



Meeting Minutes Duval County Public Schools

January 29, 2025, Policy Handbook Review Committee Meeting and Litigation Shade - REVISED

Ms. Charlotte D. Joyce, Chairman
Ms. April A. Carney, Vice-Chairman
Ms. Melody A. Bolduc
Mr. Reginald Blount
Ms. Cynthia Pearson
Mr. Anthony Ricardo
Mr. Darryl D. Willie
Dr. Christopher Bernier, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: All Board Members were present, except Board Member Reginald Blount. Dr. Christopher Bernier, Superintendent, and Mr. Ray Poole, Office of General Counsel, were also present. Board Member Darryl Willie arrived at 10:34 a.m.

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:14 a.m.

Items to be Discussed

1. BOARD POLICY 4.10 - THE CURRICULUM

Cami Sams, Executive Director of Policy and Compliance explained that she was starting with Board Policy 4.10 and deferred to Office of General Counsel Attorney, Ray Poole to provide information regarding the policy.

Mr. Poole shared that when he reviewed Florida statute 1003.42, he stated that the statute only spoke about opting out, not opting in. He is not comfortable with using the opt in as he could not tell the Board what the consequences would be from the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE).

Discussion involved:

- A suggestion was made about an opt in/opt out form.
- It is better to keep in compliance with the statute especially not knowing what the fall out would be if the district was to use an opt in option.
- There needs to be more transparency, and it needs to be provided to the parents.
- Communication to parents about what is being taught.
- The condom lesson was moved two years ago.
- There is a full lesson plan for reproduction. The full lesson plan is available for parents.
- Regarding the Florida statute, some districts have decided to go with opt in. It is understood that the statute is a starting point, and FLDOE has not said anything.

- Have a form that would list some of the lessons and allow parents to opt in or opt out.
- It was shared that some parents don't have time to look through the things their children bring home, so the students may miss out due to their parents not being involved. Plus, most students do not take information home to their parents.
- Parents want transparency and the district needs to make it happen.
- Parental involvement.
- Inquiry about what happens to students who do not return the form to opt in or opt out.
- Boys and girls were separated at one time regarding lessons on reproduction.
- Alert parents before the lesson is taught, then a reminder can be sent.
- An acknowledgement that parents have received the information on the big topics, full transparency.
- The updating of blue cards.
- Blue cards are now done in FOCUS. There are some required fields, but not all fields are required.
- Lessons versus curriculum.
- The lessons are approved by FLDOE.
- An exert from Florida statute 1003.42 was shared with the Board Members.
- Have parents check a box for acknowledgment purposes and be provided a link to the lesson being taught at the time.
- It is not the job of the Board to make parents respond.
- There is sensitive information being provided to children that are growing up.
- We are not aware of each families' values, and what they are teaching their children.
- If the information is put out there, it is an over-reach to require a parent to acknowledge that they have read and reviewed the material.
- The Board just wants to make sure parents understand what the district is doing and have an option to remove their child if that is their choice.
- Consequence for students that do not return the form.
- Protecting children, parents' decisions, protecting teachers, and the district.
- Teachers' time to track down parents.
- Recap of the conversation was provided.
- The number of times the course is taught at the middle school and high school level was provided.
- More concern with the middle school level was expressed.
- Make the requirements for elementary and middle school levels only.
- Make provisions around those students who are taking the course online during the summer.

2. BOARD POLICY 4.44 - SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

Ms. Sams explained her understanding about the Board's concerns with this policy and the changes that were made.

No discussion was held.

3. BOARD POLICY 4.45 - CHAPERONES FOR SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

Ms. Sams explained about the changes to the policy regarding volunteers having a Level II background screening.

No discussion was held.

4. BOARD POLICY 9.63 - SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS/SCREENING PROCESS

Ms. Sams explained the changes to the policy in order to be consistent with the policy.

Discussion involved:

- The costs of the prints and how long the results are good for.
- Conversation at the state level about removing the requirement to make the process more affordable for parents. There is also conversation about the state picking up the cost. Will have to wait to see how the state session goes.
- We want more parents to be involved.

5. BOARD POLICY 2.14 - SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

Ms. Sams explained that there were no changes, but that it is time for it to be brought back to the Board. Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Assessment, Corey Wright joined in the discussion.

Discussion involved:

- There was mention of the upcoming Evaluation Subcommittee Meeting.
- Overlapping in the evaluation tool.
- There is language in the policy that references the Superintendent's contract and the contract references Board Policy 2.14, which needs to be cleaned up.
- Consider having a paragraph about transitioning.
- The Board desires to have an evaluation by the end of the school year.

6. BOARD POLICY 2.26 - BOARD MEETING AND PROTOCOL

Ms. Sams and Mr. Poole explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion involved:

- Time limit for representatives.
- The number of bargaining units in the district.
- Make a notation of who is able to speak on behalf of the organizations.
- The chairman's script has the names of representatives.
- As of right now, each group has unlimited time. Worked on determining a time limit for each group to speak.
- Consider having a time limit on Board Members during For the Record.
- The Board Members put things in policy that they can police, not things that they can't.
- Consider having a time limit on the discussion of items during the Agenda Review.
- Recap of conversation.
- Groups do notify the district in advance as to who will be speaking at the meeting.

