

Minutes of
Okeechobee County School Board Meeting
March 11, 2014

The Okeechobee County School Board met in regular session on the above date with the following members present: Chairman Joe Arnold, Vice Chairman Gay Carlton, Malissa Morgan, India Riedel, and David Williams. Also present were Ken Kenworthy, Superintendent of Schools, and Tom Conely, School Board Attorney.

Chairman Arnold called the meeting to order. Tom Conely, School Board Attorney, opened the meeting with prayer, and Chairman Arnold led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Board and Superintendent recognized *Michael Daniel*, for being selected as a 2014 Sunshine State Scholar representing Okeechobee High School. Wendy Reister, Sponsor, was also recognized.

The Board and Superintendent recognized *Tamea Allen*, *Jessica Mond*, and *Julia Weldon*, for qualifying to represent Okeechobee High School at the State Weight Lifting competition. Coach Tyrone Smith was also recognized.

The Board and Superintendent recognized *Tiffany Bowers* for representing Okeechobee High School and placing 3rd in the State in Girls Wrestling. Coach Bruce Jahner was also recognized.

The Board and Superintendent recognized *Cory Vickers* for qualifying to represent Okeechobee High School at the State Wrestling competition. Coach Bruce Jahner was also recognized.

The Board and Superintendent recognized *Calberth Baul*, Custodian at Okeechobee High School for his retirement and 15 years of service.

On a motion by Gay Carlton, seconded by India Riedel, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on February 11, 2014.

Chairman Arnold recognized the following individuals who submitted requests to address the Board regarding valedictorian and salutatorian selection:

- Steve Moreland, Parent
- Zane Moreland, Student
- Irfan Chaudhary, Student
- Dr. Muhammed Chaudhary, Parent

The speakers questioned the fairness of the current system by which points are given for the number and types of courses to determine the valedictorian and salutatorian of the graduating class. Both students addressing the School Board received A's in all courses they have taken and yet were not named as valedictorian or salutatorian. According to the speakers, this is because the current point system places more emphasis on the number of courses taken than on the difficulty of the courses taken. They stated that it is unfair to students who take more rigorous courses and maintain a 4.0. They stated that the point system is outdated, a B is counted as only one (1) point less than an A, and there are many other flaws in the system. Students decide which courses to take based on the advice of their guidance counselors and may not understand how the courses will affect their standing in the valedictorian and salutatorian selection. Both students and their parents asked the Board to reconsider the process of selection for this year's valedictorian and salutatorian. The students stated that they deserve the top ranking and should have been considered for the honor based on the rigor of courses they took and the fact that they both maintained a straight 4.0 GPA.

Superintendent Kenworthy complimented the students for receiving a perfect 4.0 GPA and said that not many students were able to achieve such an accomplishment. He explained that selection of valedictorian and salutatorian is based upon a quality point system. Quality points are assigned to honors, advanced placement and dual enrollment classes. Five quality points are awarded to students earning an "A," four quality points are awarded for a "B," and so forth. At the end of the first semester of the senior year, the two students with the most quality points receive the designations. He stated that this

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system has been in place since 1998, and may need to be examined since there are more courses being offered in dual enrollment and advanced placement. Superintendent Kenworthy stated that although the two students presenting tonight did receive all "A"s and a perfect 4.0 GPA, the fact that the other students took more courses caused them to be awarded additional quality points. Current policy as published in the Student Progression Plan and the Parent Guide were followed in the designation of the valedictorian and salutatorian.

After lengthy discussion by the Board and Superintendent the Board agreed that the students already designated as valedictorian and salutatorian should be named co-valedictorians along with Zane Moreland and Irfan Chaudhary, therefore having four (4) co-valedictorians and no salutatorian for the 2014 graduating class. The Board members commended both students for maintaining straight A's in all their courses.

India Riedel made a motion that all four students with the highest quality points and GPA should be named co-valedictorians. The motion was seconded by David Williams, and the Board voted unanimously to approve the motion as stated.

Further, the Superintendent and Board discussed the possibility of changing to a cum laude system of determining academic honors for graduation, as some districts are doing. He reported that both his student advisory group and the high school student council have indicated that they would like to move away from the valedictorian and salutatorian system. While the current system honors the top two students academically, a cum laude system would allow more students to be honored for academic achievement. Superintendent Kenworthy stated that the method of selection for valedictorian/salutatorian is a part of the Student Progression Plan, which requires public notice before any changes can be made to it. The Board suggested that a workshop for the Board to review the Student Progression Plan would be appropriate at this time and requested that Superintendent Kenworthy recommend the earliest possible dates at the regular April Board meeting.

