

**Picolata Crossing Elementary
School Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
Picolata Crossing Elementary Media Center and TEAMS
January 27, 2026
3:30pm**

Attendance:

<i>SAC Member</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Brian Morgan, Principal	<i>X</i>	
Jennifer Wolfe, SAC Chair, Instructional Staff	<i>X</i>	
Kerry Johnstone, Support Staff Representative	<i>X</i>	
Aria Norori, Parent	<i>X</i>	
Raphael Camilo, Parent	<i>X</i>	
Katie Pepper, Parent	<i>X</i>	
Melissa Gates, Instructional Staff	<i>X</i>	
Elizabeth Soto, Parent	<i>X</i>	
Paul Proios, Parent		<i>X</i>

Quorum:

A quorum with at least 51% was met.

Non-Voting Guests in Attendance:

- Elizabeth McCall, SAC Secretary
- Nicole Cubbedge
- Shannon Higgins
- Barbora Majors
- Tara Benowitz
- Kristine Hissins
- Kendall DeLane
- Melissa Gates
- Patty Brown
- Lithesha Holloman
- Kendall DeLane
- Ashley Pitter
- Kelly Yelvington
- Trish Fletcher
- Steven Lopez
- Ania Noroni
- Lauren Vazquez

Called to Order: 3:31 PM

Welcome: Jennifer Wolfe, SAC Chair, reminded everyone to sign the attendance sheet.

Previous Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 18, 2025 without changes, was made by Elizabeth Soto; Raphael Camilo seconded the motion.

Motion Passed by Voice

Ms. Wolfe shared SAC guidelines, expectations, read the names of voting members, and identified non-voting members.

The Procedural Clarifications that were shared:

1. A physical quorum of members, greater than 50% of the members, must be present in-order to vote or move forward with any action items, including approving meeting minutes.
2. Virtual participants/SAC members may take part in discussions but are not permitted to vote on action items. Members must be present to vote and to be considered part of the process.
3. SAC Chairs must ensure that noticing is following Sunshine Law. 7 days for date of meeting, 3 days for agenda to be published.
4. An addition, written by the St. Johns County School Board Attorney, will be provided to add to bylaws.
5. After meeting the physical quorum requirement, all schools will need to ratify year-to-date actions.
6. SAC meetings during school hours must have a way for zero contact with students.

A Motion to reapprove the bylaws, the minutes, positions, previous funds requests, and the following SAC Members: Mr. Morgan, Ms. Wolfe, Ms. Johnstone, Ms. Norori, Mr. Camilo, Ms. Pepper, Ms. Gates, Ms. Soto, and Mr. Proios, was made by Elizabeth Soto; Raphael Camilo seconded the motion.

Motion Passed by Voice

Principal's Report and Budget:

Mr. Morgan shared that the budget was approximately \$29,000 in total. He shared that he was able to get three tutors for 3rd-5th grade through a grant. The tutors focus on target skills for students in 3rd-5th grade. He shared that it is important to carefully consider all future funds requests. He also shared that many of the digital programs our school currently use are accredited, adaptive, and standards based, such as Lexia and DreamBox. He also shared that they are not purchased by the school district.

He also shared the events that are taking place during Celebrating Literacy Week:

Monday, January 26 – American Hero Day

Tuesday, January 27 – Patriotic Poem in Your Pocket

Wednesday, January 28 – Puma Spirit Day

Thursday, January 29 – You're a STAR Reader!

Friday, January 30 – Aloha Friday and Red, White & Blue Too!

He mentioned that the events are sparking great conversations, celebrating family members who were veterans with name tags, and the students are enjoying them. The teachers are enjoying an interactive opportunity with letters and taking pictures, which Ms. Yelvington initiated.

The game room will be opening and will strategically open after the mid-term assessment (PM2) as an incentive and celebration. It may be used to celebrate behavior, academics (individuals and classes), and utilizing Puma Bucks. The PTA is requesting support with putting together the pool table. The Foosball table was recently assembled.

School of Hope Informational Presentation

Nicole Cubbedge shared a presentation with the following information:

Program (2017):

- Target: Schools with persistent "D" or "F" grades.

- Location: Within 5-mile radius of low-performing schools.
- Authorization: Local school board approval required.
- Scale: 12 schools opened statewide since 2017.

Three Game-Changing Provisions:

EXPANDED SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY

- New criterion: Bottom 10% statewide on Grade 3 ELA or Grade 4 Math (in 2 of 3 years)
- Significantly increases the number of eligible schools

MANDATORY CO-LOCATION

- Operators can select ANY underused, vacant, or surplus facility
- Districts MUST allow co-location at no cost to the operator
- No longer limited to low-performing school zones

BYPASSING LOCAL BOARDS

- Operators can seek authorization from colleges or universities
- Reduces local school board authority
- Superintendent receives notice but cannot block

Co-Location Requirements:

Facility Access:

- Any facility not at "full student station utilization" is considered available.
- Space proportionate to enrollment (classrooms, offices, storage, common areas)
Contiguous space where feasible.

Required Services (at no cost to the operator):

- Custodial and maintenance
- Security personnel
- Food service
- Transportation
- Nursing services
- Other services "without limitation"

Timeline:

- Districts have 20 calendar days to raise objections after a School of Hope submits a building notice, but objections must be based only on "material impracticability."

