



**MISSION:**

*To ensure that each student achieves his or her highest personal potential.*

**VISION:**

*To be a world-class school system.*

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF LEE COUNTY**  
**Superintendent Search Workshop - MINUTES**  
(School Board Meeting Room, 2855 Colonial Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33966)  
**Friday, April 15, 2011**

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**PRESENT:**

Board Members

Mr. Thomas Scott., Chairman  
Ms. Mary Fischer, M.A., Vice Chairman  
Mrs. Jeanne S. Dozier, Member  
Dr. Jane E. Kuckel, Member  
Mr. Don H. Armstrong, Member

District Staff

Dr. Lawrence D. Tihen, Interim Superintendent  
Mr. Keith Martin, Board Attorney  
Mrs. Georgianna McDaniel, Director, Personnel Services  
Mrs. Donna Lesansky, Administrative Assistant to the Board / Recording Secretary

Guests

Dr. Wayne Blanton, Executive Director, Florida School Boards Association  
Mr. David Hall, Chairman, Superintendent Search Citizens Committee  
Mr. Cedric Hall, Esq., Vice Chairman, Superintendent Search Citizens Committee

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**I. Opening Exercises**

**A. Call to Order**

The School Board of Lee County, Florida, met on Friday, April 15, 2011, in the School Board Meeting Room for a Superintendent Search Workshop. Board Chairman Thomas Scott presided and called the workshop to order at 9:03 A.M.

Mr. Scott explained that the purpose of today's workshop is to develop a list of finalists that the Board would like to invite to the District to interview for the position of Superintendent of Schools. He acknowledged the presence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Superintendent Search Citizens Committee, Mr. David Hall and Mr. Cedric Hall, respectively; and Dr. Wayne Blanton, Executive Director of the Florida School Boards Association and Superintendent Search Consultant. He added that they would be asked to share their candidate selections with the Board; after which each Board Member would share his/her selections.

After providing a brief history of the search process, Mr. Scott asked Mr. D. Hall and Mr. C. Hall to come forward to present the recommendation of the Superintendent Search Citizens Committee.

**II. Presentation of Superintendent Search Citizens Committee / Florida School Boards Association**

Both Mr. D. Hall and Mr. C. Hall thanked the Board for the opportunity to provide input into the search process. Mr. C. Hall presented the five finalists chosen by the Committee last night:

- Kamela Patton (Ph.D.)
- Nancy Graham (Ed.D.)
- Joseph Burke (Ed.D.)
- Constance Jones (Ph.D.)
- Steven Cobb

Dr. Wayne Blanton stated that it was his pleasure to inform the Board that he was in agreement with the Committee's five finalists. He added that although at the beginning of last night's meeting they only matched four out of five, after discussion, he and the Committee reached consensus on the five individuals named today.

### **III. Board Member Selection of Finalists**

Mr. Scott asked each Board Member in turn to present his/her finalists.

Mr. Armstrong thanked the members of the Superintendent Search Citizens Committee and Dr. Blanton for all of their work. He presented his finalists:

- Ofelia San Pedro
- Joseph Burke (Ed.D.)
- Steven Cobb
- Kamela Patton (Ph.D.)
- Barbara McGann (Ph.D.)
- Leon Hobbs (Ed.D.)

Mrs. Dozier thanked the members of the Superintendent Search Citizens Committee for their dedication during the process. She shared her philosophy that "home-grown" candidates are best for the School District. She presented her finalists:

- Joseph Burke (Ed.D.)
- Nancy Graham (Ed.D.)
- Leon Hobbs (Ed.D.)
- Constance Jones (Ph.D.)
- Kamela Patton (Ph.D.)
- Steven Cobb

Ms. Fischer thanked Dr. Blanton, Mrs. McDaniel, and the Superintendent Search Citizens Committee members, especially the students, for their assistance during the process. She presented her finalists:

- Kamela Patton (Ph.D.)
- Joseph Burke (Ed.D.)
- Nancy Graham (Ed.D.)
- Constance Jones (Ph.D.)
- Steven Cobb

Dr. Kuckel thanked the members of the Superintendent Search Citizens Committee and acknowledged that their work formed the basis for her decision. She expressed concern that none of the applicants were long-standing superintendents, and that although the Board had decided that it would choose their finalists today, offered two alternative plans. She proposed that Dr. Tihen be asked to remain as Interim Superintendent a little longer while the District re-advertised the position; or that an individual be designated for a longer term, perhaps one year, after which the position would be re-advertised. Dr. Kuckel suggested Dr. Jones, Dr. Adkins, or Dr. Desamours as possible candidates who could maintain stability and keep the District moving

forward in the meantime. She, therefore, declined to present any names for consideration as finalists.