Chairman Arnold asked if the Superintendent or Board members had any changes, additions, or deletions to the *Items for Action*. Superintendent Kenworthy requested that Item L., *Separation Agreement and General Release*, be added to the agenda; and as a result of adding this item, Superintendent Kenworthy requested that Item VII., *Hearing*, be withdrawn. On a motion by India Riedel, seconded by Gay Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to add Item L. to the *Items for Action* and withdraw Item VII., *Hearing*.

The School Board of Okeechobee County, Florida, hereby certifies that pursuant to a legal notice, a meeting for public hearing was held in Room 303 of the School Board Administrative Office, 700 S.W. 2nd Avenue, at 6:00 p.m. in the City of Okeechobee on the 11th day of March, 2014, for the purpose of discussing adoption of Board Policy 5.321 Bullying and Harassment.

The Board further certifies that it remained in session until 7:15 p.m. and there appeared no one at said hearing to oppose or discuss this policy change.

On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by Gay Carlton, seconded by Malissa Morgan, the Board voted unanimously to approve amendment of School Board Policy 5.321 Bullying and Harassment. The policy amendment adds language regarding cyberbullying and cyberstalking in accordance with changes made to Florida Statute 1006.147. Advertisement of the intent to amend Policy 5.321 was approved by the School Board on February 11, 2014, and legally advertised to the public on February 12, 2014, as required by Chapter 120, Administrative Procedures Act, Florida Statutes. Superintendent Kenworthy stated that he received no comments or questions from the public regarding the proposed amendment.

On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by Malissa Morgan, seconded by Gay Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to approve advertisement to amend Board Policy 2.20 Board Meetings to bring the policy into agreement with current statutes and practice regarding public speakers at School Board meetings. Superintendent Kenworthy commented that the legislative intent of this policy is to provide everyone an opportunity to speak at public meetings if they request to do so.

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On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by India Riedel, seconded by Malissa Morgan, the Board voted unanimously to approve advertisement to amend Board Policy 3.45 Background Screening for Contractors to bring the policy into agreement with current statutes regarding issuance of state ID badges for contractors. Superintendent Kenworthy commented that Senator Grimsley sponsored this bill so that one statewide badge could be issued to contractors who work in multiple counties.

On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by Malissa Morgan, seconded by Gay Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to approve advertisement to amend Board Policy 3.70 Flag Display and Pledge to bring the policy into agreement with current statutes regarding display of the U.S. flag and the Florida flag. Superintendent Kenworthy commented that the proposed amendment contains minor changes in addition to requiring that all U.S. flags display in schools and on school property must be made in the U.S.A.

On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by India Riedel, seconded by Gay Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to approve advertisement to amend Board Policy 6.113 Responsibilities of School Bus Operators to bring the policy into agreement with current statutes banning texting while driving and reducing heavy duty idling.

On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by Malissa Morgan, seconded by India Riedel, the Board voted unanimously to approve advertisement to amend Board Policy 6.56 Professional Ethics to bring the policy into agreement with current statutes regarding newly required ethics training for the Superintendent and School Board members. Board Member India Riedel asked the Superintendent what activities are done with staff to refresh and review their ethics training. Superintendent Kenworthy responded that a PowerPoint presentation for ethics training has been developed. Employees view the presentation, which includes a 10-question quiz at the end. When an employee completes the training, a certificate is placed in his/her personnel file. Ms. Riedel stated that Board and Superintendent are required to complete ethics training yearly and that it is important for the training to be provided to staff members.

On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by Gay Carlton, seconded by David Williams, the Board voted unanimously to approve advertisement to amend Board Policy 8.23 Transporting Students in Private Vehicles to bring the policy into agreement with current statutes banning of texting while driving.

On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by Gay Carlton, seconded by Malissa Morgan, the Board voted unanimously to approve advertisement to amend Board Policy 8.30 Automotive Equipment to bring the policy into agreement with current statutes banning texting while driving and reducing heavy duty idling.

