

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

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

July 28, 2020

Immediately Following Tentative Budget Hearing at 6:00 P.M.

This meeting was open to the public and electronically recorded.

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chairwoman, Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis, at 6:12 p.m.

2. OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was led by Mr. Tyrone D. Smith.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in unison.

4. RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Milton recognized Mrs. Judith Mandela, Principal Maurice Stokes and the Task Force Committee members. He stated that the district has submitted a draft plan to reopen schools. He stated that many of the school districts are moving their school reopening start date back. He stated that following the Board meeting, each faculty and staff member will receive a draft copy of the school reopening plan. He stated that there will be a zoom meeting tomorrow (July 29th) at 10:00 a.m. He stated that Mrs. Mandela is very passionate about education and he appreciates all of her hard work and efforts. He also recognized Ms. Rose Raynak, Dr. Sylvia Jackson, and Mrs. Tammy Farlin for their hard work. He stated that the district received approval from the Department of Education on their Innovative School Reopening Plan.

Mrs. Farlin shared with the Board the seven assurances for the instructional plan for reopening schools: **Assurance 1:** Upon reopening in August, the district will assure that all brick and mortar schools are open at least five days per week for all students subject to advice and orders of the Florida Department of Health, local departments of health, Executive Order 20-149, and subsequent executive orders; **Assurance 2:** The district must provide the full array of services that are required by law so that families who wish to educate their children in a brick and mortar school have the opportunity to do so. These services include in-person instruction, specialized instruction for students with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) and those services required for vulnerable populations, such as students from low-income families, students of migrant workers, students who are homeless,

students with disabilities, students in foster care, and students who are English language learners (ELLs; **Assurance 3:** The district will provide robust progress monitoring to all students; tiered support must be provided to all students who are not making adequate progress. If a student is receiving instruction through innovative teaching methods fails to make adequate progress, the student must be provided additional support and the opportunity to transition to another teaching method; **Assurance 4:** The district will work with IEP teams to determine needed services, including compensatory services for students with disabilities. School districts must immediately begin working with IEP teams to identify students who may have regressed during school closures. IEP teams must follow a student-centered approach with a commitment to ensure that the individual needs of each child are met; **Assurance 5:** The district will work with ELL Committees to identify ELLs who have regressed and determine if additional or supplemental English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services are needed. Districts should ensure that appropriate identification of English skills has been noted and that schools have the resources to implement additional interventions and strategies; **Assurance 6:** Progress monitoring data must be shared regularly by the district with the Department, in a manner prescribed by the Department; **Assurance 7:** Districts must extend the same flexibility in instructional methods to every charter school that submits a reopening plan to the sponsoring district addressing the requirements set forth in DOE ORDER NO. 2020-EO-06. In addition, the district will collect reopening plans from each charter school's governing board for approval.

Dr. Sylvia Jackson read the district's Innovative Reopening Plan approval letter from the Department of Education. She stated that the Department of Education has reviewed the Innovative Reopening Plan for the Fall 2020 School Semester submitted by the Gadsden County School District. She stated that the Department's review, for purposes of considering the approval of a reopening plan, is focused on verifying each of the seven assurances required by DOE Order No. 2020-EO-06. She stated that DOE is pleased to report that the district's plan submitted provides each of the required assurances. She stated that as such, the district's reopening plan is approved, effective immediately. She stated that as a reminder, DOE's emergency order does not (and cannot) waive any federal requirements. She stated that DOE encouraged the district and team members to be diligent in ensuring strict compliances with all federal obligations and the delivery of all necessary and required student services required by law. She stated that DOE is eager to support the important work districts are accomplishing. She stated that DOE is confident that innovative solutions, tailored to the local challenges associated with educating students during Florida's recovery, will come from every school and district across the State. She stated that as the district discover helpful strategies and practices, let DOE know so they can facilitate the sharing of best practices. She stated that DOE thanked the district for their commitment to excellence and innovation in support of student achievement and look forward to continuing to support the district's faithful implementation of this plan.

Mr. Milton recognized Ms. Regina Munroe, President of GESPA, for her dedication and hard work. He thanked everyone for their support. He stated that the Innovative Reopening Plan will be posted on the district's website.

