

The District School Board of Indian River County met on May 10, 2016, at 1:00 p.m. The discussion was held in the Media Center located at Pelican Island Elementary School, 1355 Schumann Dr., Sebastian, FL 32958. District School Board Members attending were: Chairman Dale Simchick, Vice Chairman Shawn R. Frost, and Board Members: Matthew McCain, Claudia Jiménez, and Charles G. Searcy. Dr. Mark J. Rendell, Superintendent of Schools; and Suzanne D'Agresta, School Board Attorney, were also present. Prior to the meeting, at 12:30 p.m., Board Members toured the school.

Discussion Session Minutes

I. Discussion was called to order by Chairman Simchick.

II. ITEMS PLACED ON AGENDA BY BOARD MEMBERS

A. Charles Searcy

1. C.A.P.E. Funding Program

Dr. Rendell described the program (Career and Professional Education State Program). He said that funding for the program was based on students' certification credits. Dr. Arnett answered questions from the Board regarding the funding stream, names of industry certification classes credited, accounting corrections, and data collection. Dr. Rendell stated that the School District covered the cost of programs from the general fund for the years prior to certification. If the program was not covered, the District paid for the classes without funding based on what was best for students. Board Member requested business cards and brochures to help get the word out to the community about the industry certification classes offered in Indian River County Schools. There was a discussion on the required student reading and math abilities needed for students to successfully complete the specific program and the differentiated instruction issues.

2. District Facility Rental Rate Structure

Mr. Morrison answered questions on the process that goes through Risk Management and the payments that process through Finance. Dr. Rendell said that they would look into the reported concern on a statement made by a school regarding the need to charge for facility usage.

B. Claudia Jiménez

1. Algebra Curriculum

Dr. Rendell said that the math District wide program was being reviewed for effectiveness. Dr. Rynberg reported on the steps that were being taken to improve the instruction being given to elementary school math students. A handout was distributed on the achievement levels, training/transformation, trends, positive trends, and areas of concern. Math Support Leaders were present to address areas of concern and steps being taken to improve instruction. Board Members were concerned that students were failing. Staff responded to questions from the Board regarding what would happen to students not ready for the changes in the way math was being taught and students being tested on areas not covered by the teacher because of the change in testing dates.

Community Input was heard on this topic.

2. Title I School Threshold

Dr. Rendell talked about the possible consideration with regard to lowering the reduced lunch rate percentage to 70% that could result in two additional elementary schools being placed in the Title I category for additional funding for at-risk students. There was concern from the Board that increasing the number of Title I schools would result in less funding for existing Title I schools. Dr. Rendell asked that the discussion wait until the District had completed its recommendation.

Chairman: Five-minute break

3. State of the District

Board Member thanked the Superintendent for the televised “State of the District Report” held on May 2, 2016, in the TEC. Dr. Rendell said that he did not anticipate that there would be any additional funding needed for the changes he talked about in his Report.

4. Multicultural Education Plan versus African American Student Achievement Plan

Board Members discussed the difference between the two issues. There was concern that in order to achieve unitary status under the Desegregation Order, there should be two separate plans. Mr. Frost attended and reported on the recent Multicultural Plan Workshop held May 4, 2016. Dr. Rendell stated that the workshop’s focus was on student achievement as was the concern in the original Desegregation Court Case. He said that although the workshop’s starting point was with the original plan, the Board would see changes by the time the group finished their task. After discussion, there was Board support to include the African-American Student Achievement Plan within the Multicultural Plan.

Community Input was heard on this topic.

C. Chairman Simchick

1. Board Attorney Evaluation

Board Members were given information from a survey of similarly-sized School Districts and neighboring School Districts. The results included whether Districts had a contracted or in-house attorney, whether or not they evaluated the Board Attorney, and if they had a copy of the tool they used to evaluate the Board Attorney. Board Members discussed the issue. Most agreed not to consider making an evaluation process a Board policy.

D. Shawn Frost

1. HB7029 Classroom Choice at the Elementary Level
2. HB7029 Spending Transparency Provision
3. Exploration of Privatizing Ancillary Services: Transportation, Waste Management, Food Service, Security, and Janitorial.

Mr. Frost reported on House Bill 7029 and the affects to the School District; i.e., State-wide, open enrollment based on seat availability. Dr. Rendell stated that it would not go into effect until 2017-2018. He said that Statewide, Superintendents were meeting to discuss a process that would work for every District. He also noted that the Department of Education would be coming forward with their opinions. Issues discussed were magnet and charter school acceptance, ethnic balance, sibling acceptance, and out of zone students returning to the District. Dr. Rendell said that he would ensure that the process was fair.

Community Input was heard on this topic.

E. Mr. McCain

No issues requested.

III. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairman Simchick stated that she would attend the Scholarship Awards Night at Vero Beach High School.

Mr. McCain noted that two weeks from today he would not be here for the Board meetings due to a work commitment that was scheduled earlier than usual.

Mr. Searcy mentioned the commencement address he would be giving at a kindergarten graduation.

IV. ITEMS PLACED ON AGENDA BY SUPERINTENDENT – Dr. Rendell

A. Minutes and Recommendations from Land Acquisition Meeting held March 10, 2016 – Mr. Morrison

Board Member was concerned that not all of the Board representatives were present at the meeting. Board Member noted that the Committee's name was changed to include "and Use". Mr. Morrison presented the Committee's recommendations as follows:

- Pursue acquiring the 1900 16th Street property across from Vero Beach High School for the School District from the County as stated in the minutes.
- Negotiate sale of parcel located on corner of 20th Avenue and 25th Street as stated in the minutes.

Board Members discussed the recommendations. They also talked about the property located in South County that was originally earmarked for an additional high school. Mr. Morrison talked about the property. Dr. Rendell stated that there was not enough student growth at this time to build an additional high school.

B. Digital Classroom, Phase III – Mr. Green

Mr. Green reported that, in the area of science, all 5th grade classrooms would become digital with onsite support at all 13 elementary schools. He talked about the Digital Innovation Initiative (D12) and how the program was funded. Dr. Rendell said that the District focused on a subject area and how to get children involved with hands-on experiences. He said that he could not speak to how virtual classes would compare to classroom learning. Mr. Green said that success would be measured through local Benchmark assessments in October and January, with the State test at the end of the school year.

- V. ADJOURNMENT – Chairman Simchick
Discussion adjourned at approximately 4:09 p.m.