Schools of Hope had the opportunity to submit requests:

- Declining enrollment
- Co-location not geographically limited
- Operator discretion
- Limited District recourse
- Districts began receiving operator notices in October 2025. (15 Districts; 105 Schools)
Brevard, Broward, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lake, Miami-Dade, Osceola, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota, Sumter, Volusia, Manatee, and St. Johns.
- By November 2025: 22 Districts and 690 Schools

~Two requests were received in St. Johns based on this report for First Coast Technical College (FCTC); one was not a School of Hope.

Vacant & Underutilized Facilities Report

- School Capacity 2251
- Permanent Capacity 1561
- Utilization Factor 1.2
- COFTE 367.92
- Percent Utilization 16%

“Available Capacity” 1883

Actual Current Enrollment at FCTC Campus

• FCTC Vocational Technical	697
• SJTHS	174
• LifeWork	88
• PK/VPK/Head Start	<u>75</u>
• Subtotal	1034 (46%)
• SJVS	<u>346</u>
Total	1380 (61%)

It was discussed that this information does not factor in special programs, only what may be considered as “available ~~seats~~”; ~~regardlesseats~~”, ~~regardless~~ of the unique needs of students or the setup of the campus. (A situational example of placing a School of Hope with Kindergarten students and bathroom needs in FCTC available shop classroom.) It was also noted that many of the students are Vocational. A request was made to add 1,800 seats.

Districtwide Situation: -Underutilized or Surplus Space

- Evaluate Schools with “Available” Capacity
 - Identify ways to reduce capacity footprint
 - Return of Leased Relocatables
 - Reorganize for more efficient use of space and co-locate service providers
 - Investigate Beneficial Community Partnerships
 - Continue to evaluate additional options
1. It was noted that operators can seek authorization from colleges or universities.
 2. It was shared that Saint Johns County School District (SJCS D) is trying to utilize space in different ways.
 3. It was discussed that this may impact flexibility with changing student populations and changing student enrollment.
 4. Discussion about what coexisting would look like with School of Hope, utilizing the space without paying rent, and what the required services could look like in the future. It was shared many of the specifics are currently unknown.
 5. It was discussed about potentially limiting the local school board’s authority and the long-term impact.
 6. A story about someone moving into a house expecting to coexist, rent free, free transportation, and food was shared.
 7. Rezoning may be a future possibility, but SJCS D is trying alternative solutions.
 8. It was shared that it is unknown if Schools of Hope are looking for spaces to open whole schools or specific grades.
 9. It was noted that Schools of Hope would not have access to the testing information or data of students who are not enrolled in the Schools of Hope.
- It was discussed how competition may foster growth and how marketing the SJCS D may impact Schools of Hope.
 - There was discussion on the required services, focusing on the items that would be at no cost to the operator and what other services “without limitation” may include.

- There was a discussion about the distance for transportation, the potential of having young students in FCTC with older students, and in rooms that are identified as available space but currently utilize for clubs, career or specialty equipment. Many of these spaces are not currently outfitted or equipped for young students making the space impractical.
- Discussion about the potential impact to students with specific learning needs, potential impact on teachers and administrators, and the effort to reduce the appearance of empty seats or underutilized space that is currently being used by schools.
- It was shared that there are groups online and organizations expressing personal opinions.
- Additional information was requested about the financial impact, logistical impact, and expectations on schools and the district.
- Discussion about removing portable classrooms, moving teachers, and moving office staff to reduce the available classrooms and how enrollment within different schools may change.
- There was discussion about what is considered impractical and incompatible.
- There was discussion about the impact on students with individual educational plans and unique needs.
- It was shared that the school would not be reducing the services for students with specific Individual Education Plans, but the location may be different, look different, or possibly be more condensed so the school may appear to have fewer open seats; although some classrooms are coded for specific ratios of students.
- Several other schools were mentioned and there was discussion on how opening the new schools may impact other schools and how removing the portables and moving staff into buildings is the current course of action.
- It was shared that school districts have 20 calendar days to respond to requests.
- Several personal experiences were shared, which included teaching challenges, reduction of space and resources, and expectations.
- Other school districts have responded by seeking changes to the current law.
- It was discussed how to contact legislators and legislative aids with personal stories.
- It is currently unknown if Schools of Hope are looking to establish whole schools or specific grade levels as a starting point.

PTA Update

The PTA Meeting was on January 26th. There are many upcoming events:

- January 31st Iceman Hockey & PCES Spirit Night
- February 6th Outdoor Movie Night (Moana 2)
- February 24th McTeacher Night for K-2nd from 4pm-7
- February 25th McTeacher Night for 3rd-5th from 4pm-7
- March 12th Mother/Son Event at Main Event at 7pm
- April 18th Daddy/Daughter Dance at Renaissance Hotel at 5pm

Thank you to the teachers, parents, and staff for the amazing school spirit and support.

Current Financial Report:

SAC Program 102 Balance (School Advisory Council): \$2,356

SAC Program 805 Balance (School Recognition Fund): \$27,000

SAC Funds Requests:

There were no SAC funds requests at this time.

Good of the Group:

- SAC Members and guests thanked Ms. Cubbedge for attending.

Motion to Adjourn: Elizabeth Soto made a motion to adjourn; Raphael Camilo seconded the motion.

Motion Passed by Voice

Meeting adjourned: 4:37pm

Next Meeting: February 23, 2026 in the Picolota Crossing Elementary School Media Center and available on TEAMS at 3:30pm

Notes Taken By: Elizabeth McCall