

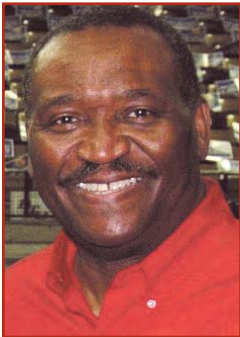
Leaders

A Newsletter for Florida School Board Members

Education Purchasing Consortium up and running

The Florida Education Purchasing Consortium, a joint creation of FSBA and the Florida Association of District School Superintendents, has already received resolutions from 17 districts indicating their willingness to participate. It has also issued its first bid request for construction paper, with nine districts participating in the bidding process and another three likely to step in.

Volusia board member Candace Lankford, who chairs the consortium along with Orange County School Superintendent Ron Blocker, told the board that future bids would cover smart boards and toilet paper.



Ron Blocker

"We want to start slow with four or five items common to all school districts," said FSBA

Executive Director Wayne Blanton.

"We consider this great PR, with two state-wide organizations coming together to save school districts money," Ms. Lankford said. "We're on the threshold of doing something dramatic in this state."

She said that Texas, which has had a similar consortium in place for eight years, has realized savings for its participating districts of about \$12 million a year.

Ms. Lankford emphasized that neither FSBA nor FADSS are considered the bidding agents, that a school district will

take the lead in each bidding process.

She mentioned that Mr. Blocker has come up with a new theme for the consortium: "Economies of Scale—Taking us to a new high."

The consortium's major purpose is to "maximize every dollar a school district spends," particularly on school equipment and supplies, said consultant Jim Hamilton, a retired Hillsborough County assistant superintendent



Candace Lankford

who helped put the consortium together and is now acting as its liaison.

Five school board members and five superintendents manage the consortium with input from an advisory committee of 15 school district purchasing agents.

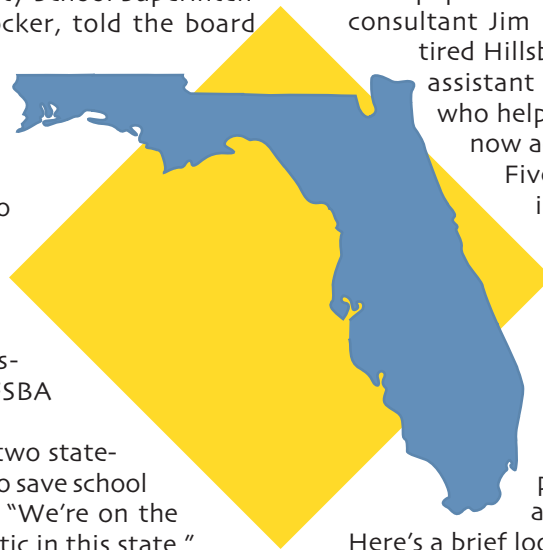
All districts have to do to become members of the consortium is for each to approve a resolution to join, then submit a membership agreement to the consortium. There are no membership fees or costs to districts to participate and they are not obligated to buy anything.

Here's a brief look at how the consortium operates:

- ✓ Member districts identify goods and services common across the state.
- ✓ The consortium then establishes agreed-upon specs for the product or service.
- ✓ A member district will become the lead district to handle the solicitation.
- ✓ Member districts can also participate in pre-solicitation meetings with vendors to establish terms and conditions and to explain to participants the vendor fee and business volume.

In addition, school district staffs can help develop the bid specifications.

Dr. Blanton emphasized that local vendors won't be cut out of the bidding process. The consortium intends to work with communities to make sure these vendors can still participate.



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Leadership Calling

Texas district wins Broad prize, Broward a finalist

For the second straight year, Broward County Public Schools was one of five urban school districts selected as a finalist for the 2009 Broad Prize for Urban Education. But the award this year went to a Texas school district outside Houston.

The Broad (rhymes with "road") Prize for Urban Education is an annual \$2 million award that honors the urban school districts that demonstrate the greatest overall performance and improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among ethnic groups and between low- and non-low-income students. It is sponsored by the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation. The winner, Aldine Independent in Texas, was announced in mid-September.

Broward was named a finalist because new data analysis shows the district has continued to make student gains. Other finalists in the running included Gwinnett County Public Schools, near Atlanta, Ga.; Long Beach Unified School District, in California; and Socorro Independent School District, El Paso, Tex.