Mrs. Lewis thanked Mr. Milton for being proactive. She also thanked the School Reopening Task Force Members, Mr. Maurice Stokes, Mrs. Tammy Farlin, and Dr. Sylvia Jackson for their hard work. She reminded everyone that the Superintendent and Board are looking out for students, families and employees. She stated that the Board is looking to be creative as the district moves forward. She stated that we are a TEAM – Together Everyone Achieves More. She thanked the Board of County Commissioners for their efforts in working to expand broadband for families and their homeless plan. She thanked the Board for coming together to approve the Innovative School Reopening Plan.

Mr. Frost thanked the Superintendent and staff for their hard work. He stated that it is very stressful as a Board to do what is right for all students and staff during these challenging times. He stated that we are all in this together.

Mr. Scott thanked the Superintendent and staff for their diligent work. He thanked the Board and Superintendent for making their decisions on a safe school reopening plan.

Mr. Smith thanked everyone who for doing a great job.

Mrs. Lewis presented Mr. McMillan with Mrs. Sandra McMillan's Teacher-of-the-Year ring for the 2019 – 2020 year. She congratulated Mrs. McMillan for being Teacher-of-the-Year for the 2019 – 2020 year; and she congratulated Mrs. Sallie Murphy for being Teacher-of-the-year for the 2020 – 2021 year. She stated that many families are going through a lot in this unpredictable time. She stated that these are challenging times for all of us. She stated that we have to all work as a team.

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

Mrs. Lewis entertained a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Charlie D. Frost. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

5. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- a. June 23, 2020, 4:00 p.m. – Special School Board Meeting
- b. June 23, 2020, 4:30 p.m. – School Board Workshop
- c. June 23, 2020, 6:00 p.m. - Regular School Board Meeting
- d. July 14, 2020, 2:00 p.m. – School Board Workshop
- e. July 21, 2020, 6:00 p.m. – Special School Board Meeting

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

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

- a. Personnel 2020 – 2021

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Revised 2020 – 2021 Calendars

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

7. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

- a. Board Review Requested for Financial Statements from Charter School

Fund Source: All Public Funds at Crossroad Academy Charter School
Amount: Crossroad Academy Charter School Financial Statements Attached

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

8. AGREEMENT/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

- a. Contracted Services with Justina Williams of Aubrey's Heart Therapy Services and Gadsden County School Board

Fund Source: FEFP Dollars
Amount: \$58.00 per hour

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. FSU Multidisciplinary Services 2020 – 2021 School Year
 Fund Source: FEFP Dollars
 Amount: \$25,000 estimate
 ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- c. Approval of Turnaround Schools Supplemental Services Allocation (TSSSA)
 Fund Source: General Appropriation
 Amount: \$324,290 James A. Shanks Middle School
 \$177,700 West Gadsden Middle School
 Total \$501,990
 ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- d. Head Start 2020 – 2021 Refunding Application and Program Improvement Plans
 Fund Source: Head Start
 Amount: \$2,232,127
 ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- e. 2020 – 2021 Agreement Extension for Security Monitoring and Maintenance with Vendor – Redwire
 Fund Source: General Fund
 Amount: 2019 – 2020 FY = \$9,447.36
 ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- f. 2020 – 2021 Agreement Extension for Security and Access System Monitoring and Maintenance with Vendor – Sonitrol
 Fund Source: General Fund
 Amount: 2019 – 2020 FY = \$48,342.17
 ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- g. 2020 – 2021 Agreement Extension for Solid Waste and Cardboard Recycle Services
 Fund Source: General Fund and School Food Service
 Amount: 2019 – 2020 FY = \$138,746.49
 ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

9. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

- a. Medical Physicals 2020 - 2021
 Fund Source: 110 Fund
 Amount: \$8,100.00
 ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

b. Resolution Affirming Participation in the Small District Council Consortium

Fund Source: General Fund
Amount: \$3,250.00

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.

10. FACILITIES UPDATE

Mr. Hunter stated that roof work is being done on some of the schools. He stated that doors are being installed at Stewart Street Elementary School. He stated that staff have pulled weeds from in front of West Gadsden Middle School and Gadsden Elementary Magnet School. He stated that the mechanical system in building 2 at Stewart Street Elementary School is being worked on. He stated that staff is continuing lawn work. He stated that the portables at George W. Munroe Elementary School are being reroofed. He stated that he is looking at ways to repair the walkways, and items in the kitchen at George W. Munroe Elementary School. He stated that roofs are being repaired at Gadsden Technical Institute. He stated that the ditches at Gadsden County High School will be maintained. He stated that roof and metal doors have been ordered for Havana Magnet School. He stated that more training will be done for custodians. He stated that each school will be provided with cleaning supplies. He stated that training will be provided on how to use the cleaning products. He stated that water bottle stations will be placed at each school. He stated that there will be hand sanitizer stations at the schools and placed in classrooms. He stated that safety markers and stickers will be placed inside the schools. He stated that there will be sneeze guards for common areas at the schools.

