



Master Facility Plan Implementation

Tracking the impact of the voter approved half-penny sales-surtax

May 20, 2026, Sales Surtax Oversight Committee Meeting

Committee Members Present

David Kilcrease, Trey Perry, Connor Oswald, Wanda Ford, Amy Henderson, Mike Hightower, Tim Horvath, Darryl Edwards II, Ryan Murphy, Robert Stafford, Stephanie Schaap, Marion Tischler, Karen Nuland

Ex-Officio, Non-Voting Members Present

Dr. Christopher Bernier

Call Meeting to Order

Chairman, Mike Hightower, called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

He announced there is a Quorum and that the committee could move forward with voting and conducting the committee business on the agenda. The Chairman thanked the committee for their committee to the mission and vision of this committee and the work tasked upon the district to manage the taxpayer's money responsibility.

Mr. Hightower thanked Facilities and the school admin at Jean Ribault for their hospitality and for allowing the committee into the building to see the wonderful new space.

Welcome and Telephone Participation

Chair Hightower welcomed the committee and made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Stephanie Schaap arrived at 10:10 a.m.

Approval of Agenda

Motion:

Chair Hightower made a motion to approve the February 18, 2026, agenda.

Motion:

That the Oversight Committee approve the May 20, 2026, Agenda as submitted to the committee.

Vote Results: 13-0

Motion: Trey Perry

Second: Wanda Ford

Vote Results: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Approval of Minutes

Chair Hightower made a motion to the committee to approve the minutes from February 18, 2026.

Motion:

That the Oversight Committee votes to approve the February 18, 2026, Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes.

Vote Results: 13-0

Motion: David Kilcrease

Second: Trey Perry

Vote Results: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Proposed Meeting Dates

Chair Hightower reviewed the proposed meeting date handout with the committee members and called for a vote to approve the meetings for 2026-2027. He announced that the committee needed to identify the June 2027 interim meeting date due to a conflict on the calendar at the Schultz Center.

The Oversight Committee discussed June 9, 2027, and the chairman called for a vote.

Motion:

That the Oversight Committee approves the Oversight Committee Interim Meeting on June 9, 2027.

Vote Results: 13-0

Motion: Darryl Edwards II

Second: Connor Oswald

Vote Results: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The chairman announced the committee could now vote to approve the 2026-2027 meeting dates.

Motion:

That the Oversight Committee approve the Oversight Committee Proposed Meeting Dates for 2026-2027.

Vote Results: 13-0

Motion: David Kilcrease

Second: Ryan Murphy

Vote Results: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Public Comment

The chairman introduced the vice-chair, Mr. Darryl Edwards II, to conduct the public comments portion of the meeting.

Susan Aertker gave public comments regarding charter school concerns.

Items to be Discussed

Operations Update

Chair Hightower welcomed and introduced Chief Operating Officer, Jim Culbert, who gave a PowerPoint Presentation, Sales-Surtax Oversight Committee Briefing.

Topics Included: Building Blocks of our Facilities Plan, Why was the plan Adjusted, Value Focused Design, Where Strategy Meets Savings, Project Highlight: Pickett ES, Converting Savings into Capacity, quality, & Opportunity, Two Year Look Ahead, Plan Adjustments Through Strategic Management, Full Transparency through Duval Reimagine, and Duval Reimagine – 2026 Update.

Key points that Mr. Culbert wanted to point out include:

- The Master Facilities Plan (MFP)/ Long Range Facility Plan (LRFP) update going forward over the next several years based on several factors presented today.
- Dr. Bernier took the opportunity to acknowledge details of Jim's statement above and gave comments regarding how the MFP and LRFP are referenced based on the planning and project work:
 - The MFP outlines year one through five as a solid plan in terms of expectations and achievable outcomes.
 - The LFRP plan is year one through fifteen, where adjustments and plans may change because the framework past year five is based on the district's best educated guess.
- The Maintenance team and directors review funding allocations for schools and look at moving those funds based on needs, trends in global numbers, and financials like cost savings in new builds and using internal operations to take on projects where possible.
- The team has worked hard to get costs down to meet or beat other local districts who are building new facilities.
- The delivery performance that cuts down work and timelines to meet timelines that will positively impact enrollment.
- Focusing on "Value Focused Design" to optimize projects by reducing non-construction square footage and concentrated on learning outcomes.
- Resolving issues with paying vendors on time by aligning best practices with the Finance team to pay vendors timelier.
- Highlighting Pickett Elementary through this new structure:
 - 100,000 square feet built for 984 students.
 - Original budget was \$73 million, and the Construction Budget came down to \$59 million to save \$20 million in costs.
 - The school will be built at \$335 per square foot.
- The savings can allow the district to accelerate priority projects and increase the major maintenance projects and put money back into the budget to meet demands across the division.
- Highlighting the projects by category: New Build (NB), Deferred Maintenance (DM), and Renovation for Classroom Additions (RCA).
- Highlighting the projects for next two years:
2026-2027 projects:

- Biscayne Elementary, San Jose Elementary, and Thomas Jefferson Elementary will all get classroom renovations.
 - Ribault Middle will be getting attention to maintenance needs.
- 2027-2028 Planning phases:
- Holiday Hill
 - Oceanway
 - Biltmore
 - Lake Lucina
 - William M. Raines High School
 - Other schools on the list
- The chairman commented and thanked Jim and the district for their work and efforts to take the feedback and comments from the community and teachers and the internal staff to move work forward in a cost-efficient manner to show fiscal responsibility of taxpayer's money.
 - Committee Member inquiries include:
 - Why was Garden City moved back 10-years on the project timeline?
 - Mr. Culbert stated that enrollment has gone down and the team wants more time to study the trend before investing more money in the school.
 - There was a news announcement that reported false information and the committee wanted to point this out.
 - Mr. Culbert and Dr. Bernier asked that Mr. Stafford send them that news information so they can make corrections to the report.

Finance Update

Chair Hightower announced to the committee that Mr. Fagan is unable to join for today's meeting and welcomed and introduced Executive Director of Finance, Evon Nelson-McIntyre, who presented a PowerPoint presentation: Sales-Surtax Oversight Committee – Financial Services and Charter Schools.

Topics Included: Sales-Surtax as of February 2026-Collections as of April 2026, Funding Overview 2025/2026, 4th Quarter Review Observations, Charter School Expenditure Amounts, and Revenue & Expenditures as of April 30, 2026.

Members of the Oversight Committee made the following requests to Ms. Nelson-McIntyre:

- Committee Member, Ms. Tischler requested that the Sales-Surtax charts (Life-to-Date and 2025/2026) show percent columns next to annual totals for charter and district-run school. This would show how the allocation for charter schools has increased from 15% in 2021 to 21% in 2025 - a significant change of proportional funding.

Key points that Ms. McIntyre wanted to point out include:

- As part of the discussion, Ms. Nelson-McIntyre reviewed the percentages of funds that were dispersed between district and charter schools as of April 2026.
 - District Share of funding received is 82%.
 - Charter Share of funding received is 18%.
- Ms. Nelson-McIntyre outlined the schools that were not eligible for the 2025-2026 fiscal year and did not receive sales-surtax funding.
 - KIPP Impact K-8
 - San Jose Primary
 - Tiger Academy
 - Wayman Academy of the Arts
- The self-reported expenditures from charter schools for quarter four and a review of what categories were expended based on their self-reporting.

- The chairman asked for clarification of jurisdiction over charter schools and that it is up to the state to verify their eligibility. This reporting is a result of the state's determination.
 - Ms. Nelson-McIntyre confirmed this is correct and it is based on the annual audit performed by the state. The district is required to disburse funds and cannot withhold funds once they are determined eligible by the state auditors each fiscal year.
 - Dr. Bernier clarified that while the district cannot withhold funds, funds can be recouped if there is an overpayment of funding. Finance can deduct funds from any remaining monthly payments that the district owes to the charter school within that fiscal year.
- Ms. Nelson clarified to the committee that there are 44 charter schools.
- On slide 6: Sales Surtax Revenue & Expenditures as of April 30, 2026 – the dates in the column headings showed 2024-25 fiscal year. Ms. Nelson-McIntyre explained that the revenues and expenditures displayed in the chart were for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. She announced this correction to the column headings would be made to show the correct fiscal year 2025-2026, before the minutes packet is sent to the committee.

Chair Hightower reiterated that the corrections to this slide would be made and he thanked Ms. Nelson-McIntyre for her presentation and the ease of understanding provided in the Finance presentation.

2025 Annual Report Final Edits & Approval

Chair Hightower explained to the committee the duty of this committee to provide an annual report and recommendations for the Duval County School Board and Superintendent to consider regarding the work reported on by the Sales-Surtax Oversight Committee.

Based on the committee's homework from the February 18th regular meeting the chairman acknowledged members that provided additional feedback: Wanda Ford, Cynthia Brown, Connor Oswald, and Marion Tischler and opened the floor for discussions regarding the draft 2025 annual report.

Discussions included:

- Reviewing the feedback from the 4 committee members.
- Ms. Tischler proposed edits to the oversight committee regarding the annual report recommendations list.
- Based on the handout she provided, the Chairman thanked Ms. Tischler for her work and agreed additional time is needed to review her work and implement the proposed changes.
- The Chairman asked for members to volunteer to create a subcommittee that will work with Ms. Mihalik to identify a date for a subcommittee meeting that can be formally noticed within the 7-day timeline and take place before the June 17, 2026, interim meeting to finalize the edits to the annual report.
- Ryan Murphy, Connor Oswald, Tim Horvath, and Marion Tischler volunteered to serve on this subcommittee.
- The chairman also announced that an interim meeting needed to be held on June 17, 2026, to reconvene and finalize the annual report after the subcommittee meets.
- Vice-Chair Edwards announced to the committee the following information to formalize the discussions and decisions regarding the subcommittee and interim meetings:

Vice-Chair Edwards made a motion regarding the committee discussions.

