



Meeting Minutes Duval County Public Schools

June 14, 2022, Board Workshop

Mr. Darryl Willie, Chairman
Dr. Kelly Coker, Vice-Chairman
Ms. Elizabeth Andersen
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: All Board Members were present except Vice-Chairman, Dr. Kelly Coker. Dr. Diana Greene, Superintendent, and Mr. Ray Poole, Office of General Counsel, were also present.

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:13 a.m.

Items to be Discussed

1. PROMOTION RATES AND GOOD CAUSE EXEMPTION

Corey Wright, Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Assessment shared a PowerPoint Presentation (see attached) with the Board Members on Promotion and Retention Rates for the 2021-2022 school year informing them that additional promotions will occur after summer school. Paula Renfro, Chief Academic Officer, assisted Mr. Wright with the presentation.

Ms. Renfro shared the following information:

- The elementary schools' academic and attendance support.
- The review of instructional frameworks.
- How students may be at risk for retention or parental request for a student to be retained.
- Things being reviewed included the barriers for which a student was not promoted to include attendance or other issues students may be having at school.
- The teachers and school administrators are becoming actively involved in Professional Development (PD) again. The last hour of early dismissal days within elementary, middle, and high schools, professional development, is incorporated to include virtual planning and the expectations for the next 3 weeks.
- The review of school support includes targeted interventions through individual progress plans.

When students exhibit struggles or challenges, it may be within the core instruction, but having those candid conversations, and very specific professional development to support schools is needed.

- Attendance is an issue as some students have been absent 148 days out of 180 total days, so this produces a need to look at accountability and assessment to look at how the district is intervening, supporting students and reconnecting with schools.

Mr. Wright shared the following information:

- The percentage of students being retained by grade level and that the data does not cover students in summer school.
- The grade 3 data between the years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, revealing a big difference in the percentage of students being retained. The reasoning behind this big difference is due to summer school being incomplete. The emergency orders granted to seniors last year as well as the promotional flexibility granted to 3rd graders last year with the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) testing due to Covid. The largest group of students that struggled in 3rd grade was the English Language Learner (ELL) students.
- Good Cause Exemption percentage rates were included in the data presented. The good cause exemption deals with being exempt from meeting the 2.0 score or higher on FSA testing. All 3rd graders are required to meet a 2.0 or higher score to be promoted, but there are groups of students that can be exempted from this requirement.
- The 6 different good cause exemptions are as follows:
 - ELL students that have not been in the country for more than 2 years receiving instruction in an ESOL program.
 - Students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that determines it is not appropriate for them to participate in such testing.
 - Previously retained students that have received reading intervention instruction for 2 or more years.
 - Students that demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized assessment approved by the State Board of Education.
 - Students that have received intensive reading instruction for 2 or more years and still demonstrate a deficiency in reading.
 - Students who demonstrate, through a student portfolio, a level 2 performance on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment.

Ms. Renfro shared that conversations have been held about how elementary retentions are being reviewed to include implementation of formalized data chats and the creation of strategic plans at the beginning of the year.

Board Member Andersen arrived at 9:40 a.m.

Mr. Wright informed the Board that there are no FSA requirements for grades 4 and 5, so that is why the percentage of students retained is lower.

Dr. Greene shared a review of past practices with the master schedule as it was thought that the middle school schedule was too long. 6 periods a day was challenging for middle schoolers. She included that it would cost the district approximately \$13 million dollars to implement the A/B day or 4x4 schedule; but a 5-period day would cost approximately \$6 million, which is more affordable and would work towards not exacerbating the teacher vacancies. The 5-period days give more time to focus on areas of student struggle, including English Language Arts, Mathematics, and then focus on student success.

