

**Giles County Public Schools  
School Board Meeting  
NEWS RELEASE  
APRIL 10, 2008**

*Dr. Terry E. Arbogast, II*

*Division Superintendent*

**\*Pledge of Allegiance**

The School Board Chairman led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**\*Public Comments**

Michael Etzler attended the School Board meeting on behalf of the GEA. He stated that he was truly inspired by the opportunity seven years ago when he began teaching and he looks forward to going to Giles High School. In addition, he considers it to be a privilege to be in front of the students every day. He continued by stating that the down fall of this was that he had to use a credit card for the first three years he was employed to pay his bills. After that, because of the re-benchmarking that occurred a couple years ago, he was able to pay off his credit card and began living from paycheck to paycheck. He continued by reading an excerpt from Time Magazine that was titled "How to Make a Better Teacher?" The article talked about salaries for Teachers and how stressful it is to try to make ends meet. Mr. Etzler stated that he finds himself running short after the first couple weeks of each month. He commented that the situation only seems to be getting worse, not only for him, but for other teachers as well. He displayed a blanket that he received from his grandmother when he began teaching that said, "Teachers Inspire the Hopes of Today and the Dreams of Tomorrow." He stated that he used this blanket all winter long because he didn't have heat in his car. In closing, he thanked the School Board for everything they do and stated that the proposed 5% increase would really help. He stated that he can't stress enough that a lot of us are treading water. He then asked, "How inspired can teachers be if they can't pay their monthly bills?"

**\*Special Presentations**

On behalf of the Professional Advisory Council, the following were recognized for their Outstanding Efforts and Continued Support: Joseph James – MMS, Larrisa Harkonen – Family Preservation (MMS), Connie Hopkins – Family Preservation (MMS), Lauren Bryant – Family Preservation (MMS), Lindsay Long – Family Preservation (MMS), Sonya Jones – Family Preservation (MMS), Catherine Dyches – Family Preservation (MMS), Faith Briggs – MACC (GHS/NHS), Charles Waselchalk – MACC (NHS), Todd Meredith – MACC (NHS), Anna Swenty – MACC (NHS), Karen Letts – MACC (NHS), Meagan Jones – MACC (NHS), Greg Brown – GHS, Jason Mills – GHS, John Genodoupolus – MACC (GHS), Terry Beckner – MACC (GHS), Doris Lynch – MACC (GHS), Lane Mann – MACC (GHS), Connie McCall – EEMS, Amy Maxey – EEMS.

Margaret "Pat" Duncan, Director of the Southwest Virginia Governor's School, was presented with a plaque that contained a resolution from the Giles County School Board members to thank her for her dedication, leadership, and support she has provided to Giles County Public Schools as the Director of the Southwest Virginia Governor's School. Mrs. Duncan was very appreciative of the "surprise" resolution/plaque presented to her at the meeting. Several Giles County students attended the meeting with Mrs. Duncan to do a PowerPoint presentation on the Governor's School. The main speaker, Wyatt Hall, presented an overview of the Governor's School. He showed pictures of the new school and discussed the layout of the building. He discussed the SELU (Conservancy center in Radford), the classes, labs, and internships offered at the Governor's School for juniors and seniors. Wyatt discussed each day's schedule of classes and how the Governor's School was a transitional environment and had very knowledgeable teachers. The PowerPoint contained many pictures of the building, including SELU, and the labs that the students participate in. In addition, Wyatt spoke about the various places where the students work during their internships. Several other students that attended the meeting with Wyatt discussed their internships and how they have been very beneficial for them. Wyatt briefly explained the process of the Science Fair at the Governor's School. He then discussed all of the extra-curricular activities that the Governor's School students participate in, including many different clubs, sports, work, band, and various other activities. In closing, Wyatt stated that the Governor's School helps to prepare the students for college and the future.