Motion:

That the Oversight Committee approves forming a subcommittee that will meet and finalize the edits prior to June 17th and that the committee approves meeting for an interim meeting on June 17, 2026, to finalize the report and any other discussions necessary.

Vote Results: 13-0

Motion: Ryan Murphy

Second: Trey Perry

Vote Results: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Chairman Feedback

Chair Hightower shared that he met with Chief Ramirez and Dr. Bernier and provided an update on their conversations. He also acknowledged each member of the organization has different needs and he wants to ensure those needs are captured to help outline future agenda items for district staff to meet these needs. He mentioned the post meeting procedure of capturing the committee's needs if they were not captured in the presentations or discussions by the end of the meeting.

Vice-Chair Edwards made a formal request to be involved in future preliminary meetings to ensure the sitting vice-chair can step in as needed and ensure the duties of the vice-chair can be fulfilled in future planning and updates to the work of the Sales-Surtax Oversight Committee.

Dr. Bernier clarified for transparency, if both members are included in the planning meeting between the Chairman, Vice-Chair, and Superintendent, it will have to be publicly noticed, and anyone can attend.

Governance

Vice-Chair Chair Edwards announced that there is a Board Workshop Meeting on June 9, 2027, and needs to change the interim meeting date to June 23, 2027.

The Chairman made a motion.

Motion:

That the Oversight Committee approve changing the interim meeting from June 9, 2027, to June 23, 2027, due to a district meeting that conflicts with June 9th.

Vote Results: 13-0

Motion: Ryan Murphy

Second: Wanda Ford

Vote Results: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Chair Hightower asked Dr. Bernier and the Legal Team to address the committee and hear the feedback directly from the district.

Dr. Bernier acknowledged and thanked the Duval County School Board Members for their dedication and work through their leadership. He acknowledged the importance of the partnership between the school district and the public and the committee members on this

committee is an incredible opportunity to help tell the story. These talking points and handouts provided at these meetings are geared towards giving tangible tools to show the sales-surtax work is progressing and successful through the changes and improvements in the district's work ethic.

Charter School Accountability & Finance

During Governance Mr. Hightower announced this topic for discussion today because the committee voted and approved a motion for this agenda topic at the September 2025, regular meeting. He acknowledged it was not on the February 18, 2026, regular meeting and wanted to re-visit this topic to fulfill the committee's approval of reviewing the topic from Ms. Tischler, Charter School Accountability & Assessment. Mr. Hightower opened the floor to Ms. Tischler to elaborate on this topic and the intent behind this agenda item.

Items discussed include:

- The general understanding of what is happening with charter schools that will inform the committee enough to ask questions.
- Understanding when charter schools close, there is an impact on the district and that funds are shifting.
- Does the school board have a plan to bring charter students back into schools – the plan would be encouraging to acknowledge the potential in enrollment growth.
 - The chairman stated he respects the inquiry but based on his understanding, this concern is a matter this committee does not have authority over.
- The Chairman called on the Chief Legal Counsel, Will Spillias, and Assistant General Counsel, Shane McGrath, to provide statutes and information to create an understanding of the committee's mission, role and purpose as it relates to the statutes regarding charter schools and their sponsors.
- The statutes referenced in the memo provided by Mr. Spillias will be available in the committee SharePoint folder.
- Mr. Spillias and Mr. McGrath went through the relevant factors in these statutes related to the duties of the charter schools and the district as their sponsor.
- There was a request for district staff to explain to the committee how charter schools report.
- The Chairman asked that legal counsel to attend the June 17, 2026, interim meeting to have conversations regarding charter school questions regarding any questions the committee may have.

The chairman concluded the discussions and thanked Will and Shane for their report and conversations. He announced a couple of upcoming topics at separate meetings regarding the referendum regarding the 1-mil plan for teacher's salaries. He reminded the committee about the Groundbreaking Ceremony at Sandalwood High School on May 21st.

Next Meeting Date:

Chair Hightower advised the next meeting date for the Sales Surtax Oversight Committee will be on Wednesday, June 17, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Chair Hightower announced the adjournment of the meeting and made a motion.

Motion:

Chair Hightower made a motion to adjourn the meeting:

Motion:

That the Oversight Committee vote to the September 17, 2025, Oversight Committee Meeting.

Vote Results: 15-0

Motion: Ryan Murphy

Second: Karen Nuland

Vote Results: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Minutes were taken by Megan Mihalik, Coordinator to the Chief of Staff.

These minutes were approved at the June 24, 2026, Sales Surtax Oversight Committee Interim Meeting.

***** In order to comply with the Americans with Disability Act, some attachments are not viewable here. To receive any attachments or presentations, please email Megan Mihalik, Coordinator to the Chief of Staff, at mihalikm@duvalschools.org*****