Dr. Dana Kriznar, Deputy Superintendent, shared details on how the 5-period days would work to include a

71 minute period every day, allowing more time for content area coverage and still allowing students to be able to take at least 1 elective and physical education. As it relates to Title I schools, some have 4-period days and due to their funding and being able to afford it through the use of Title I funds, they are able to keep that schedule if they choose to and feel it works best for their schools. The 5-period days also allows room for a student that may need to remediate a course as well, but that course would be taken during the time allotted for an elective course. Dr. Kriznar also shared that the 5-day period would be something new and different for the district.

Discussion took place on the following:

- A mandatory elective.
- Background on implementation of the 5-day periods.
- Reduction of transition time.
- Stakeholder feedback.
- The goal as it relates to courses that have a state exam connected to them.
- The 5-day period yields more instructional time.
- Teacher feedback on the effects of student transition on instructional time.
- Funding for the 5-day period.
- Principal Feedback.
- Possibility of Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) being the first district to implement the 5-day periods.
- The positive effect the 5-day periods will have on Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students.
- Past decisions that were made to save money.
- Past practices and its impact from the standpoint of a former teacher.

Board Member Joyce shared her appreciation with Dr. Greene for the implementation of the 5-day periods.

Board Member Andersen shared that the driving force for this is the standardized testing and trying to ensure students spend most of their time in testing subject areas.

Dr. Greene shared that the 2nd driving force is student behavior as the transitions, lack of focus, due to roll call, and submitting assignments can consume a lot of time, which reduces instruction time.

Scott Schneider, Chief Officer, Chief of Schools, shared details on the instruction time per subject during this 5-day period.

Board Member Joyce shared her concerns about student electives being incorporated into the schedule.

Dr. Greene gave a shout out to Dr. Denise Hall, Region Superintendent, Middle School Region, for her assistance with the 5-day period schedule.

Mr. Wright continued with the presentation:

- The core classes needed to move from middle school to high school as the credit requirements are higher from grade 8 to grade 9.

Ms. Renfro added that Duval Flex provides continued instruction so students can continue to progress.

Dr. Greene added, this year the waiver provided to students on the concordance score goes away.

Mr. Wright continued with the presentation:

- The grade 12 data includes the certificate of completion in the promotion rate. Students that earn

credits but don't have a 2.0 GPA only receive a certificate of completion.

Discussion included the following:

- Board Member Joyce requested of Dr. Greene to receive the breakdown of the retention rate by school to include identifying the problem areas.
- Chairman Willie requested the actual number of students that the percentage rate covers to be broken down by schools and also to look at it by cohort.
- Dr. Greene shared that certain groups are known to struggle because of what they have faced, which causes them to have less than normal proficiency. She shared the following scenarios:
 - The 3rd grade cohort dealt with COVID while in 1st grade, which affected learning.
 - There were 400 students that were not in any of our schools, which data shows they had many challenges.
 - The 9th grade is challenging for most because of the environmental change.
- The percentage of families with choices and how that makes a difference along with parental requested retentions.
- Inquiries were made concerning the progress on the textbooks to support the new ELA and Mathematics curriculum.
- Importance of parental involvement in literacy within grades K-5.
- Academic Services and the Parent Academy feedback.
- The Pre-K correlation between Pre-K availability in a district and the retention rate.
- Board Member Pearson suggested that Love Grove Elementary would make a good Pre-K campus as she would like to see more Pre-K programs.
- A deeper dive into the data to identify the consistent variable; for example, attendance among higher retention rates.
- The ELL among elementary, middle and high levels.

Dr. Greene shared reasons for which one district could be more successful than another:

- The schools with fewer or no vacancies.
- Environmental barriers.
- Large influx of immigrants.
- The repeated variable of chronic absenteeism.
- Challenges in getting substitutes to cover classes from one district to another may differ.
 - Ways that Board Members can assist from a campaign standpoint.
 - Board members being intentional to spread the word about the need for substitutes.
 - Review of the contract with the company handling substitute coverage.
 - Reviewing numbers per ethnicity group and identifying the missing pieces for next steps.
- It is unfair to compare the data to last year since this year is the first year back to normal.
- Staff will go back and look at the 18-19 school year.

