



VISION  
To be a world-class school system.

**Board Advisory Committee Chairs' Meeting – N O T E S (Draft)**  
**Monday – May 7, 2007/3:30 p.m.**

**Call to Order:** by Mr. Keith Martin, Board Attorney (at approximately 3:40 p.m.)

**Attendees:** Mr. Art Steidel, Construction Advisory Committee      Mr. David Hall, Finance Advisory Committee  
Dr. Constance Dennis, Curriculum Advisory Committee      Mrs. Donna Butts, District Advisory Council  
Mr. Dick Young, Compliance Advisory Committee      Ms. Brenda Wall, Recording Secretary

**1. WELCOME FROM SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Browder welcomed the group. Participants introduced themselves. Brenda Wall, new secretary to Keith Martin, was introduced to the committee.

Dr. Browder informed the group that the legislative session has ended. There may be a special session called to deal with other issues. The item that would affect the District the most is a budgetary issue regarding curriculum that requires 150 minutes of physical education a week for K-5. It does not state physical education, rather physical activity. If a physical education class has to be scheduled each day, it would detract from a variety of other art and music type classes. Recess and lunch may have to be restructured in order to meet the law. Dr. Browder noted that the legislation does not require an instructor to be certified in physical education to teach the course. The committee was invited to attend several legislative update meetings, the first being May 16 at 1:00 with the Department of Education and the second on Monday, May 21 at 2:00 with Bob Cerra.

Dr. Browder informed the committee that Monday, May 14 high school graduations would begin. There will be 11 high school graduations and 12 next year.

**2. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 5, 2007 MINUTES**

Minutes were accepted as submitted.

**3. REMINDER OF COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mr. Martin provided a reminder to the group that the next quarterly reporting to the Board is June 19, 2007. Mr. Martin informed the committee that the briefing meeting time has been changed to 2:00 p.m.

**4. DISCUSSION OF INDIVIDUAL COMMITTEE INITIATIVES**

**A. Dick Young of the Compliance Advisory Committee (CAC)** - reported that his committee has spent the last three (3) months putting together a recommendation for an updated call center or hotline as it has been defined. This was reported at the last Board Meeting.

**B. Donna Butts of the District Advisory Council (DAC)** - stated that she had a follow-up question regarding minutes from the previous Advisory Committee Chairs meeting and requested clarification. The question was regarding the District accreditation that Dr. Jones had mentioned, and whether it was approved for District Advisory Chairpersons to serve on that committee. Dr. Browder replied that the Board did approve moving forward regarding this matter, although he was not aware of any discussion that a DAC person would be on the committee. Dr. Jones will be compiling this information.

Since Ms. Butts last update to the Board, the committee has had three (3) meetings, February 28, March 14 and April 18, 2007, with the next meeting scheduled for May 9, 2007. The March 14, 2007 meeting was solely dedicated to Dr. Brunick, who gave an ESE overview. The STAR program has been

approved and presented to all of the teachers. Dr. Scricca spoke to the DAC, regarding teaching Spanish in elementary schools. It was initially presented as mandatory and many questions came out of that. Since that meeting, it was learned that it is not mandatory, but voluntary and adding to that, she has learned that it is neither mandatory nor voluntary. It will now be up to the principals of the schools whether they would like to participate. Dr. Browder stated that the District has applied for a grant regarding this issue. As a District-wide approach to the matter, ITV would be utilized and the channel could be turned on and vocabulary words would be there that children could learn. It could be that it is required in all elementary classrooms and it would be a 10-15 minute lesson, twice a week. This would help children to learn another language and Spanish appears to be the most popular. Dr. Browder noted that he is not sure if the District has received the grant and we have not moved forward to implement this, consequently it is still in the design/development stage.

The bullying legislation has been an on-going discussion for the last few months. All of the information for the legislation was given out at the DAC meeting for people to call to attempt to get legislation passed.

Mrs. Butts noted that retaining students was another topic of discussion for her committee. Some members thought that in-depth counseling was needed for students that were retained. Counseling is provided for parents and children. The kids are usually fine. The goal is to hold them back as early as possible.

Another issue was 16 year olds with three (3) credits or less, which was a high school concern. The DAC received quite a bit of information and wanted to know exactly how many the District had. However, the data that they received was of no use to them, because it did not explain the demographics at each school

Mrs. Butts stated that there was a request for data collected by the District in January 2007 on graduation and dropout rates. Dr. Browder suggested that she speak with Mr. McNerny and he would be able to provide the requested information to the DAC.

Mr. Shafer is coming to speak with the DAC on May 9, 2007. He is going to address the elementary school on the cumulative folders.

**B. Dr. Constance Dennis of the Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC)** - noted in March, that Sue Roshon, Coordinator of Technical and Career Education, came to the meeting along with Dr. Connie Jones and explained to the committee how the high school major program was developed, so that they would have an understanding of how it works. Many students were upset about picking a major before they had made a decision of whether they really wanted to do it. On the whole the gifted/advanced 8<sup>th</sup> graders like the idea of picking a major and thinking ahead. The idea is good one, it just has some technical issues to be worked out.

