



Meeting Minutes Duval County Public Schools

March 5, 2021, Board Member Meeting

Ms. Elizabeth Andersen, Chairman
Mr. Darryl Willie, Vice-Chairman
Dr. Kelly Coker
Ms. Lori Hershey
Mr. Warren A. Jones
Ms. Charlotte D. Joyce
Ms. Cindy Pearson
Dr. Diana Greene, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: Board Members Cindy Pearson, Lori Hershey, Dr. Kelly Coker, and Charlotte Joyce were present. Ms. Karen Chastain, Office of General Counsel, was also present.

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:09 p.m. by Board Member Cindy Pearson and held in the Cline Auditorium.

Items to be Discussed

1. SCHOOL NAME CHANGES

Purpose of Meeting

The meeting was called to discuss concerns that had been expressed by constituents. Two themes were identified:

1. Funding source(s) for anticipated expenses incurred by potential name change.
2. Uniformity in procedures and processes for voting at each respective school, as well as clear communication with all stakeholders.

Board Members Hershey and Pearson acknowledged family members who had graduated from high schools being considered for renaming. Board Member Dr. Coker underscored depth of family roots in the community which have caused many community members to reach out to her. Board Member Joyce shared that she has assured her community of a transparent process and that she has become frustrated with lack of information to define the process. She also expressed concern regarding access to School Advisory Council (SAC) minutes and concerns for the delay in the release of clear procedures that had been requested since the summer and were received 03/04/2021. There was consensus that there was need for

this meeting and conversation.

2. FINANCE

- There was conversation around potential expenses and the need to identify which costs were to be incurred by the district and/or school.
- Ms. Chastain reminded the Board Members that the funding source for the renaming could be included in the agenda item as part of the Superintendent's recommendation.
- Board Member Hershey shared that a former Board Member had suggested adding an amendment to the Superintendent's recommendation that identified the funding source if one was not presented in the agenda item.
- There was discussion about expenses incurred in the renaming of Westside High School. The conversation included the anticipated commitment that it would be paid for by private donors and the reality that the District incurred the costs.
- Dr. Coker reminded Board Members that previous Board practice required the Superintendent to identify the cost to the District, as well as the funding source for the expense.
- Ms. Chastain highlighted the fact that previous practices required cost and funding source to be a part of every agenda item.
- Dr. Coker indicated that adding the required cost and funding source would be a best practice for all agenda items moving forward which would allow the Internal Board Auditor to review funds available for agenda items prior to Board approval.
- All Board Members agreed that use of the half-penny sales tax would erode public trust.

Questions:

1. Would renaming a school interfere with any scheduled updates for other schools? Ex: If a high school or middle school were renamed and new uniforms for athletics, band, etc., was needed, would a high school or middle school who was scheduled to have those same updates be delayed because the renamed school took priority?
2. What is the exact expense associated with renaming an elementary school, middle school, or high school?
3. How will we prioritize the funding for the renaming process? Would high schools receive funding first, followed by middle schools, then elementary schools—or would it be in the reverse order?
4. How will the Jacksonville Public Education Fund (JPEF) be used? Will these funds be directed to a certain aspect of the renaming process?
5. With schools being able to solicit donors for the name changing process, how will the District manage this process to ensure multiple schools do not ask the same donors for funds?
6. How will we handle schools that have full uniforms with the logos on them, especially for parents who may hand these uniforms down to save on clothing costs for their children?

3. VOTING PROCEDURES

Stakeholders

- Board Member Joyce expressed a need for the District to provide a list of alumni for each high school beyond 2008.
- Dr. Coker recommended asking Mr. Wright to attend the upcoming workshop to explain accessibility of records and share how to create a roster for each graduating class.
- There was consensus that the District needs to have the same set of rules and available records for all stakeholders.

Questions:

1. What is the best way to communicate with the community members who live in the school zone that are eligible to vote?
2. Are community members included in original school zone if the school has become a magnet school?
3. Can the District provide a set of standardized practices for voting?
4. How has the District communicated that suggested name changes can be submitted on the blue speaker card?
5. How will suggested names that do not meet District criteria be recognized and noted for disqualification?

Voting

- There was discussion regarding the need for uniformity in voting practices across all school voting sites.
- The need for equitable access for all stakeholders to cast their ballot includes the need to have students be able to vote while on campus. Likewise, adult stakeholders need access after school hours.
- It was noted that only one school currently provides an opportunity to vote on a Saturday.
- Conversation focused on the ballot chain of custody and the need to identify a person to be responsible for collection of daily ballots.
- There was discussion about the proposed ballot.

Questions:

1. Who is responsible for the security of ballots?
2. Who will keep record of stakeholder verification?
3. Will the District create guidelines for uniformity in voting times and equitable access to vote?
4. Is the poll worker from the Supervisor of Elections office?
5. How will the District balance security, accessibility, parking, and directional signage?
6. How will SAC votes be delivered to the Superintendent of Elections (SOE)?
7. Can Mr. Hogan or someone from the SOE office be present at the upcoming workshop to clarify?
8. Can Ms. Shultz be available to identify how school staff is defined in order to be eligible to vote? Will it include part time employees or those who work for contracted vendors?
9. Can the District create a one-pager that clearly identifies policy regarding the name change process? Can this guidance be provided to those suggesting a new name so that they are aware of the Board policy governing this election of a new name for a school?
10. Can the voting hours across all schools be standardized so that the number of days/hours for voting are the same at each school site? Additionally, if Saturdays are going to be available at one site, can they be provided at all sites to ensure equal access to voting?
11. While it has been identified that only students in tested grade levels and above will vote, what will the procedure be for student voting at the elementary, middle, and high school levels? Can we ensure that these protocols for student voting are standardized across all schools to ensure equity in the student voting process?
12. Can schools keep a log of those who have manned the voting site and secure the ballots should there be a question about an occurrence after the voting process concludes?

Board Member Comments

- Board Member Hershey pointed out the need to ensure this process does not disenfranchise any stakeholder.
- Board Member Coker underscored the need to ensure this process is credible and worthy of the public trust.
- Board Member Joyce highlighted the need to ensure that this process is transparent and equitable to all stakeholders.
- Board Member Pearson emphasized the need to address funding concerns sooner rather than later.

Adjournment**1. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:41 p.m.

LH/KC/LBL

Superintendent

Chairman