

MINUTES OF THE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF PUTNAM COUNTY, FLORIDA

TUESDAY, March 23, 2009 - 1:00 P.M.

The District School Board of Putnam County, Florida met in **Workshop Session** on Monday, March 23, 2009, at 1:00 P.M., in the School Board Meeting Room of the Campbell School Administration Building, located at 200 South Seventh Street, Palatka, Florida with the following Board Members present: Mrs. Lisa Parsons, Chairperson, Mr. C. L. Overturf, Jr., Vice Chairman, Mr. John Milton, Mr. Terry Wright and Mrs. Joann Barber. Also present were School Board Attorney, James L. Padgett and Mr. Thomas D. Townsend, Superintendent and Secretary.

The meeting was opened, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and observance of a moment of silence.

Superintendent Townsend stated the purpose of the workshop was to discuss details of his recommendation to close three schools: Q.I. Roberts Middle School, Moseley Elementary School and Mellon Elementary School. He further stated the District is looking at a 12.99% reduction in funding for the 2009-2010 school year, not including the 15% cut which has already been taken this school year (2008-2009).

Superintendent Townsend stated that each school in question has representatives who will be allowed to speak to the Board. He stressed that even though this is an open meeting and all are welcome to observe, it is a workshop for Board Members to get questions answered and discuss in detail possible solutions to the financial crisis.

Board Members C.L. Overturf, Jr. and Joann Barber reported on their recent trip to Tallahassee to meet with Legislators during the Florida School Board's Legislative Day. Discussion followed.

Mrs. Rhonda Odom, Chief Financial Officer gave a financial update with the most recent information. She handed out the following documents: (1) Draft Budget Estimates for 2009-2010; (2) 2008-09 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Release information stating the 15% hold-back; (3) Draft 2009-1010 Instructional Allocation Plan; (4) Draft Recap of Gains/Losses on Allocations. (See Supplementary File)

Associate Superintendent Sam Foerster reported the latest information on cost saving measures and where the District stands in the effort to close the gap. Discussion followed.

Representatives from each school spoke to the Board. After each group, Mr. Charles Buresch gave details through a power point of cost savings, if the school was closed. (See Supplementary File)

Q.I. Roberts: Mrs. Annie Svetlik, Parent; Mrs. Laura Godwin, Teacher

**RECESS 2:55 P.M.**

**RECONVENE 3:05 P.M.**

Mellon Elementary: Mrs. Ashley McCool, Parent; Mrs. Tracy Taylor, Teacher

Moseley Elementary: Mrs. Lillian Bivins, Teacher

Board Members asked questions, gave opinions and discussed many scenarios. Mrs. Grace Thomas discussed with the Board the effect on curriculum if certain schools closed. She also answered Mrs. Parsons question about the possibility of keeping sixth grade at the elementary level. Discussion followed.

Board Members were asked by the Superintendent for their feeling about school closings at this point. Discussion followed with the School Board Attorney pointing out that this is only a workshop and no decisions can be made.

Mrs. Sharon Hughes, President, Putnam Federation of Teachers United discussed with the Board the option of closing out the school year four days early (for cost savings) due to the fact that an extra fifteen minutes is built into every school day (because of possible hurricane days). Discussion followed. She also informed the Board that another early retirement incentive is in the works and they will be getting more information. Lastly, she gave the Board some information on a four-day work week and asked them to review this as they make such important decisions. Discussion followed.

A citizen, Mrs. Carol Petty, 1430 Baden Powell Road, Hawthorne, Florida spoke to the Board and suggested they contact the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for financial resources.

Superintendent Townsend thanked everyone for their participation and the workshop adjourned at 4:10 P.M.

          /s/ Lisa Parsons            
LISA PARSONS, CHAIRPERSON

          /s/ Thomas D. Townsend            
THOMAS D. TOWNSEND, SECRETARY