

**Giles County Public Schools
School Board Meeting
NEWS RELEASE
May 15, 2008**

Dr. Terry E. Arbogast, II

Division Superintendent

***Pledge of Allegiance**

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

***Educational Feature**

Mrs. Michele Thompson attended the meeting on behalf of the Special Education department to present the educational feature. She wanted to introduce a program to the School Board members that the school system is going to begin implementing. Based on the challenges of the requirements of IDEA and the indicators that Special Educators are now responsible for while providing services, it was determined that they did not have a curriculum for their more challenging students. Due to this, the school system has purchased the STAR program, which is based on Autism research, but it can also be used for any students who need a modified curriculum. There are several advantages to this program because this program is not only for Special Education Teachers and Students, but can also be used by Regular Education teachers and students. This program assesses each child based on their level of achievement and will provide information that will break down the students learning into one of five parts. Mrs. Thompson shared that she felt that the biggest advantage to this program is the accountability it provides. There is documentation for each level every day, so when a parent comes in and wants to know what their child has been doing, it is very easy to show them what has been going on in all of the five areas. The other advantage of this program is that you teach these children skills, and at the end of the process they can carry it over into the regular classroom and into other activities during the day. Mrs. Thompson is very excited about this program. In addition, a few parents have reviewed this program and they were very excited about the use of this program. This program is Pre-K through high school and comes with DVD's and manuals. The first training session for this new program was held several weeks ago, which included regular and special education teachers, as well as teacher assistants. In addition, more training will be conducted at the beginning of the school year to include additional teachers. Dr. Webb asked Mrs. Thompson how the first workshop was received. Mrs. Thompson stated that the teachers were positive about this program and the assistants were excited that they would be trained. Surveys were completed at the end of this workshop and the overall feeling was that this program would be beneficial. The regular education teachers in the training were also very excited about the program.

***Public Comments**

Sonya Meekins, GEA President, attended the meeting to speak on behalf of the rebenchmark money. She stated that the rebenchmark money was intended for the employees of Giles County. They shouldn't have to beg for this money and justify why it is theirs. She stated that this unfortunately happened several years ago when the Board of Supervisors cut local funding and this same thing happened this year. They shouldn't be made to feel like they have to choose between a raise and renovation. They want renovation as well, but they also want a raise. With the money that the county was receiving from the state for rebenchmarking, this was the county's opportunity to get ahead. Next year, the General Assembly is going to send the school system about \$400,000 additional money. They strongly feel that something should have happened this year to make this better. The GEA is unbelievably disappointed, aggravated and upset that they did not receive more of a raise this year. They really don't understand what happened. She thanked Mr. Buckland and Mrs. McMahon for speaking up at the joint meeting with the Board of Supervisors saying that they needed to give their teachers a raise. She also thanked Dr. Arbogast for working with them to try to get them a raise and that's what The General Assembly intended for him to do. The Board of Supervisors did not do them any favors this year and they cannot recover from this. She doesn't know how the Board of Supervisors will make it up to them like they said in the last meeting. She told Dr. Arbogast that they were very upset about the situation and she could go on for hours. She stated that the Board of Supervisors saw this as their golden opportunity, but it wasn't their golden opportunity. The GEA has spent two years building a relationship with the School Board members. The 5% raise that Dr. Arbogast first presented was fine. They were not overly pleased with this, but they were pleased with everything else that he was trying to do. She stated that Giles was the only district in this area that did not benefit from the rebenchmark money. This makes them feel very unappreciated. Mrs. McMahon stated that Dr. Arbogast supported the 5% raise for teachers. They would

have loved to give teachers more than 5%. The Board of Supervisors is very generous to the school system. This past year, the Board of Supervisors gave the school system approximately 2.6 million more than what was required. Mrs. McMahon continued by stating that the Board of Supervisors felt that we needed to use the money for renovations. She also stated that the School Board feels that renovation is essential, but also is behind salary increases. The School Board would have loved to give a 5% raise, but renovation is important too. Mrs. Meekins questioned whether the staff will have to continue to pay for renovation in the future? Mr. Buckland stated that there will be no increase or decrease in School Board money to pay for the renovation after this year. Mr. Buckland stated that he does not question what she is saying. He doesn't know of anywhere where it states that the funding is specifically for teacher salaries. Mrs. Meekins will send some information to the School Board members on the rebenchmark money.

