

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

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

December 16, 2025

6:00 P.M.

The meeting was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Leroy McMillan, Chairman; Ms. Cathy S. Johnson; Ms. Stacey S. Hannigan; 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.

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 Sister Kysha Washington-Hopkins, Supply Pastor at Ebenezer AME Church.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in unison.

4. RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Key shared with the Board the Academic Newsletter. He stated that Principal Floyd, Principal Jones, Principal Kirkland and Principal Hickman did an outstanding job of sharing with the other administrators how data from PM1 and PM2 are being used to refine instructional priorities for the current semester and strategically prepare for PM3. He stated that they also talked about the great things on their campuses. He recognized Ms. Thelma Hickman from Havana Magnet School as the district's Principal of the Year and Mr. Christopher Germany from Stewart Street Elementary School as the district's Assistant Principal of the Year. He stated that an official announcement will be made on Thursday, December 18th for Ms. Hickman and Mr. Germany.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND CONCERNs

Ms. Judith Mandela, President of the Gadsden County Classroom Teachers Association, addressed the Board to ask a few questions: 1) what was the percentage of the fund balance for the 24-25 school year. Mrs. Bruner responded 3 percent; 2) what was the percentage for the 25 – 26 school year, 3% as well. Mrs. Bruner stated that is what the district starts with, we won't know until the end of the year; 3) Ms. Mandela stated that the next question relates to what we're going through right now in terms of bargaining, but this is a question that comes with some of the conversation about facility repairs and things that need to happen with the air quality and the expenses that might occur. She asked if the \$12 million dollars from Hurricane Michael insurance funds were available or accessible. What was the outcome of knowing about the funds specifically in terms of FEMA? She stated that this might cover some of the expenses from the general funds, which affect teacher salary negotiation.

Mr. McMillan stated that the Board would get that information for Ms. Mandela. He stated that he would speak with the Finance Director and the Superintendent. He stated that the district is doing all we can to make sure our employees are getting the most.

Ms. Hannigon stated that Ms. Mandela mentioned that it was part of good faith bargaining that you all have the financials, so that you all know what to ask for. She stated that as it has been said in this boardroom that collective bargaining happens outside of the boardroom and whenever we have discussions, it is in an executive session. She stated that her question is within the committee, has collective bargaining been made aware of the district's financials, or is it that you have not received them as to why you are coming to the Board? Ms. Mandela stated yes, they are waiting on the AFR, which will help to determine what the district has.

Mr. Key stated that the Board would convene in an executive session following the meeting.

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

Mr. McMillan entertained a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was made by Ms. Stacey S. Hannigon, seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

6. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- a. November 10, 2025, 4:00 p.m. – School Board Workshop
- b. November 18, 2025, 4:30 p.m. – School Board Financial Workshop
- c. November 18, 2025, 5:30 p.m. – School Board Organization Meeting
- d. November 18, 2025, 6:00 p.m. - Regular School Board Meeting

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

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

- a. Personnel 2025 – 2026

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

8. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

- a. 2024 – 2025 Annual Financial Report

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

9. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

- a. Board Approval of New K-8 Construction Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP)

Fund Source: State of Florida Fixed Capital Outlay/Special Facility Construction Funds

Amount: \$73,000,000.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

10. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

- a. Crossroad Academy Charter School Girls' Basketball Team Out-of-State Field Trip Request

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Crossroad Academy Charter School Boys' Basketball Team Out-of-State Field Trip Request

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

11. CONSIDERATION, PROPOSAL, AND/OR ADOPTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE RULES AND RELATED MATTERS

- a. Request to Post Notice of Intent to Amend/Adopt Board Policy

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

12. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Key stated that the Academic Services and the Support Services Newsletter will keep the Board informed of what has happened in the past month. He stated that the Support Services Newsletter would be sent to Board members via email. He stated that the district is closing out this semester. He stated that the last day for students will be Friday, December 19th which is a 1/2 day. He stated that the last day for 12-month employees would be Tuesday, December 23rd. He stated that next Tuesday would also be payday for employees. He reminded all employees that their next paycheck after this Tuesday would be January 30th.

13. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Johnson congratulated Principal Thelma Hickman for being selected Principal of the Year. She stated that Principal Hickman is in District 1 at Havana Magnet School. She stated that we are so grateful for the excellent job she is doing in our community.

Ms. Hannigan stated that on behalf of District 5, she wanted to congratulate Mr. Christopher Germany for being selected as our Assistant Principal of the Year. She stated that they do great work at Stewart Street Elementary School and Havana Magnet School. She stated that she enjoys going to Havana Magnet School every time Ms. Hickman extends an invitation. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and to be safe. She thanked all of the staff for the work they are doing. She gave a special thanks to the finance and facilities department for all their hard work.

Mr. McMillan stated that the district lost a good employee, Mr. Gary Russ-Sills. He stated that we must do all we can to increase salaries.

14. The meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

The Board convened in executive session to discuss collective bargaining issues at 6:34 p.m.; and adjourned at 6:45 p.m.