

**JOINT MEETING OF THE HARRIS COUNTY BOARD
OF COMMISSIONERS AND THE HARRIS COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Harris County School District, Professional Learning Lab
757 Carver Circle, Hamilton, GA 31811
Tuesday, September 23, 2025
6:30 p.m.

In attendance from the Board of Education: Justin Finney, Superintendent; Stephen Johnston, District 1 Board Member; Bridgett Oliver, District 2 Board Member; Garnett Ray III, District 3 Chair; Scott Greene, District 4 Board Member; Harry Proctor, District 5 Board Member; Steve Goodnoe, District 6 Super District Vice-Chair; Monica Sparks, District 7 Super District Board Member.

In attendance from Harris County Board of Commissioners: Rob Grant, District 2 Chair; Susan Andrews, District 5 Vice-Chair; Greg Gantt, District 3; Scott Lightsey, District 1; Bobby Irions, District 4. Staff Present: Clark Harrell, County Manager; Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk; Melissa Price, E911/EMA Director; Greg Panzer, Economic Development Director.

CALL TO ORDER. Garnett Ray, III, Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

AGENDA APPROVAL. Garnett Ray, III, Chair recommended that the Harris County Board of Education review and approve the September 23, 2025 Joint Meeting agenda as presented. A motion to approve the September 23, 2025 Joint Meeting agenda was made by Mr. Goodnoe - District 6, seconded by Mr. Proctor - District 5, and passed unanimously.

Dr. Justin Finney welcomed everyone to the joint meeting and announced that those in attendance will have dinner first and then the meeting will continue. The meeting recessed at 6:33 p.m.

The meeting was called back to order at 6:58 p.m.

STATE OF SCHOOL DISTRICT PRESENTATION. Dr. Finney made a presentation that included Achievement and Performance Indicators, 2025 AP Score Comparisons, Milestone Testing, CTAE Pathways, Safety and Security, and Facilities and Operations.

BOE / BOC SHARED SPACE AT THE CARVER CENTER. Discussion was held as to whether there was some additional space at the Carver Center; that there may be some additional space at the Carver Center; that there may be some administration offices as well. The County's Facilities Maintenance Director should get in touch with the facilities maintenance individuals from the Harris County School District to go over possible locations that could be utilized by Harris County.

SHARING ATHLETIC FACILITIES. Dr. Finney advised that he and Assistant Superintendent Shawn Fisher met with Recreation Department Director Ashley Marston and Assistant Recreation Director Mike Fuson about sharing recreation facilities. He would like to explore the possibility of sharing athletic facilities and that game field space with lights is their largest need and that it would be in the best interest in all of us giving each other priority to the use of each others facilities. Discussion included the increase in all of the sports especially girls' flag football; the concept plan for expanded outdoor facilities next to the Community Center; and that there are so many club opportunities in the Harris County School District.

Chairman Grant stated that sports each having two seasons has added strain on County facilities. Dr. Finney would like football would also go Countywide like other sports have so that their middle and high school football would be a goal for kids that would be in those programs.

NEW RADIO SYSTEM AND JOINT COMMUNICATIONS. Dr. Finney advised that the School District had an opportunity to hear first hand from beginning to end the entire incident that occurred at Apalachee High School in Winder, GA in great detail; that the incident prompted them to have a full scale drill at the high school; that the incident from start to finish was only about 60 seconds; that they would like to start looking at having full scale drills with all parties; that it might take a year to coordinate a full scale drill that could take place over a long weekend possibly; and that buses, traffic control, reunification sites and command structure would need to be reviewed during that process.

E911/EMA Director Melissa Price informed those in attendance that the County is currently wrapping up paperwork including the leases; that it is expected that they will have a final design plan by October 1st; and that once the final design plan is accepted that they will be able to break ground.

In response to a question from Vice-Chair Andrews, Dr. Finney stated that they would like to explore being able to join the County's new radio system. Ms. Price said that the radio system has been designed to accommodate the school district being part of the system when they are ready.

POSSIBLE LAND SWAP. A brief discussion was held related to possible areas that might be available related to a land swap including property behind Pate Park and at the Northwest Harris Business Park.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE. Dr. Finney advised that the Grove has school space planned into it and that there is commercial property there as well but that there are no specifics as to what might be going in at that location. Chairman Grant stated that Daesol is currently about two years ahead of schedule and so the benefits will happen sooner than originally expected. Economic Development Director Greg Panzer advised that Daesol America just received their certificate of occupancy; that they have invested \$53 - \$55 million; and that they are working on closing out the Phase II bond. A brief discussion was held related to the Housing Study.

WEST POINT - PROPERTY TAX REDUCTION RATE. A brief discussion was held related to how the Harris County Board of Education would find out what would be needed to consider a lower property tax rate and that Chief Appraiser Shalee Mallory and County Clerk Andrea Dzioba have provided information to Dr. Finney related to same.

Chair Garnett Ray stated that we need to find ways of generating revenue in other ways to help take the burden off of homeowners. Additional discussion was held related to possible areas of economic growth and the infrastructure that would be needed.

CITIZEN COMMENTS. Brian McKeen, citizen, addressed the Boards related to economic growth and stated that he has enjoyed listening to the joint meeting and advised that citizens don't break down government into entities; that improving communications is an important step to creating a single unit; that the entities need to work with people and provide more information to citizens; that when someone calls, "don't send them along;" that there has been unplanned and poorly planned growth in Harris County; that there is a lack of viable commercial growth; that density is needed for commercial growth; that we need to be proactive; that once density increases that commercial will follow; that there is a high cost of living and increased taxes; that growth has already happened and will continue to happen; and that there needs to be resources where development is likely.

ADJOURNMENT. A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Greene - District 4, seconded by Dr. Sparks - District 7, and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.