Mr. Poole and Board Member Pearson shared information about the section on travel in the policy.

Discussion involved:

- Board Members have been forth coming about their experiences when they travel. It has been done during governance, workshops, or for the record.
- Inquiry made, and concern expressed about the policy.
- The purpose or the policy was shared, and how it could be done.

- Cannot police the Board Members. All are elected officials.
- Edits will be made to the policy.
- The Board uses protocol, and it is Roberts Rule of Order.
- There is benefit for the public and the Board to hear about other Board Members travel.
- If the information is not put in writing, then it will never happen.
- It was suggested to put a discussion topic under travel, which would be the opportunity for Board Members to speak at the time about their experience.

Chairman Joyce had a discussion about public comment. It involved:

- Public comment during the agenda meeting.
- Concerned about the precedent set if public comment is moved to the beginning of the meeting.
- The topic that was addressed at the last Agenda Meeting was not something the Board was going to vote on.
- At the Agenda Meeting, consider limiting the public comment to only the items on the agenda.
- The public does not know what is on the agenda during the meeting.
- Order of operation or topic of conversation.
- The information that the public receives pertaining to the meeting.
- The actual agenda is made public seven days prior to the meeting.
- There was previous conversation about limiting public comment to agenda items.
- There was conversation about having public comment at the beginning of the meeting for just agenda items and then creating space at the end of the meeting for any comments.
- Information from Florida Law pertaining to public comment and three options were shared.
- Reason for violation of policy was shared.
- The Board Members can just vote on making a change at the time change is needed instead of changing the policy completely. This does not happen often.
- Policies are not made to do things the same all the time. Sometimes you have to make adjustments.
- There needs to be communication to all the Board Members if something is going to happen on the fly.
- Concern expressed about students missing class. There are other ways they may communicate with the Board Members.
- The public being aware of what is on the agenda in advance and being able to speak.
- The ability to just publish the table of contents so that the public can see what is going to be discussed at the meeting.
- Publish the topics and have public comment at the end of Agenda Review.
- Policy around moving meetings.
- Applying additional rules from Robert's Rules to assist with the meeting flow.
- Suggestion about a policy on what to do when technology is not working, which affects transparency.
- If the streaming does not work, there is an audio recording.
- Protocols for making the audio of a meeting available to the public.
- Confirmation was given by the Board Secretary responsible for taking the minutes for the meeting, nodded that the recording is being preserved.
- Meetings that have technical issues have not been posted to the website.
- Start the meeting at the original location, recess, relocate, if necessary, then return to the original location to finish the meeting.
- Recap of the conversation was provided.

7. BOARD POLICY 7.10 - SCHOOL BUDGET SYSTEM

Ms. Sams and Chief Financial Officer, Ron Fagan and Dr. Bernier explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion involved:

- At present there is a 4% budget fund balance. If it had to be touched, the Board would be informed in advance.
- Other unassigned accounts belonging to the Superintendent.
- Explanation about moving funds and examples of how the funds are used to the best of the district's ability.
- The process in place that the Superintendent has a responsibility to inform, and the Board has a right of approval.

Recessed at 11:16 a.m.

8. BOARD POLICY 6.08 - APPOINTMENT OR EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

This policy was not covered at this meeting. It will be discussed at the next Policy Meeting.

9. BOARD POLICY 6.12 - EMPLOYMENT OF ATHLETIC COACHES

This policy was not covered at this meeting. It will be discussed at the next Policy Meeting.

10. BOARD POLICY 6.45 - PERSONNEL FILES

This policy was not covered at this meeting. It will be discussed at the next Policy Meeting.

11. BOARD POLICY 6.57 - ANNUAL LEAVE

This policy was not covered at this meeting. It will be discussed at the next Policy Meeting.

12. BOARD POLICY 6.61 - BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

This policy was not covered at this meeting. It will be discussed at the next Policy Meeting.

13. BOARD POLICY 6.67 - TEMPORARY DUTY ELSEWHERE

This policy was not covered at this meeting. It will be discussed at the next Policy Meeting.

14. BOARD POLICY 6.73 - SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL

This policy was not covered at this meeting. It will be discussed at the next Policy Meeting.

15. BOARD POLICY 6.78 - DEFERRED RETIREMENT OPTION PROGRAM (DROP)

This policy was not covered at this meeting. It will be discussed at the next Policy Meeting.

16. BOARD POLICY 6.83 EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

This policy was not covered at this meeting. It will be discussed at the next Policy Meeting.

III. Litigation Shade

1. LITIGATION SHADE

Reconvene at 11:36 a.m.

The Board moved into a closed attorney-client session pursuant to Section 286.011(8), Florida Statutes. The following listed persons were in attendance:

Chairman Charlotte D. Joyce, Vice-Chairman April A. Carney, Board Member Cindy Pearson, Board Member Melody A. Bolduc, Board Member Anthony Ricardo, Board Member Darryl D. Willie, Dr. Christopher Bernier, Mr. Ray Poole, and the Court Reporter.

Adjournment

The Board unanimously agreed to postpone the remainder of the Policy Handbook Review until February.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

GC

Superintendent

Chairman