

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF  
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, APRIL 15, 2021

The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, convened in Special Workshop at 3:00 p.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center, 30 East Texar Drive, Pensacola, Florida, with the following present:

Chair: Mr. William E. Slayton (District V)  
Vice Chair: Mr. Kevin L. Adams (District I)  
Board Members: Mr. Paul Fetsko (District II)  
Dr. Laura Dortch Edler (District III)  
Mrs. Patricia Hightower (District IV)

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Ellen Odom

Superintendent of Schools: Dr. Timothy A. Smith

Advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on March 18, 2021 – Legal No. [4642874](#)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Slayton called the Special Workshop to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. DISCUSSION:

- Calendar

There were no changes to the remaining schedule of workshops/meetings for April 2021. There were no changes to the current schedule of workshops/meetings for May or June 2021. Following their calendar review, the School Board engaged in a discussion with Ms. Lesa Morgan, Director-Secondary Education, regarding upcoming high school graduations, specifically with regard to capacity issues at the Pensacola Bay Center.

- Public Forum Update

-None

- Legislative Update – Adams

[*Handout provided to School Board Members*] Vice Chair Adams, as the School Board's representative to the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA), gave a brief update on recent and upcoming legislative matters.

- Summer Activities Including Summer School & Camps – Slayton

Mr. Steve Marcanio, Assistant Superintendent-Curriculum, began by advising the School Board of a forthcoming amendment to Item V.b.1.C.1., *The School District of Escambia County, Florida Summer School Programs – 2021*. (April 20, 2021 Regular Meeting agenda). Mr. Marcanio said the amendment would reflect updated student projections and additional elementary school program sites. Mr. Marcanio then provided a brief overview the plans for summer school and camps. It was noted that summer school would be offered only in-person or virtually; there would be no remote option. Mr. Marcanio and Ms. Shenna Payne, Deputy Superintendent, responded to questions posed by School Board Members regarding the particulars of the summer school and campus schedules and offerings.

- Update on Next School Year – Slayton

At the request of Chair Slayton, the Superintendent gave an update on next school year, by addressing the following issues: *Elimination of Remote Learning Option* - The Superintendent advised that the School District would eliminate the remote learning option for the 2021-2022 school year. The School District would still offer its virtual program for those students and families not quite settled with the idea

of returning to traditional brick-and-mortar schools. (The remote option was authorized under an emergency order from the state for the 2020-2021 school year.) *Elimination of Mask Mandate* - The Superintendent advised that the School District would eliminate the mask mandate after this school year. (This school year, students, faculty and staff were all required to wear masks when they could not socially distance. That would need to change next school year given that Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran recently sent a letter to school districts telling them to amend their mask policies to make them optional.) School Board Members noted the importance of getting this information to parents.

- Pensacola High School I-Tech Academy

Students enrolled in the I-Tech Academy at Pensacola High School, provided a virtual presentation outlining their experiences in this program.

- Parent University – Superintendent

*[Handout provided to School Board Members]* Mr. Michael O’Neal, Executive Director of Parent University operating in Savannah-Chatham County (Savannah, Georgia), made a brief presentation to the School Board regarding the launch of Parent University in Pensacola, Florida (October 2020). *Parent University is a community collaborative that provides services and support to families. This initiative encourages parent involvement and participation in the education of the community’s children and youth.*

- VM Ware Status – Superintendent

- DA Schools Update – Superintendent

Mr. Denny Wilson, Director-Continuous Improvement, provided handouts to School Board Members that contained updated data on schools in the Differentiated Accountability (DA) category [*now known as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Schools*]. Principals from each of the DA schools reviewed the updated data: [Workman Middle School](#) (Principal Traci Ursrey), [Holm Elementary School](#) (Principal Terri Fina), [Warrington Elementary School](#) (Principal Tim Rose), and [Warrington Middle School](#) (Principal Brent Brummet). School Board Members posed questions to each principal at the conclusion of each update. Mr. Wilson concluded with an update regarding the External Operator (EO) extension for Warrington Middle School next school year.

- Interlocal Agreement – Superintendent

Topic postponed to April 16, 2021 Regular Workshop.

III. PUBLIC FORUM

-No registration forms submitted

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Workshop adjourned at 6:25 p.m.