

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

November 19, 2024

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. Hannigon, and Mr. Steve Scott. Mr. Elijah Key, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board, Mrs. Deborah Minnis, Attorney for the Board; and others. Mr. Charlie D. Frost was absent.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Leroy McMillan, at 6:04 p.m.

2. OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was led by Bishop Tyrone Smith, Pastor of Life Changing Faith Church.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in unison.

4. RECOGNITIONS

Mr. McMillan stated that he was elected to serve as Chairman of the School Board. He stated that he was going to do all he can to make the Board all it can be. He stated that as Board members and Superintendent, we need to make it our priority to be committed to every student's success in the district. He stated that it is not about you and me, it is about our children and what is best for our school district. He stated that we need to be a team. He stated that it is not team School Board and team Superintendent. He stated that it's Team Gadsden County and we are all part of that. He asked if Board members could receive Board information packets the 3rd Tuesday of the month to give Board members time to come and talk to the Superintendent and staff to ensure that we get questions answered. He stated that in the event that we cannot the world is not going to end. He stated that order would be maintained in the Boardroom.

Ms. Johnson recognized Major McNealy, student at Havana Magnet School, for coming to do the Pledge of Allegiance at the organization meeting.

Mr. McMillan amended the agenda to add item #8e – Political Lobbyist Service Contract. Mr. Key stated that the lobbyist has been doing a great job with connecting the district to the right people. He stated that because of the lobbyist pushing to ensure that our students apply scholarships, one of our students got over tens of thousands of dollars in scholarship money.

Mr. McMillan stated that the scholarship that Superintendent is referring to is the Balacki Award. He stated that he was at a book fair at one of the schools and the principal stated that we try to get the kids involved, but they do not have the money to buy books. He stated that he made one phone call to our lobbyist and stated

that he needed help. He stated that the lobbyist sent \$500 to help with books. He entertained a motion to add item #8e – Political Lobbyist Service Contract to the agenda. Mr. Scott made a motion to add item #8e to the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cathy S. Johnson and carried unanimously.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

Mr. Torrence Henson, Sr. addressed the Board to request a hearing in Student Case #020-2425-0051.

Mr. McMillan removed from the agenda item #'s 9a – Student Case #016-2425-0051; 9b – Student Case #017-2425-0051; and 9c – Student Case #020-2425-0051 until a hearing could be held.

Mr. McMillan entertained a motion to approve the remaining consent agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Steve Scott, seconded by Ms. Cathy S. Johnson and carried unanimously.

6. REVIEW OF MINUTES

a. October 22, 2024, 4:30 p.m. – School Board Financial Workshop

b. October 22, 2024, 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 2024– 2025

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

8. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

a. Contract for Consulting Services

Fund Source: General Fund

Amount: Not to Exceed \$75,000.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

b. Agreement for Program Evaluation Services between Gadsden County School District and CIC Planning Group

Fund Source: U.S. DOE – School Climate Transformation Grant – Elevate Rural FL

Amount: \$50,000.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

c. Request Approval for Contract Amendment

Fund Source: Spectrum Lease Compensation (T-Mobile)

Amount: \$26,000.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

d. TCC Early College Program Agreement

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

10. SCHOOL FACILITY/PROPERTY

a. Purchase Order Request for Jenkins HVAC

Fund Source: General Funds

Amount: \$25,394.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

b. Purchase Order Request for Southland Rowe Roofing, Inc.

Fund Source: General Funds

Amount: \$85,250.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

c. Purchase Order Request for B&T Fencing

Fund Source: General Funds

Amount: \$3,724.13

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

d. Purchase Order Request for B&T Fencing

Fund Source: General Funds

Amount: \$64,466.72

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

11. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

a. Gadsden County High School Boys Basketball Team Out-of-State Field Trip Request

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

b. Approval of the 2024 – 2025 PAEC Course Catalog

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 acted upon during the discussion portion of the agenda.

*8. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

e. Political Lobbyist Service Contract

Fund Source: General Fund

Amount: \$24,000.00 at a Rate of \$2,000 per Month for One Year.

Ms. Hannigon stated that she needed to know the content of the contract. She stated that the contract was not included. She stated that she wanted to see the lobbyist track record and past record. Mr. McMillan stated that the lobbyist delivered a large amount of monies to the district. Mr. Key stated that the lobbyist was a big help in the new K – 8 school projects and he is still doing more.

Following discussion, Ms. Stacey S. Hannigon made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation on agenda item #8e. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

*10. SCHOOL FACILITY/PROPERTY

e. Architectural Engineering Services for CPA Hurricane Michael Renovations

Fund Source: FEMA Hurricane Michael Funding for CPA (75%) and District (25%) per FEMA Guidelines

Amount: Total Cost Not to Exceed \$1,344,236.46 (unless additional funds are allocated by FEMA)

Ms. Hannigon asked how time sensitive was agenda item #10e. She stated that she wanted to be more informed about the CPA Hurricane Michael FEMA monies. She stated that the funding was coming from FEMA, which must be used solo for CPA due to the Hurricane Michael damage. She requested more time to read the documentation to catch up to speed with the repairs. She requested a meeting with Mr. Hudson and the Superintendent to discuss information about the FEMA project. Mr. Key stated that a lot of this money was allocated to CPA. He stated that is government funding, and must be used for the school intended. He stated that some of the monies would go to Shanks, which is part of the new school. He stated that with FEMA dollars, normally you spend the dollars, and FEMA in turn will reimburse. Dr. Sylvia Jackson stated that the district has submitted the proper documentation with Ranston to be up to date with receiving the FEMA dollars. He stated that he would get the total amount to be allocated for the new school later.