**\*Educational Feature**

Mr. Rowdy Stump and Mrs. Anna Swenty attended the School Board meeting on behalf of the Narrows High School educational feature. Mrs. Swenty is a Science Teacher at Narrows High School and shared

information about her Earth Science classes with the School Board. She showed a PowerPoint that was titled, "Building Bridges" and began by quizzing the School Board members on the name of the bridge, the span of the bridge, and other information about the bridge that was pictured. If they answered the question correctly, she gave them a piece of candy. The PowerPoint showed several different bridges and their structures. Mrs. Swenty's Earth Science classes were discussing earthquakes and in an effort to tie this discussion to a real life application, she explained to her class that when builders are building bridges, they have to look to see whether they will withstand an earthquake. Mrs. Swenty's husband, a civil engineer studying at Virginia Tech right now, came in to talk with her students about bridges. The students received a presentation from him on how bridges work, what they are, and how they are important. She then talked about the project she assigned her students dealing with constructing a bridge out of Popsicle sticks and hot glue. She continued by stating that the goal of the project was to build a bridge to withstand a heavy load and an earthquake. The project consisted of building a bridge that would hold a bucket of sand, while a billiard ball rolls into it to help show how an earthquake might affect a bridge. Sand would be added to the bucket until the bridge falls. The bridge had to be 10" in span, had to have hot glue used for the connections and the students only had a building time of one hour. Mrs. Swenty also provided her students with instruction on the concepts of tension and compression when building bridges. Mrs. Swenty concluded by stating that her students had so much fun and didn't realize how much they were learning doing this project. Alec Frazier, a NHS student, attended the meeting to show his bridge to the School Board members and inform them of how he designed it. Alec Frazier and Cody Fisher were the engineers of the bridge that Alec showed and explained. The kids took ownership of their projects and even named them. The students were very eager to complete and learn about this project. Mrs. Swenty informed School Board members that Dennis Kidd's classes also build bridges too! His classes draw and design a toothpick bridge in approximately 3 ½ weeks that consists of a 24" span, 8" height, and a 4" lower beam. Mrs. Swenty thanked the School Board members for their time. Mr. Buckland asked Mrs. Swenty how she tied this project to the SOL's. Mrs. Swenty stated that she tied this project to the SOL's for scientific experimenting and earthquakes. The Board chairman thanked Mrs. Swenty and Alec for their presentation.

#### **\*School Board Approves Consent Items**

- Meeting Minutes – March 13, 2008
- Special Meeting Minutes – March 26, 2008
- Bills in the amount of \$ 241,603.06
- Payroll, March 31, 2008
- Revenue for March 2008
- Expenditure for March 2008
- Appropriation Request for May 2008

#### **\*The School Board Approves/Confirms Personnel Items**

The School Board confirmed the following **Employment**: **Cindy Stafford** – MMS Special Education Teacher Assistant (effective April 1, 2008), **Margret Journell** – EEMS Elementary Teacher (effective for the 08-09 school year), **Stacy Cunningham** – GHS Math Teacher (effective for the 08-09 school year), **Katherine Peery** – GHS Secondary Math Teacher (effective for the 08-09 school year), **Joel Rader** – EEMS Bus Driver (effective for the 08-09 school year)

The School Board confirmed the following **Resignation**: **Erin "Corey" Mawby** – GHS Special Education Teacher (effective end of 07-08 school year), **Julie Hoeksema** – NEMS Elementary Teacher (effective end of 07-08 school year), **Robert Stump** – NHS Principal (effective end of 07-08 school year)

The School Board confirmed the following **Supplemental Contracts**: **Sherry Miller** – NHS MACC All Around & Head Coach, **Betsy Wood** – NHS MACC English, **Alleeta Morrison** – NHS MACC Math, **Gary Hinson** – MACC Science, **Larry Greer** – NHS MACC Social Studies

The School Board confirmed the following **Athletic Coaching Contracts**: **Todd Guynn** – NHS Co-Head Baseball Coach

The School Board confirmed the following **Volunteer Agreements**: **David Bowers** – NHS Assistant Softball, **John Maddy** – NHS

The School Board confirmed all ***Substitute Teachers to Date***.

