

## SCHOOL BOARD WORKSHOP

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

February 23, 2021

4:30 P.M.

This workshop was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Leroy McMillan, Chairman; Mr. Steve Scott; Mrs. Karema D. Dudley; Ms. Cathy S. Johnson; 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 workshop was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Leroy McMillan, at 4:30 p.m.

2. 2021 – 2022 Student FTE Forecasting

Mrs. Wood shared with the Board a memorandum from the Department of Education to Superintendents regarding the 2020-2021 scholarship deductions and survey 5 add-on full-time equivalent (FTE) student membership data. She stated that everything so far has been funded based on 2<sup>nd</sup> calculations as of July 1st. She stated that because of the 2020-2021 FEFP the Second calculation will continue to be the basis for school district payments until completion of the 2020 – 2021 FEFP Fourth Calculation following survey 3 (February), there will not be an FEFP Third Calculation for the 2020 – 2021 fiscal year. She stated that she doesn't know how the legislature will address a \$4 billion shortfall. She stated that the district will be funded on what the year started with except for special scholarships. She stated that the district has lost \$975,000 but have encumbered \$1,000,000. She provided a student enrollment sheet by school of actual numbers and then a close estimation for the current year enrollment. She stated that the forecast brings a net of 4,406 students. She stated that the allocation of resources are actual expenditures for last year Gretna site - \$36,293.70, but as of July 1<sup>st</sup> to February 2021 is \$16,094.

Mr. Key stated that staffing plans must be reviewed by sites, and the district has to see what it can do without until student enrollment increases. He stated that he will check with other districts that are about the size of Gadsden to find out how many employees they have.

Mr. Scott stated that staffing has to be looked at by the number of sites.

3. Facilities Plan Update

Mr. Hunter shared with the Board a power-point presentation outlining strategic facilities planning. He stated that the title facilities planning, covers a broad range of elements that support a school district's educational program. He stated that earlier this month the Board agreed there was a need to form a committee to meet the facilities planning needs of the district. He stated that there are two main types of facilities planning that includes: Maintenance – planning for the renovation or replacement of major elements. This can include incorporating new technology, addressing energy conservation measures as well as the scheduled maintenance and replacement of equipment and infrastructure. All elements of a facility have a life expectancy. Proper planning uses this information to predict end of useful life and to schedule equipment replacement before failure. Some of the more noticeable elements are mechanical equipment, roofing, windows and doors,

furnishings; and New Construction – the planning and design of a new school includes the elements. Fortunately, much of this is done by design professionals but before they can start the district must be able to provide them enough information like number of students and location of the new school site. He stated that during the Special Board Meeting this month, the Board briefly touched on the general makeup of a maintenance/facilities planning committee. He stated that understanding the difference between the two types of planning, the recommendation is that two committees must be formed. 1) Core Maintenance Committee – addresses the short and long range planning for maintenance, and 2) Construction Committee – facilitates the construction of a new school in the district. He stated that the constitution of the Core Committee includes the superintendent, board member, support services, director of facilities, safety & security, instructional administrator, finance and media & technology. He stated that the constitution of the Construction Committee includes the core committee, architect, elementary principal, middle school principal, ESE, Pre-K, and two community members. He stated that it was recommended each committee meet at least once a month on the first and third Wednesday of the month at 2:30 p.m. He stated that as recovery efforts from Hurricane Michael begin to filter in, the Board recognizes the need to identify and prioritize projects that are in line with the recovery efforts and the district’s long range educational plans. He stated that all the projects, large and small, are very important. He stated that the addition of a new Pre-K through 8 school offers the most immediate benefit to the district and is of top priority. He stated that the Gadsden County School Board’s newly proposed “Construction Committee” will be tasked to provide the Board with the following recommendations: 1) determining how many student stations should the new school contain; 2) outlining a justification for the recommended student stations; 3) identifying the existing schools that will be supporting the new school’s student station count; 4) evaluating existing School Board owned property for potential location of the new school; 5) bringing design professionals on-board to provide a preliminary evaluation of the selected site(s); 6) coordinating conceptual renderings of the new school site; and coordinating public meetings. He stated that all site considerations have been identified for single story buildings. He stated that the intent is solely to determine if a site will accommodate the new school. He stated that the design professionals will make the final recommendation. He stated that the funding sources would be Millage of 1.5, PECO, General Funds and CO & DS. He stated that the new school funding source would be FEMA and Hurricane Michael Insurance. He stated that DOE looks at funding by the number of student stations and because the district has excess space DOE would probably say to use current space.

Mr. Hunter suggested reviewing the 5-Year Work Plan.

Mr. Key stated that the difference with Gadsden and Leon is partly because of the sales tax and Leon doesn’t have the student station count that Gadsden has.

Mr. Hunter stated that the committee could go look at similar schools. He stated that Marianna recently built a new school.

Mrs. Wood stated that enrollment and the FEFP data should be looked at. She stated that the district is funded on full time equivalent and not enrollment.

Mr. Hunter stated that money could be saved by bidding out jobs and then using that with different sites. He stated that decisions need to be made because money needs to be put into these old buildings. He stated that repairs are needed at schools but if the school is not going to remain open should repairs be made. He stated that there must be several people involved in this decision. He stated that there are a lot of roof problems and the budget needs to include repairing roofs.

Mr. Frost asked if the district has enough money to say we can build a school and patch old schools, or are we 5 years down the road to have building money?

Mr. Hunter stated that we can’t tell when because the “how much” must be determined and this will be determined by the committee. He stated that a new school is needed and hopes that FEMA and insurance money will build.

Mrs. Wood asked everyone to look at the hard data about what the trends are showing. She stated that exploring options for financing is always available.

4. Educational Items by the Superintendent

Mr. Key stated that we are talking about building one K-8 school and which sites to build. He stated that a recruitment effort to get students back to the district needs to take place because students are not going into the traditional schools.

Mr. McMillan stated that a new school was needed in town and a decision needed to be made fast. He stated that several schools have exceeded their life expectancy.

5. School Board Requests and Concerns

Mr. Scott stated that all Board members have a list of legislatures and can contact them for different issues i.e., scholarships for vouchers, term limits for School Board members, and testing and use of standardized testing. He encouraged Board members to contact legislative representatives.

6. The workshop adjourned at 5:30 p.m.