



June Regular Meeting
06/03/2025 05:00 PM
Gadsden City Board of Education
Central Office

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance

Voting Members

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff, Board Member - District 3
Mrs. Nancy Stewart, Board Member - District 6
Hon. Allen Millican, Board Chairman - District 7
Mr. Mark Dayton, Board Member - District 5
Mr. Mike Haney, Board Member - District 4
Ms. Adrienne Reed, Board Member - District 1 - Absent
Mrs. Rita Smith, Board Member - District 2

Non-Voting Members

Mr. Keith Blackwell, Superintendent
Mr. Ed Howard, Board Attorney
Mrs. Cory Skelton, Chief School Financial Officer
Mrs. Kelly Swafford, Superintendent Administrative Assistant

A. Call to Order, Opening Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Millican called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Mrs. Rita Smith led with prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Chairman Millican declared a quorum was present.

B. Recognition of Visitors/Guests

Superintendent Blackwell acknowledged City Councilman Steve Smith for attending. Chairman Millican recognized Officer Sykes for his work at the meeting, and Board Member Nancy Stewart expressed gratitude to the Titan Ambassadors, Lilly Troncale and Kingsly Weathers.

C. Approval of Agenda

The June agenda was presented for approval.

Motion made by: Mr. Mark Dayton

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mark Dayton - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

D. Reports

1. Accreditation Report - Mr. Hector Baeza and Ms. Janie Browning, Federal Programs

Superintendent Blackwell introduced Hector Baeza and Janie Browning from Federal Programs to provide an overview of the final Accreditation Review conducted for Gadsden City Schools. Mr. Baeza reported that the district received a score of 338, which is well above average and represents a significant improvement from the previous accreditation review. The Gadsden City School System exceeds expectations and scored a four on all thirty standards.

The Cognia review team was impressed with several achievements, including the district's strategic plan, which was developed in collaboration with all stakeholders. Additionally, they highlighted the extensive academic and extracurricular opportunities available to students in Gadsden City Schools. These accomplishments were showcased in a video presentation that earned high praise.

The areas identified for improvement were largely based on the system's self-assessments. Mr. Baeza concluded by stating that this is a significant accomplishment for the system and a celebration for the entire community.

2. ACAP Report - Mrs. Marcia Farabee, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Mrs. Marcia Farabee, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, provided an update on the reading portion of the Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) scores for the 2024-2025 school year. The ACAP is a standardized test designed to assess the reading achievements of third-grade students in accordance with the Alabama Course of Study Standards. Full test scores will be released in December 2025.

The reading scores are used to determine which students will be invited to the summer learning experience. This year, the cut score for the exam increased from 435 to 444. Out of the 403 third-grade students who took the ACAP exam, 342 met the cut score, while 61 fell below it. Of those 61 students, 27 have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and 15 are English

Learner (EL) students, most of whom qualify as newcomers. The count for the summer learning program has increased to 454 students.

Mrs. Farabee expressed her gratitude to all the third-grade teachers for their exceptional work in preparing the students for the exam.

E. Board Action

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the regular board meeting on May 6, 2025, were presented to the board for approval.

Motion made by: Mr. Mark Dayton

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Rita Smith

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mark Dayton - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

2. Surplus Property

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the property items listed from Litchfield Middle, Gadsden City High, and Striplin Elementary School as surplus property.

Motion made by: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff

Motion seconded by: Mr. Mark Dayton

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mark Dayton - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

3. Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trips

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the following out-of-state and overnight field trips.

- a. Gadsden City High School: Skills USA National Conference in Atlanta, GA**

Gadsden City High School electrical students participate in the Skills USA National Conference, plus a trip to Six Flags and the Georgia Aquarium from June 23 to June 28, 2025, in Atlanta, GA.

Motion made by: Mr. Mark Dayton

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes
Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes
Hon. Allen Millican - Yes
Mr. Mark Dayton - Yes
Mr. Mike Haney - Yes
Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

b. Gadsden City Schools: SADD Club to Walt Disney World, Orlando, FL

Sponsor Valerie Taylor and the members of the Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) club are requesting to attend Walt Disney World in Orlando, FL, from October 26 to October 31, 2025, and participate in Disney's Student Youth Program.

