr. Jane E. Kuckel, Vice Chair
Mr. Steven K. Teuber, Board Member
Mr. Keith Martin, Board Attorney
Mrs. Denise Mangus, Recording Secretary

(Dr. Kuckel called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m.)

A. ITEMS WITH GUESTS

- 1. DAC Chair and Compliance Chair Reports to Board** – This was pulled (chairs were not present).
- 2. Take Stock in Children Presentation** – Marshall Bower and Brenda Tate were introduced; Al Shilling played a four-minute video of a Take Stock in Children visit at Bonita Middle. The video explained the program; business leaders rank the submitted applications. There is a 99% success rate, and students sign a performance pledge. Mentors provide guidance; students completing the program receive scholarships. Mr. Bower noted kudos to Mrs. Tate and her husband for their heartfelt work/donations (they were Sanibel mentors and moved to the Bonita area). Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) has become a partner in the Take Stock program; Mr. Bower met with the College of Education Dean, Dr. Greene, today re expanding their involvement and he'll meet with professors over the summer. It's the hope to expand Take Stock in other middle schools. Efforts were brought in from the Bonita community for their program and there was a desire to link up with the Dancing Classrooms in that area. Dr. Greene and Mr. Bower discussed doing a study, working with the District, re the statistics and difference program has made on students (program is felt to lower drop-out rates and juvenile crime). FGCU will continue to contribute to the paper publication. As the program grows, assessment costs do also but FGCU grad students may be able to help. There are 23 students in Bonita Middle's program; \$135,000 raised for Bonita scholarships. David Lucas of Bonita Bay was commended for stepping forward in addition to others. The graduation lunch for 25 graduates this year is 4/29; there'll be 53 scholarships in May to 6th-9th graders (not including Bonita Middle's). Dr. Kuckel noted appreciation; talking with Mrs. Tate several times; and doing data behind the program to ensure success (comparing those in program vs. not). Dr. Browder commended Mrs. Tate for her leadership, commitment, and he appreciates the students having a fair shot/opportunity. Dr. Kuckel acknowledged the fundraising efforts and separately thanked Messrs. Williams (Bonita Middle Principal) and Mr. Shilling.

B. BOARD MEMBERS

- 1. Special Areas of Board Involvement/Reports** – Dr. Kuckel noted this month's well-conducted Sons of American Revolution JROTC lunch/recognition event where the Board received a certificate.
- 2. Legislative Update** – Mrs. Dozier attended the recent NSBA Orlando conference and noted Mr. Teuber attending as an alternate for delegation meetings, a sergeant of arms, and his voting on several issues. She represented Lee and FSBA. Mrs. Dozier mentioned a dues-restructuring issue was blocked. She attended several meetings and spoke with the national affiliate associate; due to cutbacks/budget, we may not be doing the dues again this year. FSBA even discussed whether they'd be affiliate due to an almost 21% increase. Mr. Teuber reiterated our belonging to FSBA and the Consortium, which share similar interests (vs. some states in NSBA); he feels we get a great amount of Tallahassee support, and he wouldn't mind seeing membership cost reductions. The regional conferences are respected for what is brought forward.

Mrs. Dozier attended this month's Construction Advisory meeting where the committee is active/excited re the talked about guard houses; she acknowledged the good job by Bill Moore and Reggie Snell. Separately, Mrs. Dozier noted this month's most spectacular Golden Apple event, which was well planned by the hard-working Foundation and a tribute to teachers. She commended the Foundation's Dancing Classrooms program, the students' behavior/presenting themselves, and she wants all to watch the program and its effectiveness; Donna Mutzenard and Mark Castellano were there also. Mrs. Dozier also attended the North Fort Myers Academy of the Arts annual function.

Re Days in Legislature, Mrs. Dozier visited numerous senators and representatives (Saunders, Thompson, Williams, Pickens, Aubuchon, etc.), asking all to be on same page. White paper (on file) went to the delegation today. Detrimental choices to Lee that legislature has made noted as well as what we've asked them for—2 remaining District requests be accepted as written. Senator Saunders understands we're not actually getting new money; property taxes are being

distributed to areas in the state (some rural without incoming tax monies), resulting in less money for Lee. Legislators Williams and Aubuchon are extending themselves re education and may suffer repercussions (i.e., future leadership positions); Legislators Aronberg, Bennett, and Saunders are going to do this as well. Flexibility is being requested. She noted many Tallahassee meetings and the Consortium. Mrs. Dozier continues to say the legislature isn't identifying stable (education) revenue sources and hurricanes, tourism, and construction can't be depended on. She sat in front of education committee but waived right to speak, as Rep. Thompson provided excellent testimony re the bullying bill. Mrs. Dozier did a Friday webcast about a week ago to FSBA members on Tallahassee's not so good budget news. She noted FSBA is doing a dues reduction to school districts as a result of experiencing cutbacks; FSBA executive committee is cutting back on travel to offset reduced revenues. She noted the 5/16-17 community engagement seminar and that some might want to attend. Re 3,000 nationwide school boards, there are only 11% the size of Lee; we may have sized ourselves out of the market. Possibly doing a FSBA/Florida 'Days on the Hill' over 6-8 weeks in Washington, D.C. may be an avenue (saving NSBA dues), with six different districts visiting weekly as a possibility. Mrs. Dozier will pass note(s) on to the Board re FSBA calendar events and the recent legislative phone conference call with Mr. Cerra.

