

SCHOOL BOARD WORKSHOP

CARTER PARRAMORE ACADEMY CAFETERIA
631 SOUTH STEWART STREET
QUINCY, FLORIDA

March 13, 2017

6:00 P.M.

The workshop was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Isaac Simmons, Chairman; Mr. Steve Scott; Mr. Charlie D. Frost; Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis; and Mr. Tyrone D. Smith. Also present were Mr. Roger P. Milton, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board; and others. Mrs. Deborah Minnis, Attorney for the Board, was absent.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The workshop was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Isaac Simmons, at 6:00 p.m.

2. DISCUSSION OF RECONFIGURATION OF SCHOOLS

Mr. Simmons stated that the Board held a series of community meetings to share information with the community regarding the proposed school reconfiguration. He stated that the Board wanted to gather input from the communities about the school reconfiguration proposal. He stated that the intent of this workshop was to discuss the school reconfiguration proposal and general information from the communities. He stated that he would vote no for the current proposal. He stated that proposals were recently received from Mr. Donald Mackey, Ms. Millie Forehand, and Mrs. Audrey Lewis. He turned the meeting over to Mr. Milton.

Mr. Milton stated that he would only discuss the latest proposal from Mrs. Lewis.

Mrs. Lewis presented the following proposal to include a half-cent sales tax to renovate and upgrade facilities, and turn Chattahoochee Elementary School into a public charter school. She stated that if a half-cent sales tax is imposed, there needs to be a plan in place as to how the monies would be used. She stated that she believe in community schools. She stated that House Bill 610 will have a negative impact on the district. She stated that she wanted to preserve the legacy, pursuing the future, "Putting Our Students and Families First".

Mr. Frost stated that no one in his district was for Mr. Milton's school reconfiguration plan. He proposed a plan to include turning East Gadsden High School into a middle/high school with grades 6 thru 12, like West Gadsden High School. He recommended doing what Mrs. Frances Brown suggested in a proposal to draw a line down the middle of the county and send all the students in the west side to schools on the west, and all the students in the east side to schools on the east side. He stated that this would leave James A. Shanks Middle School empty, so he suggested combining George Munroe Elementary School and Stewart Street Elementary School and place them there.

Mr. Scott stated that zoning might not even be a possibility beginning next school term once "open borders" goes into effect. He stated that if parents can pick and choose which school district they go to within the state of Florida, then they can probably pick what school they go to within the district. He stated that many of the objectives he has heard have centered on transportation and convenience. He stated that decisions have to be made from the head and not the heart. He stated that his first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students.

Mr. Smith stated that he did not submit a school reconfiguration proposal. He stated that he respects and appreciates everyone who did. He stated that Mr. Milton did not just propose a plan. He stated that Mr. Milton also brought in the maintenance and transportation directors, which brought validity to his plan. He stated that when creating a proposal, cost-budget analysis and school population management must be considered. He stated that as for building a new school, anything in the future is not 100 percent. He stated that if the special facilities money and process that it takes for it to be decided is not concrete, then there is no plan to decide on. He stated that many of the parents in the schools are his generation, and they believe in progress and forward thinking. He stated that some parents are highly opposed to problems that persist. He stated that change must occur because millennial parents are continuing the trend of taking their children to other school districts. He stated that sometimes when you have too many options you end up doing nothing.

Mr. Simmons shared his thoughts on the proposed school reconfiguration plan. He stated that he values and considers what people in the community had to say. He stated that he has a vast amount of experience on the board. He stated that he speaks from experience. He stated that he was convinced that we are moving too fast and don't know where we are going. He stated that he was more confused now than when the school reconfiguration proposal was first presented. He stated that he was willing to continue further discussion on school reconfiguration. He stated that there was no need to rush into anything. He stated that open borders will have a negative impact on the district.

Mr. Milton stated that a lot of time and effort was put into his school reconfiguration proposal. He stated that there will be no recommendation coming from him at this time regarding reconfiguration of schools. He stated that the ball is in the Board's court. He stated that he was going to give them the opportunity to lead him. He stated that for the upcoming school year, the district will do the very best they possibly can with the facilities they already have. He asked the Board members to put half the amount of energy into creating a plan as they put in the meetings. He stated that then the district will be on the road from good to great.

3. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

None.

4. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

None.

5. The workshop adjourned at 7:08 p.m.