

## Collier's education subcommittee meetings will be televised

By KATHERINE ALBERS

Monday, December 14, 2009

Naples — Committee members, get ready for your closeup.

The Collier County School Board's education subcommittee voted 5 to 2 Monday afternoon to televise their meetings. Committee members Jim Smith and Pam Cole dissented.

Smith asked that the committee reconsider televising its meetings during the committee's October meeting, but when it came time to vote, he said he could not support televising the meetings.

"I do not see this committee functioning better or the community being better informed as a result of televising the meetings," he said, adding he did not think the televised portion of the meeting would have many viewers since subcommittee meetings are held from 4 to 6 p.m. "Anyone who wants to have input can only do that by attending the meetings."

Subcommittee member Laurie Lile said she had mixed feelings about the issue, but said last month's discussion on the school calendar drove home the need to have the meetings televised.

"There were things I didn't know that went into how the calendar was created. I received questions from parents who couldn't attend the meeting and I wished they had the opportunity to listen to this discussion," she said. "My feelings are, we are representatives of the public. ... It is in the best interest of the community to televise these meetings."

Naples resident Sheila Crowley said she found the subcommittee meeting about the calendar very interesting and gave information she had received to parents over the past month. She said those parents were curious to know the rationale behind the meetings, but did not have the opportunity to attend. Televising the meetings would solve that problem, she said.

Member Richard Heers said he also considered the issue's pros and cons, but said the right decision was to televise the meetings.

The meetings will be televised on The Education Channel, cable 99, in January. The district's operations subcommittee and school board meetings are also televised.

Sandy Parker, president of the League of Women Voters of Collier County, said she appreciated the opportunity to observe the subcommittee meetings. She said the committee had a duty to help the public be informed citizens.

Cole wanted to know if the meetings could be streamed live and archived on the district's Web site, rather than televised. She said that would give parents access to the meetings without televising them at a time when most families are not watching TV.

