

## REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

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

April 22, 2025

6:00 P.M.

The meeting 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; 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 Chairman, Mr. Leroy McMillan, at 6:02 p.m.

2. OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was led by Bishop Charles Salem, III of Victory For Youth, Share Your Heart Ministries

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in unison.

4. RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Scott commended the staff at West Gadsden Middle School. He stated that the staff put together a Career Day Event last week; the Superintendent, Board Member Frost, Chairman McMillan and I were there. He stated that he was told that the event was led by Mr. Anthony Luckey. He stated that he did a great job putting everything together. He stated that the Principal and the entire staff were well received.

Ms. Johnson recognized Ms. Kesandra Brown, the Director of Exceptional Student Education and her staff for doing such a great job with our Special Olympic Team. She stated that it looks like 90% of her staff came to help and volunteer. She stated that the Special Olympics Team traveled to Fort Walton County High School for the Special Olympics. She stated that there were 17 individuals that placed to go to the State in May of this year. She stated that she had the pleasure of attending the Parent and Community Meeting at Havana Magnet School. She stated the meeting was hosted by Mr. Gary Russ-Sills and his staff. She offered kudos to Commissioner Simpkins with her Sprout and Shout event that she held on Saturday at the Havana Community Park. She stated that she also had the opportunity to attend Spring Fling at the Midway Head Start Program. She stated that the children participated various things such as fishing, jumping bags and had a chance to work on their coordination skills. She stated that it was enjoyable to be out there with the children. She announced that the Havana Northside High School Gladiators Mega Reunion would begin on Friday, April 26, 2025; she stated that thanks to HNHS the Mega Reunion has been going on for two decades. She stated that it is an honor to go to a public school that make those kind of connections with friends and family.

Ms. Hannigon thanked the staff of Gadsden County High School for extending an invitation for the football team banquet that will be April 23, 2025. She stated that she would try to stop by before heading out of time for a conference tomorrow evening. She congratulated the team for their achievements. She thanked the Quincy Area Threes (staff and students) for decorating bags for her to present to the 170 residents at Riverchase for the Easter holiday.

Mr. Frost thanked the staff at West Gadsden Middle School for the work they did for Career Day. He stated that he really enjoyed everything. He stated that the students enjoyed everything as well.

Mr. McMillan thanked the staff at West Gadsden Middle School and Greensboro Elementary School. He recognized Mr. Luckey and Ms. Washington for their hard work in organizing the Career Day event under the leadership of Principal Cummings and Principal Pitts.

## 5. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Ryan Lynn (Education, Engagement Coordinator for WFSU) addressed the Board to share information on programs for students. She stated they work with children ages 3 – 8. She provided handouts to the Board and the Assistant Superintendent of Academic Support Mrs. Tammy McGriff. She stated that the programs are grant funded and there would be no cost to the district. She stated that they also have Family and Community workshops. She stated that they print out approximately 300 activity books for kids on fun things to do during the summer. She stated that they provide workshops for educators ELC monthly and offer in-service hours. She stated that their new website is called [learningneighborhood.org](http://learningneighborhood.org). She stated that everything they offer is free.

### ITEMS FOR CONSENT

Mr. Key made a request to add to the agenda item #7c – TSIA Funding Allocation. He also made a request to remove from the agenda item #8c – Florida State College at Jacksonville MOU/Internship Agreement.

Mrs. Minnis stated that a vote was needed by the Board for the amendments to the agenda based on the Superintendent's request. She stated that since the Board was adding and taking away from the agenda, it would be cleaner on the record to vote.

Mr. McMillian stated that the Superintendent has asked that the Board add item #7c titled TSIA Funding Allocation to the agenda. He stated that this item was discussed in detail during the financial workshop, and he asked if we could remove item #8c – Florida State College at Jacksonville MOU/Internship Agreement from the agenda for corrections.

Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to add item #7c to the agenda and to remove item #8c. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cathy S. Johnson and carried unanimously.

Mr. McMillan entertained a motion to approve the remaining consent agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and seconded by Mr. Steve Scott.

