

Gadsden City Schools

COVID-19 Emergency Meeting
03/20/2020 01:00 PM
Teleconference

Attendees

Voting Members

Dr. Nathan Carter, Board Member - District 2
Mr. Mark Dayton, Board Member - District 5
Mr. Mike Haney, Board Member - District 4
Rev. Z. Andre' Huff, President - District 3
Hon. Allen Millican, Board Member - District 7
Ms. Adrienne Reed, Board Member - District 1
Mrs. Nancy Stewart, Vice President - District 6

Non-Voting Members

Mr. Tony Reddick, Superintendent
Mrs. Christie Knowles, Board Attorney
Ms. Nancy Foster, Superintendent Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

Via teleconference President Z. Andre' Huff called the meeting to order. Secretary called roll. All members were present. President opened the meeting with prayer.

On Friday, March 13, 2020, President Trump declared a national emergency in response to the pandemic influenza outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Due to the impending threat to the state of Alabama, on March 13, 2020 Alabama Governor Kay Ivey issued a proclamation requiring the closure of all K-12 public schools at the end of the day Wednesday, March 18, 2020, with reopening scheduled for the start of school on Monday, April 6, 2020, should circumstances permit.

The State Superintendent of Education and State Health Officer shall consult with one on a continuing basis and provide recommendations to the governor, as warranted, regarding the opening or closure of schools in response to COVID-19.

On Friday, March 20, 2020, Gadsden City Board of Education scheduled a Special Called Emergency Meeting at 1:00 p.m. via teleconference for the suspension of board policy or provision thereof, identified by the Superintendent as needed to implement written guidance from the State Superintendent relating to COVID-19 for the duration identified in the Governor's order of March 13, 2020 and any subsequent executive order.

2. Board Action

a. Board Resolution - Emergency - Suspension of Policy

WHEREAS, [Ala. Code §16-8-9 for county boards] or [Ala. Code §16-11-9 for city boards] authorizes local school boards to govern their respective systems, including adopting local board policies pursuant to Ala. Code §16-1-30;

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) as a pandemic;

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Governor Kay Ivey declared a state of emergency in Alabama pursuant to her authority under Ala. Code §31-9-8 in response to the outbreak of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the U.S. President declared a national state of emergency and Governor Ivey ordered closure of all public K-12 schools in Alabama until April 6, 2020 to contain the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on March 18, 2020, Governor Ivey issued a supplemental proclamation giving public bodies the authority to meet electronically subject to certain requirements and protections related to public access; and

WHEREAS, the State Superintendent has authority to waive instructional hours and school days, to interpret graduation requirements, and to oversee the allocation of resources for nutrition, transportation, and other crucial aspects of public education and is providing written guidance to Alabama school systems on issues related to COVID-19, including but not limited to student attendance, distance/online learning, high school credit, meal distribution, and other issues;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the GADSDEN CITY Board of Education hereby suspends any board policy or provision thereof, identified by the Superintendent or his or her designee, as needed to implement written guidance from the State Superintendent relating to COVID-19 for the duration identified in the Governor's order of March 13, 2020 and any subsequent executive order.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent will consult with the Board as feasible and appropriate and timely report to the Board regarding the emergency closure and efforts to implement written guidance from health and government agencies as disseminated by the Governor and/or State Superintendent.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, to the extent it is impossible or impractical for the Board to meet due to health and public safety concerns and/or restrictions imposed by local or state governments and/or health authorities, the Superintendent shall have the authority to take any action he or she deems appropriate and necessary to operate the System without prior board approval during the state of emergency. Any such actions shall be communicated to the Board in writing as soon as practical, preferably in advance of such action when feasible, and shall be reported to the public at the next scheduled Board meeting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent is authorized to close any school facility without further action by the Board. Such closure shall continue during the emergency created by the COVID-19 pandemic until such time as the Superintendent, in consultation with appropriate health and government authorities, deems it in the best interests of the District and its students to open schools.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent is authorized, based upon the needs of the System and the guidance from health and government agencies disseminated by the Governor and/or State Superintendent, to direct staff assignments during closures, including but not limited to essential employees who must report to work, employees who may be reassigned, and employees whose services are not needed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that access to public school grounds and public school buildings may be limited or repurposed to serve the community as directed by the Superintendent during System closures.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in light of this statewide emergency closure, the Board declares an emergency in which advertising for bids and competitive bid procedures may result in material injury or damage to the public interest of the System. Pursuant to Ala. Code §16-13B-3, the Superintendent is granted the authority to waive the requirements of advertising for bids and competitive bid procedures for purchases which may be necessary due to the emergency. The Superintendent will document the reasons prompt remedial action is necessary to prevent physical injury to persons or to property of the school district.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, subject to orders from the Governor and/or State Superintendent, in the interest of public health, the board may attend board meetings electronically and shall make a reasonable effort to permit the public to observe or listen using available technology.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that execution of this Resolution is conclusive evidence of the Board's approval of this action and of the authority granted herein. The Board

warrants that it has, and at the time of this action had, full power and lawful authority to adopt this instrument. Adopted and approved this __20th__ day of __March, 2020_____.

Motion made by: Mr. Mark Dayton

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart

Voting

Dr. Nathan Carter - Yes

Mr. Mark Dayton - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

3.

Adjournment

President Huff requested a motion to adjourn the emergency meeting.

Motion made by: Mr. Mark Dayton

Motion seconded by: Dr. Nathan Carter

Voting

Unanimously Approved

_____ Date

_____ Superintendent/Secretary