



VISION:
To be a world-class school system.

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF LEE COUNTY – Briefing Meeting / M I N U T E S
Tuesday – October 21, 2008 / 2:30 p.m. (called to order by Dr. Kuckel at 2:42 p.m.)

Attendees: Dr. Jane E. Kuckel, Board Vice Chair
Mr. Steven K. Teuber, J.D., Board Member
Dr. James W. Browder, Secretary & District Superintendent

Mr. Robert D. Chilmonik, Board Member
Dr. Elinor C. Scricca, Board Member
Mr. Keith Martin, Board Attorney
Mrs. Denise Mangus, Recording Secretary

A. BOARD MEMBERS

1. Special Areas of Board Involvement/Reports – Dr. Kuckel noted Mrs. Dozier was ill. Mr. Teuber noted a very good DAC meeting, with good response re DARE; attendees given true data vs. media sound bites. Legislative platform was distributed at that meeting; he thanked Drs. Scricca and Kuckel for recently attended out-of-town meetings. Dr. Browder, re legislative priority card, reminded Mr. Teuber (for the Board) about two printing possibilities; consensus was given for least expensive. Dr. Kuckel noted DAC's focus change; it can be revisited (quality process; plan/do/study/act). Dr. Scricca was pleased to attend CAC, noting committee intensity, and looks forward to profitable/informative meetings; a LEED PowerPoint (state initiative, to impact financially, when remodeling/renovating) is anticipated at a Board Briefing next month. She gave a profile of the District to Lehigh Kiwanis; they asked about the old K-Mart. She commended Lehigh Senior High on the well-attended AVID program (on 11/3 Briefing) orientation session. She thanked Dr. Kuckel for the opportunity to fill in at the Bonita leadership meeting where Dr. Scricca spoke after Dr. Browder who's tough to follow; Dr. Tihen was present also. She had copies of AVID syllabus and all took one with sincere interest. She noted filling in for Mrs. Dozier at the Calendar Committee meeting, which was a terrific gathering and they'll probably meet once more; Dr. Scricca was impressed with the process, respect, and comradery. She thanked Bonita Bay for a grant event where four schools were recipients; the teachers' innovativeness for consideration was impressive. Mr. Chilmonik acknowledged Bonita Bay for a wonderful function as well. Re parades, he noted Columbus Day's and the upcoming Veterans Day. Mr. Chilmonik had a call re one SAT testing on the Saturday of graduation weekend next year but he'll talk with the Superintendent on concerns. Dr. Kuckel noted the honor and privilege of attending last night's Curriculum meeting, as it's a great group. She also attended the SWFL College's design event; there are 100+ students in the program, it's a win-win for the International Design Center, and students get first-hand experience. Separately, the Headstart Policy Council will be moving more decisions to the Board, and updates will be received.

B. ACADEMIC SERVICES

1. Update / Reading Initiative – Dr. Browder introduced Dr. Tihen as a *Reading First* State Administrator of the Year, noting he has led us in this area the last six years, along with Dr. Jones, to help make huge gains; the Superintendent thought it was time for an update as to what we're doing. Dr. Tihen expressed thanks for support to the Board, community, and teachers and he noted the latter (from every school/level) have put in their time on this. Students need different types of support (he gave a PowerPoint on the District's K-12 Reading Program Tiers; copy on file); there are three tiers (for elementary, middle, and high), with national initiative reflected to identify students early on. Students have different time tables depending on tier, but materials needed are provided to help in the process. The cadre from the spring produced, from our teachers, 500 design strategies (what works best in the classroom) for the fall. Dr. Tihen noted some of the new software programs used; e.g., Teen Biz encourages independent reading (four of our high schools saw significant reading gains after using). New students identified yearly: 16,000-18,000, of which 5,000 are kindergarten and 8,000 brand new/never been here; secondary reading programs: 16,000 placed. Teachers stepped up; they have the skills/got through reading endorsements. Not an easy process to change school culture—children and needs complex. Dr. Jones thanked Dr. Tihen, adding it's a very important structure to support students; she sincerely believes issues have to be corrected for students before ESE referrals, as it's truly a reading issue for 90% of those referred and many students can become successful earlier. There are first-year teacher jitters (lot to learn) but there's encouragement to stay the course, teach with fidelity, follow through, and stick with it; supplements/adjustments to be made can be looked at in the summer as there's no perfect program out there. Dr. Browder noted this huge task started three years ago; there's now consistency so if students move schools (40% mobility rate of youngsters noted; can move 30-50 times in educational career), damage can be minimized. Dr. Scricca asked about student needs in the three levels; in elementary, there are significant different languages—98 languages/158 countries (fluency in homes noted). Many students don't have a prior knowledge base and need to catch up upon entering the District. In high school, difference is between verbal and comprehension. Dr. Kuckel noted thanks for standardization, applied research, and staff input; she has some background but not what's seen today. Dr. Tihen is thankful for Dr. Kuckel's prior start of a District reading initiative.