Motion made by: Mr. Mark Dayton

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Rita Smith

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes
Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes
Hon. Allen Millican - Yes
Mr. Mark Dayton - Yes
Mr. Mike Haney - Yes
Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

4. Personnel Actions

a. Part A

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the following Part A personnel actions be approved:

Retirement:

Vanessa Morgan, Adams Elementary School, Paraprofessional, effective 06/01/2025

Resignations:

Katie Gillihan, Eura Brown Elementary School, 5th Grade Teacher, effective 05/23/2025

Darby Green, Adams Elementary School, Classroom Teacher, effective

05/23/2025

Alyssa Daniell, Striplin Elementary School, Kindergarten Teacher, effective 05/23/2025

Jamie Self, Gadsden Middle School (homeschool), Systemwide Fine Arts Instructor, effective 07/01/2025

Morgan Chambers, Systemwide Gadsden Middle School, Special Education Teacher, effective 05/23/2025

Bethany Mullinax, Floyd Elementary School, Classroom Teacher, effective 06/12/2025

David Wooten, Gadsden City High School, Music Teacher, effective 06/02/2025

Erin Deck, Adams Elementary School, Assistant Principal, effective 06/10/2025

Perry Underwood, Eura Brown Elementary School, Custodian, effective 05/16/2025

Kelcey Holcomb, Walnut Park Elementary School, CNP Worker, effective 05/23/2025

(Part A) Reemployment:

(A-1) Sharon Underwood, Floyd Elementary School, Elementary Assistant Principal, 10.5 month contract, effective 07/17/2025

(A-2) Shelly Mason, Striplin Elementary School, Elementary Assistant Principal, 10.5 month contract, effective 07/17/2025

(A-3) Patrice Mosley, Eura Brown Elementary School, Elementary Assistant Principal, 10.5 month contract, effective 07/17/2025

(A-4) Lindsey Dukes, Floyd Elementary School, OSR Pre-K Lead Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 (one year only) **#2526.027**

(A-5) Jill Partridge, Eura Brown Elementary School, OSR Pre-K Lead Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 (one year only) **#2526.028**

(A-6) Shanna McCants, Donehoo Elementary School, OSR Pre-K Aide, effective 08/04/2025 (one year only) **#2526.029**

(A-7) Brigitte Connally, Eura Brown Elementary School, OSR Pre-K Aide, effective 08/04/2025 (one year only) **#2526.032**

(A-8) Amanda Milam-Moses, Adams Elementary School, Special Education Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.050**

(A-9) Dawn Hickman, Striplin Elementary School, Classroom Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.037**

(Part B) Transfers:

(B-1) Kristy Johnson, transfer from Gadsden City High School/10-Month Marketing Teacher and Co-op to Gadsden City High School/12-Month Business Marketing and Work-Based Learning Coordinator, effective 07/01/2025

(B-2) Cory Dunn, transfer from Donehoo Elementary

School/Classroom Teacher to Donehoo Elementary School/Physical Education Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2425.179**

(B-3) Molly Jordan, transfer from Emma Sansom Middle School/Special Education Teacher to Litchfield Middle School/Math Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.015**

(B-4) Mitchell Blake Smith, transfer from Thompson Elementary School/Classroom Teacher to Gadsden Middle School/6th Grade Math Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.046**

(B-5) Donna Hickman, transfer from Gadsden City High School/CNP Assistant Manager to Striplin Elementary School/CNP Manager, effective 08/04/2025 **#2425.200**

(B-6) Lisa Clark, transfer from Mitchell Elementary School/Lunchroom Worker to Litchfield Middle School/Lunchroom Worker, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.057**

(B-7) Nicole Jones, transfer from Gadsden City High School/Lunchroom Worker to Litchfield Middle School/Lunchroom Worker, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.057**

(Part C) New Personnel:

(C-1) Melissa Schaefer, Floyd Elementary School, Classroom Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.019**

(C-2) Autumn Dukes, Floyd Elementary School, Classroom Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.024**

(C-3) Jennilee Baker, Eura Brown Elementary School, Kindergarten Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.026**

(C-4) Melissa Wolfe, Emma Sansom Middle School, Classroom Teacher 6th Grade, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.021**

(C-5) Andrew Elrod, Gadsden Middle School, Secondary Math Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.045**

(C-6) Kia Graves, Donehoo Elementary School, Classroom Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.044**

(C-7) Amanda Glaze, Floyd Elementary School, Classroom Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.051**

(C-8) Sidney Oliver, Mitchell Elementary School, Physical Education Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.018**

(C-9) Christy Mayo Yocum, Emma Sansom Middle School, Special Education Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.038**

(C-10) Kaitlin Clark, Gadsden Middle School, English Language Arts, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.047**

(C-11) Mallory Elrod, Eura Brown Elementary School, Classroom Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.066**

(C-12) Gabriel Cox, Gadsden City High School, Marketing/Co-op Teacher, effective 07/23/2025 (10-month contract) **#2526.022**

(C-13) Angella Hooten, Thompson Elementary School, Classroom

Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.054**

(C-14) Matthew Loyd, Walnut Park Elementary School, Principal, effective 07/01/2025 **#2526.035**

(C-15) Jasmine Lang Little, Adams Elementary School (homeschool), Systemwide Special Education Teacher, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.067**

(C-16) Valerie Franks, Maintenance Department, Maintenance Receptionist/Clerical, effective 07/09/2025 **#2526.014**

(C-17) Richard White, Floyd Elementary School, Custodian, effective 07/23/2025 **#2526.052**

(C-18) Paula Martinez, Gadsden City High School, EL Aide Paraprofessional, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.065**

(C-19) Noemi Banegas, Striplin Elementary School, CNP Worker, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.057**

(C-20) Alina Cruz Wood, Gadsden City High School (homeschool), CNP Worker, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.057**

(C-21) Amber Harper, Thompson Elementary School (homeschool), CNP Worker, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.057**

(C-22) Merideth Schneider, Gadsden City High School, CNP Assistant Manager, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.058**

(C-23) William Tiencken, Adams Elementary School (homeschool), Systemwide Instructional Special Education Aide, effective 08/04/2025 **#2526.023**

Summer Camp Personnel Recommendations

#2425.195 Teacher and #2425.196 Support

Location Placements will be based on enrollment.

