

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

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

September 26, 2017

6:00 P.M.

This meeting was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Isaac Simmons, Chairman; Mr. Steve Scott; Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis; Mr. Charlie D. Frost; and Mr. Tyrone D. Smith. Also present were Mr. Roger P. Milton, 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. Isaac Simmons, at 6:00 p.m.

2. OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was led by Reverend Tyrone D. Smith, Pastor of Life Changing Faith Ministries.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in Unison.

4. RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Milton recognized Ms. Catherine Keen of Volunteer Florida.

Ms. Keen recognized Mrs. Bea Hopkins for her service of over 20 years administering the AmeriCorps Program. She stated that Mrs. Hopkins did not view the AmeriCorps Program as a job but as a mission. She stated that her achievements include 630 members being trained. She stated that Mrs. Hopkins was a piano student who performs semi-annually at her teacher's recitals. Mrs. Hopkins received a gift certificate to Beethoven and Company for piano sheet music. The Superintendent and Board thanked Mrs. Hopkins for her service of over 30 years to the district.

Mr. Milton recognized Centennial Bank as a business partner. Representatives Leigh Hinson and Stella Murray introduced the new spirit debit card program. Ms. Hinson stated that Centennial Bank was excited to announce a new partnership with the Gadsden County School Board. She stated that the new School Spirit Debit Card was a way for students, staff, families and community members to show their school spirit. She stated that Centennial Bank is offering a new custom debit card in support of Gadsden District's Schools. She stated that with the launch of the School Spirit program, every time a cardholder uses the Centennial Bank School Spirit debit card to make a purchase, it allows Centennial Bank to give a portion of their earnings to the communities they serve, which

as a community bank is at the core of their existence. She stated that the cards are available to any current customer of Centennial Bank or to new customers who open a checking account with the bank. She stated that the Centennial Bank School Spirit debit cards can be used anywhere MASTERCARD is accepted. Mrs. Murray shared encouraging words supporting the district. She solicited the support of district employees. Mr. Milton was presented with his new Centennial Bank School Spirit debit card.

Mr. Frost recognized Ms. Hinson and Ms. Murray with Centennial Bank. He also recognized Mr. Bruce James and district staff for their work during Hurricane Irma. He stated that district staff worked as a team to service the community during Hurricane Irma.

Mr. Smith stated that the Gadsden County community came together as a team during Hurricane Irma. He recognized Mr. Popel, Tallahassee Community College Trustee member, for supporting the district's IB Program.

Mrs. Lewis thanked the district employees for their support during Hurricane Irma. She also thanked staff at the Health Department for their support during Hurricane Irma.

Mr. Scott thanked everyone for their support during Hurricane Irma. He complimented Chattahoochee Elementary School on their beautification.

Mr. Simmons thanked everyone for their support during Hurricane Irma. He recognized Mrs. Bea Hopkins for her valuable service to the students and the district.

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

Mr. Simmons added to the agenda item #7f – Closing on Sale of Havana Elementary Property. He entertained a motion to approve the remaining consent agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Charlie D. Frost, seconded by Mr. Tyrone D. Smith and carried unanimously.

5. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- a. August 22, 2017, 4:30 p.m. – School Board Workshop
- b. August 22, 2017, 6:00 p.m. – Regular School Board Meeting
- c. August 29, 2017, 4:30 p.m. – Special School Board Meeting
- d. August 29, 2017, 5:00 p.m. – School Board Workshop
- e. September 5, 2017, 10:00 a.m. – School Board Workshop
- f. September 5, 2017, 6:00 p.m. – Final Budget Hearing

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

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

- a. Personnel 2017 – 2018

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

7. AGREEMENTS/PROJECT/GRANT APPLICATIONS

f. Closing on Sale of Havana Elementary Property

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval

9. SCHOOL FACILITY/PROPERTY

a. Osceola Supply, Inc.

Fund Source: 110

Amount: \$21,161.50

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

b. Brooks Building Solutions

Fund Source: 110

Amount: \$19,491.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

c. Brooks Building Solutions

Fund Source: 379

Amount: \$41,171.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

d. Brooks Building Solutions/Daikin

Fund Source: 379

Amount: \$146,722.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval

e. South Eastern Surfaces (SSE & Associates, Inc.)

Fund Source: 110

Amount: \$12,615.00

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

10. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

a. School Field Trip Requests (Out-of-State) – Gadsden Technical Institute

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- c. 2017 – 2018 Uniform Assessment Schedule

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.

* 7. AGREEMENTS/PROJECT/GRANT APPLICATIONS

- a. Contracted Services for Dual Enrollment Program

Fund Source: General Fund
Amount: \$21,732.30

Mr. Scott questioned whether a separate person was needed to oversee the Dual Enrollment Program. He stated that the description of services should be assigned to the guidance counselor.

