

## SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

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

November 13, 2017

5:00 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; 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. Mr. Charlie D. Frost was absent.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Isaac Simmons, at 5:03 p.m.

2. STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Mr. Milton thanked the administrators and staff for attending the special meeting. He stated that the district is trying to change its culture. He stated that attendance is very important for students and employees.

Mrs. Lewis shared with the Board a power-point presentation regarding discipline. She stated that she wanted to revisit the district's approach to manage undesirable student behaviors because all lives matter. She encouraged everyone to join the AAA team as the district considered ways to effectively manage undesirable student behavior while addressing attendance, attitude, and academics. She used examples in the following areas: Attendance – Students – Code of Conduct (Are students, parents and staff knowledgeable of the consequences of their actions?); Employees (Are employees aware of the impact of their absence on student learning and the budget when substitutes are used?); Skyward – Correct contact numbers – create campaigns to get correct contact numbers for parents. Parent communication system gives the data of all incorrect numbers. Do the district use the parent communication system to send random positive messages to parents? Attitudes – The Attitudinal Barrier: What is the district doing do improve the attitudes of students? How can the district encourage and motivate students to improve their attitudes about learning? How does one's attitude affect customer service and student behavior? Customer Service – How do we treat our customers? The front line employees are the first point of contact and set the tone of your business/school; Academics – Attendance and

attitude have a profound effect on teaching and learning. How do we change the schools' culture so that it will positively impact teaching and learning, attendance and attitudes? She stated that the following resources could be used to assist with student discipline: Counseling, Capital City Youth Services CCYS, Children and Families, Health Department, Life Management Skills, School Advisory Councils (governing body of the School Improvement Plan – SIP which includes the Parent Involvement Plan – PIP). Parental and Community Support – Law Enforcement, DJJ, Faith-Based, Judicial System (Teen Court), Diversion Program, Universities, and Business. She stated that the following suggestions could be used as volunteering: Employee Mentorship – pairing and assigning x number of students to employees; In-School Suspensions – are procedures or steps in place assigned by the Instructional Leader; Parent Services – are we (the district) communicating to the community and soliciting their support? Are we having community conversations to voice the need to support our mission? How do we help get the word out that the expectations of administrators and school leaders are consistently clear to students, parents and employees! Student Expulsions – make sure statements of the infraction/situation are factual and clear. Attorney – Explanation of the authority of the School Board when the ultimate consequence is to remove a student from the school system – in the code of student conduct. She stated that cultural change in schools occur when the district consistently and with fidelity apply rules, policies and procedures in all actions taken. It is important when the district build positive and lasting relationships with students, parents, employees and other stakeholders. She stated that the 2016 National Survey of Children's Health revealed that 250 Preschoolers are suspended or expelled every day. She asked the question – has zero tolerance for discipline gone too far? She stated that these disciplinary rates are particularly shocking since suspending and expelling young children have not been shown to produce positive behavioral results. She stated that quite the opposite, such practices can often intensify the challenges faced by these children and their parents, and have even been discussed as the first stage in a preschool-to-prison pipeline. She stated that therefore, when the Board, as policymakers, consider when strategies can improve student outcomes and reduce challenging youth behaviors, we look to preschool first, where an inclusive and welcoming learning environment can pay huge dividends! \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ and then, A CUSTOMER Friendly Environment within ALL Gadsden County programs and schools! She stated that research shows that when teachers are supported with adequate resources and evidence-based training, preschool can help young children build crucial social-emotional skills. Increasingly, social and emotional learning is understood as a major factor in educational success. Exclusionary discipline, such as suspension, isolates the children most in need of social-emotional development, and is associated with terrible educational outcomes. She stated that the district must build relationships! She stated that each one of us is accountable for change: The School Board by creating policies and procedures to effect change; Superintendent by ensuring the day-to-day operations that implement Board policies and procedures; and Principals and administrators through their actions as they apply rules, policies and procedures set forth by the Superintendent and Board. She requested each principal answer the following two questions and share with the Superintendent: Let's identify the greatest challenges to improved attitudes/behavior. What are possible solutions; and let's identify the greatest challenges to improved attendance. What are possible solutions?

Mr. Scott asked administrators to identify their challenges and asked what it takes to solve problems. He questioned what it would take to create and maintain a safe and learning environment.

Mr. Smith stated that the district is a team. He stated that it is very important that everyone play their part in creating a safe learning environment for all students.

Mr. Simmons thanked everyone for being a part of the special meeting. He stated that the district must do something in regards to student discipline. He stated that there must be conversations to help prevent student discipline. He stated that the district needs adequate resources to be able to deal with student discipline. He stated that the district must do something to change the perception to minimize student discipline.

Mr. Milton stated that student discipline was not unique to Gadsden County. He stated that most districts are having problems with student attendance and discipline. He stated that he wants to bring pride to the schools. He stated that the district must build relationships and change behaviors.

The following individuals from the audience participated in the discussion of student discipline: Dr. Ronald Peterson, Mrs. Rolanda Jackson, Lt. Shelton Turner, Mr. Bruce James, Ms. Pauline West, Deputy Bowman, and Mr. Rick Soskus.

On behalf of the Board, Mr. Simmons thanked everyone for their input. He stated that the Board will develop plans to implement ideas and suggestions to minimize student discipline.

Mr. Milton thanked everyone for their participation. He recommended the next step to schedule a workshop with the administrators from Carter Parramore Academy and secondary schools to discuss restructuring student discipline.

Mr. Simmons reminded the Board of the upcoming meetings on Tuesday, November 21, 2017: Financial Workshop – 4:30 p.m.; Organization Meeting – 5:30 p.m.; and Regular School Board Meeting – 6:00 p.m.

3. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

None.

4. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

None.

5. The meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.