Reading Coaches

Mandisa Perry – Adams

Terri Dickson – Adams

Vicky Porter – Striplin

Valerie Johnson – Floyd

Katie Mayes – Floyd

Rashida Starr – Striplin

Latera Woods – Striplin

Alison Correll – Floyd

Math Coaches

Buffy Vaughn - Striplin

Jeressa McGee - Adams

Adrienne Edwards - Adams

Shereka Wright - Floyd

Additional Teacher

Shaniqua Appleton - Striplin

Latoya Laster - Secondary Teacher

Support

Marianela Gonzalez – Adams

Brenda Jiménez – Floyd

María Infante – Striplin

Ciera King Summer School

Substitute Summer Camp: Amber Buchanan

Motion made by: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff

Motion seconded by: Mr. Mike Haney

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mark Dayton - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

Superintendent Blackwell reads the new personnel and formally introduces the new principal of Walnut Park Elementary School, Mr. Matthew Loyd.

b. Part B

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve Part B of the personnel recommendations:

RESCIND NON-RENEWAL OF EMPLOYMENT:

Bethany Mullinax, Floyd Elementary, Certified Elementary Teacher, effective 05/23/2025

TRANSFER:

April Washburn, transfer from Thompson Elementary/Math Coach to Thompson Elementary/Certified Classroom Teacher, effective 06/06/2025

Motion made by: Mrs. Rita Smith

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mark Dayton - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

5. Monthly Financial Report and Bank Reconciliation

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the monthly financial report and cash balances presented by CSFO Cory Skelton. The financial data and cash balances presented are based on the reconciled bank statement and the general ledger as of April 30, 2025.

Motion made by: Mr. Mark Dayton

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Rita Smith

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mark Dayton - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

F. Information Items

1. Old Business

The graduation ceremony for the Class of 2025 was a success. Board Member Mike Haney remarked on the dignified nature of the event. The board members also praised the new, impressive Jumbotron and noted that the community was very pleased with the layout and overall commencement. They expressed their gratitude to Mr. Steven Fraser for announcing.

2. New Business

a. Superintendent and CSFO Evaluations - Dr. Asbury, Director of Human Resources

Dr. Asbury distributed paper evaluations to the board members. One for the superintendent and one for the CSFO. He requested the board members fill them out tonight or return them to the central office within 10 days. He stated these evaluations are anonymous.

b. HB166 - FOCUS Act (Freeing our Classrooms of Unnecessary Screens Act)

Superintendent Blackwell discussed the newly passed House Bill 166, called the FOCUS Act (Freeing our Classrooms of Unnecessary Screens for Safety Act), which limits the usage of wireless communication devices in classrooms. A policy for the system must be sent to the State for approval by July 1, 2025. The FOCUS Act is a new law enacted

by the state Legislature to reduce classroom distractions and limit student usage of wireless communication devices during instructional time. It will take effect beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

c. Board Meeting Schedule for 2025-2026

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
July 1, 2025	Central Office Board Room	5:00 PM
August 5, 2025	Central Office Board Room	5:00 PM
September 4, 2025 (Thursday)	Central Office Board Room Budget Hearing #1	5:00 PM
September 9, 2025	Donehoo Elementary School Regular Board Meeting and Budget Hearing #2	5:00 PM
October 7, 2025	Mitchell Elementary School	5:00 PM
November 4, 2025	Central Office Board Room	5:00 PM
December 2, 2025	Thompson Elementary School	5:00 PM
January 13, 2026	Central Office Board Room	5:00 PM
February 3, 2026	Floyd Elementary School	5:00 PM
March 3, 2026	Central Office Board Room	5:00 PM
April 7, 2026	GCHS Auditorium	5:00 PM
May 5, 2026	Walnut Park Elementary School	5:00 PM

June 2, 2026	Central Office Board Room	5:00 PM
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Additional meetings could be added as needed.

3. Next Regular Board Meeting

- a. Determine a date and time for a Special Called Board Meeting in June for personnel recommendations.**

Superintendent Blackwell recommended checking the available dates in June to determine if an option is suitable.

- b. The next scheduled board meeting is Tuesday, July 1, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. at the Gadsden City Board of Education**

G. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned on motion by Vice Chairman Mark Dayton.

Date

Superintendent/Secretary