Board Member Andersen requested that a conversation take place on why the retention rates for Black Students have almost doubled, what is happening, and what the Board can do.

Board Member Joyce requested to be provided with the number of 3rd grade students per district who are reading on level 1 and 2.

Dr. Greene shared:

- A parent could request to have their student retained or they could have been retained due to math scores.
- Lower retention rates in K-2 could be a result of a huge difference in what is learned in 2nd grade vs.

what is learned and required in 3rd grade.

- Several things come into play with 3rd grade, such as:
 - Endurance.
 - Being able to stay focused.
 - Assessment stamina.
- Committee reviews were implemented due to retention rates because attendance should not be used as a reason to retain students.
- The district continues to make calls to get students into school as well as work with families to get struggling students to participate in the afterschool programs.
- There are multilayer barriers but the district must find a way to leverage them.

Board Member Joyce requested a rubric as she stated parents had reached out to her personally expressing that they wanted their student to be retained, because they felt their student was not ready to be moved to the next grade level. However, the district did not honor the request. She inquired as to how that happened. She also spoke of the high school and retention rates for her district and requested the data per subject to include the reason for retention.

Board Member Andersen inquired about what is being done in 12th grade to ensure students understand what the requirements are. She also inquired if there is a way that a light scale of the requirements can be done while the students are in 10th grade to ensure students understand the requirements. Mr. Wright shared that the requirements are more stringent in 10th grade, but school counselors are connecting with students to go over the requirements at the beginning of the year.

Board Member Jones shared that they are aware that it is a major challenge but inquired about the students being retained and the connections made with parents to get students into the summer boost program and the success of the program. Mr. Schneider shared that there is a lot of success with the summer boost program. Board Member Jones inquired about the incentives in which Mr. Schneider shared information about the various incentives and activities being offered through the summer boost program.

Board Member Pearson inquired about things that can be done to cast a vision in terms of a campaign to share what high school looks like while students are in middle school. Discussion followed on the following:

- Students have a different mindset.
- No waivers are given any more.
- Students must get the scores.
- The hard work implemented by high schools.
- When students tap out, find a way to peak their interest.
- Tracking of Parent Academy outcomes.
- Student Outcomes.
- Educating parents on the educational needs of students to promote student success.

Chairman Willie requested to have future conversations about the summer boost programs and shared appreciation for the next steps being shared with them as well as acknowledging that the Board has a place to help.

2. TEACHER SUPPORTS

Dr. Greene shared that the presentation was a result of a Board request involving the referendum.

The following administrators shared information through the PowerPoint presentation (see attached):

- Victoria Schultz, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, shared the Human Resources vision for supporting teachers.
- Ms. Renfro shared information from the academic support perspective.
- Gail Roberts, Executive Director of Exceptional Education/Student Services (ESE), shared information about the academic support within ESE.
- Katrina Taylor, Director, Full Service Schools presented information about the student wellness support.
- Ingrid Carias, Director, English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) presented information about the academic support for ELL.
- Jackie Simmons, Executive Director, Student Discipline and Support Services, shared information concerning the teachers' technical support.

Discussion included the following:

