Approved 11/03/2026

October Board Meeting
10/06/2026 05:00 PM
Gadsden City Board of Education
W.E. Striplin Elementary School
600 Cleveland Ave

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance

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

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

B. Approval of Agenda

The October agenda was presented for approval.

Motion made by: Mr. Mike Haney
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart

Voting results: Unanimously Approved
Yes: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Yes: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Yes: Hon. Allen Millican
Yes: Mr. Mike Haney
Yes: Mrs. Rita Smith

C. Recognition of Visitors/Guests

Superintendent Blackwell acknowledged the audience and introduced Principal Anthony Ash.

1. Mr. Anthony Ash, Principal of Striplin Elementary School

Principal Anthony Ash welcomed the audience to Striplin Elementary School. Mr. Ash recognized his staff and then welcomed the Drama Club sponsor, Mr. Hunter Bussey. The Drama Club students performed for the board members and audience.

2. Lights on Celebration - Ms. Janie Browning, 21st Century Afterschool Program

Ms. Janie Browning, the Federal Programs Coordinator, invited board members and the audience to attend the 21st Century Afterschool event, the Lights On Celebration, which will take place on Tuesday, October 20th, at The Cola Warehouse. During her presentation, Ms. Browning provided an overview of the after-school program and explained the objectives of the Lights On Celebration. Additionally, students from the after-school program distributed invitations to the board members.

D. Reports

No reports.

E. Board Action

1. Approval of Minutes

a. Minutes from the Budget Hearing #1 - 09/03/2026

Chairman Millican entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the Budget Hearing.

Motion made by: Mr. Mike Haney
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Rita Smith

Voting results: Unanimously Approved
Yes: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Yes: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Yes: Hon. Allen Millican
Yes: Mr. Mike Haney
Yes: Mrs. Rita Smith

b. Minutes from Budget Hearing #2 & Regular Board Meeting - 09/08/2026

Chairman Millican entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the second Budget Hearing and Regular Board Meeting.

Motion made by: Mrs. Rita Smith
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart

Voting results: Unanimously Approved
Yes: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Yes: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Yes: Hon. Allen Millican

Yes: Mr. Mike Haney
Yes: Mrs. Rita Smith

c. Minutes from Work Session/Whole Board Training - 09/17/2026

Chairman Millican entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the Work Session.

Motion made by: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Rita Smith

Voting results: Unanimously Approved
Yes: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Yes: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Yes: Hon. Allen Millican
Yes: Mr. Mike Haney
Yes: Mrs. Rita Smith

2. Approval of Salary Schedule for 10-Month Teacher with Stipend

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the salary schedule for 10-month teachers with the stipend.

Motion made by: Mrs. Rita Smith
Motion seconded by: Mr. Mike Haney

Voting results: Unanimously Approved
Yes: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Yes: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Yes: Hon. Allen Millican
Yes: Mr. Mike Haney
Yes: Mrs. Rita Smith

3. Monthly Financial Report and Bank Reconciliation

Chief Financial School Officer Cory Skelton presented the monthly financial report for review and approval. The financial data and cash balance presented are based on the reconciled bank statement and the general ledger as of August 2026.

Motion made by: Mr. Mike Haney
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Rita Smith

Voting results: Unanimously Approved
Yes: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Yes: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Yes: Hon. Allen Millican
Yes: Mr. Mike Haney
Yes: Mrs. Rita Smith

4. Reinstatement of Days for an On-the-Job Injury

a. Mellissa Sims - Gadsden City High School

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the reinstatement of forty-five sick leave days for Mellissa Sims due to an on-the-job injury at Gadsden City High School.

Motion made by: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart

Voting results: Unanimously Approved
Yes: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Yes: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Yes: Hon. Allen Millican
Yes: Mr. Mike Haney
Yes: Mrs. Rita Smith

b. Glenda Vaughn - Gadsden City High School CNP

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the reinstatement of seven sick leave days for Glenda Vaughn due to an on-the-job injury in the Gadsden City High School lunchroom.

