

MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
CONFERENCE CALL
September 29, 2004

Chairman F. Philip Handy convened the meeting of the State Board of Education via conference call at 10:10 a.m., on September 29, 2004, with the following members present: Linda J. Eads; William L. Proctor; and Linda K. Taylor. Vice Chairman T. Willard Fair, Charles Garcia and Julia Johnson were absent.

Welcome

Chairman Handy welcomed members and participants.

Action Items

Public Education Capital Outlay Bonds

Dr. Proctor made the motion to authorize the sale of the Public Education Capital Outlay Bonds, with a second by Dr. Eads. The motion passed unanimously.

Hurricane Update

Commissioner Winn reported on the involvement of the Department of Education in providing assistance to school districts, community colleges, and universities affected by the recent hurricanes. Commissioner Winn stated this was the first time the Department had a permanent role at the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC). He stated this school year is not a loss and that the Department and school districts still maintain the goal of increased student achievement consistent with the policies and expectations of the Board.

Jeanine Blomberg, Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Operations, provided an overview of the Department's strategies in assisting districts during the hurricanes. She further stated that each district was assigned one staff person from the Department in order to report damages to the Department so we could provide or arrange for support. In addition, the Department established a 24 hour hotline initially for Superintendents, which later extended to students, parents, and educators as they searched for information about school closings, etc. Ms. Blomberg **also** reported that the Department has maintained a twenty-four hour seven day a week presence at the State EOC.

Ms. Blomberg provided a summary of the lost school days as a result of the hurricanes. She reported that every district has had at least one day lost and that St. Lucie with 19 days (as of today) has lost the most school days. The total number of days lost for public school districts is 438.

Dr. Proctor requested a report on the estimate of property damage to the schools and information regarding the strength of the new schools built after 1992.

Chancellor Warford reported on the current policies relating to the number of days schools were closed. He stated school districts which missed five days or less must

make up the five days to ensure that each student has the required 900 hours of instructional time. For the districts which had schools closed for more than six days the Department of Education will negotiate with each district individually to develop a plan for making up the days missed. Chancellor Warford stated that districts with schools closed five days or less will administer the FCAT as originally planned. For those districts with schools closed six to ten days, the FCAT will be administered one week later, and for those districts with schools closed eleven days or more, the FCAT will be administered two weeks later than originally scheduled.

Chairman Handy asked if there are any implications on school grades. Chancellor Warford reported that this has not been determined as of yet, but districts have been informed that if the entire state is delayed grades may not be provided by the end of the school year.

Commissioner Winn reported that the four districts with the most damage to K-12 schools were Charlotte, Escambia, Polk, and St. Lucie.

Chancellor David Armstrong reported that Indian River, Polk, South Florida, and Pensacola Community Colleges have not reopened as a result of damages due to the hurricanes. Indian River, Polk, and South Florida Community Colleges anticipate opening on September 30, 2004. Chancellor Armstrong stated that Pensacola Community College was severely damaged, but anticipated reopening on October 4, 2004. Chancellor Armstrong reported that the community colleges are self insured through an Insurance Consortium. He stated each claim can cover up to 2.5 million dollars. Hurricane Charley closed 16 community colleges for a total of 28 days. Hurricane Frances closed 25 community colleges for a total of 65 days, and Hurricane Ivan closed 9 community colleges for a total of 30 days. Presently, the community colleges are still assessing damage caused by Hurricane Jeanne. Chancellor Armstrong reported that both Pensacola and Indian River Community Colleges have approximately 20 staff members who have lost their homes.

Chairman Handy asked if any Community Colleges are pressing forward with 4 year Baccalaureate Degree Programs. Chancellor Armstrong stated that three requests are outstanding. He reported that the requests from Edison Community College and Chipola Community College had been submitted previously, which included agreements with a university. The two community colleges have reported that agreements with the universities have not been resolved and have requested to continue with the baccalaureate programs without the involvement of the universities. In addition, Chancellor Armstrong reported the two community colleges were requesting an exemption from having a CEPRI review and recommendation since this had been completed previously. Chairman Handy stated he believed the community colleges must go through the process again including a review by CEPRI. Daniel Woodring, Counsel for the Board, agreed this was the appropriate path for the community colleges to follow. Chancellor Armstrong stated he would advise Edison Community College and Chipola Community College of this decision. Chancellor Armstrong stated that CEPRI will be reviewing the other outstanding proposal by Daytona Beach Community College in the very near future.

Chancellor Austin reported that all eleven universities closed for at least one day due to the hurricanes with only the University of West Florida remaining closed. Chancellor Austin reported the damage to UWF is significant and individuals from Florida State

University, University of Florida, and Florida A & M University are on site at UWF to assist in assessing the damage and aiding in efforts to reopen the university. It is anticipated that the dorms at UWF will open on October 4, 2004 and classes will resume on October 5, 2004. Chancellor Austin reported that universities will make up missed days either by having classes on Saturday or by adding more days at the end of the semester. The cost of damage is approximately 43 million dollars and additional costs will be added due to Hurricane Jeanne.

Commissioner Winn stated the Department has coordinated cash donations for hurricane relief funds through Foundation Partnerships. Foundation partners have worked with retailers to provide school supplies for students where needed.

Commissioner Winn reported that Frances Marine, Communications Director, worked diligently with the EOC to ensure information relating to the hurricanes had been communicated throughout the state as well as coordinating briefings and interviews.

Ms. Marine reported she had submitted her resignation as Communications Director to accept outside employment. Ms. Marine thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve and stated that she would continue to be an advocate for the Department of Education. Members of the Board thanked Ms. Marine for her contributions to the Department.

Adjournment

Chairman Handy stated the next Board meeting will be held October 19, 2004, at the Miami School Board Offices, in Miami, at 8:30 a.m. Having no further business, Chairman Handy adjourned the meeting of the State Board of Education.

F. Philip Handy, Chairman

Lynn Abbott, Corporate Secretary