

## SCHOOL BOARD WORKSHOP

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

February 11, 2020

4:00 P.M.

This workshop was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis, Chairwoman; Mr. Steve Scott; and Mr. Tyrone D. Smith. Also present were Mr. Roger P. Milton, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board; and others. Mr. Leroy McMillan; Mr. Charlie D. Frost; and Mrs. Deborah Minnis, Attorney for the Board, were absent.

1. Call to Order

The workshop was called to order by the Chairwoman, Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis, at 4:10 p.m.

2. Discussion of High School Graduation

Mrs. Lewis stated that the majority of the Board members wished to have the high school graduation remain in Gadsden County. She stated that she is proud of Gadsden County. She stated that the Board is aware of issues with space and parking at Gadsden County High School for graduation. She stated that the school cafeteria is an option for overflow. She stated that the leader of the school along with Dr. Sylvia Jackson will work to have a nice graduation for the students. She requested the parents work with Principal Jones to have a beautiful graduation for the students. She encouraged parents to attend the school's expos. She stated that improving the graduation rate continues to be a significant priority and challenge for the district. She stated that the graduation rate is most directly impacted by graduating cohorts' ability to pass the FSA 10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA. She stated that the capacity for high school students to pass the 10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA by tenth grade and/or the time they graduate depends most significantly on the student's level of reading proficiency when they enter 9<sup>th</sup> grade. She stated that students who are two or more grade levels behind in reading upon entering grade 9 are considerably challenged to pass the 10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA. She encouraged other Board members to join her and the Superintendent in the reading initiative to "Give the Gift of a Book" to a student.

Mr. Emanuel Sapp addressed the Board to share data information on the district's graduation rate. He stated that Gadsden County has grown but not have provided elements for growing. He stated that high school graduations need to be glorified. He advocated to have the high school graduation in Leon County. He stated that he want to show the world what Gadsden County has to offer. He stated that he was very proud of all high school seniors. He pleaded with the Board to reconsider the location of the high school graduation.

Mrs. Lewis thanked Mr. Sapp for sharing the graduation data information with the Board. She stated that Mr. Sapp's heart was all in the communities. She stated that it will take more for people to come together. She stated that she will be distributing books to churches for parents to take home to their children. She stated that she is very passionate about parents and community involvement. She stated that we have to show love and care for one another.

Mr. Scott stated that he appreciated Mr. Sapp's data on graduation. He stated that he requested the workshop to discuss the district's declining graduate rate and to find ways to help increase the graduation rate.

Mr. Milton stated that Mr. Sapp presented a very passionate presentation to the Board. He stated the high school graduation for 2020 will be at Gadsden County High School. He stated that there has not been enough data or individuals to petition the location change for the graduation.

The following individuals from the audience participated in the lengthy discussion on the location of the high school graduation, and to share their concerns: 1) Mr. Gabrielle Showers; 2) Reverend Charles Flowers; and 3) Mr. Eric Hinson.

Principal Pamela Jones shared with the Board information and resources the high school is using to work with students to get what is needed to help them graduate.

Mr. Smith thanked everyone for coming to the workshop to share their concerns. He stated that things happen when people work together. He stated that connecting students to careers is a formula for graduation. He stated that student attendance is very important. He stated that we have to be educated about where we are. He stated that we are all in this together to do what is best for students.

Mrs. Lewis thanked everyone for their healthy conversations. She stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

3. The workshop adjourned at 5:55 p.m.