Motion made by: Mrs. Rita Smith
Motion seconded by: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff

Voting results: Unanimously Approved
Yes: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Yes: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Yes: Hon. Allen Millican
Yes: Mr. Mike Haney
Yes: Mrs. Rita Smith

5. Surplus Property Reports

a. Eura Brown Elementary School

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the following surplus property report from Eura Brown Elementary School.

Motion made by: Mr. Mike Haney
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Rita Smith

Voting results: Unanimously Approved
Yes: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Yes: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Yes: Hon. Allen Millican
Yes: Mr. Mike Haney
Yes: Mrs. Rita Smith

b. Floyd Elementary School

Superintendent Blackwell recommended that the board approve the following surplus property report from Floyd Elementary School.

Motion made by: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Rita Smith

Voting results: Unanimously Approved
Yes: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Yes: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Yes: Hon. Allen Millican

Yes: Mr. Mike Haney
Yes: Mrs. Rita Smith

6. Approval of Personnel Recommendations

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

Retirement:
James C. Dowdy, w/m, Gadsden City High School, Counselor, effective 01/01/2027
Brent Morgan, w/m, Gadsden City High School, Assistant Principal, effective 01/01/2027
Kenneth Sholar, w/m, Gadsden City High School, Custodian, effective 12/01/2026

Resignations:
Walter Black, w/m, Gadsden City High School, Special Education Teacher, effective 10/09/2026
Sonya Dalrymple, w/f, Litchfield Middle School, Special Education Teacher, effective 10/30/2026
Staci Stephens, w/f, Donehoo Elementary School, School Nurse, effective 10/16/2026
Crystal Cleere, w/f, Thompson Elementary School, OSR PreK Auxiliary Teacher Aide, effective 09/30/2026
Danielle Varnon, w/f, Gadsden City High School, Child Nutrition Program Manager, effective 10/16/2026
Valerie Franks, w/f, Maintenance Department, Receptionist/Clerical, effective 10/30/2026
Madison Tankersley, w/f, Floyd Elementary School, Classroom Teacher, effective 10/30/2026
Robert Lamont Kyle, b/m, Adams Elementary School, Special Education Aide, effective 10/30/2026

Rescinding of Employment:
Brian Brock, Bus Driver – Licensure #2627.013, effective 18/12/2026

Leave of Absence: *Parental leave dates will be variable.*
Emily Hayes, w/f, Eura Brown Elementary School, Teacher, Paid Parental Leave effective 09/09/2026 – 11/05/2026, Sick Leave until 01/04/2027
Ashlen Hawkins, w/f, Gadsden Middle School, Fine Arts, Paid Parental Leave effective 11/02/2026 – 12/14/2026, Sick Leave until 02/15/2027
Kristen Hope Beach, w/f, Adams Elementary School, P.E. Teacher, Paid Parental Leave effective 10/08/2026 – 12/14/2026, Sick Leave until 02/01/2027
Kaelyn Hester, w/f, Gadsden Middle School, Choral, Paid Parental Leave effective 08/24/2026 – 09/11/2026

(Part A) Reemployment:
(A-1) Micah Swain, b/f, Floyd Elementary School, Title I Instructional Aide,

effective 10/01/2026, pending board approval, October 2026 – May 2027 only, one year only **#2627.147**
(A-2) Phillip Eugene Swindall, w/m, Floyd Elementary School, Title I Instructional Aide, effective 10/01/2026, pending board approval, October 2026 – May 2027 only, one year only **#2627.147**
(A-3) Gina Nikki Allen, b/f, Striplin Elementary School, Title I Instructional Aide, effective 10/01/2026, pending board approval, October 2026 – May 2027 only, one year only **#2627.145**
(A-4) Terrica Ash, b/f, Adams Elementary School, Title I Instructional Aide, effective 10/07/2026, one year only **#2627.151**

(Part B) Transfer:
(B-1) Melissa Ward, w/f, from Gadsden City High School, Secretary/Bookkeeper, to Transportation Department, Secretary/Bookkeeper, effective 10/07/2026

