

News Release
April 14, 2010
Giles County Public Schools
School Board Meeting

Dr. Terry E. Arbogast, II

Division Superintendent

***Pledge of Allegiance**

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

***Public Comments**

Mrs. Leslie Simpkins, EEMS parent, addressed her concerns about the recent cut of teacher assistants in our schools due to the budget shortfall. Her son's assistant was affected during the recent layoffs. She stated that she was disgusted with the news due to the extreme success of Mr. Joseph James, her son's assistant. She feels that it is always special education that gets the cuts. She says that change causes the majority of the problems in special needs children. She stated that seniority should not come before compassion. She stated that she feels like her son will fall behind due to this change in assistants for next year. Mrs. McMahon stated that there was nothing in the budget that was taken lightly by board members. She feels that seniority should be looked at first when making cuts. Mrs. Carol Spangler-Hale asked why the cuts only involved teacher assistants and bus drivers. She asked why the cuts did not start at the top with administrators. Mrs. McMahon stated that administrators were cut a while back before these most recent cuts were put into place. Mrs. Hale questioned why Narrows High School had an assistant principal with only approximately 300 students. Mr. Buckland stated that with all the extra activities and the alternative education program, there was a need for an assistant principal. Mrs. McMahon stated that the board felt that children would suffer more if teachers were reduced.

Mrs. Mary Henderson, Farm Bureau Board Member, spoke on behalf of the Farm Bureau and explained the Virginia Learning Barn Project, which was implemented in the summer of 2006. The mission of the project is Agriculture Education and Promotion. The idea behind this project is to increase the awareness of elementary school students about the source for food/fiber and different things regarding agriculture. The barns presented to our elementary schools were built by the Giles Tech Center Building Trades students and are filled with 25 books in each barn. These barns will be placed in each of our elementary schools. There are over 300 barns in counties across the state and they hope to be able to place more books in the barn each year. The vision of the Virginia Farm Bureau is to create an environment where agriculture will flourish and improve the lives of Virginians.

Mrs. Gloria Hurt, GEA President, spoke on behalf of the Giles Education Association. GEA would like to commend Dr. Arbogast, Mr. Meade and the principals for their professionalism that was displayed towards the employees during the difficult layoff process. The willingness to extend the recall period for layoffs from one year to two years exhibits the School Board members and Superintendents understanding of the very difficult budget situation. They hope this will give enough time for the economy to improve. Students, Parents, and Educators are extremely pleased that the Board of Supervisors value education as well and were willing to provide needed money to supplement the school's budget. In closing, she thanked the School Board and Superintendent for their hard work on the budget this year.

***Special Presentations**

On behalf of the Professional Advisory Council, the following were recognized for their Outstanding Efforts and Continued Support: Jay Williams – EEMS, Chris Townsend – EEMS, Wanda Rhodes – EEMS, Brenda Williams – EEMS, Mary Spaur – EEMS, Angela Vaught – EEMS, Joel Rader – EEMS, Mark Givens – EEMS, Donald Lee Radford – EEMS, Mary French – MMS, Kim Squibb – MMS, Gloria Hurt – MMS, Holly Clark – MMS, Diana Blanton – GHS, Toni Chidester – NEMS.

On behalf of the School Board, Ms. Sierra Ogden, NHS Student, was recognized for her hard work & efforts in representing Giles County as a Page for the Senate at the 2010 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

***Educational Feature**

Mr. Rick Franklin, Mrs. Sarah McGlothlin, and Mr. Jacob Osborne attended the School Board meeting on behalf of the Narrows Elementary/Middle School educational feature. A PowerPoint presentation was shared depicting Jacob's educational experiences and how the available technology has benefited Jacob over the last several years. Jacob discussed how he was born with Cerebral Palsy and has undergone several surgeries over the years. He has been in Giles County Public Schools since Kindergarten and is now in the 6th grade. Since Kindergarten, his interest for technology has increased significantly. Some of Jacob's favorite technology is the touch screen, the Kendall, large calculator, Alpha Smart, and the SmartBoard. It was apparent from the PowerPoint that Jacob has benefited from both the technology and the instructional environment established in the classroom.

***School Board Approves Consent Items**

- Meeting Minutes – March 18, 2010
- Bills in the amount of \$ 703,491.73
- Payroll, March 31st
- Revenue for March 2010
- Expenditure for March 2010
- Appropriation Request for May 2010
- Additional 2009-2010 Field Trips

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

The School Board confirmed the following **Employment:** Amy Cowen – MMS Speech Language Pathologist (effective March 29, 10)

The School Board confirmed the following **Retirement:** Terri Dunford – MMS Special Education Teacher (effective end of 09-10 school year)

The School Board confirmed the following **Resignation:** Amy Hill – GHS Teacher Assistant (effective March 22, 10)

The School Board confirmed the following **Volunteer Agreements:** Tim Munsey – GHS 8th Grade Football

As per the Code of Virginia that all reappointments must be made by April 15th 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 2010-11 school year.

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

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

The School Board approved the 2010-2011 budget as proposed by the Superintendent. The total amount for the 2010-2011 Operating & Flow-thru budget is \$25,256,861.

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

Board members commended the Superintendent and everyone involved for all of their efforts with the budget this year.

Board members and the Superintendent commended the Narrows Elementary/Middle School educational feature!

Board members and the Superintendent commended and thanked the Board of Supervisors for all of their help and support this year!

A School Board member commended the article regarding the FOCUS program that was in the VSBA Showcases for Success.

A School Board member commended all the students and staff involved in Giles County Clean-Up Day (Ramps/Roads). This was done on their own time. Their efforts are greatly appreciated!

A School Board member discussed the Southwest Virginia Governor's School Regional Science Olympiad Winners from March 12-13, 2010. Alec Frazier and Robbie Wills from Narrows High School placed 5th in Trajectory.

A School Board member stated that he was glad we are still having Governor's School, considering the difficult budget year!

School Board members stated that no decision had been taken lightly during this difficult budget process.

A School Board member commended Samuel "Sam" Aistrop, GHS Senior, for receiving the award of Virginia All State Band! Congratulations Sam!

The Superintendent informed School Board members that Amaris Meredith, NEMS Teacher, was chosen as the 2009-2010 Virginia Outstanding Math/Science Teacher Award winner by the Virginia Tech Chapter of Sigma Xi. Amaris will receive a \$500 award and NEMS will receive \$500 as well. Congratulations to Amaris for this recognition!

The Superintendent and School Board members thanked Farm Bureau for their generous donation of books and barns for Agriculture Awareness and Promotion. They also thanked the Giles Tech Center Building Trades students for building the barns for the books. They did a super job!

The Superintendent congratulated the 35 students who passed the MCAS (Microsoft Certified Application Specialist) credential. This test validates their skills using the 2007 Microsoft Office system and Windows Vista. The students were from Mr. Eric Widdoes and Mrs. Tabitha Young's classes at Giles High School.

***In Other Action**

The School Board approved additional payrolls to include April 15th, 2010.

The School Board approved an additional revised policy to include JEC-R (Student Transfer Policy).

The School Board approved additional personnel recommendations to include garage/maintenance.

***Next School Board Meeting**

The next School Board Meeting will be held Thursday, May 20th, 2010 at 4:00 p.m.