Mr. Milton stated that the district's school safety plan includes safety items for students and staff. He stated that it will take a lot to ensure the safety of everyone.

In response to Mr. McMillan's concern regarding lawn care, Mr. Hunter stated that there are three full-time grounds position. He stated that he recommend hiring one more individual for the maintenance department. He stated that he will get outside help to ensure all school lawns are mowed. He stated that staff are working hard.

Mr. Frost stated that the maintenance department is under staff. He stated that it will take approximately six individuals to keep the lawns up at the schools. He stated that lawns have to be constantly mowed.

Mr. McMillan suggested Mr. Hunter look into using the inmates as a resource to mow lawns.

Mr. Hunter stated that he has used inmates for painting but not for lawn care. He stated that he will look into using inmates to assist with lawn care.

Mr. Frost stated that he appreciates Mr. David McPhaul and Mr. Commodore for their hard work in the district.

Mrs. Lewis stated that the transportation department has a video on safety. She stated that the safety video will be on the district's website.

11. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Milton shared with the Board the findings from a teacher survey he received from GCCTA. He stated that 850 Distance Learning Request Forms had been received for online services. He stated that tomorrow (July 29th) at 10:00 a.m. a webinar on the school reopening plan will be provided for staff. He gave Board members a copy of the school reopening plan. He thanked the Board and the finance department for finding ways to continue to pay teachers their regular pay on August 31st. He stated that a contract has been obtained to provide five devices for internet service. He stated that there is a lot of work to be done. He stated that everyone has to work collaboratively. He thanked Mrs. Wood and Mrs. Paula Milton along with the food service staff for approval of a grant extension to provide meals through the month of August. He stated that there are approximately 1,215 positive COVID-19 cases as of to date. He stated that shelter use may require the use of the school gyms and classrooms. He requested an executive session following the meeting to discuss collective bargaining issues.

12. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Frost stated that we are all in these challenging times together. He stated that he was concerned about something that could not be seen. He stated that everyone is concerned about managing their healthcare. He stated that the Board is trying to make schools and the community safe.

Mr. Scott stated that choices are limited when the Commissioner of Education has mandated districts to open schools in August. He thanked the Board for moving the district's school start date back to August 31st. He stated that the district has to be flexible with parents. He stated that everyone has to be adaptable. He stated that some students cannot do face to face learning at this time. He stated that everyone must emphasize the importance of wearing a mask. He stated that consistency to wear a mask and social distance is very important.

Mr. McMillan thanked the Superintendent for a job well done.

Mrs. Lewis concurred with Board members regarding everyone being flexible and adaptable with parents. She stated that she is thinking positive that this pandemic will soon end. She stated that it is time for Gadsden to come together. She stated that parents have a choice with their child's education. She stated that there will be professional learning. She requested a copy of the training schedule. She stated that she wants everyone to be safe. She stated that we are a TEAM – Together Everyone Achieves More!

Mrs. Judith Mandela, President of GCCTA, addressed the Board to share comments by a teacher who had a sister to recently pass due to COVID-19. She stated that teachers want to return to the classroom but are concerned about their safety. She requested the Board advocate to the Governor, and Legislators to do distance learning only. She stated that last week was a little testy. She apologized for disrupting the meeting last week. She stated that we all have a voice. She stated that teachers should be offered flexibility. She stated that Mr. Hunter did not give any assurances to a safe plan for returning to school. She stated that we are all in this together. She thanked the Board for allowing her to speak. She stated that she believes in working together.

Mr. Milton stated that Mr. Hunter is making sure safety items are ordered for staff and students. He stated that the district has a month to continue to prepare for safe schools. He stated that Mr. Hunter has taken the approach to work closely with principals and site base managers to ensure the safety of all schools. He stated that the district is working to do whatever it takes to work with people. He stated that it is going to take everyone working together. He stated that a lot of work has to be done.

Mrs. Lewis stated that she has spoken with teachers who have underlying conditions as she does. She requested everyone work together. She encouraged Mrs. Mandela to continue to fight for teachers.

13. The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

The Board convened in an executive session at 7:50 p.m. to discuss collective bargaining issues; and adjourned at 8:05 p.m.