

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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WORKSHOP

DATE: NOVEMBER 6, 2007
LOCATION: PINE RIDGE EDUCATION CENTER
TOPICS:
-Update of High School Reform
-New Website for Facilities & Construction Management
-BEEP Update; Digital Divide
-School Board Members' Requests for Workshop/Retreat Items

Charter Schools Suit

Beverly Gallagher, Chair, informed the Board that Pembroke Pines Charter School has filed a lawsuit against the SBBC. The Board is discussing the next steps with General Counsel.

In a separate action, the Chair also stated, The Florida School Boards Association met in Tallahassee Monday, November 5, 2007, and called upon several of its member school boards to sue the state. At issue is whether a new state agency should be able to open, close, and oversee publicly funded charter schools. Previously, that power rested exclusively with locally elected school boards with an appeal process to the State. The association says the new Florida Schools of Excellence Commission violates the provision of the state constitution that grants local school boards power over all public schools. After Monday's meeting, Broward Superintendent, Jim Notter, said the State School Boards Association would be in talks with Board Attorneys from around the state for their opinions on what legal route to take.

Update of High School Reform

Our Call to Action: Broward County's Blueprint for Redesign. The Blueprint for High School Redesign provides the framework to ensure that the work of the high schools is data driven and clearly focused on students' success. To provide high quality education that ensures that young men and women are ready for lifelong success, no matter which door they take first: college, work or career. The goals and objectives for Broward High School Redesign are:

- To engage students academically.
- To personalize the learning environment for all students.
- To have accountable leaders.
- To engage entire community.
- To reward excellence.

The High School Reform update let the School Board Members know where the District is today. The Board discussed Guidance Counselors and their importance for students and their help to ensure students are on the right path and are taking correct courses in order to achieve their future goals. Schools will provide individualize guidance, information, and resources on career pathways and opportunities for participating in workplace-based learning school to career programs. Also discussed is the importance of extracurricular activities at the high school level, which gives students opportunities for being part of a group and meeting new friends, which helps keep students' interest in school. The Board discussed graduation and dropout rates and the fact that the States computation and Broward Schools' differ. The Board wanted the community to be aware of this difference

showing the methods used to reach these rates. The focus of the presentation is the importance of the leadership at a school. The responsibility of this School District is to make sure that leadership understands what the Board wants regarding reform initiatives and reaches it, understands it and implements it.

New Website for Facilities & Construction Management

Previously, facility project information was recorded on many databases, spreadsheets and software applications. Current business processes dictate that facility/project information needs reliable data gathering and reporting. One location to find information for all facility projects was very needed. The new website, *Integrated Workspace*, is such a vehicle to find this information. Now Board Members, the Facilities & Construction Management Deputy Superintendent, Project Managers, and other staff can locate easily updated information on existing projects, to answer questions they may have. This website helps ensure schedules are being met, estimating project costs, tracking and analyzing project costs, documenting and delivering project status information. Board Members and their assistants will be trained to use this website so all information needed is available and retrievable. The Board is looking forward to the end of the year when this information is available and they will be able to monitor projects for themselves and their constituents. This is a tool to communicate to our stakeholders and keeping on schedule with the various facility projects.

BEEP Portal/Digital Divide

The BEEP Portal aligns to the School Districts' Technology Strategic Plan. Broward County is ahead of the curve with this new technology. The presentation given by the Instructional Technology staff demonstrated the *Teachers Portal* and what is available. Board Members had a hands-on opportunity to actually go into the portal and see what is available for teachers. There are 8,500 lesson plans, which 90% have videos. There are online textbooks, Art, K-5 Science, Character Education, ESOL Strategies, ESE accommodations, to name a few. Teachers, administrators and parents can access the BEEP portal. The Board wanted access for parents made easier and suggested that the BEEP locator button on the browardschools.com website be moved to a more visible location. As part of the strategic plan, Instructional Technology has created a bar code process to help teachers get books and uniforms returned at the end of the year. There will be a *Student Portal* developed, which will include student participation using the current BEEP *Teacher Portal* structure by March 2008. There will be a sign on to online textbooks, access to research databases, and student resources. Students would also like a personal learning space, collaboration areas, college sites, and clubs as part of this portal.

The second part of this discussion was about the Digital Divide, which is to eliminate the gap between those people and communities who can make effective use of information technology and those who cannot. Broward's focus is to increase "First Time" home computer families. 2005-06 Instructional Technology developed a parent-training pilot at Lauderdale Manors Elementary and developed computer surplus and refurbish procedures. Over the past years there have been School Board approval with Microsoft for software on Digital Divide computers, Dell TechKnow agreement for low income students to build and earn a home computer, and Riverdeep re-license for select math and reading software. To date, nearly 1,500 computers have been distributed to eligible students/families via schools or programs.

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