On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by David Williams, seconded by India Riedel, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Internal Funds Financial Statement/Audit Report for all schools for the period ending June 30, 2013, and ordered it filed as part of public record. Superintendent Kenworthy commented that no material weaknesses were reported and that six (6) schools had perfect audits with no findings. The Board commended school staff and bookkeepers for receiving good audit reports.

On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by Gay Carlton, seconded by David Williams, the Board voted unanimously to approve an agreement with the District School Board of Putnam County on behalf of the North East Florida Educational Consortium (NEFEC) to provide Virtual Instruction Program Services effective February 5, 2014, through July 30, 2014. Superintendent Kenworthy commented that this agreement will allow eligible Okeechobee Students to participate in online instruction through NEFEC, a facilitator of a virtual instruction program for 6th-12th grade students. The agreement will allow the District to recover some of the FTE for students enrolled online through NEFEC.

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On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by India Riedel, seconded by Malissa Morgan, the Board voted unanimously to approve the 2014-15 Instructional Calendar as follows:

**2014-15
Okeechobee County School Board
Instructional Calendar**

August 8	Fri	New Teachers Report
August 12	Tues	Returning Teachers Report
August 18	Mon	Students' First Day
September 1	Mon	Holiday—Labor Day
September 19	Fri	Early Release Day for Students
October 17	Fri	End 1st Nine Weeks (44 Days)
October 20	Mon	Teacher Plan Day (No Students)
November 21	Fri	Early Release Day for Students
November 24	Mon	Fall Break Day (1st Make-up Day)*
November 25	Tues	Fall Break Day (2nd Make-up Day)*
November 26	Wed	Fall Break Day
November 27	Thu	Holiday—Thanksgiving
November 28	Fri	Fall Break Day
December 19	Fri	Last Day of School prior to Holidays
December 19	Fri	End 1 st Semester (83 Days)
December 22-24	Mon-Wed	Winter Break
December 25	Thu	Holiday—Christmas
December 26-31	Fri-Wed	Winter Break
January 1	Thu	Holiday—New Years Day
January 2-5	Fri-Mon	Winter Break
January 6	Tues	Teacher Plan Day (No Students)
January 7	Wed	Students' First Day Back After Holidays
January 19	Mon	Holiday—Martin Luther King Day
February 6	Fri	Early Release Day for Students
February 16	Mon	Presidents' Day—No Teachers/No Students
February 27	Fri	Teacher Plan Day (No Students)
March 13	Fri	End 3rd Nine Weeks (45 Days)
March 16-20	Mon-Fri	Spring Break—No Teachers/No Students
March 23	Mon	Teacher Plan Day (No Students)
April 3	Fri	Good Friday—No Teachers/No Students
May 1	Fri	Early Release Day for Students
May 25	Mon	Holiday—Memorial Day
June 5	Fri	End 4th Nine Weeks (52 Days)
June 5	Fri	Students' Last Day (180 Days)
June 9	Tues	All Teachers—Last Day

*In the event that school is closed due to a hurricane or other emergency, these are the first two days that will be used as "Make-up Days."

Superintendent Kenworthy reported that the employee vote was 212 for Option B Calendar and 166 for Option A Calendar. Chairman Arnold thanked the Calendar Committee for producing two (2) calendar options and for conducting a vote by employees.

On the recommendation of Superintendent Kenworthy and a motion by Malissa Morgan, seconded by Gay Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to approve a Separation Agreement and General Release with Catherine Jones. Superintendent Kenworthy reported that the agreement was put together by attorneys from each side and was signed by Ms. Jones earlier in the afternoon. Board Member David Williams asked Tom Conely, School Board Attorney, if the agreement met his approval. Mr. Conely responded that the agreement is very well written.

Chairman Arnold asked if any Board member or the Superintendent wished to pull any item(s) from the Consent Agenda. There were no requests. On a motion by Gay Carlton, seconded by David Williams, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

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The following personnel were employed:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>School or Center</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Fonseca, Laura	Secretary	Freshman Campus	02-03-2014
Ochsenbine, Ashley	Custodian II - 4 Hrs	Okeechobee High School	03-03-2014
Smith, Jarren	Custodian II	Okeechobee High School	03-03-2014
Sprague, Eric	Teacher, Social Studies	Osceola Middle School	02-07-2014
White, Ann	Teacher, Elementary	Everglades Elementary School	02-03-2014
White, Dawn (Out of Field)	Teacher, EBD	Okeechobee Achievement Academy	02-18-2014