The winner received \$1 million in scholarships for high school seniors who will graduate in 2010. The four finalist districts each received \$250,000 in scholarships.

High school dropouts give district return on investment

Utilizing Penn Foster Virtual Education, school districts are beginning to develop new methods to retrieve and graduate high school dropouts.

For example, the San Antonio School District in Texas is using a vacant school building for its "drop-in" program that provides students a way to complete their high school education. Forty students (100% of those eligible) graduated from this program last year.

What makes programs like this successful? Penn Foster, an accredited virtual curriculum, provides students with individualized instruction, as well as the flexibility these students need to complete their education.

Students attend school only four hours a day, and school is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Students take only the courses they need to graduate and can learn at their own pace. Also, because Penn Foster provides certified instructors, the staffing at these centers is reduced.

For further information on these retrieval centers, call Don Kidd, Penn Foster Virtual Education, (352) 212-1395.

Tech Center names building after school board member

The Washington-Holmes Technical Center in Chipley has dedicated its Learning Resource Center building to Washington County School Board member Wayne Saunders, the founding director of the technical center.

Mr. Saunders became the center's first director when it opened its doors in July, 1966. Saunders' wife, Carolyn, was the first coordinator of The Learning Resource Center, a position she held until her retirement.

He was joined at the dedication by current Washington County Superintendent Sandra Cook and former superintendents Calvin Stevenson, Jerry Tyre and Kelly Brock. Mr. Saunders praised the center's faculty and staff for their role in the school's development. "We always selected the best as instructors," he said.



Wayne Saunders

Foster Folly News



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Gaming compact, offshore drilling await legislators

Two controversial issues that could mean more state revenue are likely to get lawmakers attention in the coming months.

One, the gaming compact with Florida's Seminole Indians, will probably get a hearing in the coming weeks. The other, having to do with offshore drilling, probably won't surface until the Legislature convenes in regular session March 2.

The gaming compact, which Gov. Charlie Crist recently signed with the Seminole Tribe, must be ratified by the Legislature. It was originally thought a special session would be held in early October to do just that.

However, Senate President Jeff Atwater, R-North Palm Beach, had some questions about the compact and wants the governor to supply the Senate with more information before Senate leaders can decide if a special session is needed or if there should be more negotiations with the Seminoles.

"This is a complex issue and conducting a thorough analysis will take time. We have a responsibility to exercise due diligence to ensure we understand the long-term ramifications of the proposed compact," Senator Atwater wrote to the Senate.

Lawmakers gave Crist an outline for an agreement with the Seminoles in May, but the governor's final deal did not include some of the provisions they laid out.

State education stands to gain quite a bit under the proposed compact which would allow the tribe to offer slot machines and some card games, such as black jack.

"Education will get \$150 million each year for the next two years," said FSBA Executive Director Wayne Blanton. "Then, in the future, that will eventually escalate to \$400 to \$500 million."

Offshore drilling is another potential revenue generator that will not make everyone happy. But if legislators are going to plug the gaping hole that will be left in the

state budget once the federal stimulus money runs out in 2011, it's something they may consider.

"Oil drilling could mean \$2.5 billion in revenue for Florida," said Dr. Blanton.

He said other possible avenues for more money may include more taxes on beer, wine and, for the first time, bottled water, all which could raise another \$3 to \$4 billion.

"We have to reorganize our tax structure. We've got to have a more equitable taxation system," he added.

While FSBA favors the gaming compact, it has not yet taken a position on offshore drilling.

Upcoming Events



- Oct. 29** FSBA Committee Day/Legislative Platform, Grand Hyatt Tampa Bay
- Dec. 1-4** FSBA Annual Joint Conference, Grand Hyatt Tampa Bay
- 2010**
- Jan. 31-Feb. 2** NSBA Federal Relations Network, Washington, D.C.
- March 2** Legislative Session begins, Tallahassee
- March 24-26** FSBA Day in the Legislature, Tallahassee
- April 10-13** NSBA 70th Annual Conference, Chicago, Ill.
- May 7** Legislature adjourns
- June 16-18** FSBA/FADDS Annual Spring Conference, Grand Hyatt Tampa Bay

Hillsborough in running for \$100 million grant

Hillsborough County Public Schools has a chance to land a \$100 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that can be used to study teacher effectiveness, raise student achievement and increase graduation rates.

