

SCHOOL BOARD FINANCIAL WORKSHOP

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
MAX D. WALKER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
35 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.
QUINCY, FLORIDA

August 26, 2025

4:30 P.M.

The workshop was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Leroy McMillan, Chairman; Ms. Cathy S. Johnson; Ms. Stacey S. Hannigon; and Mr. Steve Scott. Also present were Mr. Elijah Key, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board; Mrs. Deborah Minnis, Attorney for the Board; and others. Mr. Charlie D. Frost was absent.

1. Call To Order

The workshop was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Leroy McMillan, at 4:33 p.m.

2. Financial Information

• 2025 – 07 Board Expenditure Summary Report

Mrs. Bruner stated that there was an expenditure report in the packet, but not a revenue report. She stated that for July, the finance department has been working on prioritizing our prior year cleanup and working with the auditors. She stated that the auditors have been working on our 23-34 audit. She stated that as soon as they complete the 23-24 audit they would begin working on the 24-25 audit. She stated that they have been trying to get all of that information wrapped up. She stated that it is anticipated the audit will not be approved before the September 11th deadline. She stated that she is going to request an extension on the AFR. Mr. McMillan asked how long will the extension be? Mrs. Bruner stated October 30, 2025, we are still working toward it and doing all the things we can. She stated that we know that the auditor general's report won't come before the due date. She stated that the finance department has been working on DOE Form 399 which we have to complete at the end of the year for our grants, and we have a couple that have some coding issues that we need to work out and correct. She stated that there are some payroll issues that need to be worked out, then there is Class Wallet. She stated that we are going to need another week or longer before we can get the information that's needed from Human Resource. Mr. McMillan asked again about Class wallet. Mrs. Bruner stated that Class Wallet usually don't release the funds until September 30th. She stated that she could let them know that we are trying to release them sooner. Ms. Hannigon stated that she recalled Ms. Mandela mentioning at the last meeting she referred to the fact that we've been having this conversation for the past years. She stated that it was difficult for her to be okay with things that we do as a district recurring annually. She stated that somewhere along the line, we have to do things better. She stated that we need to take the time to evaluate what we have done, and what is not working. She stated that in our last meeting it was said that the money would be disbursed by August 15th. Mr. Key stated that Class Wallet is in the process to release funds to the teachers we know that are returning as of July 1st. He stated that it is just too much for what's going on internally for staff to deal with. He stated that it was an oversight. He stated that the teacher supply money was not one of the things on the radar until the union president asked about it. He stated that it is one of the things that Ms. Bruner has put on her checklist. He stated that was part of the issue that it was not on the radar. Ms. Hannigon stated that hopefully all of the information would be available soon enough for us to aim for July 1st. Mr. Key stated that it's the teachers that have been reappointed, those funds can be released right away to those teachers. He stated that so you're hoping that those individuals remain in the district, that they don't spend the money and then take off. He stated that whatever they purchased, they would leave at the

school because technically that's what they should do. He stated that once they are renewed in June, that funding could be released at that point in time. Ms. Hannigon stated that maybe there could be more collaboration, coordination with our union representative on subjects such as these. She stated that she understands there are so many moving parts. She stated that even if we don't meet our own deadlines, they are deadlines. She stated there should be a level of rapport with our colleagues so that it doesn't come across like they're beating up on us and we're not cooperating with them. Mr. Key stated that the question is not the relationship with the union, it is the union leadership. He stated that the question really is geared towards me and more than likely it's not going to happen. He stated that Mrs. Bruner just forgot about it, and even if they had brought it up prior to that, it would have been said that we have not given teachers their supply money. Ms. Hannigon stated that she will continue to hope and her desire is to work with everybody. She stated that the teachers have enough to deal with. She stated that wherever we could assist to where we can move on. She asked realistically how early do we need to start this process and what is the deadline? Mrs. Bruner stated that the deadline was August 1st. She stated again that it just depends on the teachers that were confirmed at that time. She stated that anyone that's confirmed after that time, we have until September 1st. Mr. Key thanked Board Member Hannigon for her comments. He stated that Class Wallet is the process that we are using to release the funds to the teachers. He stated that is the way to do it because from July 1 even to now, it's just too much going on internally here for staff to deal with. He stated that it was an oversight. He stated that this is one of the things Mrs. Bruner will put on her checklist. He stated that the President asked about it and then right away the finance department went to work on that. Ms. Hannigon stated that for us to meet the first deadline you said that it's August 1st for all teachers who are confirmed by July 1st and the starting of that clock is July 1st. She wanted to know if a month was enough time for us to do what we need to do? Mrs. Bruner stated that we're going to run into people who come along after the first wave. She stated that they would be after September 1st. Ms. Hannigon stated that she look forward to us not having any piece of this conversation next year.

