

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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**School Board Workshop
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Environmental Stewardship Web Site

The Environmental Strategic Plan goal states, "The School Board of Broward County, Florida, will become a model environmental steward and is aligned to The School Board of Broward County, Florida, mission, vision, and core values."

Staff came before the School Board Members to give them a glimpse of the new Environmental Stewardship Web Site, which is under development. Plans to launch the web site are in spring of 2010.

The goals of the web site are to create a fun, easy to use, collaborative learning center focused on environmental stewardship and to provide a site to collect and share environmental programs and innovations.

The web site uses flash navigation. Roll your mouse over different areas to learn more about this green learning environment. You can search by school location or by category, such as: air quality, energy conservation, and environmental curriculum, to name a few.

The online submission web site allows schools to log in and submit information about their environmental projects. Every single Broward County Public School has a page on the web site. Schools select categories they are involved in and provide a brief description of their activities. Examples of school pages were shown to the Board Members, which enables schools to highlight successes and accomplishments.

School activities range from butterfly gardens and recycling teams, to solar powered vehicles. There are 128 butterfly gardens, 59 fruit and vegetable gardens, 4 hydroponics gardens, 51 nature habitats, and 195 Schools that are actively involved with recycling. There are currently 123 Broward County Schools participants in School Clean Ups and 134 Schools offering environmental clubs. Schools and centers have participated in green events and environmental field trips and have successfully reduced their electrical and water usage.

Since Hurricane Wilma, the School District has been working with environmental individuals in the County and there is a whole new change in the District's environmental direction. There are new partnerships with Waste Management, Broward County Government, and Hospital Districts, all working toward the same green goal. It was suggested that adding to the One Broward grant a smart grid, which keeps track of all electricity that is used in the School District and can turn

on or off selected machines during peak usage times, may improve the School District's chances to receive Federal Government Stimulus dollars.

The School District has always greatly supported environmental issues. Staff was thanked for this great presentation and hard work developing the Environmental Web Site. Great people bring about great things. It was suggested that there should be a press conference to bring all the great green initiatives that are going on in Broward County Public Schools to the community's attention. Many people do not realize our schools are saving the School District money, and they have fun doing it. Staff informed the Board that at the next environmental committee meeting they would be discussing having a press release. There is nowhere to go but grow.

The material for this presentation can be found on the eAgenda February 9, 2010 workshop.

Policy 6000.1 Student Progression

Staff came before the School Board to give an update on the legislative changes adopted on February 2, 2010 for the 2009-2010 school year.

-Unlimited Access to Florida Virtual School.

-Elementary physical education waiver (same as for middle school.)

Staff then went over the recommendations School Board Members suggested at the last workshop discussion.

1. Core GPA. The Board gave direction to maintain, but align with FACTS.Org. Staff informed the School Board the Core GPA is maintained and will align with the calculations of the State University System admission requirements. FACT.org does not feed into our system, therefore, parents and students can go to Virtual Counselor to access this site. The Student Advisor suggested putting a notice on the Virtual Counselor explaining how to get to the FACT.org site. Also, students must be informed by their Guidance Counselors on classes such as honors versus AP courses and what is best for them to achieve high GPA's for the purpose of going on to college. Another point made was the use of grades for punishment. The objective is for students to succeed. Area Offices are requested to look at what is happening at schools regarding this.

2. 50% as the lowest grade. The purpose is to encourage students. The Board directed staff to explore this further and bring back pros and cons. Schools felt this to be a bigger issue and needs a comprehensive approach look at the grading overall from K-12. The Board also asked, how does the 50% affect the grading curve and have there been any discussion regarding this. This will be added into the discussion for the work group. The work group will continue surveying schools, teachers, Principals, and parents and bring back information for the Board Members.

3. Exam exemptions for middle school students taking high school courses. To give students the same exemption that is given at high school. It is recommended to eliminate language for the exam exemption from policy. State end of course exams are coming soon. (Math is field tested this year.)

4. FCAT good cause promotion in middle school: Delete, as no longer relevant. FCAT is no longer the determining factor for promotion at middle school.

