

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

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

February 23, 2016

6:00 P.M.

This meeting was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Roger P. Milton, Chairman; Mr. Isaac Simmons; Mr. Charlie D. Frost; Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis; and Mr. Steve Scott. Also present were Mr. Reginald C. James, 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. Roger P. Milton, at 6:00 p.m.

2. OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was led by Rev. Douglas Harris, Pastor of Midway Unity Fellowship, Inc.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in unison.

4. RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Scott recognized East Gadsden High School and West Gadsden High School Boys and Girls Basketball Teams.

Mrs. Lewis recognized Ms. Mary Broward. Ms. Broward addressed the Board to request assistance with an art project. She requested the Board give Mrs. Lewis permission to work with the art project, and permission for students to assist with painting dumpsters in Havana. She stated that Waste Pro Management was on board with painting the dumpsters.

Mrs. Lewis stated that she visited the AMIKids Program facility. She stated that she was impressed with the AMIKids Program. She invited the Board to visit the AMIKids Program facility. She stated that the tour guides were students from James A. Shanks Middle School and West Gadsden High School.

Mr. James recognized Mr. Keith Cummings with the Division of Forestry. Mr. Cummings presented a check in the amount of \$8,340.00 to the district for their share of proceeds from the distribution of the Lake Talquin State Forestry receipts. Mr. Cummings shared with the Board information on the 2016 Florida Forestry Teachers Tour. The Superintendent and Board members thanked Mr. Cummings for the presentation.

Mr. James also recognized student Cheleshia Johnson, an eighth grader at Havana Magnet School, for receiving the Commissioner's Leadership Award. He stated that the district was featured in the New York Times with an article involving the reduction in juvenile arrests. A collaboration of the district and sheriff's department resulted in an increase in the district's graduation rate. He stated that the schools would be closed Wednesday, February 24th as a result of a storm scheduled to pass through the Big Bend in the early morning hours. He stated that schools in the neighboring counties were also closed.

Mr. Milton acknowledged Mr. Zachery Woods, Midway City Council. He stated that Mr. Woods teaches a CDL Class and Bus Driver Training Class.

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

Mr. Milton added item #6c – Suspension Without Pay of Employee #020-12-0479, and item #11c – School Field Trip Request (Out-of-State) Havana Magnet School. He entertained a motion to approve the remaining consent agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Charlie D. Frost, seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

5. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- a. January 26, 2016, 4:30 p.m. – School Board Workshop
- b. January 26, 2016, 6:00 p.m. – Regular School Board Meeting
- c. February 2, 2016, 4:00 p.m. – Student Hearing
- d. February 2, 2016, 5:00 p.m. – Student Hearing

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

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

- a. Personnel 2015 – 2016

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

7. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

- a. Budget Amendment 1

Fund Source: All Funds

Amount: See Budget Amendment 1 for ESE 139

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

9. STUDENT MATTERS

- a. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #27- 1516-0071

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- c. Student Expulsion – See back-up material
Case #29-1516-0071
ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- d. Student Expulsion – See back-up material
Case #30-1516-0071
ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

10. SCHOOL FACILITY/PROPERTY

- a. Storm Drain Repair at East Gadsden High School

Fund Source: 110
Amount: \$7,000.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- b. East Gadsden High School Building 7 Water Leak Repair

Fund Source: 110
Amount: \$2,000.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

11. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

- a. School Field Trip Requests (Out-of-State) – East Gadsden High School

Fund Source: N/A
Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- b. School Field Trip Requests (Out-of-State) – Stewart Street Elementary

Fund Source: N/A
Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- c. School Field Trip Requests (Out-of-State) – Havana Magnet School

Fund Source: N/A
Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Items preceded by an asterisk (*) removed from the CONSENT agenda at the beginning of the meeting and acted upon during the DISCUSSION portion of the agenda.

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

b. 2016 – 2017 Calendars

Mr. Simmons stated that he was concerned about the number of ½ days for students. He asked if the student calendar mirrored Leon County School District.

Dr. Hightower stated that the district's student calendar mirrored Leon County School District.

Following discussion, Mr. Isaac Simmons made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #6b. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

c. Suspension Without Pay of Employee #020-12-0479

Mr. Milton requested that the 2nd paragraph of employee #020-12-0479 suspension letter be amended to suspend without pay until a hearing could be held on Tuesday, March 1st at 6:00 p.m., or charges are resolved.