As per the Code of Virginia that all reappointments must be made by April 15<sup>th</sup> annually, the Superintendent recommended, contingent upon receipt of notification of necessary funding, all personnel appointments, non-reappointments, and transfers as recommended by principals and administration of the Giles County Public Schools System for the 2008-09 school year.

**\*The School Board Hears Reports from the Superintendent**

The School Board approved the Roger Allen Perdue Memorial Scholarship offered by the family of Roger Perdue. On behalf of the family of Roger Perdue, they would like to offer a scholarship, beginning this year, to a graduating senior from Narrows High School who is enrolled in the building trades program at the Giles County Technology Center. Roger was a licensed contractor in the state of Virginia and West Virginia for 40 plus years. The family would like to honor the life this man led through giving back to a young person who may be following the same path. This will be a yearly scholarship and will be at least \$500 annually. This scholarship will be distributed to a worthy NHS senior with the possibility in the future of being equally divided between a NHS and GHS senior depending on the amount of funds available for that year.

**\*School Board and School Staff Present Comments and Mission Statement Accomplishments**

The Board Chairman stated that he realized what position teachers and the nation is in because it is a very difficult time, but he does realize that we have an excellent staff. He stated that the Board of Supervisors has been very supportive of the school system.

Mrs. McMahon asked the Superintendent if there has been any investigation done on the maternity leave policy for adopted parents? The Superintendent stated that he had received information from several school districts. He had sent an email out to all of the Region VII Superintendents to see what kind of policies their school divisions had on maternity leave for adopted parents, if any.

A board member commended the students and teachers for their participation in the Giles County Roads and Ramps Litter Clean-up Day.

A board member stated that they had participated in the academic fair and students were very excited. Everything went well!

A board member commended Mr. Canaday, teachers, and staff for how things were handled with the tragedy at Eastern Elementary/Middle School.

Mr. Whitehead distributed many handouts to the School Board members regarding information from the Governor's School. These handouts included various information, including the following: Highest Scores at the Governor's School on the American Mathematics Contest, VJAS papers accepted, General Information about the Governor's School which contained class/credit information, and the 2008 Science Fair Award winners.

A board member commended the Governor's School presentation and the presentation by Mrs. Swenty and Alec Frazier. They were both excellent!!

A board member commended the band for receiving a superior rating while on their trip to Florida.

The Superintendent commended all of the students for their academic fair projects, as well as the schools and their staff for all of their hard work.

The Superintendent also commended Mr. Canaday, the teachers, and the staff at EEMS for how things were handled during the tragedy at EEMS. In addition, he commended Mr. Scott Meade for all of his efforts while coordinating with the other guidance counselors to assist Eastern Elementary/Middle during this time.

The Superintendent commended the band for receiving a superior rating during their band trip to Florida.

The Superintendent informed the School Board members that the GHS Chorale would be leaving to go on their trip to New York. The NHS Band will be traveling to New York at the end of the month for their trip.

The Superintendent informed the School Board members that the 7<sup>th</sup> grade trips for the schools start next week for two schools and the other school will be going the following week.

The Superintendent commended the presentations made by Mrs. Swenty, Alec, and the Governor's School students.

**\*In Other Action**

The School Board approved the April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 payrolls.

The School Board approved the Resignation of Kathleen Ward – Narrows Elementary/Middle School Teacher (effective end of the 2007-2008 school year).

The School Board approved the Resignation of Pamela Cress – Narrows Elementary/Middle School Special Education Teacher Assistant (effective end of the 2007-2008 school year).

The School Board approved a commitment to fund a minimum of 20 seats at the Southwest Virginia Governor's School for Science, Mathematics and Technology for a two-year period beginning July 1, 2008.

**\*Next School Board Meeting**

The next School Board Meeting will be held Thursday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at 3:30 p.m. The Teacher of the Year reception will begin after the board meeting at approximately 5:00.