

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

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

December 14, 2021

6:00 P.M.

The meeting was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Leroy McMillan, Chairman; Mr. Steve Scott; Ms. Cathy S. Johnson; Mrs. Karema D. Dudley; 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 6:00 p.m.

2. OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was led by Reverend Tony Hannah, Pastor of St. Peter African Methodist Episcopal Church.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in unison.

4. RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Key reminded Board members of the Ethics training due December 31st.

Mr. Saxton, stated that he met with Representative Ramon Alexander to discuss ways to assist Gadsden Technical College in moving forward. He stated that physical repairs are needed as well as a rebranding expansion. He stated that a proposal was sent to the House and Senate for repairs, rebranding expansion, and teaching positions (patient care technicians, marketing specialist, grant writer, and solar panel technician). He stated that he appreciates the wonderful staff at Gadsden Technical College and Dr. Sylvia Jackson.

In response to Ms. Johnson's concern regarding the district working with current industries in Gadsden and training for students, Mr. Saxton stated that there is some communication with current industries and Gadsden Technical College is working to bridge the gap.

Mrs. Dudley stated that she is excited about the solar panels. She stated that this will create a lot of opportunities.

Ms. Johnson thanked Mr. Saxton for his passion and what he is doing for the district. She stated that she hopes the conversations will begin with the current industries and engagement with the companies to do training with the community.

Mr. Key stated that marketing will help with the communication. He thanked Mr. Saxton for his dedication. He stated that the students who made straight "A's" the first nine weeks enjoyed themselves today at the Skating Rink. He stated that the students had a blast. He stated that he is having conversations with the county officials to help save students. He stated that he is also having conversations with the retired teachers to help out in the schools.

Mr. Frost recognized Mr. Key, Dr. Sylvia Jackson and staff for their hard work.

Ms. Johnson thanked Mr. Key for providing a schedule of the basketball games. She stated that it is important to be a part of school activities. She stated that she enjoyed judging doors at Havana Magnet School.

Mr. Scott recognized the administration and staff at Greensboro Elementary School, West Gadsden Middle School, and Gadsden Elementary Magnet School.

Mr. McMillan recognized the students at Gadsden Elementary Magnet School. He stated that the students are excited about their new location.

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

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

5. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- a. November 16, 2021, 4:30 p.m. – School Board Workshop
- b. November 16, 2021, 5:30 p.m. - School Board Organization Meeting
- c. November 16, 2021, 6:00 p.m. – Regular School Board Meeting

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

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

- a. Personnel 2021 – 2022

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.

*7. AGREEMENT/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

- a. Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Standards and Instructional Support
Civic Literacy Excellence Initiative

Fund Source: N/A
Amount: N/A

In response to Mr. Scott's concern regarding the execution date of the MOU for the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Standards and Instructional Support Civic Literacy Excellence Initiative, Mrs. Minnis stated that the execution date is the date upon which all signatures have been obtained.

Following discussion, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #7a. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

*8. SCHOOL FACILITY/PROPERTY

- a. Request to Approve the Full Five-Year Survey Conducted by Florida Department of Education (FDOE)

Fund Source: N/A
Amount: N/A

Ms. Johnson stated that she felt that the Special Facility Construction Funds application process was handled incorrectly. She stated that a part of the process should have included community involvement.

Mr. McMillan stated that the Board is voting on the survey only. He stated that the planning committee has recommended the Board approve the full five-year survey.

Mrs. Dudley stated that for a point of clarity that the five-year survey is what the committee is recommending the Board take action on.

Following discussion, Ms. Cathy S. Johnson made a motion for the Board to involve the community before taking action on the five year survey.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #8a. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Karema D. Dudley and carried with Mr. McMillan, Mr. Scott, Mr. Frost and Mrs. Dudley voting "aye". Ms. Johnson voted "nay".

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

*9. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

- a. Approval of 2021 – 2022 School Advocacy Council (SAC) Membership Rosters

Fund Source: N/A
Amount: N/A

Mr. McMillan stated that the School Board is a professional educational system. He stated that all items submitted to the Board should be of good quality and professional.

Ms. Vicki Johnson thanked Mr. McMillan and stated that she agrees with him regarding professionalism. She stated that she did not create the documents.

Following discussion, Mr. Leroy McMillan made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #9a. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

10. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Key stated that he is planning an activity for the 2nd nine week Straight "A" Student Recognition. He stated that students will be released early on Friday, December 17th.

11. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Frost stated that he wants to know what the Social Worker requirements and duties are. He stated that students with behavioral issues need attention.

Ms. Johnson wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a blessed holiday season.

Mr. Scott stated that School Board information packets are on the district's website. He stated that employees on grant funded positions need to be identified. He stated that when the grant runs out, the job is finished.

Mrs. Dudley reminded Board members of the play (Dr. Suess – How the Grinch Stole Christmas) at Stewart Street Elementary School on Thursday, December 16th at 6:00 p.m. She wished everyone a happy holiday. She stated that she appreciates the conversation with the Superintendent. She stated that it is very important to be able to communicate with each other. She stated that she was excited about bringing programs to help students. She stated that resources are very important to helping students.

Ms. Johnson stated that roundtable discussions need to be held to discuss issues. She stated that retirees need to be recognized for their work with the district. She stated that it will take all of us to do what is needed.

Ms. Vicki Johnson stated that retirees need to be recognized. She stated that in the past Envision Credit Union provided funds to assist with recognizing retirees. She stated that there is not a budget set aside for retirees. She stated that fundraising efforts will help with funds to recognize retirees.

Mr. Key stated that student donations were used for the straight “A” student recognition event at the Skating Rink. He requested everyone keep Mrs. McGriff-Farlin and her family in prayer, her husband and mother are both sick.

Mr. McMillan thanked and appreciated a parent who lives in Leon County but have her four children in Gadsden County Schools. He stated that the parent says she believes in the Gadsden district.

Mr. Key stated that letters were sent to the parents of the students making straight “A’s” the first nine week grading period. He stated that he thanked the parents for what they are doing for the students.

Mr. McMillan asked the Superintendent to follow-up with parents to see why students are leaving the district. He stated that Gadsden County is headed in the right direction. He asked the Board to think about what to do with Chattahoochee High School. He stated that he will speak with Mrs. Minnis regarding the payments for Chattahoochee High School.

Ms. Judith Mandela, President of the Gadsden County Classroom Teachers Association, asked the Superintendent where to find the plans for the ESSER II funds.

Mr. Key stated that Mrs. McGriff-Farlin will provide Ms. Mandela a copy of the plans for the ESSER II funds. He stated that the information is public.

Ms. Mandela stated that an email was sent to the Superintendent for having meaningful conversations with the community and stakeholders. She stated that community input was needed on how to use the funds from the American Rescue Plan. She stated that she provided a copy of the video from Lake County on how they used funds from the American Rescue Plan. She stated that almost every district has given the \$1,000 bonus to all employees. She stated that all employees will feel appreciated if they receive the \$1,000 bonus.

Mr. Key stated that a \$1,000 bonus has been given to teachers. He stated that many districts are using other funds to provide the \$1,000 bonus to non-instructional staff. He stated that he is trying to make a change in real salaries. He stated that there is a difference about what you can and cannot do with the funds to provide the \$1,000 bonus to non-instructional staff.

Mr. McMillan stated that the Board and Superintendent care about all employees. He stated that checkups are not needed on the Board and Superintendent.

Ms. Johnson stated that she wants to know the number of people who have not received the \$1,000 bonus. She stated that she wants to revisit the ESSER funds to see how they can be used.

12. The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.