



Gwinnett County School Board Address Thanks for the Memories!

Re: Superintendent James Alvin Wilbanks Final School Board Meeting
Delivered by: Marlyn Tillman, Executive Director/Co-Founder
July 15, 2021

Tonight, is Superintendent James Alvin Wilbanks final school board meeting. I remember my very first Gwinnett board meeting in April 2002. The meeting occurred just a few days after Simonton Elementary School's principal, Betty Robinson, committed suicide and staff emotions *understandably* ran high. I made a commitment then to attend most board meetings and I've done that. After 25 years of tenure, it's been a wild ride and this day is long overdue. We are here tonight to say, "thanks for the memories." We stand to thank you on behalf of the:

- Over **230,000** students you put on the path of being pushed out of school through in-school suspension during your reign
- Over **175,000** students who were pushed out of school through out-of-school suspension
- The untold number of students who were arrested at school. The number is untold because the superintendent refuses to provide it to the very community that funds this system without exacting an exorbitant fee.
- The fake parent and community engagement committees
- The unchecked racism heaped on students, parents, and staff
- For being the fashion police who labeled Black students as gang members for wearing ethnic dress
- For building Sycamore Elementary butting up to a landfill.
- Spending twice as much than needed for this *very* building that bears your name
- For not providing for the emotional safety of our students
- Providing 2.1 million dollars to the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce instead of investing in helping children learn to read
- Denying children access to the curriculum based on race, zip code, and socio-economics

I could go on for well past my three minutes, but I'll stop here. Again, thanks for the memories. I bid you farewell in several of the languages that are spoken by our diverse student body.

The remarks ended with a recording of goodbye spoken in the following languages:

- Goodbye (English)
- Zàijìàn (Chinese)
- Au revoir (French)
- Adiós (Spanish)
- Annyeong (Korean)
- Tạm biệt (Vietnamese)
- Sayōnara (Japanese)