Mr. Milton stated that the Dual Enrollment Program agreement is a continuation of previous years. He stated that the Dual Enrollment Agreement is for the 2017 – 2018 year only. He stated that following this year, services for Dual Enrollment Program will be incorporated in the guidance counseling duties and responsibilities.

Following discussion, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #7a. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tyrone D. Smith and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Agreement Between the School Board of Gadsden County, FL., Capital Health Plan, Inc., World Class Schools of Leon County, Inc., and Titus Sports Academy, L.L.C.

Fund Source: N/A
Amount: N/A

In response to Mr. Smith's concern regarding Capital Health Plan's responsibilities and financial costs, Mr. Milton stated that Titus Sports has been providing services to the students for many years at no cost. He stated that there are no fees for services to the students.

Following discussion, Mr. Tyrone D. Smith made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #7b. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- c. District Office Purchase Orders

Fund Source: 110 General Fund
Amount: \$45,672.06

Mrs. Judith Mandela, Teacher at James A. Shanks Middle School, addressed the Board to request clarity on the DES contract and who qualifies to receive a contract.

Dr. Hightower stated that participation in the DES of Florida contract is for retirees. He stated that there are no benefits paid by the district for participants.

Mr. Milton stated that retirees are paid at the beginning step of the salary schedule. He stated that amounts include benefits and a processing fee paid by DES of Florida. He stated that the employee becomes a DES of Florida employee.

Mrs. Minnis stated that the contract is between the employee and DES of Florida. She stated that benefits and administrative fees are paid by DES of Florida.

Mr. Ronte Harris, GCCTA President, addressed the Board with the concern of one employee being in their first year of the DES contract and two employees in their second year of the DES contract. He asked what the reasons were for employees being in their second year of the DES contract.

Dr. Hightower stated that upon negotiations with the retirees, they did not want to apply to work under the Florida Retirement System.

Following discussion, Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #7c. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

d. District Office Purchase Orders

Fund Source: 110 General Fund
Amount: \$45,672.06

Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #7d. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

e. District Office Purchase Orders

Fund Source: 110 General Fund
Amount: \$45,672.06

Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #7e. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

*8. STUDENT MATTERS

a. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #01-1718-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #02-1718-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- c. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #04-1718-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- d. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #05-1718-0051

The parent of student #05-1718-0051 addressed the Board to request a hearing.

Following discussion, Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to defer action on agenda item #8d until a hearing could be held on Tuesday, October 3rd at 5:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- e. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #07-1718-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- f. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #08-1718-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- g. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #09-1718-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- h. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #10-1718-0051

The parent of student #10-1718-0051 addressed the Board to request a hearing.

Following discussion, Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to defer action on agenda item #8h until a hearing could be held on Tuesday, October 3rd at 4:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- i. Student Expulsion – See back-up material

Case #11-1718-0051

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

Mrs. Lewis expressed her concerns regarding student discipline. She stated that the Board needed to take a firm stance on student discipline. She requested a report on students who attend HOPE Academy. She stressed that there needs to be zero tolerance with student discipline. She asked if students are educated at home what effect it would have on the district. She stated that she was tired of students attending HOPE Academy and not being educated. She stated that she did not want students disrupting teaching and learning.

Mr. Frost stated that a more strenuous discipline policy was needed.

Mr. Milton stated that it is the mission of the Board to provide every student with a free education. He stated that there are only a few students causing havoc. He stated that the message will be given to students that this Board will not tolerate student disruptions. He stated that the other alternative for students is placement at Carter Parramore Academy or HOPE Academy. He stated that the Board must educate students 16 years and under. He stated that home school is an option for students. He stated that he was concern about the well-being of students. He stated that the GED program is an option for students who are 17 years and older. He stated that students who are 15 and 16 years old can be home schooled.

Mrs. Lewis stated that student safety is first. She stated that students cannot learn in a disruptive environment.

Mr. Simmons stated that student discipline policies are in place. He stated that policies can be amended. He stated that a workshop was needed very soon to further discuss student discipline.

Following discussion, Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #'s 8a, b, c, e, f, g & i. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

The Board scheduled a workshop on Tuesday, October 3rd at 6:00 p.m. to further discuss student discipline.

Mr. Smith left the meeting at 7:15 p.m. due to a prior obligation.

***10. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES**

b. 2017 – 2018 Gadsden County Controlled Open Enrollment Plan

Fund Source: N/A
Amount: N/A

Mrs. Lewis stated that she was proud of Gadsden Elementary Magnet School and Havana Magnet School for being the highest performing schools in the district.

