



January Regular Board Meeting
01/13/2026 05:00 PM
Gadsden City Board of Education
1026 Chestnut Street
Gadsden, AL 35901

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
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, Roll Call

Chairman Allen Millican called the meeting to order at 5:00 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 a quorum was present.

B. Recognition of Visitors/Guests

President Millican thanked the audience for attending the meeting and turned it over to Superintendent Blackwell for Board Member Appreciation.

1. Board Member Appreciation Month

Superintendent Blackwell acknowledged the board members for Board Member Appreciation Month. He thanked them for their collaboration and for providing excellent support to the Gadsden City School System. Superintendent Blackwell emphasized the importance of their teamwork and the positive impact they have on the community and the students.

C. Approval of Agenda

The January agenda was presented for approval.

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. Mark Dayton - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

D. Reports

1. State Report Card Results - Mrs. Marcia Farabee

Mrs. Marcia Farabee, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, presented an overview of the State Report Card results to the board members. After analyzing the results released in November 2025, she noted several high points for the Gadsden City School System and where improvement is needed. For the second consecutive year, the system received an overall grade of B, achieving a score of 80%. Mrs. Farabee highlighted various statistics, pointing out that while many schools in the system showed improvement, a few experienced a decline. The system has three schools that earned an A grade: Eura Brown Elementary, Donehoo Elementary, and R.A. Mitchell Elementary School. Walnut Park Elementary School received the highest improvement in its score. The state department emphasizes three key areas: academic achievement, academic growth, and attendance. Mrs. Farabee stated plans are already in place for each school to meet a goal of continuous improvement in the Gadsden City School System.

E. Board Action

1. Approval of the Minutes from December 2, 2025

Chairman Millican entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the December 2, 2025, board meeting.

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. Mark Dayton - Yes

Mr. Mike Haney - Yes
Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes
Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

2. **Surplus Property for Emma Sansom Middle School**

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the surplus property report from Emma Sansom Middle School.

Motion made by: Mrs. Rita Smith

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
Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes
Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

3. **Personnel Recommendations Actions**

a. **Part A**

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

RESIGNATIONS:

Maggie Bellew, w/f, Gadsden City High School, Family and Consumer Science Teacher, effective 01/05/2026

Blake Hall, b/m, Gadsden City High School, Social Studies Teacher, effective 12/19/2025

Reagan Lowe, w/f, Gadsden City High School, Bookkeeper, effective 01/31/2026

Catheryne Freeman, w/f, Gadsden City High School, Secretary/Clerical, effective 12/19/2025

Carlton Baise, b/m, Floyd Elementary School, Title I Aide, effective 12/19/2025

Kera Dudley, b/f, Thompson Elementary School, Kindergarten Teacher, effective 12/19/2025

India Mostella, b/f, Thompson Elementary School, Fourth Grade Teacher, effective 01/12/2026

(PART A) TRANSFERS:

(A-1) Rachel Cole, w/f, from Floyd Elementary School, Receptionist Clerical to Floyd Elementary School, Title I Aide (**#2526.167**), effective TBD, Pending Board Approval, Remainder of the 2025-2026 Academic

Year only

(A-2) Jasmine Turner, b/f, from Thompson Elementary, Secretary/Bookkeeper to Floyd Elementary School, Secretary/Bookkeeper (**#2526.170**), effective TBD

(A-3) Gloria McDaniels, h/f, from Thompson Elementary, ORS Aide to Thompson Elementary, Kindergarten Teacher (**#2526.173**), effective 01/12/2026, Pending Board Approval

(A-4) Paula Martinez, h/f, from Gadsden City High School, ESL Aide to Gadsden City High School, Title I Parent Liaison/Receptionist/Clerical (**#2526.175**), effective 01/14/2026

(PART B) NEW PERSONNEL:

(B-1) Christina Drummond, w/f, Gadsden City High School, CTE Family and Consumer Science Teacher (**#2526.171**), effective 01/05/2026, Pending Board Approval

(B-2) K. David Hayes, w/m, Gadsden City High School, Secondary Social Studies Teacher (**#2526.172**), effective 01/12/2026, Pending Board Approval

(B-3) Frances N. Hall, b/f, Donehoo Elementary School, K-2 Auxiliary Teacher Aide (**#2526.150**), effective 12/03/2025, Pending Board Approval, Remainder of the 2025-2026 Academic Year only through 06/30/2026

(B-4) Phillip Swindall, w/m, Floyd Elementary School, Title I Instructional Aide (**#2526.169**), effective 01/05/2026, Pending Board Approval, Remainder of the 2025-2026 Academic Year only

(B-5) Tara Lindsey, w/f, Striplin Elementary School, K-2 Auxiliary Teacher (Aide) (**#2526.152**), effective 01/05/2026, Pending Board Approval, Remainder of the 2025-2026 Academic Year only through 06/30/2026

Updates/Corrections:

Cassaudra Knight, Emma Sansom Middle School, CNP, returns to work 01/12/2026, from a Leave of Absence

SUBSTITUTES:

Cafeteria Substitute Reapplying:

Cecillia Pruitt

Support Substitute:

Daniel Lubin

Certified Substitute:

Karen Watkins

21st CENTURY AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS:

Site Coordinator/21st Century:

Staci Slick (#2526.168)

Afterschool Subs:

Deborah Alford w/f

Christina Glass w/f

Selena Rivera Flores h/f

Motion made by: Mr. Mike Haney

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

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

The new personnel employees were read by Superintendent Blackwell.

b. Part B

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the personnel recommendation for part B for termination.

Termination of Employment:

Luke Lewis, Walnut Park Elementary School, Custodian, effective 01/14/2026

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

Ms. Adrienne Reed - Yes

Mrs. Rita Smith - Yes

4. **Monthly Financial Report and Bank Reconciliation for November 2025**

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the monthly financial report and bank reconciliation presented by Chief Financial School Officer, Cory Skelton. The financial data and cash balance presented are based on the reconciled bank statement and the general ledger as of November 30, 2025.

Motion made by: Mr. Mike Haney

Motion seconded by: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff

Voting:

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

F. **Information Items**

1. **Old Business**

No old business to discuss.

2. **New Business**

- **Unity in the Community Parade** on Friday, January 16, at 1:00 p.m. on Broad Street. Schools dismiss at 11:30 a.m.
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** - No School on Monday, January 19, 2026
- **Recent Grants Awarded:**
 - Dependent Care Grant for Eura Brown Elementary School was awarded for \$20,219.25. This grant supports the start-up, expansion, or quality improvements of school-age extended day programs of non-21st Century programs.
 - The Alabama Summer and After School Program (ASAP) Grant for \$225,000 for elementary and middle schools that are Title I schools. Grant funds support academic intervention and enrichment activities, including STEM, fine arts, tutoring, homework assistance, financial literacy, workforce development, and hands-on learning experiences.
 - Superintendent Blackwell will be attending a special recognition in Montgomery with the principals from Eura Brown and Walnut Park Elementary Schools to acknowledge their improvements on the State Report Card.

3. **Next Board Meeting is Tuesday, February 3, 2025, at Floyd Elementary School**

G. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned on motion by Mark Dayton at 5:39 p.m.

Date

Superintendent/Secretary