## 6. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- a. March 25, 2025, 4:30 p.m. – School Board Financial Workshop
- b. March 25, 2025, 6:00 p.m. - Regular School Board Meeting
- c. April 1, 2025, 4:00 p.m. – Student Hearing
- d. April 1, 2025, 5:00 p.m. – Student Hearing
- e. April 1, 2025, 6:00 p.m. – Student Hearing

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

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

- a. Personnel 2024– 2025

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Personnel 2025 – 2026

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

## 8. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

- c. Florida State College at Jacksonville MOU/Internship Agreement (Removed from the agenda)

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- d. PAEC Gateway Finance Contract

Fund Source: General Fund

Amount: \$16,892.68 for three years

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

## 9. STUDENT MATTERS

- a. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #109-2425-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

## 10. SCHOOL FACILITY/PROPERTY

- a. Purchase Order Request for Carpet One Floor & Home

Fund Source: General Fund

Amount: \$15,574.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Purchase Order Request for Davis Safe & Lock

Fund Source: General Fund

Amount: \$35,945.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

## 11. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

- a. Chattahoochee Elementary School Out-of-State Field Trip Request

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Stewart Street Elementary School Out-of-State Field Trip Request

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- c. James A. Shanks Middle School Out-of-State Field Trip Request

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

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 acted upon during the discussion portion of the agenda.

## \*8. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

### a. Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program

Fund Source: School Climate Grant and Title IV

Amount: \$31,990.00 (\$14,448.00 SCG) (\$17,542.00 Title IV)

Ms. Hannigon asked what the Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) Program look like in action. Dr. Holmes stated the AVID Program is a recognized college and career readiness system designed to support students by equipping them with the skills and confidence needed to excel in rigorous coursework, graduate high school, and succeed in college and careers. She stated that the AVID program provides structured support through study skills, critical thinking, organization, note taking, and college prep activities. She stated that the AVID Program originally started in secondary with the middle and high school. She stated that recently in the past 2 years, they have begun to push that down to what we call AVID Elementary. She stated that students would be identified as early in elementary to start to develop their skills, their study skills just to make them good overall students. She stated that the likelihood of those kids that continue to matriculate through the system and prepare for college and career readiness. She stated that this originated through the school climate grant. She stated that the district collaborated with PEAC three years ago to bring the program back to Gadsden County. She stated that there was a need because the elementary students were becoming stagnant. She stated that the teachers teach better instructional strategies that will prepare kids for rigorous coursework. She stated that by the time students get to high school you would see the improvement and the readiness for college. Ms. Hannigon stated that the exception of the AVID elective? Is this offered for all students or is it only for certain students? Dr. Holmes stated that all students will have the opportunity, there is an application process. She stated that students must want to participate in the program. Ms. Hannigon asked if the students who choose to participate, are their progress tracked, or what kind of tracking takes place? Dr. Holmes stated that every year we must complete reports with AVID. She stated that staff go through the data and the number of students that are in the program. She stated that all information is turned in to DOE and the schools go through a certification process. She stated to be transparent, it has been a little rocky, but we are working. She stated that this year there is more consistency. She stated that bringing a program back takes time to get people trained. She stated that some people who were trained are no longer in the district and there is constant training for others. She stated that the district has a group of willing administrators and staff members who are committed to seeing the AVID Program through. Ms. Hannigon stated that whatever the program offer is on the regular school schedule, it is not after school or anything. Dr. Holmes stated no, it is within the school day.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

### b. Thomas University (TU) Field Placement MOU

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

Ms. Hannigon stated again with her newness, what does this item look like in action? She asked if there are certain staff persons that are assigned to work with this program. She stated that she was just curious, what does this look like and is this something new? Do we have other MOU's with universities to allow for these types of opportunity for students? Have we utilized these MOU's to become a feeder system and recruit teachers for our school system? Mrs. Tammy McGriff (Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services) stated that this MOU is similar to the other MOU's; the district has four of them. She stated that this one is targeted at social workers. She stated that there is a need for social workers across the district. She stated that this is an opportunity to give them a platform, apply their skills, and hope that they choose Gadsden. Ms. Hannigon stated because of the shortage, what does that look like? Who are they paired with? Mrs. McGriff stated that the agreement says: In an internship, you have the university or the college who has someone assigned to you but then we have social workers in our ESE Department that will shadow and partner with them. Ms. Hannigon asked if they were working independently, Mrs. McGriff responded no, none of the interns. Ms. Hannigon stated she was asking questions because she know the district does not have enough social workers. Mrs. McGriff stated that the contract outlines what the

responsibilities are. Mr. Key stated to the Chair that Mrs. McGriff actually has done a good job of answering the questions. He stated that the individuals are at the university and at the school. He stated that there is a social worker assigned to every school. He stated that this is only one agreement. He stated that the district has an agreement with FAMU, FSU and TSC that allows the same thing. He stated that the rules have changed now because of the shortage of teachers. He stated that internships could actually be paid now. He stated that the district is recruiting individuals that are being offered jobs.

Following discussion, Ms. Stacey S. Hannigon made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #8a & b. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cathy S. Johnson and carried unanimously.

Mr. McMillan stated to the Superintendent that he believes he is doing a great job having staff attend the meetings when they have an item on the agenda to answer questions. He stated that there were three schools that scheduled field's trips and Mrs. McGriff asked school staff to come to the meeting. He stated that he asked her not to have them come. He stated that he did not see the need for them to come because the information was reviewed and ready for the Board's approval.