"The \$100 million will be spread over five to seven years," said Hillsborough School Board member Jack Lamb.

Originally, ten districts were in the running, including Palm Beach County. The list has since been narrowed to five districts and the winner will be announced later this year, said Dr. Lamb. The other four finalists are Memphis, Omaha, Pittsburgh and Los Angeles school districts.

Main objectives of the grant are to research, develop and test methods to rate teachers and to experiment at

a handful of school districts to try out new ways of recruiting, training, assigning and assessing teachers.

Other supplemental objectives include motivating students to become responsible learners, challenging students with an appropriate curriculum, recruiting and retaining an effective workforce and increasing high school graduation rates.

"How you measure teachers is critical. That has been a main focus of our district," said Dr. Lamb.



Jack Lamb

From the President

By Joy Bowen



Joy Bowen

Challenges facing school districts in next year

When I assumed the FSBA presidency in June I gave you my theme: Change and Challenge, educating students for the global marketplace. Your board of directors then came together in September in Orlando for a two and a half day retreat based on that same theme.

It was an excellent series of meetings made possible by four sponsors: Penn Foster, consultant Michael Glover, CTB/McGraw-Hill and Universal Studios.

We heard from Amy Baker, coordinator of the Office of Economic and Demographic Research for Florida's Legislature, who gave us an economic overview that makes it clear the recession will be with us until late 2010. This means our legislators will face significant challenges in crafting an adequate education budget.

Another agenda topic, "From District-wide to World-wide, How we fit into the global marketplace" was handled by 2000 Pulitzer Prize winner John Bersia, a University of Central Florida professor who is special assistant to the president for Global Perspectives.

Our executive director, Dr. Wayne Blanton, also updated us on some of the key issues facing school districts, such as stimulus dollars, constitutional amendments, litigation, offshore oil drilling and the gaming compact recently agreed to by Governor Charlie Crist with the Seminole Tribe of Florida, but which still must be ratified by the Legislature.

However, the core business of the retreat was develop-

ing our strategic goals for next year. I am so very thankful for the enthusiasm and hard work of our board members as they eagerly took on this task. You'll be hearing more about these goals in the coming months. In addition, our committee chairs have set forth some challenging agendas:

Board Development: Chair Joie Cadle, Orange County, said the challenge is to provide a quality training program without state funding.

Economic Commitment to Education: The challenge of this new ad hoc committee, chaired by W.C. Gentry, Duval County, is to assess potential revenue streams for education, a tall order by any measure.

Function and Services: The challenge of another new ad hoc committee, this one chaired by Maggie Lewis-Butler, Leon County, is to evaluate the function and services of FSBA.

Growth Management: Chaired by Kathryn Hensley, St. Lucie County, this committee's challenge is to address and resolve inconsistencies in the growth management statutes and to address the impacts of declining enrollment, another tall order.

Legislative Committee: This committee's challenge is pretty straight forward. Chair Maureen Dinnen, Broward County, reported it will craft a legislative platform and pursue the goals outlined in the platform. The challenge of one of its subcommittees, Advocacy, chaired by Dee Dee Rasmussen, Leon County, is to keep grassroots groups engaged and to craft a coherent message so we're all speaking from the same page.

Multicultural and Diversity: Chair Betty Burney, Duval County, said the challenge of her committee is to provide districts information on multicultural programs and to survey districts on best practices.

Past Presidents Council: Chaired by Judy Conte, Volusia County, its goal is to provide guidance to FSBA's leadership and, more importantly, to recruit new leaders.

Finally, we all should remember that each of us has our own personal challenge which is to keep Florida's school districts moving in a positive and purposeful direction without ever losing sight of the children we serve and the quality of life they deserve as citizens and leaders in a global society.

Thank you for bestowing on me the honor of serving as your president this year.

Ms. Bowen, a member of the Leon County School Board, is FSBA's 2009-2010 president.



Board members hear economic update
FSBA Executive Director Wayne Blanton and President Joy Bowen, right, welcome Amy Baker, the Florida Legislature's state of the economy guru, to the recent FSBA President's Retreat in Orlando.