Ms. Johnson inquired about updated information on the account balances and when she will be able to receive them. Mrs. Bruner stated that she planned to pull those for Ms. Johnson from our last account balance statements. She stated that the finance department has been busy putting out fires, and meeting with the auditors. Ms. Johnson stated that she has requested the information for some time. Mr. McMillan stated that Ms. Johnson has asked for this information for a while, let's make sure we receive it.

Mr. Scott asked if the left over monies from Hurricane Michael would show on the revenue reports or any report? Mrs. Bruner stated yes, funding in the SBA account. Mr. Key stated that Mr. Scott was talking about did we actually end up receiving that funding and using it the year that it came in, is it no longer operating expenses in the years to come. He stated that the only thing that would or should play a role in that would be interest received that should be counted as revenue back into that account. He stated that in reality that money was tied to that fund balance and the monies are still there. He stated that some of the money was used for some things that the Board approved for payment. He stated that he previously shared with the Board a list of those things about two years ago. Mr. Scott stated that he had asked for a forensic audit on those funds. Mrs. Bruner stated that the auditor has all the information requested. Mr. Scott wanted to know if the money could be released. Mr. Key stated that the Board contracted with Rostan to help with the FEMA project, and nothing has been done. Dr. Sylvia Jackson stated that FEMA dollars have not be drawn down, and are allocated to repair damaged buildings from Hurricane Michael. Mr. Key stated that in the last Board meeting that he made the statement that there are some things when it comes to maintenance, we are going to have to ask the Board to utilize insurance money instead of the general funds. He stated that we have the money sitting there. He stated that the monies from Hurricane Michael – FEMA Insurance money cannot be used towards the new school. He stated that the money must be used for what it was intended for repairs and such from Hurricane Michael. Mrs. Hannigon wanted to know if the monies could still be drawn down and used. She requested a workshop to further discuss the issue and have a representative from Rostan present.

3. Facilities Update

Mr. Hudson stated that Allstate Construction and CSI representatives are here to give the Board an update on the second phase of the new school construction. He stated that we are in our second week of the start of the new school year. He stated that it has been extremely busy and with challenges. He stated that the biggest challenge are with HVAC and grounds keeping. He stated that 384 work orders were received. He stated that about 116 are actually still in progress. He stated hats off to the maintenance staff. He shared pictures of Chattahoochee Elementary, Carter Parramore Academy, and George W. Monroe School. He stated that the HVAC system at Chattahoochee Elementary School need to be cleaned, and parts were ordered for the AC unit at Carter Parramore Academy. He stated that at George W Monroe a temporary solution was formed until the parts came in to repair the AC unit. He stated that portable AC units were brought and fans are in the process of being purchased. He stated that at Stewart Street Elementary School in the nurses portable, the floor in one of the offices was sinking in. He stated that our carpenter, Mr. Mayo, was able to fix the flooring. He appreciated everyone for being patient with the maintenance department. Mr. Scott referenced the Board's agenda item #9 request for portable AC units. He assumed that this was an order because of the AC problems. Mr. Hudson stated yes, instead of having to rent whenever something happens, we'll have something readily available we can grab and install. He stated that it is better to purchase the portable AC units we need to have on hand in the future, just in case units break down. Mr. McMillan stated that he hear Mr. Hudson's cry. He stated that he has been on this Board for about seven years, and has heard this same cry for seven years. He stated that the maintenance department is not properly staffed and all you do now is respond to emergencies. He stated to the Superintendent and Dr. Jackson that Mr. Hudson need some help. He stated that the district has one plumber and one AC mechanic, and if they left the district or something happened to them, we'd be up a creek. He stated that these are two knowledgeable people that know what's going on in this district. He stated that Mr. Hudson has got to have some help in that department.

Mr. Key stated that's why the half cent sales tax is very important. He stated that we're going to have to push forward again because we just do not have the money. He stated that some of the issues in groundskeeping stemmed from one individual leaving the district and another employee resigned recently. He stated that some of the issues have already been discussed help solve some of these maintenance issues. He stated that Mr. Hudson has started implementing some of the things to help. He stated that the custodial workers are involved in the process a little bit more because we just have to find ways to do it a little bit better than depending on contractors and everybody else to do it. He stated that the assignment was given to a previous employee to replace every ageing AC unit in this district at every school that was not going to be torn down. He stated that it was not done. He stated that it is all about right now, how do we move forward. He stated that he hear what teachers and the current union president are saying. He stated that he understand how shorthanded we are at the same time. He stated that right now we are reacting to things that happened in the past, but it all falls on me because I'm the leader. He stated that he was not going to take all the credit for utilizing the custodians to help out with the lawn cutting. He stated that speaking with Mr. Hudson and Mr. Bryant, Mr. Bryant said find a way to utilize our custodians to help out with the lawn cutting. He stated that he had conversations with the custodial workers and said what it would take, and they agreed.