Following discussion, Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #10b. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

Mr. Ronte Harris, GCCTA President and member of the Insurance Benefits Committee, addressed the Board with the concern of having a competitive insurance benefit package for employees. He stated that the Insurance Committee recommended American Fidelity to provide employees with a competitive insurance benefit package. He stated that there has been some miscommunication of what services were to be provided to employees by American Fidelity. He stated that American Fidelity did not know that their products would not be provided to employees this year. He stated that the employees did not know that their products would not be provided by American Fidelity this year. He stated that the issue is about employees receiving service products from American Fidelity this year. He stated that some employees can save as much as \$70.00 per month. He stated that an email was sent on September 21st stating that the services provided by American Fidelity would not be provided to employees until next year.

In response to Mr. Frost's concern about not being aware of the issues with American Fidelity, Mr. Harris apologized for not being able to reach him by phone.

Mr. Harris requested the Board allow employees who were affected by this process be allowed to receive products by American Fidelity this year.

Mr. Milton thanked Mr. Harris for serving on the Insurance Committee. He stated that open enrollment ended on August 31st.

Mr. Harris stated that it was the intent of the Insurance Committee to have American Fidelity provide flex spending account services to employees and other services.

Mrs. Minnis stated that the American Fidelity Service Agreement does not clarify other service products. She stated that the Board need to decide whether other products by American Fidelity should be allowed by employees at this time. She stated that Federal regulations will not allow employees to go back and make changes following the last day of open enrollment.

Mr. Mark Cisneros with American Fidelity stated that the law allows employees to make changes prior to the plan start date.

Mrs. Wood stated that because all other vendors complied with the open enrollment deadlines, there will be ramifications.

Mr. Milton recommended the Board do what is best for the employees.

Mr. Simmons commended Mrs. Wood and staff for their hard work. He stated that the Board needs to be more careful in reading language before taking action.

Following a lengthy discussion, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to allow employees who have previously signed up for other services by American Fidelity to be allowed to do so, and to have those employees who have already signed up to drop their previous existing policies. The "cut-off" date for this shall be September 26, 2017. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis and carried unanimously.

Mr. Harris applauded the Board for making decisions over vendors. He stated that he represent employees.

Mr. Simmons thanked Mr. Harris for bringing information to the Board regarding employee insurance benefits.

11. FACILITIES UPDATE

Mr. Hunter stated that repairs are complete on the chiller at Gadsden County High School. He stated that the chiller should operate up to the schools' capacity.

12. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Milton thanked Mr. Harris for being an advocate for students and employees. He stated that Mr. Smith will represent the Board at mediation in the case Bridges vs. Gadsden County School Board. He stated that he received a letter from the Commissioner regarding the make-up of instructional hours due to Hurricane Irma. He stated that the district must make-up two instructional days. He stated that he will provide the Board with a recommendation on Tuesday, October 3rd at a special meeting for the two make-up days for instruction. He stated that he had received notification from the Department of Education regarding the removal of the letter grade "I" for James A Shanks Middle School. He requested the Board consider an early release date for high school students or all schools to prepare for Gadsden County High School Homecoming Parade. He stated that professional development was taking place in the district. He shared with the Board the following information: a) request from the citizens of Havana regarding the Havana Northside property; b) discipline reports for students by schools; and c) reports for students who attend HOPE Academy.

13. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Frost thanked Mr. Harris for ensuring that things get done. He also thanked Mrs. Wood and staff for their hard work.

Mrs. Lewis thanked Mrs. Farlin for her hard work. She stated that the district is using the Accelerated Reading Program. She stated that reading is fundamental. She stated that she wants reading initiatives to take place monthly. She stated that public relations is vital to the district. She stated that she want to promote the good things in the district. She requested Ms. Mandela meet with each Teacher of the Year, Rookie Teacher of the Year, and School Related Employee of the Year from each school and highlight the positive things they are doing.

Mr. Scott stated that the Board needed to emphasize what strong measures are needed to handle student discipline. He stated that he had received an invitation to attend the Florida Students First Florida Policy Task Forces on Assessments Meeting on Friday, October 13th at the University Center Club.

In response to Mr. Simmons' concern regarding FEMA reimbursement, Mr. Milton stated that Mr. Bruce James contacted FEMA and forms need to be completed. He stated that the district will make every effort to receive funds for employees.

Mr. Simmons stated that he had concerns about Junior Varsity games at the high school.

Mr. Milton stated that high school games are being played by the Junior Varsity teams. He stated that he will address the issue with the Principal and Athletic Director. He stated that he and the Board are very supportive of all athletic programs as well as academics.

In response to Mr. Frost's concern about the Junior Varsity Announcer at games, Mr. Milton stated that he will speak with the Principal and Athletic Director regarding the issue.

Mr. Simmons thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He stated that the meeting was good and productive.

14. The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.