**ACTION REQUESTED:** The Superintendent recommended approval.

## 12. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Key stated that currently Board members have the updates for Academic and Support Services. He stated that there was also a calendar about the upcoming events for next month. He reminded the Board that April 23 was Administrative Assistant/Support Day. He announced that Friday (April 25) was Relay for Life. He stated that Master Board Training was scheduled May 13 and 14<sup>th</sup>. He stated that June 18 and June 19 are possible dates for the Board's Retreat. He stated that in regards to the Code of Conduct – principals have been asked to talk with their staff about some of the things that need to be changed or put in the Code of Conduct. He stated that district staff would then have a smaller meeting next month to further discuss any possible changes for finalization before July. He announced Gadsden County High School Commencement on May 23 @ 7:00 p.m.

## 13. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Hannigon stated that at the last meeting the Board discussed Quincy Main Street's request about the donation of the old Quincy High School property. She wanted to know if the Board could schedule a date to further discuss the issue. She stated that she wanted to know if the Board was moving forward with approving the Enterprise Fleet Management Agreement. Mr. Key stated that at this time the district is still waiting on Enterprise Fleet Management to provide requested information. He stated that he would have Mr. Bryant contact Enterprise Fleet Management about the information that was to be shared with the district. Ms. Hannigon stated that she wanted to mention that she was thankful that the conversations with the Superintendent. She stated that she was concerned about the collective bargaining agreement and the expectations of the teachers. She stated that she was appreciative of staff and everyone that is willing to sit at the table. She stated that she wants to move the district forward. She stated that Gadsden County is not always, what we hear. She stated that she wanted to have a meeting to talk with the Superintendent and HR about some of the employees and wrap her mind around what our policies are and what are the expectations when it comes to staff. She stated that what she has seen is some questionable behavior with employees. She stated that employees need to give the district a chance before bashing the school district.

Mr. Frost stated that he had some question about Quincy Main Street's request. Mr. Frost requested a list of all the school graduations. Mr. McMillan asked Mr. Frost to hold on and allow him to answer.

Ms. Hannigon stated that on May 30, 2025 @ 6pm – 10pm, Marshay's Catering was hosting a Spoken Word and Jazz Event @ L&R. She stated that a portion of the proceeds would be donated to the Gadsden Education Foundation. She encouraged those who are available to attend. She stated that a flyer would be shared. She stated that the Rutledge College Foundation was offering a \$500 scholarship to any of our students who are entering college or technical college. She stated that the scholarship application deadline was May 12, 2025.

Mr. McMillan stated that there was not a long line of students applying for scholarships. He stated that there was only one student from Gadsden County that applied for the Bullock Award, and he attends Crossroad Academy. He stated that our students must do a better job of applying for scholarships.

Mr. Key stated that one of the problems the district has is that students do not want to write essays. He stated that he personally spoke with students about that. He stated that he had a conversation with the principal and other staff at the high school and stated that writing essays was going to be an assignment for students starting in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. He stated that the students would have to write essays. He stated that seniors are part of the google classroom, and they are receiving all the scholarship information.

Mr. McMillan asked Attorney Minnis to look into some information about what can the Board do with the Old Quincy High School and Chattahoochee High School properties. Mrs. Minnis stated that there is statute that allows school boards to dispose of property. She stated that there need to be a resolution to dispose of education property. She stated that there might be a question for the public regarding Quincy Main Street request. She stated that the property could be bid. She stated for public interest, there must be written documentation outlining the plans for the property. Mr. McMillan stated the intent for the property must be advertised. Mrs. Minnis stated that the bidding process must be to sell or lease of the property. Mr. Frost stated that he was concerned about giving away property. Mrs. Hannigon stated that the Board is not in a position to give away property. Mrs. Minnis stated that the Board is not the record owner of the Faith Apostolic Church Mortgage (Chattahoochee High School Property). She stated that the Board only holds the mortgage note. Mrs. Minnis stated that the Board has the option to request a deed, have another company collect, or follow the foreclosure process to send a demand letter, file complaint of foreclosure, title search, processor to serve the complaint, pay attorney fees, request motion for summary judgement, and then the property will go to the clerk for sale of the property. She stated that a representative of the Board would need to attend and bid the property. She stated that the Board would be liable for the property.

Mr. McMillan stated that he and Mrs. Bruner would be attending the FSBIT (Florida School Boards Insurance Meeting) on Wednesday to Friday (April 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>). He stated that FSBA would discuss the insurance rate increase. He stated that architects are ready to move forward with the new K-8 school construction on June 1, 2025.

14. The meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.