Mr. McMillan recognized Allstate and CSI representatives to give an update on the New K – 8 school construction.

Mr. Scott Brewer with Allstate Construction, and Mr. Norman McMillan with CSI addressed the Board to give the Board and update on where we are in the process of moving the project forward. Mr. Scott stated that he received great news at a meeting at Senator Simon's office with the Department of Education, and several legislative folks. He stated that from the appropriation side we were told confidently that the additional request for additional funding is in the current budget that will go to the governor's office and through the legislative process. He stated that was great news because what we were told from the last session was DOE needs to first put it in their budgets and their drafts. He stated that the legislator now have that reinforcement deal to go through the process. He stated that the session will start in January, so we won't have to wait as long to know about the additional funding. He stated that the design team presented the revised concept drawings and the programs. He stated that we have now advanced that too. He stated that we received a set of progress

drawings from them a couple months ago, called design development documents. He stated that we have been giving the design team feedback. He stated that a meeting is scheduled with them tomorrow to continue to refine the project so we can get it in the bidding market and get to a guaranteed price for what we are going to call Phase 2, which will tell us the total cost of the entire project. He stated that the projects are going to include the gym renovations and then we will back up from there and based on the money we have in place move the project forward. He stated that we will have the drawings in the coming months. He stated that the goal is to bring the GMP solution to the Board in November or December before the holiday with the goal of starting the remaining Phase 2 work on building the new campus in January. He stated that there's a lot of work that's been happening that you don't see the progress from other than what we've done in Phase 1, which Mr. Norman McMillan will address. He stated that we feel really good about the goals and objectives. He stated that advertisements will be coming soon. He stated that there will be workshops so we can get to the local community, the vendors and the subcontracting markets to start promoting the project and ensuring that we're getting quality participation at every level. He stated that one of the things that we'll do from those workshops is have some kind of bid packages that would allow the smaller businesses to participate, also partnering with some of those smaller businesses with the larger subcontracting market. He stated that those things will happen in October and November. He stated that the other things that are going on behind the scenes is permitting the Water Management District for the site work and those processes will continue to develop. He stated that the goal is to start the site development work in January.

Mr. McMillan stated that it has been brought to his attention by our finance director that we will have to at times fit the bill and then be reimbursed by the State. Is that correct? Mr. Brewer stated yes, that is correct. He stated that we will show the finance director how to draw down the monies for the monies to be available quicker than waiting to get some of the invoices that come through. He stated that as a reminder, that money has been approved. He stated that you have X number of monies that's in the account that's from DOE. He stated that money is approved and will be reimbursed to you. He stated that we will work together in getting in front of it because DOE releases the money in increments. Mrs. Bruner stated that she just got information on that today. She stated that the person that we needed to speak with is out of the office for two weeks. She stated that as long as we get the forms that we have filled out by the end of this week, then we will get a draw at the end of next month. She stated that you have to do it by the end of one month to get it by the end of the next month. She stated that we would have to be able to project out at least two months in advance so that we have enough funds coming in. Mr. Key stated that DAG is sending in invoices for payment and at that point in time there's no time to draw down money for their payment, so that's the issues that we've been currently having with the architect. Mr. Brewer stated that Senator Simon was excited to know that we advanced to Phase 1. He stated that the bid packages are on the way so we can promote smaller businesses to be a part of the new school building. He stated that the workshops will begin next month. Mr. McMillan stated that he thinks that it is important that we keep the Board posted on these workshops and when they're going to be so that we can talk to people about what they can do to help the district. He stated that this will be an opportunity for them to pour those sidewalks instead of us using the big contractors to do it. Mr. Brewer stated that there is a separate web page that has a link that has been set up and on the board's web page for this type of workshop information to be posted as well. He stated that he will make sure the community is informed, and by word of mouth. The Board thanked Mr. Brewer and Mr. McMillan for the update.

Mrs. Kesandra Brown, Director of ESE, addressed the Board to present new language to agenda item #8h – Gadsden Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan. She stated that DOE adopted the new language.

4. Educational Items by the Superintendent

None.

5. School Board Requests and Concerns

None

6. The workshop adjourned at 5:54 p.m.