

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

**JAMES F. NOTTER
SUPERINTENDENT**

Telephone (754) 321-2600

Facsimile: (754) 321-2701

**School Board Workshop
January 30, 2008**

Policy 7000 – New School Site Selection

Policy 7000 was brought forward to present recommendations to the School Board Members. This policy is made up of three provisions; authority, responsibility and impact.

Authority - The School Board of Broward County, Florida has the authority to operate, control and supervise all free public schools within the school district.

Responsibility – The location of schools and future school sites shall be in accordance with Florida Statutes and Florida Administrative Rules. The Superintendent shall analyze and considers the need and opportunity to upgrade, renovate and expand existing schools to assure equitable opportunity for quality education.

Impact - Adherence to this provision is not intended to avoid the construction of a new school when such upgrading, renovating and expansion of existing schools would be inadequate to meet overcrowding pressures and educational objectives.

Staff presented the recommended changes to the Board Members for discussion. The suggested changes included rationale to clarify projection needs, expansion requirements to acquire new school sites, maintaining diversity, site review representation, and who provides information to the site review committee.

The Board gave staff their recommendations. This policy will be brought to the February 13, 2008 workshop for the Board Members to review one more time and then proceed to Board meetings for a first and second reading per the policy process.

Property Tax Amendment

The Superintendent discussed the passing of the Property Tax Amendment and what this means to the School District. He advised the School Board that he has immediately taken measures by contacting his Budget Cabinet made up of his immediate Executive Leaders including: the Chief Financial Officer, Deputy Superintendent of Operations, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources and the Chair of the Budget Committee. The Budget Cabinet will address what to do when going into the next legislative session with a shortfall. We know taxing agencies will be impacted by this property tax amendment. The School District has already begun to plan by a freeze on new hires and not filling new vacancies. It is the request of the School Board not to impact unemployment in this county or state and to do what is necessary to keep all employees. The School Board would like to communicate to the community the hard numbers affecting this School District at this time. Governor Crist has promised to hold schools harmless, but the funding has not been determined to this date. The Board Chair said it is our time to be leaders and be proactive and make the decisions that will benefit children and meet their needs.

Policy 7002.B-Land Purchases Recommendation

Policy 7002.B is the guidelines for all Land purchases. One of the recommendations presented by staff was to change all “land purchases” in the policy with “real estate acquisition.” This is a more accurate description of the process, and not restricted to land purchases only. The rest of the changes recommended reflected sequence of events, a more accurate description, or to

conform to School Board policy. The Board did discuss purchasing a property that has to be rezoned and its timeline. If rezoning is required purchase will be contingent upon the property becoming zoned for the School Board's intended use within 90 days of the contract execution and prior to closing. Also all land purchases over \$1,000,000 must be brought before the Board for consideration and cannot be passed on a consent agenda. It was also agreed that all additional and ancillary facilities would not be brought to the Site Review Committee, however, will be brought before the School Board for their direction. Board Members suggested there be a standing committee for staff to bring forward possible land purchases to determine if they should go to Site Review and then before the School Board at a workshop. The policy will come to a workshop to review the School Board changes on February 6, 2008.

Class Size Reduction Update

Starting in 2008-09 School year ninety more schools will be added to existing 5 schools that calculate class size per classroom. In order to meet class size there will be eighteen students per class for elementary school, twenty-two students per class for middle school and twenty-five students per class for high schools. The following year, 2009-10 ninety more schools will be added to the existing 95 at that time, which will be a total of two-thirds of the schools in Broward County will be calculating students per class room. In the year 2010-11 the final third of Broward County schools will be compliance with the class size amendment. At that time Broward County schools will be at 100% compliance. The State is working on the class size definition for next year and possible modification. For today's purposes, staff is working with the strict state definition of the class size amendment.

Clarification was given to the Board regarding the core capacity. Core capacity is the cafeteria capacity or dining area capacity. There was a discrepancy between two schools, which had the same school model. A corridor was included in the figure for Western High School, which was incorrect. That correction has been noted. In the future the core capacity on portable dining sites will be included in the material given to the Board members for the boundary public hearings.

The Board Chair had concerns regarding class size and students schedules and not being able to take a class when they wanted. This is a scheduling issue. A Student may not be able to get into a class first semester, because it has filled up, but would be able to take that class the second semester.

A situation due to class size would be a student would not be able to change their schedule until after the 20-day count after school has started. After this time a student, if needed, would be able to change their schedule.

The Board Members thought there should be a provision regarding charter schools not staying in compliance with the class size amendment due to fact that this would put the entire School District out of compliance.

JFN:jd