

District Advisory Committee Minutes

October 4, 2017

Mrs. Melody Johnson, school board chairman; Mr. Tom Russell, superintendent; Mr. Gary Marks, area superintendent; Ms. Deb Muller, chief financial officer; Ms. Kim Gilliland, director, exception student education; and Nancy Wait, director, community information services, were all in attendance.

Mrs. Angela Kopnick, district advisory committee chairman, reminded and invited the high school DAC representatives to bring a high school student as a representative with them to the meetings. A motion was made to approve September's minutes and they were unanimously approved.

Mr. Russell brought greetings and talked about hurricane Irma. Many neighboring counties do not provide the amount of assistance for shelters the way Volusia County Schools does. During the storm, Orange County opened 12 shelters; Seminole 9, Brevard 10 and Volusia County 24 shelters. Principals, assistant principals, district leadership managed the shelters with assistance from School Way Café who prepared three hot meals a day, FMT staff who helped make sure generators are up and running, as well as nurses and law enforcement officers. Mr. Russell stated he was asked why there were buses on the roads during the storm; the buses transported many of the guest that stayed at the emergency shelters.

Next, Mr. Russell spoke on the tragedy in Puerto Rico from Hurricane Maria. The district is anticipating 400-500 students, primarily on the west side of the county, moving to Volusia County with family members because of the devastation that took place. Many of the students are being sent to live with relatives and the parents are staying behind to rebuild their homes. Deltona schools have the space for these students since there has been a decline in enrollment since the recession. Teachers and staff are prepared for the increase of enrollment and to help support to the students with this transition. Several state representatives have sent a request the governor to hold off on the FTE counts until all the students have arrived to help with the funding of these students.

Middle School Redesign was the last topic Mr. Russell spoke about. During the past two years, principals visited middle schools around the state and it was discovered a vast majority of middle schools did not schedule reading as a class unless the student had a reading deficit. In place of reading, an academic elective like STEM or a career education class was offered allowing the students to have more hands-on and project-based studies. Currently Galaxy Middle, Deltona Middle and River Springs Middle offer academy course options to the students. Other middle schools in the district have begun the process to offer alternative courses and academy options.

Ms. Deb Muller, chief financial officer, presented a [PowerPoint](#) regarding Volusia County Schools budget. She explained there is a lot of legality getting the budget approved. Even though the budget is effective on July 1, it is not officially approved until the proposal to spend is presented to the school board. Then a temporary budget

is adopted until the revisions are made. The final budget adoption generally will take place in September. The most important piece of the budget is the property tax levy, which is the tax that is collected from home owners and property owners.

Ms. Muller spoke about the timeline of the budget calendar, base student allocation and district cost differential. For every taxpayer dollar, Volusia only receives .9617cents creating a loss of \$11 million dollars this school year to Volusia County Schools. Since 2004, Volusia County Schools has lost over \$140 million. Ms. Muller also mentioned the free and reduced lunch rate has grown from 40 to 65%. Volusia County Schools has not received additional funds to cover the loss. A Q&A period followed. Links to the [Annual Financial Report](#) and [DCD video](#) are included and have been placed on the DAC webpage.

Next School Board Chairman Melody Johnson shared her experiences when visiting six school districts that have been affected by loss from DCD. VCS is the only system that does not receive the full dollar back on the taxed dollar. Police and Fire department are not affected the way the school system is. Mrs. Johnson no longer is requesting a new study, she recommends it be brought forward to the voters. To get the DCD item on the ballot it will take ten [CRC Members](#) to approve it. She has three CRC members on board. She is asking for help from anyone that will reach out to the CRC members and encourage them to help our students by allowing the DCD item to be voted on.

District Advisory Committee member Ms. Kim Short spoke about the potential charter schools that are currently in the application process. She recommended DAC members [listen to the capacity interviews](#) and attend the October 24 school board meeting at 4 p.m. to speak with the board regarding any concerns they may have.

Mrs. Kopnicky asked members to share next month's meeting topic, which will be on safety and volunteers, with their SAC members and to ask them what questions would they like discussed regarding the topic.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 1, at Mainland High.

The names and contact information for the 37 Commissioners on the Florida Constitution Revision Commission:

Commissioner Dr. Jose "Pepe" Armas
Commissioner Carlos Beruff
Commissioner Pam Bondi
Commissioner Lisa Carlton
Commissioner Timothy Cerio
Commissioner Hank Cox
Commissioner Jose Felix Diaz
Commissioner Erika Donalds
Commissioner Don Gaetz
Commissioner Emery Gainey
Commissioner Anna Marie Hernandez Gamez
Commissioner Tom Grady

Commissioner Brecht Heuchan
Commissioner Marva Johnson
Commissioner Darlene Jordan
Commissioner Arthenia Joyner
Commissioner Fred Karlinsky
Commissioner Belinda Keiser
Commissioner Frank Kruppenbacher
Commissioner Tom Lee
Commissioner Dr. Gary Lester
Commissioner Patricia Levesque
Commissioner Roberto Martinez
Commissioner Rich Newsome
Commissioner Chris Nocco
Commissioner Jeanette Nuñez
Commissioner Sherry Plymale
Commissioner Darryl Rouson
Commissioner William "Bill" Schifino, Jr.
Commissioner Chris Smith
Commissioner Bob Solari
Commissioner Chris Sprowls
Commissioner John Stemberger
Commissioner Pam Stewart
Commissioner Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch
Commissioner Carolyn Timmann
Commissioner Nicole Washington

Education Committee:

Members

Chair:

[Commissioner Marva Johnson](#)

Vice Chair:

[Commissioner Nicole Washington](#)

- * [Commissioner Erika Donalds](#)
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