Following discussion, Mr. Isaac Simmons made a motion to amend the Superintendents recommendation to suspend employee #020-12-0479 without pay until a hearing could be held, or charges are resolved.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

*8. AGREEMENT/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

a. 2016 – 2017 Collegiate High School Program

Fund Source: N/A
Amount: N/A

Mr. Simmons stated that he was concerned about the prior approval date of January 11th in the cover letter. He requested the date be removed.

Dr. Hightower stated that the 2016 – 2017 TCC Collegiate High School Program Contract was not complete at the January 11th Board meeting. He stated that the contract is now complete.

Following discussion, Mr. Isaac Simmons made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #8a with the correction to remove the prior approval date of January 11th from the cover letter. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

*9. STUDENT MATTERS

b. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #28-1516-0071

The grandmother of student #28-1516-0071 addressed the Board to request a hearing.

Following discussion, Mr. Isaac Simmons made a motion to defer action on agenda item #9b until a hearing was held on Tuesday, March 1st at 5:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

*10. SCHOOL FACILITY/PROPERTY

c. Possible Purchase of Havana Elementary School

Fund Source: N/A
Amount: N/A

Mr. Scott requested a brief overview of the possible purchase of the Havana Elementary School property.

Post Commander Jim Brennan of the American Legion Post 84 shared with the Board a brief overview of the possible purchase of Havana Elementary School. He stated that the mission of American Legion Post 84 is to reduce homelessness, unemployment and social isolation among veterans in American Legion District 2 and surrounding counties. He stated that this project will be accomplished through the construction and operation of a veteran's center in Havana, Florida that will serve veterans in District 4 and the surrounding counties. He stated that this will be accomplished through partnerships with State and local government, businesses, the Tallahassee area Veterans Administration and community members. He stated that the project will be sustained through rental fees for the affordable housing units and rental fees for meeting and event space. He stated that an offer would be made when funding becomes available.

Following discussion, Mr. Isaac Simmons requested item #10c be removed from the agenda until a later date.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

Ms. Kelly Otte, Executive Director with the PACE Center for Girls, addressed the Board to share with the Board information regarding a MOU to provide free community-based, and gender responsive counseling services for girls identified to be in need of mental health and social service interventions through its PACE Reach Counseling Services Program.

Mr. Dave Galloway thanked the Board for their support.

Ms. Mis'Shaylanq Smith, former educator at Havana Elementary School, addressed the Board to inquire about the disbursement of School Recognition Funds.

Dr. Hightower stated that the district had not received School Recognition Funds. He stated that the statutes will be followed when school recognition funds are disbursed.

Mr. Ronte Harris, President of Gadsden County Classroom Teachers Association, addressed the Board with the following concerns: a) the need for microphones in the back of the Board room; b) notification of items that are added to the Board's agenda; c) teacher's distrust with the district's finance department; d) cost associated with public record's request by the union; e) salary increases will not solve all of the district's problems; and f) the connection between what happens at the Board and the school sites.

12. FACILITIES UPDATE

None.

13. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

None.

14. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Frost shared his concerns regarding teacher performance. He stated that he was willing to work with everyone. He encouraged everyone to mentor a student. He stated that students are looking for mentors.

Mr. Milton requested the Superintendent review the Title I - 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs, and summer programs. He announced that the Board would convene in executive session following the regular meeting to discuss collective bargaining issues.

Mrs. Edna Hussein Forehand addressed the Board regarding the New York Times article. She stated that the commentator followed up with two of Gadsden County schools receiving a grade of "I". She stated that an explanation was needed for the letter grade of "I".

Mr. James stated that the results of the Florida Standards Assessment were classified as preliminary by the Department of Education because school grades are based on the number of students achieving proficiency level only and do not include learning gains. He stated that learning gains are one of the most important components of the school grading process and will be included in the 2016 school grades. He stated that testing will begin next month with new school grades issued in July. He stated that in addition, both high schools received an "I" because they did not test at least 95% of their students and therefore were not eligible to receive a grade, thus causing the district to also receive an "I". He stated that both high schools tested slightly less than the requirement.

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

The Board convened in executive session at 7:40 p.m. to discuss collective bargaining issues; and adjourned at 9:00 p.m.