

SCHOOL BOARD WORKSHOP

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

May 10, 2011

5:00 P.M.

This workshop was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Roger P. Milton, Chairman; Mr. Judge B. Helms; Mr. Charlie D. Frost; Mr. Eric F. Hinson; and Mr. Isaac Simmons. Also present were Mr. Reginald C. James, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board; Mrs. Deborah Minnis, Attorney for the Board; and others.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The workshop was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Roger P. Milton, at 5:00 p.m.

2. DISCUSSION OF DISTRICT'S 2011-12 BUDGET

Mr. Milton turned the workshop over to the Superintendent.

Mr. James stated that staff had put in a lot of work hours to find strategies to reduce the district's budget. He stated that employment will be based on student enrollment. He stated that finding ways to reduce the district's budget is a working progress. He stated that staff will share with the Board a power-point presentation outlining an overview of the 2011- 2012 district's budget. Mr. James stated that community people were invited to be a part of the budget committee.

Mrs. Bonnie Wood stated that the Board received a notebook in January outlining the strategies to reduce the district's budget. She shared with the Board the following power-point presentation outlining an overview of the 2011 – 2012 budget: a) General Fund – projected fund balance as of June 30, 2011 (GASB 54 requirements – no spendable inventories \$175,000, restricted (categorical) - \$400,000, committed (specific purposes \$429,862, Assigned (constrained) 1,217,780, Unassigned (unrestricted) \$2,000,000 – Total \$4,222,642; b) Reduction of FEFP funding – State & Local (\$1,207,290), Total loss of stimulus funding – Salaries/Benefits (\$3,387,810), Fixed cost increases, i.e., health insurance, diesel, etc. (\$300,000), total reduction needed to establish budget (\$4,895,1000; Methods of reducing budget: a) Staffing allocation ratios – aligns school staffing with

enrollment, FEFP revenue ties to class size ratios, general fund savings = reduction of 56 positions – generates savings \$2,348,607; b) Retirement change – current rate regular class – 10.77%, legislative change – employees pay 3%, general fund expenditure reduction - \$640,000; c) Transfer GTI to TCC – improve funding opportunities through community college resources, i.e. PECO dollars, sustain Vocational & Adult Program – change in governance, focus on K-12 programs with general fund; 2009 – 2010 GTI actual expenditures by funding source – Workforce Development \$645,816, Adult & Post/Sec. Fees \$95,355, FEFP for 14 FTE \$83,425, general fund subsidy \$404,642 – Total cost \$1,229,238; 8 positions currently funded 100% for general fund – savings = \$387,405, utilities/maintenance reductions savings = \$75,000; d) Reduction of Administrative Staff – Coordinator for Media (Textbooks), Assistant Principal (EGHS), Assistant Principal (WGHS), Assistant Principal – (GWMS); e) Pursuing Other Funding Sources – identifying federal funds for supplementing staffing needs, sustaining fundamental programs, i.e., reading coaches; f) Sustaining Existing Initiatives - .25 mill funding for general fund, energy savings from Honeywell project, Education Jobs Fund assists in general fund balance 06-30-11; g) Summary – staffing allocation plan \$2,348,607, retirement change \$640,000, transfer of GTI \$462,405; reduction of administration \$258,387; use of fund balance \$1,185,701 – total \$4,895,100. She cautioned the Board by using cash balances for recurring expenditures.

During the power-point presentation outlining the 2011 – 2012 districts’ budget, Board members shared their concerns, made comments, and asked questions. Board members had an ensuing discussion regarding the partnership Between Gadsden Technical Institute and Tallahassee Community College.

Board members requested a workshop to further discuss the issue of GTI’s budget and its partnership with TCC; and Honeywell to provide data to show energy savings.

3. ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

None.

4. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Simmons stated he was aware that this budget year will be challenging. He stated that tough decisions have to be made. He encouraged the Board to share their ideas on reducing the budget. He stated that the Board needs to be more involved. He stated that he was in favor of enhancing programs at Gadsden Technical Institute.

Mr. Milton encouraged the Board to see the documentary entitled “Waiting for Superman”. He stated that the Board seems to be more concerned about employees before students, parents and the community. He stated that the Board needed to have the best interest of the students.

Mr. Frost expressed his sentiments on hearing things in the community before being presented to the Board. He stated that he would like to receive information first before it gets out into the community. He stated that he will continue to fight for Gadsden Technical Institute.

Mr. Helms stated that it was not going to be easy to reduce the district's budget by \$4 million. He stated that the Superintendent has the hardest job. He stated that the TCC project will be a "win win" situation for the district. He stated that the Superintendent has the brightest staff he has ever had. He stated that public education did not come out well during the legislative session. He requested that the Board ask the question is it good for kids before making any decisions.

Mr. Hinson stated that he enjoyed the dialogue with the Board members. He stated that TCC has driving energy. He stated that he could not make a decision at this time because he was not provided all the data on the partnership with TCC. He stated that the district needs a grant writer to assist in the enhancement of programs. He complimented the Superintendent and staff for their hard work with the budget. He stated that he did not want any employee to lose their job. He stated that the money is not there, so there will be a reduction in staff.

Mr. Milton stated that he respected the opinions of the Board and the Superintendent. He stated that he don't want TCC and GTI to dominate the decisions for the next month. He asked the Board to be prepared to bring to the next workshop suggested ways to reduce the budget. He stated that tough decisions have to be made.

Mr. Hinson invited Board members to the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Scholarship Ball. He stated that scholarships will be given to students at both East and West Gadsden High Schools. He thanked the Board for their support.

Mr. Dwayne Ivory addressed the Board and stated that he was a part of the budget committee. He stated that the issue of cutting Art and Music from the elementary curriculum was listed last on the budget reduction items. He stated that the district has done a great job so far with the budget reductions. He stated that he was concerned that teachers will have to use their planning period to take art and music. He stated that this will be a strain on teachers to not have a planning period. He stated that he was concerned if teachers don't teach art and music, who will.

Dr. Sylvia Jackson stated that elementary principals are very collaborative, and seemed confident that teachers can find ways to teach art and music for students.

Mrs. Rosalyn Smith stated that the Board needs to be cautious and adhere to collective bargaining and statutes. She stated that elementary principals are looking at being creative to provide for planning periods. She stated that the district has a wonderful creative team of site based management. She stated that the district must adhere to the policies and procedures.

Mr. Hinson stated that he was passionate to students having art and music. He stated that he want students to be equipped with what they need. He stated that the district needs certified art and music teachers.

Mr. Milton recommended the Board watch the movie "Waiting for Superman".

Mr. James stated that all school districts will have cut backs this year. He stated that this was the worst budget year for all school districts. He stated that he met with all principals and plans are to meet district goals. He complimented his staff (Mrs. Wood, Mrs. Smith, Dr. Jackson, and Dr. Hightower) for their hard work and efforts to find ways to reduce the district's budget. He recognized Mrs. Rosalyn Smith as the new Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services. He commended the schools on FCAT Writing Scores. He stated that the district exceeded expectations.

5. The workshop adjourned at 7:40 p.m.