

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

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

April 27, 2021

6:00 P.M.

This meeting 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 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 Danielle Upton, Co-Pastor of Centenary United Methodist Church.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in unison.

4. RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Key recognized the 5th grade scholars who recently were awarded cash prizes and certificates for their winning essays in the Annual Retired Educators Association's Essay Contest held on April 14th. He stated that the essays will be forwarded to the state level. He thanked the teachers who recognized the value of written expression and allowed scholars the opportunity to write. He also recognized Crossroad Academy Charter School student, Alondra Miranda, for placing 2nd in the Big Bend Junior Achievement Shark Bowl competition; and Gadsden Elementary Magnet School Scholars who ranked 4th and 5th in the recent Florida Civics and Debate Initiative.

Mr. Frost recognized the lawn maintenance staff for their hard work.

Mr. McMillan recognized Mrs. Vicki Johnson and the Family & Community Engagement staff for their hard work.

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

Mr. McMillan added to the agenda item #10a – Head Start 2021 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Application. Mr. Key pulled from the agenda item #9a – Resolution Relating to the Disposal of Gretna Elementary School Property.

Mr. McMillan 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. March 23, 2021, 4:30 p.m. – School Board Workshop
- b. March 23, 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 2020 – 2021
- b. Personnel 2021 – 2022

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

7. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

- a. Budget Amendment No. 1 (2020-2021)

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

8. AGREEMENT/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

- a. The School Board of Gadsden County, Contract with Independent Contractor Erika Raines

Fund Source: FEFP dollars
Amount: \$59.00 per hour

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

9. SCHOOL FACILITY / PROPERTY

- a. Resolution Relating to the Disposal of Gretna Elementary School Property

Fund Source: N/A
Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Request for Exemption from Policy 7.70 Purchasing and Bidding – Threshold Requirement for Sealed Bids/Competitive Proposals

Fund Source: General Fund – Maintenance of Plant-Capital Improvements other than Buildings then to be requested for reimbursement from FEMA Category-G Funding
Amount: \$27,926.00

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 moved to the DISCUSSION portion of the agenda.

*9. SCHOOL FACILITY/PROPERTY

c. Request to Delete and Dispose from Capital Assets and Sale via Auction or Salvage

Mrs. Judith Mandela, GCCTA President, addressed the Board with concerns regarding the process for deletion and disposing of property.

Mr. McMillan stated that there would be a public notification of the date and time for the sale via auction or salvage. He inquired about the description column not being complete on some of the items.

Following discussion, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #9c. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Karema D. Dudley and carried unanimously.

Fund Source: Applicable Funds
Amount: \$1,040,674.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

10. FACILITIES UPDATE

a. Head Start 2021 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Application

Fund Source: Head Start
Amount: N/A

Mrs. Lakysa Perkins stated that the Head Start COLA application was a grant opportunity to apply for \$28,000 for operations and not salary. She stated that there would be an additional \$28,000 for the next five years.

Following discussion, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #10a. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

Mr. Hunter stated that there were no new facility updates.

In response to Mr. McMillan's concern regarding whether there were procedures in place for use of facilities, Mr. Hunter stated that there is a use of facility form with financial obligation. He stated that the form is distributed to the principal, superintendent, and himself. Mr. McMillan stated that the use of facilities procedures should be followed.

Mr. Key responded yes, to Mr. Scott's question to have the facilities update moved to the workshop.

11. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Key stated that the FSA assessment season was in full swing. He stated that in keeping with the State's textbook adoption cycle, high quality instructional materials for ELA have been identified. He stated that the Public Objections Form is posted on the district's website and the window to submit will close at the end of this week, April 30th. He stated that the Academic Services Department will host a Professional Learning Seminar for school literacy teams on Saturday, May 1, 2021. He stated that during this seminar, teams will gain a greater understanding of the new B.E.S.T Standards for ELA and be prepared to train teachers in the summer institutes. He noted the following Family & Community Engagement activities: a.) Collaboration with the Salvation Army to establish a support center for Gadsden County residents at 320 West Jefferson Street. Services provided will

include food, hygiene products, infant items, and utilities assistance, as available; b) 3rd Quarter Parent Expos scheduled for Tuesday, April 27th at 6:00 p.m. (Elementary/Middle) and Thursday, April 29th at 6:00 p.m. (High School); and c) the Parents as Partners Virtual Symposium will be held Thursday, May 13th at 6:00 p.m. Stakeholders may register for this event on the district website. He also noted the following ESE (Exceptional Student Education) activities: a) Youth Mental Health First Aid for Parents Seminar – May 18th and 19th from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.; b) ESE Virtual Parent Night – May 25th from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.; and c) Gadsden County High School Staff Youth Mental Health First Aid for Educators – May 25th and 26th from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. He announced that graduation will be held Friday, June 18th 7:00 p.m. at Gadsden County High School with CDC guidelines adhered to.

12. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Frost stated Carter Parramore Academy (CPA) started with 50 students. He stated that he mentored students and CPA. He stated that CPA was originally designed for credit recovery. He stated that he wants to know how many students are currently housed at CPA and does it need to be restructured. He questioned whether credit recovery was needed at CPA.

Mr. Key stated that credit recovery is offered to all secondary students.

Ms. Johnson stated that she wants to be released from the Planning and Zoning Committee.

Mrs. Dudley stated that she would serve as the Board's representative on the Planning and Zoning Committee.

Mr. Scott stated that the budget has been sent to the Governor and there are some items of interest to the district.

In response to Mrs. Dudley's concern whether testing standards were changing in stages, Mr. Key stated yes. He also stated that the changes began with kindergarten and 1st grade. He stated that graduation and 3rd grade requirements were waived last week but districts have to provide assistance over the summer if needed.

Mrs. Judith Mandela, GCCTA President, addressed the Board and stated that teachers had received a letter about compensation for the 2020 – 2021 year. She stated that there was a lack of communication with administration. She stated that in an effort to collaborate and work together we must have communication. She stated that teachers have been asked to work with the district towards certification and there seems to be no level of participation from the district, but the teacher's union is willing to work with the district. She stated that the teachers are not included on things like the new school, working during the summer, etc. She asked that the Superintendent and Board work collaboratively with the union.

Mr. Key stated that the teachers were asked to have conversations with their principal. He stated that he was not a part of the contract in October 2020 but teachers knew it was going to happen. He stated he has asked teachers to speak with principals before coming to him and he in turn will talk with principals.

Mrs. Mandela stated that she was not speaking about the content of the letter but the way it is worded. She stated that it says the GCCTA contract, which implies the union is not supporting the teachers but the contract is between GCCTA and the district. Mrs. Mandela stated that the \$31,000 salary was not previously discussed.

Mr. Key stated that these specific teachers will be full time subs and no longer a part of the bargaining team.

Mrs. Mandela stated that in the big picture with all the money that is coming there needs to be conversation so that ideas are not limited.

Mrs. Dudley stated that prior to her being a Board member she would attend meetings to discuss her issues. She stated that she has not received any phone calls or emails. She stated that personal accountability must be taken into account and teachers can call, email, or come to the meetings.

Mrs. Mandela stated that a previous email with teacher surveys were sent to every Board member and Superintendent and no one responded. She stated that teachers are sometimes intimidated because of the way they are treated by the Board.

Mr. McMillan stated that he supports teachers. He stated that the Board has the best interest of the teachers at heart. He stated that we all need to come together, teach students, and not have all the negative comments. He stated that the goal is to make Gadsden a model school district.

Mr. Key stated that he read everything on the survey. He asked Mrs. Mandela to stop living in the past and any retaliation to a teacher should come to him. He stated that there were comments from teachers about things that need to be done in a school. He stated that he has already addressed that issue by advising teachers to talk with the principal prior to coming to him. He stated that he wants collaboration with everyone. He stated that the district is moving in a new direction.

Commissioner Kimblin Nesmith, Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners, shared with the Board a power-point presentation regarding the Gadsden Youth Initiative. He stated that the Commissioners need the assistance of the School Board. He stated that the Commissioners want to assist the district with anything they need in order to help make the district the best in the state and nation. He stated that the Commissioners are ready to assist the Superintendent and GCSB with any and everything needed to make this district great. He stated that in the past the Commissioners had a summer program employing students. He stated that this year they are going to place students in jobs that will train them and provide certification. He stated that the goal is place students in jobs after graduation.

Mr. Scott stated that he wanted to know who will provide the certification.

Mr. Edward Dixon, County Administrator, stated that TCC would do the certifications.

Mr. Frost asked who would be the contact person for the County.

Mr. Edward Dixon stated that he will be the contact person for the County.

Mr. Key stated that he and Dr. Sylvia Jackson will be the contact for the district. He announced high school graduation on June 18th and students return to school on August 16th.

Following Commissioner Nesmith's power-point presentation on the Gadsden Youth Initiative, Board members and the Superintendent agreed to partner with the Board of County Commissioners.

13. The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.