

SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

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

September 20, 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 Mr. Charlie D. Frost.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in unison.

4. AGREEMENT/CONTRACT

a. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD AND POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS CORPORATION

Fund Source: IDEA

Amount: 2 Registered Behavior Technicians: \$65,700.00 (146 days)
1 – Board Certified Behavior Analyst: \$6,975.00 (31 weeks)
Beginning October 4, 2021 and Ending June 7, 2022

Ms. Johnson asked how many hours would the Registered Behavior Technicians and the Board Certified Behavior Analyst work.

Mr. Key stated there is a difference in the areas by positions but the working hours would be 40 hours per week or 7.5 hours a day. He stated that the positions are at Havana Magnet School and Carter Parramore Academy.

In response to Ms. Johnson's concern about students being served at the other schools, Mr. Key stated that Havana Magnet School and Carter Parramore Academy are the locations without support for student behavioral issues. He stated that these two schools do not have behavioral support as the other schools. He stated that these positions will be to diagnose and identify issues of students and a plan will be put in place. He stated that this is for the ESE department and possibly other students that are needing help.

In response to Mrs. Dudley's question whether this will solve the issue of not having behavior specialists on campus, Ms. Sharon Thomas, Director of Exceptional Student Education, stated yes, the schools currently do not have behavioral specialists.

Mr. Key stated that the positions are for students who are showing behavioral issues and need intervention. He stated that the union has asked for options for behavioral specialists. He stated that the behavioral specialists must have training and become certified. He stated that the union has proposed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) but nothing has been done.

Ms. Johnson asked if there was enough staff for one-on-one with some students.

Ms. Sharon Thomas stated that the district is trying to put intensive support in classrooms but very few students need one on one. She stated that the district is utilizing outside people such as retired teachers, paraprofessionals and substitutes to give extra support in the classroom. She stated that the extra people in the classroom help with the needs of the students.

Mr. Key stated that Havana Magnet School does not have programs to meet all the needs of a student with learning exceptionalities.

Ms. Thomas stated that in some cases a review of the IEP is needed to see if a change in the student's placement is needed.

Mr. Frost stated that the district is going through some of the same things as other districts. He stated that the district is advertising positions but people are not applying. He stated that there is a nationwide issue with employment.

Following discussion, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #4a. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Karema D. Dudley and carried with Mr. Frost, Mr. McMillan, Mr. Scott and Mrs. Dudley voting "aye". Ms. Johnson voted "nay".

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

5. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Key stated that he is constantly checking the employment board. He stated that no one is applying for positions or they are applying with no qualifications. He stated that he will seek other ways to advertise positions. He stated that State law allows positions to be created for adjunct instructors, and if needed that is what the district will do.

In response to Mr. Scott's question if the district had reached out to PAEC and the Retired Teachers Association for assistance, Mr. Key stated that he will contact the Retired Teachers Association.

Mrs. Dudley inquired about reaching out to the colleges. Mr. Key stated that the district is currently working on advertising with both FSU and FAMU universities.

6. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Johnson asked why the software for teachers to view lesson plans was not being utilized in schools, and why copy paper was not available at Havana Magnet School. She stated that ESSER and CARES funds could be used to train teachers on the use of the software.

Mr. Key stated that ESSER funds cannot be used for training. He stated that white copy paper was not available at Havana Magnet School, but they do have colored paper. He stated that the paper was removed from the school and no one knows where it went. He stated that last year 50 cases of paper went to Havana Magnet School and now there is no paper to be found at the school. He stated that federal programs has placed an order for paper. He stated that the district is currently assisting Havana Magnet School because of employee shortage.

Mrs. Farlin stated that the questions were not about using electronic textbooks, but more of having paper to print information.

Ms. Johnson stated that staff have to try harder to move from paper textbooks. She stated that everyone has to be proactive. She stated that there are funds available to train parents.

Mr. Key stated that teachers have been trained on google classroom. He stated that Havana Magnet School's 6th and 8th grade students need to return their laptops.

Mr. Scott expressed staff shortage. He stated that adults are needed in the classrooms.

Mrs. Dudley stated that employee pay is a problem. She stated that the district need to create opportunities for employee growth. She stated that teachers have to change their way of thinking.

7. The meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

The Board convened in an executive session at 6:45 p.m. to discuss collective bargaining issues; and adjourned at 7:50 p.m.