5. Primary 1st & 2nd grade promotion criteria. Raise criteria to ensure mastery prior to 3rd grade and mandatory retention statute. Staff is requested to see if there is a grant for pre-1st.
6. High school promotion cohort exceptions. Language has been added to clarify exceptions.
7. Disability History and Awareness Weeks. Language will be added for the 1st and 2nd weeks in October as Disability History and Awareness Weeks and disability history and awareness instruction may be integrated into existing classroom curriculum to expand students' knowledge and understanding.
8. Middle school course recovery. Are there additional options that should be used for recovery of courses? Staff is requested to list the middle school free course recovery options so parents do not have to pay for them.
9. Eliminate FCAT as promotion criteria for 4th and 5th grades. Statute does not require this. There are no changes to this item. The student's portfolio is still being used as one of the promotion criteria.
10. E-PEP completion definition. This is a State requirement. Staff is requested to clarify language on what completion means. E-PEP must include the student's courses for all 4 years and the major area of interest.
11. Diploma Awarding. The policy states at this time the student who completes requirements mid year shall be awarded a standard diploma at the time he/she completes requirements. The language will be revised to state that a diploma may be awarded when requirements are met. This allows the student to finish out the year.
12. Dual enrollment policy restricted to only those students with 11 credits or more. This requirement will be eliminated, which opens up opportunity for students and aligns with statute.

In the future, the Board and staff decided to bring Policy 6000.1 back twice a year, instead of quarterly, to review any legislative changes or modify the policy.

Exam Exemptions

Board Members decided that there needs to be more discussion regarding this and requests teachers, parents, and parent groups to be a part of conversation. Several suggestions/remarks were made:

- There must be guidelines for the exemptions.
- The Board agreed that if there are exam exemptions, ultimately it must be the decision of the parent and student.
- The Board would like to speak about the middle school component regarding the middle school teachers giving final and standardized tests.
- The paperwork to process the exam waivers has become a burden and added work for the school. On the other hand, there would be less test papers to grade.

- Board Members requested that this discussion come back to a workshop for a two hours discussion. Material for this discussion should be given to the Board Members two weeks in advance so they can come up with their own thoughts.
- Exemptions are an incentive. If you are a good student, who gets good grades, and demonstrate knowledge of the material, you would be able to waive out of a final exam. Board Members would like to know how much a final exam is weighted and is the exam cumulative or the end of the course exam.
- The number of exams block scheduling has in comparison to a straight 7 must be considered.
- When does a student sign a waiver? Is it before the grade is received?

Master Scheduling

The Master Scheduling process for 2009-10 is a new data program. Student information is input into the program and the schedule is printed out. Courses are suggested for students to take, so they receive all courses they need to graduate. Board Members and the Student Advisor had several concerns.

- The Board Members and Student Advisor are hearing it is the school's decision who they schedule first.
- Because of class size reduction, some schools will not allow any schedule changes.
- Students will be misplaced and someone will end up in a class they did not want.
- Do not think this process is flexible enough.
- It is more difficult to move too less rigorous courses.
- There still needs to be the conversation with teachers and guidance about more flexibility.
- It looks good on paper; the reality is that they are not given the opportunity to change.

Staff stated that students do have the flexibility to take less rigorous courses. There is an override form to take another course other than what is suggested. Schools expect parents to be involved in the selection process.

Area Superintendents are requested to pass on the directive to schools to allow flexibility on scheduling. Staff is requested to meet with the Principals to remediate these situations. The master-scheduling program is only for core classes and students will still choose their electives. Staff is requested to look at the student's issues and experiences and bring that data back to the Board Members.

Material for this presentation can be found on the eAgenda February 9, 2010 workshop.

Diversity Committee's Response to the Superintendents Annual CCC Settlement Agreement Status Report-2008-09

The Superintendent's Annual CCC Settlement Agreement Status Report was presented to the Board and Diversity Committee in August 2009. The Diversity Committee and Subcommittees met from August 2009 to January 2010. The Diversity Committee approved the final response January 7, 2010. The response to the Annual Status Report is being made at today's workshop.

General Recommendations:

1. The School Board is encouraged to adopt the agreed upon definition of Education Equity and infuse it into all aspect of the District belief and policies. This recommendation has been completed.
2. Identify all schools, which have not met the specific indicators in the report. Staff stated that this information would be available in the very near future.
3. Each Condition should indicate criteria for compliance. An acceptable definition of compliance has been received.
4. The Diversity Committee requests representation and input on innovative programs/school options, policy, and other relevant district policies, especially those related to the nine conditions of the CCC report.

Other recommendations include data by gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality at schools. Also requested, is data on the discipline incidences across the district.

