



MEETING MINUTES

Attendance

Voting Members

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

Non-Voting Members

Mr. Keith Blackwell, Superintendent
Mr. Ed Howard, Board Attorney
Mrs. Kelly Swafford, Superintendent Administrative Assistant

I. Work Session Opens with Breakfast

The work session began at 8:00 a.m.

II. Field Trip to tour The Challenger Learning Center of Northeast Alabama

Board members had the opportunity to tour the Challenger Learning Center in Rainbow City, Alabama, via a new Gadsden City school bus. The Challenger Learning Center provides students with hands-on learning experiences focused on STEM and space exploration. The group returned from the tour at 9:45 a.m.

III. Updates of State Report Card Grades for Ray Thompson Elementary and G.W. Floyd Elementary Schools

Floyd Elementary School

Dr. Roy Bliss, Principal of Floyd Elementary School, presented the past, present, and future of Floyd Elementary based on State Report Card scores. Dr. Bliss introduced Mrs. Amanda Rogers, Math Coach at Floyd Elementary. Dr. Bliss outlined his goals and preparation efforts to improve academic growth, including the following highlights:

- Emphasized the importance of transforming the school culture to reflect a unified, family-oriented community
- Provided support in reading, math, and cohort growth, with plans to establish these improvements as the new Floyd norm
- This year, Floyd achieved 100% ACAP participation. Dr. Bliss credits that to an increased use of robocalls to communicate upcoming events and academic growth updates
- Expanded data meetings and in-house professional development
- Developed community partnerships to further support students
- Implemented strategies to support teachers and strengthen partnerships with families

Thompson Elementary School

Mrs. Maxwell, Principal of Thompson Elementary School, introduced Ms. Latera Woods, Reading Coach at Thompson Elementary. Mrs. Maxwell presented Thompson's demographics and a breakdown of mental health referrals. Key points included:

- Expressed need for an assistant principal to increase classroom observations
- Gave a breakdown of demographics at Thompson Elementary
- Currently staffed with a full-time counselor and a mental health counselor two days per week
- Identified that students need a greater understanding of the ACAP instructional process, specifically the use of think-alouds
- Thompson has increased teacher trainings, including growth report strategies and OMI trainings
- Engaged outside resources to provide additional assistance
- Continued focus on student and teacher support initiatives

IV. Mr. Gullede discusses Apparel Contract for Gadsden City High School

Mr. Joel Gullede, Principal of Gadsden City High School, presented information regarding the bidding process for an upcoming apparel contract. The current contract with Adidas is set to expire in June 2026. Mr. Gullede clarified that this bidding process differs from a standard competitive bid process and that the Athletic Directors managed and oversaw the bid submissions. Head coaches were given the opportunity to vote in the process. Mr. Gullede noted that the information was intended to make the Board aware of the upcoming recommendations and the process moving forward.

V. Lunch

Federal Programs Update

During lunch, Federal Programs Director Mr. Hector Baeza provided an update on English Learner (EL) students and the positive impact of the Seal of Biliteracy program. Mr. Baeza noted that eleven students will graduate with the Seal of

Biliteracy this year, bringing the total to thirty-two recipients since the 2023–2024 school year.

VI. Discussion of Principal Contracts

- Discussed the renewal of principal contracts and probationary periods
- Discussed policies for renewals
- Chain of commands
- Keep compliments about the system/school as a whole and not individuals.
- Discussed the importance of supporting all schools by attending events but respect day-to-day school operations

VII. Bus Transportation Updates

Superintendent Blackwell stated that the district is currently reviewing bus routes for next school year. Mr. Blackwell discussed maintenance requirements, as well as the plan for future funding. Superintendent Blackwell noted that city schools are not required to provide bus transportation; however, the state provides funding to operate buses for the schools that qualify. To qualify for a bus route, the majority of students must reside at least two miles from the school. Superintendent Blackwell noted that Mitchell Elementary lacks sidewalks, which presents a safety concern.

VIII. Adjourn Meeting

Meeting is adjourned at 3:05p.m.

Superintendent Signature

Date