***Special Presentations**

On behalf of the Professional Advisory Council, the following were recognized for their Outstanding Efforts and Continued Support: **Gladys Burton** – NEMS, **Sean Sowers** – MMS, **Darlene Cunningham** – MMS, **Ashley Bales** – MMS, **Lawanda Robertson** – MMS, **Kay Wise** – MMS, **Mary French** – MMS, **Shellie Austin** – MMS, **Toni Chidester** – NEMS, **Steve Ragsdale** – GHS, **Rusty Kelley** – GHS, **Jack Ellison** – GHS, **Suzanne Williams** – EEMS, **Officer Chris Neice** – EEMS.

The following individuals were recognized for their participation in the 2008 Blue Ridge Regional Art Show: **Katelyn Osborne** – GHS, **Jamie Chen** – MMS, **Luis Mendoza** – EEMS.

***School Board Approves Consent Items**

- Meeting Minutes – April 10, 2008
- Special Meeting Minutes – April 8, 2008
- Bills in the amount of \$ 658,857.91
- Payroll, April 30th and May 15th, 2008
- Revenue for April 2008
- Expenditure for April 2008
- Appropriation Request for June 2008
- Special Education Annual Plan
- Career & Technical Education Funds
- Confirmation of Educational Technology Resolution
- Additional 2007-2008 Field Trips
- Division Technology Plan 2008-2013

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

The School Board confirmed the following **Employment**: Robin Haga – Transfer from EEMS Elementary Teacher to NEMS Elementary Teacher (effective for the 08-09 school year), Mark Jones – GHS Health/PE Teacher (effective for the 08-09 school year), Vontez Johnson – GHS Head Custodian (effective July 1, 2008), Amaris Meredith – Transfer from MMS Elementary Teacher to NEMS Elementary Teacher (effective for the 08-09 school year), Jason Thomason – GHS Special Education Teacher (effective for the 08-09 school year), Stephen Guenzi – MMS Elementary Teacher (effective for the 08-09 school year).

The School Board confirmed the following **Retirement**: Sandra Spangler - SBO/Business Manager (effective May 1, 2009).

The School Board confirmed the following **Resignations**: Wanda Stump – GTC Part-time GED Instructor (effective end of 07-08 school year), Kim Smith – NHS Agricultural Teacher (effective end of 07-08 school year).

The School Board confirmed the following **Supplemental Contracts**: Teresa Lowe – NHS Newsletter & SCA Sponsor, Larry Greer – NHS Senior Class Sponsor, Margaret Christle – NHS Yearbook Sponsor, Faye Nicholson – NHS Yearbook Sponsor.

The School Board confirmed the following **Substitute Bus Drivers**: Robert Trent.

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

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

The School Board approved policy revisions as recommended by the VSBA Policy Services and administration.

The School Board approved the following authorizations for the 2008-2009 school year: The Chairman and Superintendent to accept RFP's and offer employment between School Board meetings, if needed, and Scott Meade, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum to sign documents for the 2008-2009 school year, in the Superintendent's absence, as requested by the Virginia Department of Education.

The School Board approved a resolution to adopt the 403(b) plan document. In response to recently released IRS regulations establishing a requirement for written documentation of the 403(b) tax sheltered annuity program offered to employees of Giles County Public Schools, the District wishes to adopt the plan document. This document is based on model language released by the IRS for such purpose.

The School Board approved a motion to table the approval of the Accessibility Fee Agreement until the next School Board meeting.

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

The Board Chairman stated that he realized that the teachers are upset; they can never be paid what they are worth. The Board intends to do all they can to support them. He realizes that they have fallen behind, but they will have to play catch up.

A board member commended Mr. Hinson's class on their landscaping around NHS.

A board member commended the Giles Tech Center Reality Store. It was very successful and very well supported. It will be expanded in the fall to include 9th graders.

A board member commended all of the artwork on display at the School Board office.

Tonya Vaden was commended for all of her hard work and dedication with making the Reality Store very successful!

A board member stated that on April 14th, the anatomy class from the Governor's School went to Virginia Tech.

A board member distributed handouts to other board members regarding the 2008 State Science Fair Awards at the Governor's School and also provided names of students whose papers were accepted to the Virginia Junior Academy of Science.

A board member stated that in the Virginia Math League, the Governor School was the top scoring team in our region.

A board member stated that Virginia Tech has been asking the governor school to put Engineering 1 & 2 in their curriculum. By doing this, students that attend the Governor School and then attend Virginia Tech will go immediately into their curriculum.

A board member commended the VSBA Showcases for Success. Donna Ralph was featured in this booklet for the interactive notebook. The interactive notebook incorporates the eight learning styles (linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, body-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist) into meaningful material for each student. Mrs. Ralph is a 5th Grade Science Teacher at Narrows Elementary/Middle School.