C. ADMINISTRATIVE/SUPPORT SERVICES – none

D. BUSINESS SERVICES – none

E. HUMAN RESOURCES

1. **Update / Negotiations** – Dr. Browder’s proud, and Dr. Adkins will share that bargaining teams met and worked hard in a more difficult historical time/state of the nation to get us where we’re at. Dr. Adkins noted 10/14 update; process is research based, and a 2005 Cornell study talks about creativity behind agreements re interest-based bargaining—which lasts longer (our history shows that). To work with these groups is a pleasure and much like the Calendar Committee. Dr. Adkins noted “HR Times” web newsletter communication. Groups came back together to talk really about compensation components, as state didn’t give us enough to finish out year; both agreements require coming back (e.g., discuss benefit bank contributions). He showed web postings/SPALC negotiations’ update at every site, forwarding to those who with District e-mail; directors were encouraged to copy employees’ mailboxes (Mr. Rushlow’s request). Insurance Task Force’s continuing, as utilization and costs increasing; 927 plan will go (expensive/not as rich as 903), as high migration out of it. He and Susan Strong will brief Board next month. Benefit bank will remain the same; we’re highly competitive re other districts’. An important note: salary steps frozen, with anticipation of 3% salary schedule enhancement (treating all SPALC equal); for TALC, 3% (with master’s, specialist, and doctorate add-ins). Dr. Adkins noted 10/28-29 ratification, with hope for vote at 11/3 Board Action; he noted insurance page sheets in packet, and Insurance Task Force worked hard all summer/studying many plans and having great dialogue. Best option: make affordable for employees but offer competitive benefit. Mr. Chilmonik asked if actual health care costs anticipated at next Briefing (yes) and if Dr. Browder will brief on impact of overall budget; Dr. Browder noted it can be done, with data pulled/talking with each individually. Cost approximate of raise: \$3.4 million (2% equivalent already set aside and 1% out of contingency); Dr. Browder will be providing an exact figure. Dr. Kuckel thanked Dr. Adkins, the unions, Dr. Browder, and problem-solving of interest-based for solving issues (latter works to common understanding/agreement). These are tough times, and it’s sad the initial offer in contracts couldn’t be honored but hopefully this will pass quickly; employees work very hard, and the Board’s pleased to offer what we have at this point in time for recognition of staff at every level and what they do. The District’s facing many challenges and we’re pulling together as a team; TALC and SPALC, through insistence of interest-based process/training, works well. There’s close work with legislators and common platform issues (Mr. Teuber is Board legislative liaison now). Dr. Browder clarified the units need to ratify.

F. EXECUTIVE SERVICES

1. **Policy 1.18 / Community Involvement Opportunities (11/3)** – Mr. Martin noted changes brought forward from earlier workshop; he hasn’t heard from anyone though original draft sent to Board. Dr. Kuckel noted, for the public, that the Board has discussed this (advertised workshop, Briefings, etc.). Dr. Scricca noted positive addition at DAC of having staff presentations; Mr. Martin was thanked for his work. Mr. Chilmonik noted he’ll have comments later.

G. PUBLIC COMMENT – Nice 10/20 Curriculum Committee meeting reminded her of old times; Dr. Tihen’s inspiring even for lay people. She thanked Dr. Adkins and bargaining units but Bonita newspaper misunderstanding shouldn’t make it a circus—many worked hard. Re Policy 1.18, she’s thankful for Board to provide topics’ direction and not individuals.

H. BOARD ATTORNEY / SUPERINTENDENT’S COMMENTS – Mr. Martin provided a School Law Minute on SB 610—middle school physical education requirements (new 08/09). Dr. Browder noted his opportunity to view item on-line to encourage Board’s look at opening of Dallas school session (motivational speaker); he encourages going to the site as it’s one of the best he’s heard re inspiring/opening messages for 20,000 teachers, and we might want to consider. Meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

ATTEST:

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

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.