



VISION:
To be a world-class school system.

The School Board of Lee County
Legislative Presentation [Minutes Approval 12/11/07]
Wednesday, November 14, 2007 (10:10-11:10 A.M.)
School Board Annex Training Room "D"

Attendees:

Mrs. Jeanne S. Dozier, Chairman
Dr. Jane E. Kuckel, Vice Chairman
Mr. Robert D. Chilmonik, School Board Member
Mr. Steven K. Teuber, School Board Member
Dr. Elinor C. Scricca, School Board Member
Dr. James W. Browder, Superintendent
Mr. Keith Martin, School Board Attorney
Ms. Julie Nieminski, School Board Auditor
Bob Cerra, Legislative Consultant, Cerra Consulting Group
Representative Trudi K. Williams, District 75, Legislative Delegation Chairman
Senator Dave Aronberg, District 27
Representative Gary Aubuchon, District 74
Ms. Randi Rosete, Legislative Aide to Senator Burt Saunders, District 37
Ms. Crystal Fitzgerald, Legislative Aide to Senator Bennett, District 21
Ms. Katie Dickerson, Legislative Aide to Representative Nick Thompson, District 73
Mr. Michael McNerney, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. Lee Legutko, Chief Financial Officer
Dr. Gregory Adkins, Chief Human Resources Officer
Ms. Greta Campbell, Director, Financial Accounting
Ms. Martha Crotty, Coordinator, District Operations
Mr. Joe Donzelli, Director, Communications
Dr. Ruthie Lohmeyer, Administrator-on-Assignment, Elementary Operations
Ms. Georgianna McDaniel, Director, Personnel Services
Ms. Ranice Monroe, Director, Professional Standards and Equity
Mr. William Moore, Executive Director, Support Services
Ms. Leila Muvdi, Director, student Assignment
Ms. Dolores Shelhorse, Director, Information Systems
Mrs. Donna Lesansky, Recording Secretary
Ms. Donna Mutzenard, Executive Director, Island Coast FEA Service Unit
Mr. Mark Castellano, President, Teachers Association of Lee County

WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS

Mrs. Jeanne Dozier, School Board Chairman, welcomed all of the attendees and asked that each person introduce himself / herself.

PRESENTATION OF 2006/07 ANNUAL REPORT

Mrs. Dozier briefly reviewed the Annual Report, highlighting the sections on student achievement, student assignment, school grades and school and District accomplishments.

Pursuant to questions from the Legislators, the following was noted:

- It is state-mandated that each school district develop a student assignment plan
- Student bussing is now conducted within the zones
- Each school zone is treated equally (i.e., each zone has a comprehensive school and an IB program)
- Student assignment allows for proximity preference
- The east and west zones are the fastest growing
- The District experienced a shortfall in the October FTE because of lower than anticipated student growth

PRESENTATION OF 2008 Legislative Platform Issues

Each of the Board Members (with the exception of Mrs. Dozier) and the Superintendent presented the 2008 Legislative Priorities.

Provide for Funding for Public School Operations Commensurate with a State Goal to Improve Instructional Outcomes *(Mr. Chilmonik)*

The primary goal of funding public education is to continually improve student performance. Lee County supports a powerful accountability system that strongly ties funding increases to student achievement. Florida currently ranks in the bottom quartile of states in providing per student funding for public education. We respectfully request that the Legislature:

- ▶ Increase education revenue to a level that will move Florida into the top 50% of states in student funding for public education.
- ▶ Provide funding for a 7th period day for high school students to expand the opportunities available to meet high standards.
- ▶ Allow for funding to the district for students taking courses at the Florida Virtual School during the school day.
- ▶ Review the procedures for estimating the total cost of instructional materials to include all of the true costs of newly adopted materials.
- ▶ Maintain the 90% rule within the FEFP that stipulates that a maximum of 90% of a district's base funding may be generated by local tax funds with the remainder coming from state general revenue.
- ▶ Fully fund for student enrollment growth.
- ▶ Increase the Safe Schools Allocation to meet the rising costs to keep campuses safe and secure for students and staff.
- ▶ Restore weighted funding for middle school career education programs.
- ▶ Establish full funding of the transportation formula.

Re-establish Proper Governance of Charter Schools by Constitutionally Established and Elected School Boards *(Dr. Scricca)*

The School Board of Lee County supports charter schools and has approved charters that are well-planned and contribute to meeting the needs of the overall District. We are concerned that recent changes made in the charter school law are contrary to the responsibilities for the students, parents, and taxpayers in Lee County. We respectfully request that the Legislature:

- ▶ Eliminate provisions limiting local flexibility for school boards where charter schools have failed to meet Class Size Reduction Requirements.
- ▶ Repeal the Unconstitutional Charter Schools of Excellence Board.

- ▶ Amend appeals of school board denials of charter applications to the State Board of Education (SBE) so that SBE rulings are no longer binding.
- ▶ Maintain current school board authority over all local property taxes and impact fees.

Amend Statutes to Improve Instruction and Accountability (Mr. Teuber)

We respectfully request that the Legislature:

- ▶ Change the school grading system to remove scores of new district students for the first year of testing until both performance scores and learning gain scores are available for these students.
- ▶ Update the system for determining graduation rates and drop-out rates to more accurately calculate the true graduation rates in Florida.
- ▶ Allow practical arts courses to substitute for fine arts requirements for high school graduation.

Assist with Classroom Space Needs for Class Size Reduction, Growth in Students and Replacement of Aging Facilities (Dr. Browder)

We respectfully request that the Legislature:

- ▶ Create a high growth capital outlay fund and allow any district that experiences high growth to share in the program.
- ▶ Maintain school impact fees for the purpose they were collected.
- ▶ Fund all of the capital costs of class size reduction.
- ▶ Preserve the distribution formula for class size reduction where district growth is a major factor.

Improve the State Pre-Kindergarten Program (Dr. Kuckel)

We respectfully request that the Legislature:

- ▶ Provide per student funding that will reflect the desire for a high quality program as outlined in the recommendations of the 2003 Universal Pre-Kindergarten Education Advisory Council Report.
- ▶ Plan for a Universal Pre-Kindergarten system that will ultimately provide certified teachers for the program.
- ▶ Provide for transportation costs associated with the Pre-Kindergarten program.

PRESENTATION OF DISTRICT CAPITAL PLAN, DISTRICT SUCCESSES AND DISTRICT ISSUES

Dr. Browder took a few minutes to make some comments regarding the District's Capital Plan. He stated that the State is in serious financial difficulty due to the decrease in home sales and sales tax issues. Dr. Browder added that while the District had planned to add 18 new schools over the next five years, that number had now been reduced to 10. He added that the District has worked to standardize curriculum within the District in order to collateralize the damage caused by the high mobility rate.

MINUTES BOOK NO.44 FY08

Jeanne S. Dozier, Chairman

ATTEST:

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