(Part C) New Employees:
(C-1) Allyson Drew Rhea, w/f, Adams Elementary School, Classroom Teacher **#2627.139**, effective 09/15/2026, pending board approval
(C-2) Jayelan Summerlin, b/f, Litchfield Middle School, Family and Consumer Science Teacher **#2627.142**, effective 10/07/2026
(C-3) Jarvis McKee, b/m, Gadsden City High School, Special Education Teacher **#2627.143**, effective 10/12/2026
(C-4) Hannah Sims, w/f, Donehoo Elementary School, School Nurse **#2627.149**, effective 10/19/2026
(C-5) Angel Brisker, b/f, Adams Elementary School, Special Education Aide **#2627.146**, effective 09/22/2026, pending board approval
(C-6) Tonya Vice, w/f, Central Office, Federal Programs Bookkeeper/Data Manager **#2627.141**, effective 10/21/2026
(C-7) Tiffany Teague, w/f, Adams Elementary-Homeschool,
(C-8) Jordan Kimble-Juddine, b/f, Adams Elementary-Homeschool, Title I Instructional Aide **#2627.151**, 10/07/2026, one year only

Contracts:
Shelly Williams, Donehoo Elementary School, Special Education Instructional Aide, Part-time, 8/12/2026-5/30/2027
Alnita Mitchell, Adams Elementary School, Instructional Aide/Interventionist, Part-time, 8/25/2026-09/30/2026, 10/02/2026-05/30/2027
Leita Conner, Special Education Homebound Services, 09/15/2026-05/27/2027
Zhane McClain, Litchfield Middle School, Interventionist, 10/01/2026-05/27/2027
Tyneisha Hope-Thomas, Litchfield Middle School, Interventionist, 08/07/2026-09/30/2026, 10/01/2026-05/21/2027
Kelly Gregg, Various School Locations, School Nursing Services, 10/01/2026-05/27/2027
Gail Relford, Thompson Elementary School, Reading Interventionist Teacher, 08/14/2026-09/30/2026, 10/01/2026-05/06/2027

21st Century After School Program
Assistant Program Director #2627.072
Brandy Newton, w/f

After School Substitute:
Kimberly Carter, w/f
Lisa Clark, w/f

Substitutes:
New Certified Substitute:
Mallory Garner
New Non-Certified Substitute:
Rodreka Croft
Trevor Thomas
Delisha Ledford
Faith Tucker
Linda Woods
Non-Certified Substitute Reapplying:
Amber Griffin
New Support Substitute:
David Dial
Lamin Manjang
Amanda Winborn

Motion made by: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Motion seconded by: Mr. Mike Haney

Voting results: Unanimously Approved
Yes: Rev. Z. Andre' Huff
Yes: Mrs. Nancy Stewart
Yes: Hon. Allen Millican
Yes: Mr. Mike Haney
Yes: Mrs. Rita Smith

7. Recommendation to Approve Nomination for the Delegate/Alternate for the AASB Delegate Assembly

The Alabama Association of School Boards' Delegate Assembly is held on Thursday, December 3, 2026, ahead of the Annual Convention scheduled for December 3–5, 2026, in Montgomery, AL. The Gadsden City Board of Education may send one delegate to represent the board at the Delegate Assembly.

Chairman Allen Millican made a motion to nominate Mrs. Rita Smith to be the delegate, and Mr. Mike Haney seconded the motion.
Voting: Unanimously Approved

Chairman Allen Millican asked for nominations for the AASB Delegate Assembly alternate. With no nominations, Chairman Millican nominated Ms.

Adrienne Reed to be the alternate, and Board Member Andre' Huff seconded. Voting: Unanimously Approved

F. Information Items

1. Old Business

Superintendent Blackwell addressed the Board regarding the accomplishments of the Striplin Elementary staff and the improvements made at the school over the past several years. He expressed confidence that the school will earn an even higher grade on its next state report card. Superintendent Blackwell thanked the Striplin Elementary faculty and staff for their tireless efforts and continued dedication to the school's improvement.

2. New Business

Superintendent Blackwell also introduced the newly elected District 1 City Council member, Mr. Lamont Kyle, to the Board.

a. Fall Break for Students from October 12 – 14, 2026; Teacher Inservice Day # 5 on October 14, 2026

3. Next Regular Board Meeting is November 03, 2026, at Gadsden Middle School

G. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:41 p.m. following a motion by Nancy Stewart, which was seconded by Andre' Huff.

Date

Superintendent/Secretary