



December Regular Board Meeting
12/02/2025 05:00 PM
Ray Thompson Elementary School
236 Goldenrod Ave

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance

Voting Members

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

Chairman Millican called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. Board Member Rita Smith led with prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. The roll was called, and Chairman Millican declared that a quorum was present.

B. Recognition of Visitors/Guests

Chairman Millican welcomed all attendees to the board meeting, acknowledging the presence of Councilmen Kent Back and Steve Smith, as well as the parents in attendance.

Superintendent Blackwell introduced the Gadsden City Flag Football team and its coaching staff. Coach Peter Rowe expressed gratitude to the Board of Education for recognizing the team's achievements. He encouraged community members to attend upcoming games to support the teams.

- The Varsity team has completed three seasons and has shown significant growth,

making it to the playoffs all three years.

- This year marked the introduction of a Junior Varsity team, which achieved an undefeated season without allowing any points scored against them for a total of 249-0.

Coach Rowe also recognized his fellow coaches: Michael Nelson, Wes Beck, and Drew Laughlin.

Chairman Millican introduced Principal Patrice Maxwell of Thompson Elementary School. Principal Maxwell welcomed attendees and introduced Board Member Rita Smith, who represents Thompson Elementary on the board, and Councilman Steve Smith, who represents the school's district on the Gadsden council.

Principal Maxwell then introduced her faculty and staff to the board. Following this, students from Kindergarten through fifth grade performed a skit and sang two Christmas songs, showcasing their talents.

C. Approval of Agenda

The December agenda was presented for approval.

Motion made by: Mr. Mike Haney

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Rita Smith

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

Chairman Millican announced a short break at 5:32 p.m. to allow the students to return to their parents. During this time, Board Member Rita Smith excused herself due to illness.

D. Reports

Ms. Janie Browning, Federal Programs/Community Education Coordinator, presented a report to the board on the review of the final Federal Program's external evaluations for Cohort 16. Ms. Browning thanked the board for their support of the after-school programs. This report of the evaluation is required to be reported to the board. The full report will be available online at www.gcs.k12.al.us. Gadsden City School System successfully met all the objectives in the final evaluation, being good stewards and showing growth. Student behavior and attendance showed improvement. Ms. Browning stated this is the last evaluation for this cycle in Cohort 16.

E. Board Action

1. Approval of November Board Minutes

A recommendation was made to approve the minutes from the November 4, 2025, regular board meeting.

Motion made by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart

Motion seconded by: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Not Present

2. Surplus Property Report for Floyd Elementary, Gadsden School Board Annex Building (1138 Chestnut St), and Old Gadsden High School Building (607 S. 12th St)

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the surplus property report from Floyd Elementary. Superintendent Blackwell also explained the need to approve the Gadsden School Board Annex building and the old Gadsden High School building as surplus property.

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. Mike Haney - Yes

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Not Present

3. Approval of Sales Contract for Gadsden High School Building (607 S. 12th St)

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the sales contract for the old Gadsden High School building. Board Attorney Ed Howard stated the board members reviewed all bids and collaboratively accepted a bid.

Motion made by: Mr. Mike Haney

Motion seconded by: Ms. Adrienne Reed

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes
Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes
Mrs. Rita Smith - Not Present

4. Personnel Actions

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the following personnel recommendations.

RESIGNATIONS:

Ian Lee, w/m, Systemwide Special Education Aide, Homeschool: Even Start/Family Literacy Center, **effective 11/12/2025**
Hunter Lowe, w/m, Systemwide Special Education Aide, Gadsden City High School, **effective 11/28/2025**

LEAVE OF ABSENCES:

Kristian Caudle, b/f, Classroom Teacher, Thompson Elementary School, **effective dates 11/03/2025 - 02/13/2026**
Cassaudra Knight, b/f, CNP Worker, Emma Sansom Middle School, **effective 10/27/2025 - 02/06/2026**

(Part A) TRANSFERS:

(A-1) Rebekah Payne, w/f, from School Library-Media Specialist at Donehoo/Thompson Elementary School to a Classroom Teacher at Donehoo Elementary School, **effective 11/18/2025**, pending board approval
(A-2) Larry Densmore, b/m, from Science Teacher at Gadsden City High School to a TEAMS Science Teacher at Gadsden City High School, **effective 12/03/2025**
(A-3) Micah Swain, b/f, from Title I Aide at Floyd Elementary School to a K2 Auxiliary Teacher at Floyd Elementary School, **effective 12/01/2025**, pending board approval

CONTRACT EMPLOYEES:

Gerii Jackson, Title I Interventionist for Emma Sansom Middle School, Academic Year 2025-2026
Karen Harris, RN Nurse for Even Start/Gadsden Literacy Center, December 11, 2025-May 21, 2026
Brenda Fuller, Professional Development Assistant, Central Office, January 05, 2026-September 30, 2026
Joe Billingsley, Special Project Consultant, Facilities Maintenance Department, January 01, 2026-December 31, 2026
Jennifer Lankford, Professional Development, Central Office, November 18, 2025-December 31, 2025
Wendy Goodwin, Part-time Technology Coordinator, Central Office, January 01, 2026-December 31, 2026

SUBSTITUTES:

Non-Certified Teacher Substitutes:

Tommy Norris

Re-applying "Certifying" Teacher Substitutes:

ChaRissa Stephens

Motion made by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart

Motion seconded by: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Not Present

5. Extended Substitute Pay Rate Increase

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the increase in pay for an extended substitute. Superintendent Blackwell stated that this increase will make our system more competitive with surrounding districts. The pay previously for an extended substitute was \$74.00 per day, and the recommended increase is to \$85.00 per day.

Motion made by: Mr. Mike Haney

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Not Present

6. Salary Schedule Change on Maintenance Supplement

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the increase in additional compensation for maintenance on the salary schedule to encourage the maintenance department to obtain a certification or degree in the maintenance field.

Additional Compensation:

\$2,500 - Superintendent Approved Certification

\$5,000 - Associate's Degree in Maintenance Field

\$7,500 - Bachelor's Degree

Motion made by: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff

Motion seconded by: Ms. Adrienne Reed

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Not Present

7. Monthly Financial Report and Bank Reconciliation for September 2025 and October 2025

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the monthly financial report and bank reconciliation presented by Chief Financial School Officer Cory Skelton. The board did not have any questions about the financial report from September 30, 2025. The financial data and cash balance presented are based on the reconciled bank statement and the general ledger as of October 31, 2025.

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. Mike Haney - Yes

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Not Present

F. Information Items

1. Old Business

No old business to discuss.

2. New Business

The winter athletic schedules for middle and high school, and a holiday event calendar for the schools, were included in the board members' packet and can also be found online at www.gcs.k12.al.us.

3. The next regular board meeting is on January 13, 2026, at the Gadsden City Board of Education

G. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the board adjourned on motion at 5:52 p.m.

Motion made by: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart

Voting:

Rev. Z. Andre' Huff - Yes

Mrs. Nancy Stewart - Yes

Hon. Allen Millican - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Not Present

Date

Superintendent/Secretary