Specific Recommendations for 2008-09:

- Condition 1: Textbooks. All students shall have textbooks for every applicable class. This indicator shows that the District has not met 100% compliance. A progress report fort 2009-10 is forthcoming and should show the District closer to meeting the 100% compliance.
- Condition 2: Technology. Develop a new higher standard for scanners in schools and classrooms. This is being looked into.
- Condition 3: Standards of Service. Address and make recommendations for closing gaps relating to impact on graduation rates.
- Condition 4: AP and honors courses. Data is forthcoming regarding ethnicity in these classes.
- Condition 5: Athletics and extra curricular activities. Review all core extra curricular activities by school.
- Condition 6: Media Centers. Update reference books and identify media centers that need upgrading by school. New media centers were promised, but because of the District's reduced budget by the State, projects like these have been put on hold.
- Condition 7: Disciplinary Actions. Specify schools not following the discipline matrix. Not all schools are utilizing the discipline matrix 100%.
- Condition 8: Five-Year Capital Plan. Provide an updated list of projects that have been postponed due to State budget cuts. Staff is requested to supply a timetable of when these projects will be done.
- Condition 9: Student Reassignment. Provide data on availability of choice assignments by school.

Response to the Superintendent's Annual CCC Settlement Agreement Status Report:

- The School District has met an additional two conditions and now meets five out of nine conditions.
- The School District has met two additional indicators, from 33 to 38 of 45.
- The School District has moved more than nine percentage points from 71.7% to 80.9% in compliance.

The School District is moving in the right direction and will continue to work towards achieving 100% compliance with the terms of the CCC Settlement Agreement. With new indicators and the new site visitation instrument, the School District will show continued progress.

The material for this presentation is available on the eAgenda February 9, 2010 workshop.

Budget Update

The Budget Department came before the School Board to update them on the budget cut projections that will have to be made this school year. There is an expected \$80 to \$100 million budget reduction from the State due to their overestimating FTE dollars.

Financing sources for these budget cuts were discussed. They include:

-A further 6% reduction from all schools' budgets totaling \$67.6 million.

-Transportation reduction of \$13.2 Million.

-12.7% reductions from departments totaling \$15.0 million.

-Title 1 and IDEA General Funds totaling \$20.0 million.

-Other insurance \$5.7 million.

Totaling \$121.5 million.

For next year, there is a preliminary budget projection of \$88.6 million of extra funds the District will need. These new District needs include: health insurance increase, electricity and water, loss of lottery dollars, instructional materials, loss of Safe & Drug Free School funds, and advanced academics unfunded mandate from Senate Bill 1908.

Budget Department staff also estimated teacher needs for period-by-period implementation of Class Size Reduction by October 2010, which the state does not fund. There is an estimate of 752 teachers that will be needed to meet class size, period by period. That cost is estimated to be \$53.8 million. There are some changes coming up regarding the Florida Retirement System. Staff is requested to update the Board Members on the changes.

The budget reduction for next year may impact the ability for schools to meet class size. In order to get the real financial impact, the Budget Department would have to have the scheduling to show the official amount of teachers needed. The estimated penalty for not meeting class size, class by class, is \$17-19 million.

Due to the State's under funding, Board Members are truly devastated that schools will have to reduce their budgets further this year and asked what can schools cut now. They have already lost custodians, guidance counselors, art, and music teachers. Video conferencing so schools would have art and music classes is an option at this time. Also consolidating schools is another consideration, which would create larger FTE groups, meaning more dollars for that school. Other school districts have found this to be successful.

This will be a very tough year and it is expected that next year will be worse. The State is already saying that they are short billions of dollars, which is approximately another \$10 million shortage for the Broward Public School District.

Board Members are encouraged to email any cost saving suggestions to the Budget Department staff.

Board Members requested that the Superintendent schedule more town meetings to inform the community, all local Chamber of Commerce, Broward Workshop, and Broward Alliance about the severity of the budget situation. The State has implemented a total of \$92.5 million of unfunded mandates and the School District is forced to provide these programs and is not provided funding.

Staff will be meeting with each Board Member to answer their questions. There are large financial struggles ahead and the School Board wants all needed information

The material for this presentation can be found on the eAgenda February 9, 2010 workshop.

Policy 1320, Purchasing

Staff came before the Board to provide changes to the policy previously discussed at the 10/13/09 Board Workshop.

Board Members had a few questions concerning authorizing the Superintendent to execute and amend agreements up to \$50,000, which is aligned with the current State Board Rule.

A list of all RFP's will be sent to the Board for their information. Staff is requested that any RFP that generates some interest to please call it to the Board's attention.

The Board also had a question regarding the Cone of Silence and ethics policy regarding how staff will be trained regarding this process. Staff will utilize the bookkeeping training process to update personnel on these new procedures.

In the future, when changes to contracts come before the Board, it is requested that the rationale for these changes be included. This eliminates a lot of discussion and makes the School District more transparent.

The policy will now go before the Board at a Regular School Board meeting for their approval.

The policy and matrix of recommended changes can be found on the eAgenda February 9, 2010 workshop.

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