Dr. Dennis stated that the entire last meeting of the CAC was regarding safety issues in the school. Every school has different safety issues and if a determination is going to be made as to what is the best thing for each school, then everyone needs to work together with the teachers and the staff. The kids come up with a lot of concerns too. There are general safety issues that children need review on. The School Resource Officer came in from the elementary school to speak with Dr. Dennis's 8<sup>th</sup> graders and he asked what "stranger danger" was and some of the kids had forgotten. Kids come in from other schools or other countries and they may not be aware of all of these things and it was decided that the children needed a refresher in safety. One of the ideas was for high school students developing a safety program and coming to present the program to the elementary schools. The DARE officer said that there were all kinds of materials that could be presented, but not enough time available to go to each school. It was suggested that there could be a systematic instruction at all grade levels, but there is not any money

for it. There is an interactive, traveling safety program that comes into the school, with a pretend living room, bathroom, etc. This would be a great program to implement, but the cost would more than likely be prohibitive. Dick Young pointed out that it needs to be defined whether it is student security or safety, as these are two (2) distinctive areas. Dr. Browder agreed with Dick Young regarding identifying whether it is security or safety. Safety in the home is about those things that children should be aware of that could hurt them or endanger them while they are at home. Security is about what goes on inside the school building and the training that the teacher and the administration have in place. The District has a State grant from which the money is provided for a safe and drug free school and that pays for the SRO program. A concern of Dr. Browder is that if there is an issue with homestead and the reduction of money that goes to counties, one of the first things that counties are going to look at is what are the programs that can be eliminated that would minimize the service to citizens. Dr. Browder would like for curriculum to clarify what it is that they would like from the District. Do they want the District to provide safety instruction and how to be safe at home or is it about security and do we need to speak to the children about that aspect of it. Jan Cline, Prevention Specialist for Safe and Drug Free Schools, came and spoke with the CAC and gave them an overview of all of the programs. The neediest schools tend to get the dollars for these programs. Dr. Browder stated that ITV is being looked at for some curriculum and career type programs and a focus will be on increasing the amount of exposure that ITV provides for families and the District. There are a number of safety and security ITV discs that teachers can tie into and use. The District is applying for a new large Federal safety grant.

**C. David Hall, Finance Advisory Committee (FAC)** – The administrative software conversion project is still out there, the project has stalled and they are trying to get it up and going a little bit faster. Information requested from staff that was provided to the FAC. Spoke extensively about the budget on a number of different facets regarding the matter. There was an update from District employees regarding preparation of next year's budget. Employees went through with the FAC the same thing that they went through with the Board. All questions that were asked were answered satisfactorily. Completed and distributed a position paper and a copy was provided to the Advisory Committee Chair members. The biggest concern is the sales tax initiative in which real estate taxes would be done away with on homesteaded properties and replaced with sales tax. Dr. Browder added that the ASP Project hired a project manager to help move that along and an executive committee is being formed that will troubleshoot any issues that may arise. The project manager's goal is to get it off "dead center" and moving forward and this is why a third party project manager was hired. The system that we use is old and outdated. There is too much manual work. The biggest issue will be training.

The other issue that was talked about at length at the FAC meeting was funding. Impact fees are about 25% of what they thought they would be and are dropping every day. There are 20,000 homes for sale in Lee County and the worst case scenario would be if a family of four (4) moves into all 20,000 homes, two (2) adults two (2) kids and we have 40,000 now attending our schools that we did not have before. The potential is there because Lee County is still the fastest growing county in the State and we continue to grow, while the rest of the State is shrinking. If the money is not coming in to fund the cost of these children, that could become a real problem. The market price on homes is coming down. Ken Wilkenson is working on the tax base for the next fiscal year and will use the sales data from December. We will be fine for the 2007-2008 year, the problem is next May looking back at 2007, and our tax base next year will be affected. The School District has been asked to run different scenarios on the budget, making an assumption that there are decreases in revenue from the State of Florida, because our tax base would be going down. Dr. Browder stated that we could get three (3) years out from a facility standpoint. Our student growth was the largest in the State. The District has a five (5) year balanced budget that makes some assumptions that reduce the amount of impact fees coming in, but does not know if it has been reduced enough in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year. For the last 20 years the District grew by between 1,500 and 1,800 students a year, now it is about 3,600 per year. Most of the growth in our county came from the East zone.

**D. Art Steidel, Construction Advisory Committee (CAC)** - concerned about facilities on the same issue stated above. In other words are we in a declining facilities need and should we keep building at the rate we are building. Part of the story of facilities is the class size amendment. The District has a solid three (3) years of facilities that need to go on and that we have the funding for. The construction committee has always been interested in buying existing "big box" like what was done with K-Mart. CAC took a field trip to the Metro Mall and it was loved by everyone. It is a great facility. Buying from an existing facility is the right thing to do. The infrastructures are in place.

**5. DISCUSSION OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

A discussion was held deciding whether a summer meeting should be scheduled. It was agreed that the next meeting will be scheduled in November.

**6. ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

/blw