

Inverness, Florida  
April 2, 2019

A Workshop and Special Meeting were held at the District Services Center located at 1007 West Main Street, Inverness, Florida on Tuesday, April 2, 2019. Present: Sandra "Sam" Himmel – Superintendent; Thomas Kennedy – Chairman; Sandra Counts – Vice Chairman; School Board Members: Virginia Bryant, Douglas A. Dodd and Linda B. Powers. Also in attendance, R. Wesley Bradshaw, School Board Attorney.

### **WORKSHOP:**

Chairman Kennedy opened the Workshop at 9:01 a.m. Sandra Counts had opening exercise and called for a moment of silence in remembrance of the two children from Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School and the father of a Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting victim who all committed suicide. She asked all to remember not only those who were killed or injured during those tragic events, but also the repercussions that follow them because of mental health. The moment of silence was then followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

#### **I. TOPIC:**

##### **A. Discussion on the Coach Aaron Feis Guardian Program**

Superintendent Himmel shared that the purpose of the workshop was for discussion about Guardians and mentioned there was talk about different Districts getting ready to arm teachers, administrators and hire Guardians outside of staff. She stressed that she needed direction from the board members as to who would they wanted to hire as Guardians if the District moved forward with the Guardian Program. She made it clear the District was not replacing the School Resource Officer (SRO) program. Chairman Kennedy asked Superintendent Himmel for clarification as to what exactly she needed from the Board. She explained there were a lot of avenues that could be taken regarding Guardians, such as arming teachers, administrators, or hiring outside of staff, and she needed to know who the board members wanted to take on that role. The question came up regarding the qualifications and duties of a Guardian and Mrs. Himmel stated that the Guardians would be hired under the District's Guardian job description. Chairman Kennedy mention that the current Guardian law that was in Florida Statute was different than what the House and the Senate were proposing. Doug Dodd spoke about the Coach Aaron Feis Guardian Program and mentioned it didn't allow the arming of teachers and thought it might be better to wait to see what comes out of legislation before making any decisions. Chairman Kennedy asked and received confirmation from Attorney Bradshaw that even if teachers had a concealed weapon license, they would not be able to be armed on school campus and that all Guardians must be trained through the Sheriff's Department. Superintendent Himmel mentioned that under the current law, there was Guardian money to pay for training and the District would pay for the Guardians. Mr. Dodd stated he would like to see a Guardian in every school and shared his ideas on how that would be possible, which included individuals that were already on staff and willing to be armed. A

discussion ensued regarding permitting teachers or any other staff members to be a part of the Guardian program. There were many concerns shared by the Board. Chairman Kennedy reiterated that he believed the District should be focused on the existing Guardian program and the job description that was already approved by the Board. Sandra Counts was concerned with how students would react if their teachers and/or administrators carried guns. She thought it would hinder their relationship. Ms. Counts continued to say that she didn't believe staff or faculty should carry guns, that it should be SROs, or an outside person hired as a Guardian. Major Linhart of the Citrus County Sheriff's Department was in the audience and shared his thoughts and stated he believed the board was heading in the right path with hiring Guardians. He stated that a Guardian was an extra gun on campus, an extra layer of security, and like SRO's they would interact with students and build relationships. After much discussion about the pros and cons of using existing staff as Guardians, training, and cost, Chairman Kennedy announced there would be a 5-minute break followed by a Shade session.

The Workshop recessed at 10:38 a.m.

**CLOSED SAFETY/SECURITY SESSION (pursuant to Florida Statute 281.301)**

The Closed Safety/Security Session was opened at 10:49 a.m. pursuant to Florida Statute 281.301 and the room was cleared except for the appropriate designated personnel.

The Closed Safety/Security Session was closed at 11:44 a.m.

The Workshop reconvened at 11:45 a.m.

**II. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT NEEDS TO COME BEFORE THE SCHOOL BOARD**

Sandra Counts mentioned she would like to address the issue of the Hospital Board at the April 9<sup>th</sup> agenda.

Thomas Kennedy shared information about the upcoming FSBA's Day in the Legislature.

**III. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Kennedy adjourned the Workshop at 11:48 a.m.

Thomas Kennedy  
Chairman

Sandra Himmel  
Superintendent