- More staff augmentation.
- Past practices for teacher support.
- The decisions of academic services are centered around equitable outcomes.
- The ways students are being steered in the research areas.
- Engagement strategies.
- Partnership with the University of North Florida (UNF) for Literacy.
- Emphasis on K-2 was increased.
- Ensuring teachers have what is needed to assist ESE students as some students need extra attention.
- Real-time training implementation.
- The use of the WIDA standards framework.
- 2nd Language Acquisition
- How to get a better future for refugee students.
- Training with ESOL specialists.
- Assistance for refugee families, such as English classes offered to the families, and assistance with housing and clothing.
- Implementation of Lunch and Learns to support employee wellness.
- The District has a network of partners interested in student success.
- Collaboration for student outcome.
- Building a better culture within schools.
- DCPS is the only district that provides level 1 certification to teachers at no cost, which provides theory and transfer unique to Duval County.
- Desire to have conversations on the student code of conduct dealing with the lack of consequences for certain behaviors.
- Appreciation shared for the work done thus far.
- Board Member Pearson made a request to get the demographics of those that have completed the Inspiring and Rising Leaders Program and are waiting for a position as well as how many of them are bilingual.
- How many Inspiring and Rising Leaders graduates are lost to charter schools while waiting for a position?
- 112 candidates have gone through the Inspiring and Rising Leaders Program.
- The average wait time is 1-3 years for moving from teacher to assistant principal due to the need for more coaching or if the candidate has decided to remain a teacher leader.
- 52% of Black, non-Hispanics have completed the Inspiring and Rising Leaders Program.
- 4% of Multi-racial have completed the Inspiring and Rising Leaders Program.

- 2% of Hispanics have completed the Inspiring and Rising Leaders Program.
- 38% of White, non-Hispanics have completed the Inspiring and Rising Leaders Program.
- Tools provided to ESE teachers for academic support are provided to all teachers.
- English classes are offered by Rosetta Stone.
- Professional Development for Families.
- Board Member Andersen made a request for an assisting description to give families hosting refugee families.
- Homeless students.
- Wellness support and resource feedback and utilization data is used to drive the actions for the next year.
- The curriculum for Teacher Leadership is developed by DCPS and partnered with UNF and the Jacksonville Public Education Fund (JPEF).
- Student outcome changes in classrooms where teachers have graduated from the Inspiring and Rising Leaders Program.
- Creation of individualized relationships to attend to the needs of the students.
- Consistency in enforcement of the student code of conduct.

3. SAFETY AND SECURITY UPDATE

Mr. Paul Soares, Assistant Superintendent, Chief Operations, Mr. Byron Page, Executive Director, Design and Construction Services, and Lieutenant Amber Gazdick shared a PowerPoint Presentation (see attachment) with the Board.

Discussion and Comments included the following:

- The Impact Film is currently being placed on the windows of the schools for security purposes.
- The City of Jacksonville Safety Vendor is not related to the DCPS master facility plan (MFP). It supports the enhancement of the district's safety training.
- Doors cannot be blocked as it causes a safety hazard.
- The State will be more aggressive with live active shooter drills.
- State expectation for active shooter drills.
- Installation of extra cameras in elementary schools.
- School employees have access to a district phone to assist with enhanced safety.
- The district phones are connected to the D-Con radios, school administration and emergency officials are dispatched upon confirmation of an unsafe environment at the school.
- Safety and security resources.
- 24-hour monitoring.
- Upcoming reunification planning and state laws.
- Coordination of an actual active shooter drill.
- District K-9 unit.
- Reducing the number of entrances in high schools.
- Evolv tech screening.
- Safety and Security upgrades.
- Parental notification and follow up from active shooter drills.
- Total cost of app system for safety used by school employees.
- Adjustments were made to the system to minimize false alarms.
- Effectiveness of safety technology investment.
- Board Member feedback on reunification site experience.

- Primary and secondary reunification sites have been established for every school.
- Threat assessment teams analysis.

Chairman Willie thanked everyone for the presentation and shared with everyone that since governance was not covered in this meeting, he will have it added to the next meeting. He also said that there is a need to review the legislative policies. He concluded by sharing the dates for the upcoming meetings.

4. GOVERNANCE

No governance items were discussed.

Adjournment

1. ADJOURNMENT

That the Duval County School Board move to adjourn the meeting at 1:27 p.m.

Vote Results:

Motion: Cindy Pearson

Second: Elizabeth Andersen

PASSED - 6-0

Aye:

Cindy Pearson

Elizabeth Andersen

Warren A. Jones

Lori Hershey

Charlotte D. Joyce

Darryl Willie

Nay:

None

MA

Superintendent

Chairman