Following discussion, Ms. Hannigon made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #10e. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cathy S. Johnson and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

*11. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

c. Comprehensive School-Based Attendance & Truancy Intervention Procedures Manual 2024 - 2025

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

Mr. McMillian requested the Superintendent have staff attend the board meeting when they have an agenda item.

Mr. Scott asked why the Board was receiving this information when it referenced State statute, and was it new. Mr. Gary Russ Sills, Coordinator Family and Community Engagement, stated that yes, it is new. He stated that it was just an expansion to the district's former attendance policy. He stated that the district policy outline the steps regarding days and gives bare minimum of what the district could do in regards to

student attendance. He stated that the policy expands and put more details for parents to understand their requirement as a parent as well as the student. He stated that interventions are outlined to help support students when they begin to exhibit non-attendance behaviors. He stated that the Comprehensive School-Based Attendance & Truancy Intervention Procedures Manual would help build a petition because we have an attendance problem in the district. He stated that in order for the district to carry out the process to hold individuals accountable, we need to make sure that we have the documentation to support it and outline according to State statutes and policies. He stated that these policies give the district the documentation to carry out the process. Mr. Scott asked if a committee worked on the procedures manual. Mr. Russ Sills stated that it was a collaboration between Dr. Sylvia Jackson, Dr. Loietta Holmes and some best practices from other counties. He stated that he compiled all of the information. He stated that because of the overarching of attendance and truancy, he serves in the role as compliance officer. Dr. Sylvia Jackson stated that this supports the policy the Board currently has in place. She stated that the policy states general requirements for monitoring attendance. She stated that this procedures manual specifies action and supports the Student Code of Conduct.

Mr. Key stated that the Board would be getting more of these procedures. He stated that the district did the same thing with Federal Programs in August or September. He stated that Finance is building a procedures manual. Mr. McMillan stated that Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

Ms. Hannigon asked what currently exists compared to what is being presented. Mr. Russ stated that currently the district has school-based attendance where unexcused absences are identified at 3, 5, 8, 10 or 15 days. He stated that when this happens, it outlines what is expected but again there are no procedures to carry out and how to develop the petition. Ms. Hannigon asked how would every teacher be held to this procedural manual and abide constantly and fairly by what you are asking to be put in place? Mr. Russ stated that the first step would be a professional development blitz where teachers are orientated. He stated that the teacher, administrator, and social worker would be involved with the implementation. He stated that if the Board gives approval, staff are ready to receive help. He stated that in addition to the hands on training, he has developed a monitoring system. He stated that there would be a monthly intervention attendance meeting at the school. He stated that there would be an attendance agreement. Ms. Hannigon asked how prevalent truancy is in our school district and beyond that between elementary, middle and high school. Mr. Russ stated the report would have information on the total number of students, perfect attendance, or habitual truancy. Ms. Hannigon asked if the current policies were being amended. Mrs. Minnis stated that the Board would be creating a procedure for a policy already in place. Mrs. Minnis stated that there has to be a distinction between Policy and Standard Operating Procedures, which are internal actions verses policies. Ms. Hannigon asked how many staff members district wide and from your office will be doing this work. Mr. Russ Sills stated that his office staff would manage the task with the support of the ESE department and the social workers. He stated that the social workers would serve as attendance managers on campus.

Following discussion, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #11c. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cathy S. Johnson and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

12. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Key recognized Ms. Sandra Woods one of our Bus Driver. He stated that Ms. Woods voluntarily helps monitor the students and staff at Gadsden County High School in the afternoon. He stated that one day the district's school safety officer was doing a routine check and acted as they were looking at trophies, Ms. Woods turned them around and had them report to the office. He also recognized Gadsden County High School football team for successfully moving to the playoffs. He stated that he had a meeting scheduled in Orlando with the State to discuss the district's staffing plan for James Shanks Middle School. He stated that the district is still looking for teachers. He stated that he met with DAG and Allstate about the demolition. He

stated that they are still working to get the numbers down to help Gadsden County. He stated that part of the discussion was to reduce the square footage to help bring down the cost.

13. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Johnson stated that she would like to have a better understanding of the meeting that Superintendent had with DAG and Allstate. She stated that she wanted DAG and Allstate to update the Board.

Mr. McMillian stated that a committee was formed and approved by the Board to serve as a representative to make decisions such as this one. He stated that he is a member of the committee. Mr. Key stated that reducing the square footage was only a suggestion to bring down the cost. He stated that nothing was approved. Ms. Johnson thanked Mr. McMillan for his explanation. She stated that she previously mentioned to the Board about an Owners Representative. She stated that this would be the job of an Owners Representative.

Mr. Key recognized Ms. Kynadi Harris as the new staff person for Public Relations. He stated that Ms. Harris is a graduate of FAMU and one of Gadsden Counties own.

Ms. Hannigon stated that she was thankful for the opportunity and would like to move the school district forward. She stated that there is Progress through Partnership and was her campaign slogan. She stated that it is indeed what she stands on. She stated that she would make sure the line of communication stays forward. She stated that she will have those side bar conversations and sit down and be schooled. She asked the Superintendent what are the expected outcomes from the State Board. Mr. Key stated that you have to go and stand before the State Board and explain how the district will address each one of the conditions for improving low performing schools. Ms. Hannigon referenced what Ms. Johnson previously mentioned about an owners representative. Attorney Minnis stated that from her understanding, currently the district has a construction manager, in addition to an architect and engineer, the committee and the construction manager represents the Board. She stated the owners representative position mentioned is more robust. She stated that it is a matter of what the Board decides. Ms. Hannigon stated that she would like to have that time to ask DAG and Allstate questions about the upcoming project. Attorney Minnis stated that overall the committee could not make any changes without the Board.

14. The meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.