Responding to Dr. Kuckel, Mrs. Dozier noted (Tallahassee) leadership isn't conversing re stable education revenue sources or wanting to discuss on the floor; it would have to go through committee. Mrs. Dozier noted maybe writing legislation/getting one of our legislators to carry it through the legislature (hot issue). Re writing a bill, legislature could be asked to identify and take each exemption and exclusion to re-certify; another is to appoint a legislative committee, with general members around the state, to sit with legislators. Re Dr. Kuckel's inquiry on the tax reform commission update, Mrs. Dozier noted nothing was put on the ballot and the commission also chose not to put anything about class size (latter will be done statutorily). Re Amendment 1 passage, we'll address issue of exclusions and exemptions. Now, we can't before committee—nobody is carrying those bills. Mr. Chilmonik commented on the article of Legislator Rubio's plan to get on the ballot—limit 1.35%; they'd take a 1% sales tax. Mrs. Dozier noted hearing about tax cuts but no alternate sources to replace cuts being made; she said the "Take a Stand" will be applicable also next year. Dr. Browder communicated with another superintendent (Mr. Monfort) about what it does to all of us if we continue to suffer revenue shortfalls around the state. It is in the Florida constitution that funding be provided for a high quality education; FSBA is reviewing a possible lawsuit re funding, and the work/report done a few years ago is still there and valid.

C. ACADEMIC SERVICES

1. ~~OK to Say No Social Norming/Social Marketing~~ – This item was pulled due to the time.
2. **Update/District Accreditation** – Dr. Jones quickly provided an update on the plans for the District visit re this (schedule handout on file). Of the 18-member team arriving Sunday evening, half are from within the state and are present/former educators; the Board is welcome to greet them at their hotel. Dr. Jones thanked District/school staff, community business partners, and parents for their willingness to participate/prepare. A reminder was given that the separate Board Member interviews are at 12:50 p.m. Monday. The team will visit 16 schools Tuesday, and the related Board Briefing Meeting is at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday; the team will report and give some recommendations/external feedback for continuous improvement, and the Board may know preliminarily Wednesday if the District's recommended for accreditation. It was noted the principals want to please and show the great things we're doing. Dr. Kuckel thanked Dr. Jones.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE/SUPPORT SERVICES

1. **Change Orders/March 2008** – this is FYI (there were no questions or discussion; back-up on file).

E. BUSINESS SERVICES

1. **Update/Investment Strategies** – Dr. Browder went over the two-page (just distributed) "Suggested Investment Strategy Through June 30, 2008" and noted the different percentage rates earned: SBA, 3.07%; Bank of America, 2.0%; and Reserve Account, 3.65% (as comparison re market, one of last year's rates was 5.39%). We'll start investment strategy in the next several weeks. He noted we've investment funds to get us to June 30th--\$140 million. The \$114 million reserve fund account amount would include \$100 million added to it. Mr. Teuber affirmed the public interest checking is result of bidding out. From SBA, \$5.8 million can be drawn down without a penalty. Diversification noted re utilizing the public interest checking, prime funds (government-backed securities), same-day availability, etc.; there are risks, as any fund could become insolvent based on the market. SBA's Fund A is not fully disclosed/discussed. Public interest checking can earn less than SBA but there's a penalty if all money withdrawn from Fund A. Mrs. Dozier has talked with Legislators Aubuchon and Williams re our money in SBA account and at-risk; one representative is concerned the recent SBA report findings didn't go broad enough—not defining duties, future and current, of commissioners. It's desired to have a more detailed report but legislature obtained information asked for (not all we wanted). Dr. Browder noted, re SBA, maturing of several other funds (reason for \$5.8 million additional access). Fund A funds are AAA; Dr. Browder

and Mrs. Dozier are concerned not all answers we're dealing with received. Greta Campbell monitors daily. Today lays out an investment strategy, assuming \$5.8 million drawn down and invested as identified. Jerry Ford, Lee Legutko, and Mrs. Campbell have reviewed this; Dr. Browder wants nod from Board today (given). In response to Mr. Chilmonik's reserve account question, Dr. Browder noted dollars that come from Bank of America are property taxes. Between now and 6/30, \$140 million would be taken and invested (prime fund/government-backed securities). In June, the course of next six months would be brought. Mrs. Dozier cautioned on importance re investment disclosures; Dr. Browder noted BlackRock doesn't have all investments or where all money is (re SBA) but we continue to monitor. When there's liquidity (to draw down), we can invest locally. Dr. Browder noted, as transition, we shared first look at reductions and are continuing to move through the process; negotiations re-opened. There would be a closed Executive Session with the Board as the budget picture becomes clear/available. The nation is struggling. The Florida legislature isn't supporting what our Governor said he'd do; Lee County School District may lose \$27-32 million and as cuts continue, Dr. Browder noted we're moving dangerously close to the schoolhouse. He's doing a webcast tomorrow and has referred to the bargaining units to ensure they know what we're saying. He wants to give the unions credit for moving reappointment dates to 5/9 (so to minimize possible cuts/"dust settling"). Dr. Browder noted we've asked for flexibility re 2 mill money (\$22 million in capital lost but \$16 back in operations); most of our county monies go to other areas in the state but we've asked for flexibility to use our money. If the state doesn't secure a stable funding source, kids will be hurt in the long haul and Dr. Browder is "standing up." Dr. Kuckel noted present tense of children being hurt.

