

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

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

January 23, 2024

6:00 P.M.

The meeting was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mrs. Karema D. Dudley, Chairwoman, Ms. Cathy S. Johnson, Mr. Steve Scott, 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. Mr. Leroy McMillan was absent.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chairwoman, Mrs. Karema D. Dudley, at 6:00 p.m.

2. OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was led by Reverend Roosevelt Rogers, Pastor of Old Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church in Havana.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in unison.

4. RECOGNITIONS

Ms. Johnson commended the Head Start/PreK Team for an excellent Community Family Resource Day Event. She thanked all the parents and vendors for their participation. She and the Board recognized former retirees Mr. Bennie Johnson and Ms. JoAnn Youmas. They each were presented with a plaque award.

Mr. Scott recognized Mrs. LaTisha Hutley-Figgers as being the new Teacher-of-the-Year. He also recognized the City of Chattahoochee on receiving a grant for their new Senior Citizen Building.

Mr. Frost recognized West Gadsden Middle School students on their academics.

Mrs. Dudley recognized the Head Start/PreK staff for a great community engagement event; Mrs. LaTisha Hutley-Figgers as Teacher-of-the-Year; Ms. Doris Hinson innovation with the students at Stewart Street Elementary School, and Ms. Cynthia Goldwire on her DROP retirement. She encouraged everyone to pick up a book and read during Literacy Week.

Mr. Key recognized the Head Start/Prek staff for a great community event. Mrs. LaTisha Hutley-Figgers as Teacher-of-the-Year, first grade students at Stewart Street Elementary School leading in discussions, Gadsden County High School maintenance department during the hard freeze, Gadsden County High School volunteers for morning duty during the hard freeze, and the bus drivers for doing a good job of getting students to and from the school,. He also recognized the students for their improvement on reading and math made during progress monitoring; and appreciated the hard work from staff across the district.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Mrs. Judith Mandela addressed the Board with the concern of a MOU that will impact teachers at failing schools. She stated that some of the international teachers at the turn around schools did not receive a bonus. She stated that the international teachers do not have a professional certificate. She stated that these teachers have been denied the bonus because of a temporary certificate. She asked that the Board ensure the MOU is enforced and the teachers receive their bonus.

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

Mrs. Dudley removed from the agenda item #8a – TCC Early College Program Agreement. She 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.

6. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- a. December 12, 2023, 4:30 p.m. – School Board Workshop
- b. December 19, 2023, 4:30 p.m. – School Board Financial Workshop
- c. December 19, 2023, 6:00 p.m. – Regular School Board Meeting

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

8. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

- a. TCC Early College Program Agreement

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

Removed from the Board agenda.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

10. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

- a. Havana Magnet School Out-of-State Field Trip Requests

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

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. STUDENT MATTERS

- a. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #76-2324-9016

The mother of student #76-2324-9106 addressed the Board to request a hearing.

Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to defer action on agenda item # 9a until a hearing is held.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Cathy S. Johnson and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

b. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #77-2324-0051

The mother of student #77-2324-0051 addressed the Board to request a hearing.

Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to defer action on agenda item #9b until a hearing is held. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cathy S. Johnson and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

c. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #79-2324-0051

The mother of student #79-2324-0051 addressed the Board to request a hearing.

Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to defer action on agenda item # 9c until a hearing is held. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cathy S. Johnson and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

d. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #80-2324-0051

The mother of student #80-2324-0051 addressed the Board to request a hearing.

Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to defer action on agenda item # 9d until a hearing is held. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cathy S. Johnson and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

e. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #82-2324-9106

The mother of student #82-2324-9106 addressed the Board to request a hearing.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to defer action on agenda item #9e until a hearing is held. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cathy S. Johnson and carried unanimously.

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

a. Personnel 2023 – 2024

Mr. Frost asked for clarity on the recommendation for the Director of Gadsden Technical College. He wanted to know if all the paperwork was clear on the employee. Mr. Key stated that school was a different setting for the employee. He stated that there was nothing from the Department of Education to alter the recommendation.

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

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

11. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Key stated that the district's fund balance was at a 3.2%. He stated that a closer look at positions was needed. He stated that the district has been very aggressive with teacher raises. He stated that there was nothing available in the fund balance for non-instructional staff.

12. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Johnson stated that she was concerned about looking for ways to add foreign language in the elementary classrooms. She shared information with the Board from Proximity Learning. She recommended the Board consider a pilot program with Proximity Learning in the elementary grades.

Mr. Scott requested a workshop to discuss the teacher evaluation model.

Mr. Frost asked the Board and staff to keep Mr. McMillan and his family in prayer. He stated that one of Mr. McMillan's family member was not doing well.

Mrs. Dudley asked where the district was with grievances and the cost associated. Mr. Key stated that Mr. Dietzen is representing the district not only with grievances but in other capacities such as lawsuits, etc. Ms. Johnson wanted to know how much has been spent. Mrs. Dudley stated that \$28,937.57 has currently been spent. Mrs. Dudley requested that all district vehicles be branded with the district's logo for identity. Mrs. Dudley made a motion to brand all district vehicles with the district's logo. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

13. The meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.