



Hernando School District

School Board Informal Meeting

Minutes - Draft

Tuesday, July 25, 2023

1:00 PM

District Office-Board Room
919 N. Broad Street
Brooksville, FL

CALL TO ORDER

Present

- Board Chair Gus Guadagnino
- Vice Chair Susan Duval
- Board Member Mark Johnson
- Board Member Linda Prescott
- Board Member Shannon Rodriguez

The Informal Meeting was called to order at 1:01 P.M.. Also present were Nancy Alfonso, School Board Attorney and John Stratton, Superintendent of Schools.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

An informal meeting of the School Board has been scheduled for general discussion among Board Members on Educational Matters

Topics of Discussion:

1. Gus Guadagnino - received correspondence on how they were acting unprofessional mentioning peoples names. Mr. Stratton stated that he thinks we treated staff unprofessionally and reminded the Board they were bringing forth job positions, not people. He respectfully reminded the Board that staff works for him and the only people who work for them is Nancy Alfonso and himself. Mr. Stratton also mentioned correspondence that he passed out to the Board from their labor attorney regarding the same issues. Mr. Johnson stated that he does not feel the need to have a position for a director over a department with 3-4 people. He also feels like if there are issues with behavior for people who are direct reports, some time should have to pass between that discipline and naming someone to a new position. Mrs. Prescott mentioned how this person has a 24/7 job and should be recognized for it. She passed out a survey that was completed on communications. Discussions took place on what the duties are for this position. Mrs. Alfonso stated that this topic is up for discussion at today's workshop and would be better to take place then.

2. Mark Johnson - policy of Teacher on Special Assignments (TOSA): After some discussion, it was decided to workshop this topic and possibly put out a survey.

3. John Stratton - updates on People Helping People backpacks; vape detectors; window film; Odyssey of the Mind; WWK8 construction; ESE classrooms

4. Alfonso Hersch firm not renewing their contract. Discussion took place on the hiring of a new

school board attorney. The Board agreed to keep outside counsel for the Board. Mr. Johnson expressed his concern with trying to hire a school board attorney and a staff attorney at the same time. He also stated that he would like to see all resumes/applications and all were in favor. Mrs. Rodriguez stated that she would like to see someone in the position who is versed in school law. Mrs. Alfonso stated that there are not many (approximately 100) board certified education attorneys in the state of Florida, out of 110,000 attorneys. She will help staff with the advertisement.

5. John Stratton - procedures for board meeting

6. John Stratton - Skyward access for board members: He spoke with Mrs. Alfonso regarding the student side and there are rules/laws against it. Mr. Stratton also stated that several parents reached out with concerns, and his recommendation is not to have board members access Skyward directly. If members need information either he or staff will get them the information requested. Mrs. Alfonso explained if members requested information, it would need to be for a legitimate interest such as an expulsion hearing. Mr. Johnson stated that he would like IT to set up a "test/dummy" to see what the different screens look like. He also mentioned the business side as he only has access to his own pay records and would like to see everything.

7. Shannon Rodriguez - stepping on rights; climate of the school board; emails and public records; doxing her child's information; opening mail addressed to her. Mr. Guadagnino stated that since he has been on the board, it has been standard procedure for his mail to be opened due to mail needing to be address right away. Mr. Stratton stated that he did apologize for her child's information that went out and that the employee was reprimanded. He does not believe that it was in a malicious manner. In regard to the mail, he stated that he told her that it has been a procedure of this board to have their secretary open their mail, not him. It has been agreed that Mrs. Rodriguez's mail will not be opened. Mrs. Rodriguez stated that the issue is with sending the email to whoever we chose to. Mr. Stratton clarified that it was sent to himself, the two assistant superintendents, and their confidential secretaries. Mrs. Alfonso cautioned the Board that what ever comes in is a public record and needs to be captured and retained. Ms. Duval asked Mrs. Rodriguez what she would have done with the mail if she had opened it herself. Mr. Stratton stated that by policy, it is supposed to go to him. Mrs. Alfonso stated that if mail concerns the business of the district, it is not personal and warned of situations where the information may be confidential for a period of time. She mentioned again, her concerns of someone taking the mail and opening it elsewhere before it can be captured as a public record.

8. Shannon Rodriguez - ESE funding

9. Linda Prescott - Teacher of the Year Gala; post secondary program for student with special needs

10. Mark Johnson - Allied health programs interns

[24-1617](#)

Attachments: [07-25-23 Informal Handout by L. Prescott](#)
[07-25-23 Informal Handout by J. Stratton](#)

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:22 P.M.

Superintendent

Board Chair

Mission Statement

The Hernando County School District Collaborates with students, parents and other community stakeholders to effectively prepare all students for a successful transition into a diverse and changing world.