Mr. Scott stated that going into the process, he felt that the District needed someone with strong management skills who could “lead the orchestra, not play all of the instruments.” He opined that the District’s problems are organizational and that someone is needed who could revamp the organization and place the right people in the right positions. Mr. Scott presented his finalists:

- Kamela Patton (Ph.D.)
- Joseph Burke (Ed.D.)
- Steven Cobb

Mr. Scott recapped the voting of the three entities involved, the Superintendent Search Citizens Committee, Dr. Wayne Blanton, and the School Board.

- Joseph Burke (Ed.D.) – four (4) votes
- Steven Cobb – four (4) votes
- Kamela Patton (Ph.D.) – four (4) votes
- Nancy Graham (Ed.D.) – two (2) votes
- Leon Hobbs (Ed.D.) – two (2) votes
- Constance Jones (Ph.D.) – two (2) votes
- Ofelia San Pedro – one (1) vote

Mr. Scott asked the Board Members for their comments regarding expanding the selections and Dr. Kuckel’s comments.

Mr. Armstrong expressed concern that there were no minorities among the finalists and that he would not object to extending the search to expand the pool of candidates.

Ms. Fischer opined that the Board should move forward with the process in order to meet the challenges that lie ahead, to improve morale, and to quell any discontent that might exist.

Mr. Scott opined he could not support a delay and that the Board should continue the process by bringing in the top three candidates.

Mrs. Dozier stated that she would not want to settle on someone and would, therefore, not be opposed to re-advertising the position.

When asked if he would consider remaining as Interim Superintendent, Dr. Tihen replied that he would be willing to remain on a short-term basis if the District was planning on re-advertising immediately but could not commit to another year. He added that the District needs consistency in its leadership.

When asked if he felt that re-advertising would bring forward any different candidates, Dr. Blanton stated that he didn’t feel there would be much change in applicants. He suggested that the Board interview the finalists named today; and, if the Board is not pleased with any of the outcomes, it could always opt to re-advertise at that time.

Mr. D. Hall and Mr. C. Hall were asked to share their thoughts. Mr. D. Hall stated that there were no public comments expressing concerns regarding the weakness of the candidates from any of the Committee members. He shared that from personal experience, he was not always certain of the type of individual he was looking for and that sometimes the interview process helped to clarify that for him. He added that he felt Dr. Burke, Dr. Patton, and Dr. Jones are within the realm of what the Board is seeking. Mr. C. Hall opined that he initially had high expectations and expected more from the applicants. He added that the Committee acted on what it received.

The Board decided to conduct another round of voting, which resulted in the following:

- Mr. Scott – Dr. Burke, Mr. Cobb, Dr. Patton

- Dr. Kuckel – maintained her position and again declined to name any finalists
- Ms. Fischer – Dr. Burke, Mr. Cobb, Dr. Patton, Dr. Graham, Dr. Jones
- Mrs. Dozier – Dr. Burke, Dr. Patton, Dr. Graham, Dr. Jones
- Mr. Armstrong – Dr. Burke, Mr. Cobb, Dr. Patton, Dr. Graham, Dr. Hobbs

Mr. Scott observed that based on this round of voting, Dr. Burke, Mr. Cobb, and Dr. Patton emerged as the three top finalists and that they be invited to participate in the interview process. Mrs. Dozier stated that she not support this and advocated for including Dr. Jones and Dr. Graham.

Through Dr. Blanton's guidance and the consensus of the Board, Dr. McGann, Dr. Hobbs, and Ms. San Pedro were removed from the original list. Each Board Member then expressed how s/he wanted to proceed. Ms. Fischer stated that she wanted to schedule interviews with the five finalists; Mr. Armstrong stated his desire to interview the top three; Dr. Kuckel once again declined; Mrs. Dozier maintained her wish to interview the five; and Mr. Scott stated the top three.

Ms. Fischer stated that her desire to move forward with the five was based on her belief that one of the top three might no longer be in the running once the Board got to that point. In consideration of this, Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Scott agreed to interview the top five finalists.

Mr. Scott summarized that the five finalists are: Dr. Burke, Mr. Cobb, Dr. Patton, Dr. Graham, and Dr. Jones. He stated that each of them would be informed this morning that s/he would be invited to the District to undergo the interview process.

#### **IV. Good of the Order**

Dr. Kuckel stated that although she was not in agreement with the decision, she would be very diligent as the process moved forward.

#### **V. Adjournment**

Mr. Scott adjourned the workshop at 10:13 A.M.

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**Thomas Scott, Chairman**

ATTEST:

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**Lawrence D. Tihen, Ph.D., Secretary and District Interim Superintendent**

*An audio-visual recording of this meeting has been produced to provide a verbatim record of the proceedings and may be viewed on the School District's Website at [www.leeschools.net/stream](http://www.leeschools.net/stream). Members of the public wishing to obtain a copy of the recording of this or any meeting of the School Board must make a request through the District's Communications Department at (239) 337-8327.*