The following resignations, terminations, and suspensions were approved:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>School or Center</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Culligan, Cathy	ESE Bus Aide	Transportation	03-03-2014
Friend, Margaret (Retirement)	Paraprofessional	Central Elementary School	06-11-2014
O'Bannon, Colleen (Retirement)	Teacher, Elementary	Seminole Elementary School	06-11-2014
Suits, Sharon (Retirement)	Director, K-12 Accountability and Assessment	District Office	08-01-2014

The resignation of Ashley Conrad, Elementary Teacher, South Elementary School, was accepted with prejudice effective March 3, 2014, due to lack of sufficient notice.

The resignation of Brad Mims, Guidance Counselor, Okeechobee Freshman Campus, was accepted with prejudice effective February 18, 2014.

The following leave requests were approved:

<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Leave Type</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Thru</u>
Aragon, Shirley	Central Elementary School	Short Term	02-04-2014	03-31-2014
Botello, Brandi	Yearling Middle/Osceola Middle	Short Term	02-03-2014	05-02-2014
Hawthorne, Deanna	Transportation Department	Short Term	01-21-2014	02-03-2014

The following personnel were added to the Substitute Teacher List for the 2013-14 school year:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Delagall, Tony S.	III

The Board approved the following payments to personnel:

<u>Name/Group</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Rate of Pay</u>	<u>Time Period (Maximum)</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
All Personnel Employed in 2013-14	Eligible for Temporary Employment in After-School Immigrant Tutorial	(Instructional Only) \$20.00 Per Hour	As Needed for 2013-14 up to a Total of \$3,650.00 (Including Benefits)	#4403 – Title III Immigrant

The Board approved the revised Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services for Exceptional Students (SP&P) document for fiscal years 2013-2014 through 2015-2016.

The Board approved a revised Letter Purchase Order (LPO) with DES of Florida, LLC, for the position listed below, for the purpose of providing the temporary services of Interim Administrative Personnel for the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014.

<u>Position:</u>	<u>Total Cost Including Taxes/Social Security (Not to Exceed):</u>
Interim Director of Operations	\$98,031.00

The Board approved the Title I, Part A, School Improvement Initiative Grant application in the amount of \$31,676.00 effective January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014.

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The items listed on Property Disposal List #7 for the 2013-14 fiscal year were declared as surplus, no longer usable for educational purposes, and to be removed from property records; and the Superintendent was authorized to donate or sell such items in accordance with state statute.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD				
Property Disposal				
2013-14 #7				
Property Number	Description	Cost	Condition	School/Cost Center
1636F	Gateway Laptop 600YGR	2,274.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
1845F	Gateway Laptop 400SD4	1,494.21	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
2521F	Gateway 4100	1,498.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
2718F	Gateway 4300	975.47	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
2722F	Gateway 4300	975.47	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
2764F	Gateway	940.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
2800F	Gateway 4300	1,275.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
2801F	Gateway 4300	1,275.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
2934F	Gateway 4300	1,059.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
Property Number	Description	Cost	Condition	School/Cost Center
2938F	Gateway 4300	1,059.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
2940F	Gateway 4300	1,059.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
2942F	Gateway 4300	1,059.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
2946F	Gateway 4300	1,059.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
3040F	Gateway 2300	925.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
3260F	Gateway	966.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
3263F	Gateway 2500D	966.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
3277F	Gateway 2500D	966.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
3283F	Gateway 2500D	966.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
3291F	Gateway Laptop M465E	1,550.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
3836F	Dell 745	1,092.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
3840F	Dell 745	1,075.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
3412F	Gateway	866.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
4104F	Epson Projector	1,349.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
6022F	Promethean Projector PRM-20AVI	2,514.70	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
19041	Gateway SOLO Laptop	3,786.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
19815	Gateway Laptop 400VTX	1,871.50	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
19842	Gateway 2000	844.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
19850	Gateway E2000	844.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
20285	Gateway 4300	1,059.00	Obsolete	Seminole Elementary
3457F	Dell Desktop Computer	1,114.00	Unrepairable	Everglades Elementary
3830F	Dell Desktop Computer	1,355.00	Unrepairable	Everglades Elementary
19347	2001 45 Capacity Intl Bus w/Wheelchair Lift	61,119.00	Good	Transportation
19804	2002 65 Capacity Intl Bus	51,229.00	Good	Transportation
19805	2002 83 Capacity Intl Bus	62,771.00	Good	Transportation
20145	2004 17 Capacity Intl Bus w/Wheelchair Lift	65,034.00	Good	Transportation
20146	2004 17 Capacity Intl Bus w/Wheelchair Lift	65,034.00	Good	Transportation
Total		\$345,298.35		

The Monthly Financial Statement for January, 2014, was accepted and filed as part of public record.

