

STUDENT HEARING

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

January 11, 2024

5:30 P.M.

A hearing for student case #66-2324-0051 convened at 5:37 p.m.

The following Board members were present: Mrs. Karema D. Dudley, Chairwoman; Mr. Leroy McMillan; Mr. Steve Scott; and Ms. Cathy S. Johnson. Also present were Mr. Elijah Key, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board; Mrs. Deborah Minnis, Attorney for the Board; and others. Mr. Charlie D. Frost was absent.

The proceedings were electronically recorded.

Mrs. Dudley made the following announcement: "This is not a court of law. This is a School Board Hearing. All rules that normally apply to a court trial do not necessarily apply here. This hearing is closed to the public unless the parent waives her right." She stated that the mother of student #66-2324-0051 has expressed the desire for due process as provided for under Florida Statutes 120.57 and 1001.42. She stated that pursuant to the mother's request for a hearing, she has the right to representation by counsel and the opportunity to present evidence and testimony as to why the School Board should not act favorably on the recommendation of expulsion of student #66-2324-0051. She stated that by law, expulsion hearings are exempt from the public meetings act; however, the parents have the right to waive the exemption and have an open hearing pursuant to Section 286.001, F.S.

Mrs. Dudley stated that the hearing for student #66-2324-0051 was for fighting.

The following witnesses were present for the hearing. 1) Mr. O'Hara Black, Assistant Principal of Gadsden County High School; 2) mother of student #66-2324-0051; 3) student #66-2324-0051; 4) uncle of student #66-2324-0051; 5) community representative of student #66-2324-0051; and 6) former principal of student #66-2324-0051.

The following witnesses gave sworn testimony: 1) Mr. O'Hara Black, Assistant Principal of Gadsden County High School; 2) mother of student #66-2324-0051; 3) student #66-2324-0051; 4) uncle of student #66-2324-0051; 5) community representative of student #66-2324-0051; and 6) former principal of student #66-2324-0051.

Mrs. Dudley recessed the hearing at 7:00 p.m. for deliberation and reconvened at 7:13 p.m.

During deliberation, Mr. Key recommended that student #66-2324-0051 be expelled to Carter Parramore Academy for the remainder of the 2023 – 2024 school year, and up to the first semester of the 2024 – 2025 school year with re-evaluation for a determination to return to Gadsden County High School based on the student's academics and behavior. Student should not be on any other campus, day or night, during this expulsion period except to transact official business. Student should not be on any school bus except the bus for the assigned school.

Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to expel student #66-2324-0051 to Carter Parramore Academy for the remainder of the 2023 – 2024 school year, and up to the first semester of the 2024 – 2025 school year with re-evaluation for a determination to return to Gadsden County High School based on the student's academics and behavior. Student should not be on any other campus, day or night, during this expulsion period except to transact official business. Student should not be on any school bus except the bus for the assigned school. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leroy McMillan and carried unanimously.

Attorney Minnis informed the mother of student #66-2324-0051 of her right to file an appeal with the 1st District Court of Appeal if she objected to the Board's ruling.

The hearing adjourned at 7:20 p.m.