2. **Update/FY09 Budget** – Wayne Nagy (presenting re Budget today) eats at a different school daily; 1st graders provided him good info today. He distributed current related news handouts (copy on file), noting we'll keep milk though cost is more (not replace with Yuhoo as another state), not rise over a nickel per each lunch annually (next three years), etc. District Food Service will continue to operate in the black and offer healthy choices as children who eat better perform better. Mr. Nagy noted Food Service is a world-class organization, operating like a big business with sound business practices; he noted productivity and that he's met with 8 other Districts' directors (similar size to Lee) and taking back the best they have. The percentage of labor costs versus percentage of revenue was noted; some of the others were at 48% (they were still lower in labor when looking at total big picture; ours is how our labor was laid out). He explained we've a number of 6-hour labor force daily—83% (others at 14-60%). Additional meal per labor was mentioned as well as our needing to cover the critical time when children eat lunches. The District will have more 4-hour people, resulting in more productivity to take care of students. There has been work with Bob Rushlow and Suzanne Rudd (SPALC) tirelessly to work on issues; a memo of understanding was arrived at that will be very beneficial in that all Food Service workers with more than two years in the District will be guaranteed a job and the same hours but those with two years or less, a spot will be guaranteed with a minimum of four hours. They can keep their employees employed; Mr. Nagy gave credit to Mr. Rushlow re not going to non-renewals. There are 17 vacant assistant manager positions (19 units outside of school centers); more will be expected from managers and support personnel in their department.

Mr. Nagy noted the articles on food costs and, on average, food is transported 1,200 miles today. We're in a food power buying group with 36 districts, which is second to New York City schools. This year's food increase was 6% versus the projected 3%. Mr. Nagy noted they'll continue with improvements; Dr. Browder wants all children fed hot meals and every child fed, even if they don't have the money. Meals are continually being paid back—it's working when others said it wouldn't. Re the Board's wellness policy #2 (sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education shall be integrated into other areas of curriculum such as science, language arts, and math), there's a three-year PEP grant that will assist with this weakness (Florida Dairy Council/\$125,000 in materials and programs; there's also menus' nutrition info, Nutrition Facts Café, additional vegetable choices, 100% safe staff certified/HACCP). Mr. Teuber noted Mr. Nagy's excitement/intensity and that sometimes people look at schools, taking things for granted; Food Service is a big business, and Mr. Teuber appreciates the sound business principles outlined and he commended Mr. Nagy/his team for the work done. Dr. Kuckel commended the unions also.

F. HUMAN RESOURCES

1. **Plan for Support for Employees Non-Reappointed** – Dr. Adkins cited the "Exiting Employee Resources" plan (copy on file) developed. He noted we're in midst of massive budget reductions and this information (contacts/data for unemployment, insurance, retirement, starting a new job search, terminal sick leave payout) is planned to be on the web tomorrow with flyers (with phone numbers) to all employee bulletin boards. Personnel/Human Resources is helping with managers, principals, directors, etc. to help in placement. Dr. Kuckel noted thanks for the thorough update and things being done to help people. Mr. Teuber inquired about getting the unemployment personnel here on-site; Dr. Browder noted: we can (if employees need them here); Susan Strong has been working with the local office; and everything is being done to help folks to not have an opportunity to be unemployed.

G. EXECUTIVE SERVICES – none

H. PUBLIC COMMENT – Sue Jacobse read part of her letter to Legislator Wise which was copied to our delegation re deep budget cuts, unraveling public education as we know it, etc.; she'll send same to House leadership but she's disappointed in leadership at both (House and Senate). It discourages some to vote; Mrs. Jacobse sees (Tallahassee) leadership switching.

Bob Rushlow doesn't expect state budget help this year and feels we'll have to deal with it ourselves. Review Committee looked at Food Service's efficiency; he'll meet with Dr. Adkins to take fully forward. Re sensitivity, there'll be some 2-hour school positions. If 30 hours not worked, benefits lost; there's concern for some mothers, hoping District considerate of this.

I. BOARD ATTORNEY (none)/SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS – Dr. Browder noted some national issues inside Office Depot re districts but our state/District hasn't got to this point. Re Mr. Chilmonik's request on chemistry and physics classes, Dr. Browder distributed a memo (copy on file) of what's offered school-by-school. Meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

/dwm

MINUTES BOOK NO. 44 - FY08

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

ATTEST:

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.