Budget Amendment #7 for January, 2014, was approved.

The Warrant Register for February, 2014, was approved as follows:

General Disbursement Account – Warrants #150197 thru #150481

Operating General Fund	\$ 991,393.86
Federal Programs Fund	106,708.06
Food Service Fund	170,685.24
Capital Improvement Fund	64,192.77
Total	\$ 1,332,979.93

Information Items

A. Superintendent

- Superintendent Kenworthy discussed possible dates for the Board's next tour of schools. The Board members decided on the following schedule:

Tuesday, April 8, 2014

8:30 a.m. – Seminole Elementary School

9:30 a.m. – North Elementary School

10:30 a.m. – Yearling Middle School

B. School Board Members

- Malissa Morgan asked Superintendent Kenworthy if he obtained any information on random drug testing of employees. Superintendent Kenworthy responded that he surveyed all the districts in Florida and found that 6 districts responded that they conduct random drug testing of employees. After calling the six districts, it was found that only three (3) districts were possibly doing random testing of employees. Of those three districts, Superintendent Kenworthy has had further contact at this point with one district which is Washington County. The Washington County written policy was provided for the Board. Washington County Schools tests 50% of employees who perform safety sensitive functions and 10% of each of other work groups on a quarterly basis. Superintendent Kenworthy stated that there are two cases that give him cause for concern. Governor Scott was challenged on testing of welfare/government assistance recipients and also on random drug testing of State employees. He was struck down in both cases. Ms. Morgan said that although there is emphasis on new hires for drug testing, the District would do well to seek training for all employees, especially administrators, to recognize signs of drug and alcohol abuse to determine if there is reasonable suspicion of impairment. Superintendent Kenworthy reported that there is training available from USA Mobile Drug Testing (the contractor used for random student drug testing) on recognizing reasonable suspicion.
- Malissa Morgan reported that she attended the Florida Flywheelers Annual Show in February. The tractor project that she and her husband sponsored came to an end, and the project should receive a check for \$18,000.00 in April or May. Ms. Morgan reported that the Flywheelers are anxious for another group project from Okeechobee.
- Gay Carlton announced that she will not run for another term on the School Board when her term expires this November. Chairman Arnold thanked Ms. Carlton for her service on the School Board.
- India Riedel stated that in light of recent incidents in the school district and the community, addressing the problem of drug/alcohol abuse should be ongoing. She encouraged the Superintendent to pursue a means to effect some change in staff members who may need help regardless of case law.
- Joe Arnold commented that he has looked into the subject of random drug testing for government employees and found that the 4th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is for government, not for private business, and that government can only do what has been challenged. He stated that he believes if the District moves forward with random drug testing for employees, that a federal law suit against the District could be quite possible.
- Joe Arnold reported that Okeechobee has two (2) students going to the International Science Fair this year. He also reminded those present that the Livestock Show is taking place this weekend.

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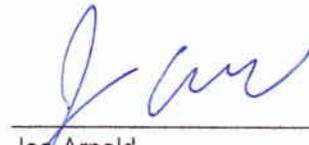
C. Board Attorney

- Tom Conely noted that the Washington County policy on random drug testing contains a caveat that states, "unless prohibited by law or other governing documents that may supersede the policy." Mr. Conely advised the Board to be very careful going forward on random drug testing of employees. Superintendent Kenworthy reported that the last student drug testing found two (2) positives for marijuana. He also stated that students are self-reporting a higher rate of usage. Malissa Morgan stated that she believes awareness training is paramount and will have a more immediate effect than random drug testing.

D. Public – None

There being no further business to discuss, on a motion by Gay Carlton, seconded by David Williams, the Board adjourned at 7:15 p.m. The next regular meeting of the School Board is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 8, 2014, at 700 S.W. 2nd Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD



Joe Arnold
Chairman



Ken Kenworthy
Superintendent of Schools