

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

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

March 26, 2024

6:00 P.M.

This meeting was open to the public and electronically recorded.

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chairwoman, Mrs. Karema D. Dudley, at 6:01 p.m.

2. OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was led by Minister Donnie Washington.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in unison.

4. RECOGNITIONS

Mrs. Dudley recognized Ms. Cathy Johnson and thanked her for working with the Special Olympics and coaching the students. She also recognized the students in Mr. Jamaal Holt's class and thanked them for designing t-shirts for Special Olympics. She recognized Ms. Kesandra Brown, ESE Director, and Mr. O'Hara Black, Assistant Principal of Gadsden County High School for their work with Special Olympics. She stated that the student athletes did an outstanding job competing. She thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Mr. Key thanked everyone for their work with the Special Olympics. He recognized Mrs. Mary Davis for her hard work and dedication to the district. He stated that the Torch Run was scheduled for April 9th and would be led by Sheriff Young and Law Enforcement. He stated that the regional summer games for Special Olympics was scheduled for April 6th in Defuniak Springs, Florida.

Ms. Johnson introduced Mr. Matthew Layard with Proximity Learning. Mr. Layard shared with the Board a brief overview of Proximity Learning. He stated that Proximity Learning connects learners everywhere with the expert teacher they deserve. He stated that Proximity Learning has been on the cutting edge of livestreamed synchronous education using high-quality teachers to increase educational equity in school districts everywhere. He stated that their teachers are dynamic, caring, fun, and trained to excel at teaching virtually. He stated that when you connect students with the expert teachers, you empower the students in your community to have a brighter future and make a bigger impact on the world.

Mr. Frost recognized Mrs. Mary Davis for her dedicated work with the district. He recognized the school board members and asked them to stay on task.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Gloria McSwain, ESE Paraprofessional at George W. Munroe Elementary School, addressed the Board to request an update on the stipends for the non-instructional staff. Mr. Key stated that the stipend has to be Board and State approved. He stated that all of us should be Team Gadsden. He expressed his gratitude of support to non-instructional staff for their hard work. He stated that all employees are deserving of the stipend.

Mrs. Dudley stated that she appreciates the support staff. She stated that everyone need to work together collectively. She stated that it is not all about the teachers. She stated that the support staff is very important.

Dr. Tracey Stallworth addressed the Board with questions concerning the issue of any book bans in the district. Mr. Key stated that he was not aware of any book bans in the district. He stated that a request has to be made by someone for a book review. Dr. Stallworth asked if there were any monitoring programs in the district for at-risk students. Mr. Key stated that there would be a mentoring luncheon at Carter Parramore Academy on Friday, April 26th at 11:30 a.m. Mrs. Dudley stated that community organizations help mentor students in the district. Dr. Stallworth asked what the Board's policy on bullying and harassment was. Mrs. Dudley shared information with Dr. Stallworth on how to get the policy on bullying and harassment. Dr. Stallworth asked if elected officials talk to the legislatures. Mrs. Dudley stated yes, the Board work closely with lobbyist and legislatures.

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

Mrs. Dudley entertained a motion to approve the remaining consent agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Charlie D. Frost, seconded by Mr. Leroy McMillan and carried unanimously.

6. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- a. February 12, 2024, 4:00 p.m. – School Board Workshop
- b. February 27, 2024, 4:30 p.m. – School Board Financial Workshop
- c. February 27, 2024, 6:00 p.m. – Regular School Board Meeting
- d. March 14, 2024, 9:00 a.m. – Master Board Training

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

7. PERSONNEL MATTERS (resignations, retirements, recommendations, leaves of absence, terminations of services, volunteers, and job descriptions)

- a. Personnel 2023 – 2024

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Personnel 2024 – 2025

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- c. 2024 – 2025 School Year Calendars

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- d. ESSER III Stipend of \$3,500 for all District Employees

Fund Source: ESSER III

Amount: \$2,583,000.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

8. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

- a. TCC Early College Program Agreement

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Yolanda Doyle YDATA Solutions

Fund Source: Head Start/PreK

Amount: \$16,313.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

9. STUDENT MATTERS

- a. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #99-2324-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #100-2324-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- c. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #101-2324-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- d. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #102-2324-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- e. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #103-2324-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

10. SCHOOL FACILITY/PROPERTY

- a. New Playground Equipment for District Schools

Fund Source: ESSER III

Amount: Not to Exceed \$1,250,000.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

b. Furniture for District Schools

Fund Source: ESSER III

Amount: Not to Exceed \$7,000,000.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Items preceded by an (*) asterisk were removed from the CONSENT agenda at the beginning of the meeting and moved to the DISCUSSION portion of the agenda.

*7. PERSONNEL MATTERS (resignations, retirements, recommendations, leaves of absence, terminations of services, volunteers, and job descriptions)

d. 2025 – 2026 School Year Calendars

Mrs. Dudley requested the Board defer action on the 2025 – 2026 School Year Calendars until a committee meeting could be held to further discuss.

Following discussion, Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to defer action on agenda item #7d. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leroy McMillan and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

11. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Key stated that Head Start Registration was this week. Ms. Valencia Denson stated that Head Start PreK Registration began Tuesday, March 26th to Thursday, March 28th at the Joe Ferolito Recreation Center. Mrs. Shannon Brown stated that parents have the option to register their child online. She stated that she was excited about registration and the Head Start PreK program. Mrs. Dudley stated that the Head Start Team is building a good foundation for the students. The Board members recognized Ms. Denson and the Head Start staff. Mrs. Brown thanked Principal Chelsea Franklin for allowing Gadsden County High School students to work with the registration process.

Mr. Key stated that the Torch Run was scheduled for April 9th at 10:00 a.m. He stated that the regional summer games for Special Olympics was scheduled for April 6th in Defuniak Springs, Florida.

12. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Johnson stated that Children’s Week at the Capitol was February 25th to March 1st. She stated that she attended and students were well behaved.

Mr. Frost stated that the district need help with mentoring. He stated that students who attend school out of the district needed to be recruited back to the district.

Mrs. Dudley stated that the Board voted to give approval of a \$3,500.00 stipend to all employees. She stated that Mrs. Farlin is working on an amendment to send to the Department of Education for approval of the stipend.

13. The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.