A board member commended the Educational Feature by Mrs. Thompson. The STAR program will be a benefit to the school system! The program has definite potential.

A board member commended the art participants who participated in the art show.

A board member stated that they understand what teachers are telling them and understand the position that teachers are in because they were there once before. They wish they could do more, but at this point, they feel like they have done what they need to do. The school system has come a long way.

The Superintendent commended Deidra Thornton, Karen Letts, and Peter Binkley for their help with the 3 Musketeers Play that was put on at Narrows High School.

The Superintendent stated that SOL tests are still going on at this time.

The Superintendent stated that he has been out to the Tech Center to present letters to award winners of SkillsUSA and HOSA.

The Superintendent commended the reality store for being so successful!

***In Other Action**

The School Board approved the final draft of the 2008-2009 School Board budget. The total operating and flow-thru budget amount is \$27,409,806.

The School Board approved the Pride Survey. The Pride Survey is a survey that the school system is going to do in conjunction with New River Valley Community Services. The information gathered from this survey will be used by NRVCS to apply for their grant and will be used by the school system when applying for the Safe and Drug Free School grant.

The School Board approved the award of IFB #6-2008 (bakery items) to Heiner's Bakery.

The School Board approved a motion to table the award of IFB #8-2008 (petroleum products for school buses by district) until the next School Board meeting.

The School Board approved the proposal from ProSource for services specified in RFP #9-2008 (refinishing NHS & GHS gymnasium floors).

The School Board approved the following vendors for services specified in RFP #4-2008 (purchase of vehicles): Part 1 (van) – Newberry Ford, Part 2 (2 cars) – Duncan.

The School Board approved the special meeting minutes from May 8, 2008.

The School Board approved the James Andrew Riffe, Sr. Memorial Scholarship. To honor and recognize his life of personal and professional service to thousands of families from across Southwest Virginia and beyond, Riffe's Funeral Service, Inc. and the Riffe Family propose to offer a \$500.00 scholarship in memory of James Andrew Riffe, Sr., to a graduating Narrows High School senior who plans to enroll at New River Community College in Dublin, Virginia.

The School Board approved the employment of Rex Gearheart – NHS Principal (effective for the 2008-2009 school year).

The School Board approved the employment of Rebecca Herman – NEMS Teacher Assistant with Sign Language (effective for the 2008-2009 school year).

The School Board approved a revision to the activities handbook. This revision is under section eight (Participation), part A (Eligibility). This paragraph now includes the following sentences: "To prevent athletic programs from being discontinued, an exception to the 7th grade participation rule will be allowed. If the total number of students entering the 8th grade drops below 75 then 7th grade students will be allowed to participate as needed."

The School Board approved the retirement of Marilyn Mustard – Narrows High School Math/PE Teacher (effective the end of first semester during the 2008-2009 school year).

The School Board approved the 2008-2009 Athletic Coaching Contracts from Giles High School for the following: Randy Roe – Head 8th Grade Football, Brandon Webb – Varsity Girls Basketball, Erin Burton –

Varsity Volleyball, Mitch Reed – Varsity Boys Basketball, Mark Hubbard – Boys & Girls Cross Country, Mark Hubbard – 8th Girls Track, Jackie Evans – Assistant Varsity Football, Jeff Williams – Head Varsity Football, Jerry Huffman – Head Junior Varsity Football, Kristen Radford - Varsity Cheerleading, W.R. Johnston – Varsity Golf, Bill Mance – Junior Varsity Girls Basketball, Byron Hurley – Assistant 8th Grade Football, Bryan Strader – Assistant Varsity Football, Bobby Buchanan – Varsity Softball, Byron Hurley – Boys Tennis, Whitney Matlock – Junior Varsity Volleyball, Bruce Frazier – Varsity Baseball, Randy Roe – Varsity Boys Soccer.

The School Board approved the 2008-2009 Volunteer Athletic Coaching Agreements from Giles High School for the following: Whitney Matlock – Assistant Varsity Girls Basketball Coach, Shana Midkiff – Assistant Varsity Girls Volleyball Coach.

The School Board approved a resolution to support the request to use inmate labor on public/public works projects. In accordance with Virginia Code 53.1-59, inmate labor may be used for public/public works projects on public lands upon the request of the locality. The Department of Corrections is committed to the use of armed security officers to guard all inmates working on public/public works projects.

The School Board approved the following surplus items:

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***Next School Board Meeting**

The next School Board Meeting will be held Thursday, June 26th, 2008 at 7:30 a.m.