



Hernando School District

Employee Disciplinary Appeal Hearing

Minutes - Draft

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

9:00 AM

District Office-Board Room
919 N. Broad Street
Brooksville, FL 34601

CALL TO ORDER

Present Board Chair Kayce Hawkins
Vice Chair Shannon Rodriguez
Board Member Michelle Bonczek
Board Member Susan Duval
Board Member Mark Johnson

This hearing was called to order at 9:01 A.M. Also present were Robert Meyers, School Board Attorney, Ray Pinder, Superintendent.

EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE APPEAL HEARING

1. [26-3637](#) Disciplinary Hearing Regarding Demotion from EST III to EST I for Stephen Hewitt that was completed end of day October 23, 2025.

Attachments: [Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Michelle Bonczek

SECONDER: Mark Johnson

AYES: Board Chair Hawkins, Vice Chair Rodriguez, Board Member Bonczek,
Board Member Duval, and Board Member Johnson

Mr. Meyers read the rules for this hearing. All parties were sworn in.

Parties for the District:

Matt Goldrick, Director of Labor Relations and Professional Standards

Caroline Mockler, Staff Counsel for HCSD

Natasha Saavedra, Principal of Pine Grove Elementary

Stephanie Sauvageot, Assistant Principal of Pine Grove Elementary

Robert Kublick, Support Operations Manager for EST

Parties for the Employee:

Branden Vicari, Attorney for Respondent

Stephen Hewitt, Employee

Ms. Mockler revised a statement that Mr. Hewitt's job entailed that he stay on campus

and he did stay on campus while he worked. She also asked to have Exhibit 10 removed. Conversation on the admission of hearsay evidence. Per Mr. Myers, it is admissible. It will be noted in the record that Mr. Vicari objected to the evidence.

Mr. Vicari requested that while one witness for the district is testifying, the others leave the room so that they cannot hear the testimony. Ms. Mockler has no objection. The Board granted this request. Mr. Goldrick can stay in the room.

Mr. Vicari objected to Mr. Kublick's testimony describing the morale of the EST's as hearsay. Noted for the record.

Ms. Mockler objected to Mr. Hewitt's argument of OT not being paid on the basis of argumentative, no foundation of law. Noted for the record.

Recessed at 10:54 A.M. and reconvened 11:04 A.M.

EST job descriptions passed out to board and Mr. Vicari.

Ms. Mockler objected to Mr. Hewitt's description of his relationship with Kelly Slusser as hearsay. Noted for the record.

Ms. Mockler objected to Mr. Hewitt's conversation surrounding the cleanup of the release of fire extinguisher in the self-contained rooms on the basis of hearsay. Noted for the record.

Motion was made to uphold the Superintendent's recommendation for the demotion of Stephen Hewitt from EST III to EST I.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:34 P.M.

Superintendent

Board Chair

Mission Statement

The Hernando County School District Collaborates with students, parents and other community stakeholders to effectively prepare all students for a successful transition into a diverse and changing world.