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Friday, 20 November 2015 07:59



The long-awaited results of Superintendent Frank Chiapetti's fate came to a close after nearly three hours of hashing out their decision between board members while in executive session at the Board of Education for Gallup-McKinley County Schools special meeting Nov.12.

At the end of the meeting, each of the five-member board members gave their testimonies following the vote.

District 5 board member Lynn Huenemann, who supported Chiapetti's return, was the first to speak about how the district has a long history of trying to find out ways on becoming fully educationally effective. He believes that the board is not there yet.

"We need to move this whole district forward beyond its history," he said. "Where we have students that are not performing at the levels that they need to be at and it is not because they can't, it is because we haven't found the most effective methods to relate to kids in our district that from many backgrounds."

Board secretary Priscilla Manuelito, who voted against the return of Chiapetti, clarified that the school board was a "new board" and that they will continually be actively involved.

"We will move forward and continue to use our authority as board members, that you have elected us to do, to control the district through the budget, through the district policies, and with our superintendent," she said.

However, District 1 Vice President Kevin Mitchell apologized to staff and former staff who he deemed were treated unfairly, and in his words, “bullied.” Mitchell voted “no” to reinstate Chiapetti.

“I know that it is a little too late for this, for we have lost many great employees,” he said. “As a board member, along with the rest of the board, we want to move in a new direction.”

Board President Titus Nez said he has seen the fear, anger and sadness within the board room and asked why children’s education is aligned with self-interest, politics, and retribution.

“What happened to the harmony?” he asked. “As a leader, we have forgotten the basic principles of being fair and impartial. This is not a racial issue.”

Sonlatsa Jim, a concerned parent who attended the meeting, says she feels disappointed about the outcome.

“I don’t think that all the voices were heard across the district,” she said. “I don’t think that the true issues that have disturbed our school district were disclosed. I hope that as time goes, we will start to get the truth out there.”

Chiapetti’s parents, Beth and Frank Sr., who were not able to make it to the last meeting held on Nov.2, however, they were present at last night’s meeting to hear the outcome of their son’s deposition.

“We are just glad that it is over with and hope that things get on with the education with the students,” said Mr. Chiapetti Sr. “He has always been for the students first and it’s been a trying few months.”

Superintendent Frank Chiapetti said his main goal was returning to the school board and to keep moving forward.

As for the investigation that was brought up against him and the complaints mentioned at the meeting, he says that he has not yet been given a report.

“I will have to read the report to see if some of it is perception,” he said “Unfortunately I do not know the exact context of everything they came out with. Once I read it, I will be able to know more.”

Chiapetti was placed on administrative leave Aug.17 and Special Education Director Carmen Moffett has been acting as interim superintendent.

Board members voted 3-2 to allow Chiapetti to be reinstated as Superintendent, effective Nov.13.