

News Release
April 12, 2011
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**

Mr. Buckland stated that we have received Mr. Lilly's documents to put up in the schools, but we have forwarded to our attorney as of last week and we are not ready to act on it today, but we would anticipate it to be reviewed before next month's meeting.

Gloria Hurt, GEA President, attended the meeting on behalf of the GEA. "I have met with Dr. Arbogast and he shared with me that one of your goals for this budget year is to maintain positions. We are extremely appreciative of that. Our wish of course was to see all those individuals laid off; we would have loved to of had them back. We do understand that things are still tight. We would also like to thank you for continuing the insurance for our people that have 30 years of service with Giles County. Upon retirement, they can have the option of having their insurance premium paid. We are also appreciative that you did not extend the 30 days for those people who did not have 30 years of service. So, again, we want to say thank you for that. We are also very excited that Governor McDonnell's amendment that required us to pay 5% towards our VRS was defeated. Why this is such a victory to us? Being required to pay 5% towards our retirement would be equivalent to a pay cut. I know that would make a hardship for most of us. Governor McDonnell's amendment to create a defined contribution law was also defeated. Again, that's a sweet victory. This preserves the VRS defined benefit retirement system for us. The PE bill a lot of people didn't understand why we didn't support that. It's not that we don't support additional PE time in our schools, but their unwillingness to provide additional funding to implement this program is where we have opposition. We just feel like there are areas of greater need right now. Just last Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, I took six of our delegates and we went to Roanoke to the VEA convention. We had a lot of new business items introduced there and we voted on those. While we attended the meeting, some information was shared with us from the Board of Education concerning the revisions that they are wanting to make to teacher evaluations. The present system for evaluating systems may have some flaws and we are all willing to admit to that. GEA does not agree that measuring teachers' effectiveness with student test scores will improve our performance or our students learning. If the decision is made in our county to revise the method in which teachers are evaluated, we would hope that a committee consisting of educators will be formed to create the most effective system to evaluate our teachers and to evaluate our pay. With that, I want to say thank you again."

***Special Presentations**

On behalf of the Professional Advisory Council, the following were recognized for their Outstanding Efforts and Continued Support: Christie Gunter/Family Preservation – EEMS, Donna Lawson/Family Preservation – EEMS, Stephanie Hanks/Family Preservation – EEMS, Amber Pennington/Family Preservation – EEMS, Ben Pauley/Family Preservation – EEMS, Katie Anderson/Family Preservation – EEMS, Mary French – MMS, Gloria Hurt – MMS, Kim Squibb – MMS, Lisa White – MMS, Donna Stump – GHS, Crystal McMahon – GHS, Thelma Yost – MMS, Mike Grim – NHS.

On behalf of the School Board, the following individuals were recognized for their participation in the 2011 Blue Ridge Regional Art Contest: Morgan Ralph, Nikki Hodges, Kara Lilly.

***Educational Feature**

Jeannie Layton-Dudding attended the board meeting on behalf of the Giles High School educational feature. She brought along 3 students, Nicole Stump, Alicia Hudson, and Stephanie Hall. The programs are open to 9-12th graders, with 14 students currently being enrolled in Floriculture and 10 in Horticulture. All of her students at some point spend time in the greenhouse. Mrs. Dudding discussed the newly completed

greenhouse, which is 42' x 60' and includes overhead irrigation, ebb & flow watering tables, and fans & louvers. She commended the maintenance guys for all that they do to help her! The students discussed the experiences they get in the greenhouse which includes: planting seeds & plugs, transplanting, labeling, proper watering/fertilizing, location/spacing, pinching/pruning, housekeeping, plant information research, plant marketing/displays, and customer service. They have a plant sale that starts May 2nd at the greenhouse. In addition, Mrs. Dudding discussed the Alternative Agriculture Grant. This was something that was set up through Virginia Tech and the Virginia FFA Foundation and "trickled" down from our Commissioner of Agriculture. The purpose of the grant was to try to encourage counties in Southwest and Southside Virginia to look at producing more crops that are not traditionally grown within those counties. Only 5 schools were selected to participate. Giles is doing tomatoes as their crop and Mrs. Dudding explained the process for the tomatoes that they will be growing. Agriculture is definitely evolving! There are several farmers markets in the area. She was terrified that she wouldn't be able to fill up the new greenhouse, but from the pictures, it is evident that she is not having any problems. Emptying the greenhouse is actually her next goal. This grant has a requirement for matching funds and the time that the students and teacher spend in the greenhouse or the maintenance of the greenhouse can count towards this requirement. They were awarded a \$3500 grant and it was not hard to match that by any means. Mrs. Dudding will be responsible for curriculum development for this project and the program will serve as a role model for other schools if they choose to pursue the grant next year if funding is available. There will be site visits from the Virginia Tech staff to make sure she is using the money the way she is supposed to and to see if anything else is needed. From this opportunity, they will be conducting research and she will be responsible for making sure the research is shared at the state Agriscience Fair. One of her goals is to use this as a recruiting tool for those nontraditional students that she doesn't normally get in Ag. Furthermore, SAE is a project that students are supposed to have. These range from what the students are doing in the greenhouse, working in Narrows Livestock Market, or working with special needs students at Harmony Hills. Nicole Stump explained how she does the weekend watering at the greenhouse for her SAE project. The students can also apply for proficiency awards. She then discussed incorporating science into her program. Agriculture is a meeting place for all of the sciences and she can correlate most anything she teaches with one of the sciences. So much of what they do is an overlapping of the SOL's. One of her goals is to have science teachers bring their classes out to visit the greenhouse and give them a tour and maybe get some more of the nontraditional Ag students. She thanked the School Board and the Board of Supervisors for all of their support with the greenhouse. They are very fortunate! Mrs. Dudding treated the School Board with hanging baskets. In closing, she stated that this past weekend on the FFA side, they competed in the State FFA Horse Judging contest, the junior team placed 2nd in the state and the senior team placed 5th. Alicia judged in the 4H category. She made the state 4H horse judging team and was 6th in the state for 4H. Nicole Stump placed in oral reasons. Alicia through 4H will get to travel to Oklahoma twice this year, Mississippi, Ohio, etc. with the 4H state team.

***School Board Approves Consent Items**

- Meeting Minutes – March 15, 2011
- Bills in the amount of \$ 533,101.14
- Payroll, March 31st, 2011
- Revenue for March 2011
- Expenditure for March 2011
- Appropriation Request for April 2011
- Additional 2010-2011 Field Trips
- Confirmation of Educational Technology Resolution
- Confirmation of Surplus Items

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

The School Board confirmed the following **Employment:** Reinstatement of Sue Perkins – Bus Driver (effective 11-12 school year)

The School Board confirmed the following **Retirement:** Betty Crigger – MMS Bus Driver (effective end 10-11 school year), Anne Wheeler – GHS Science Teacher (effective end 10-11 school year), Earl Ventry – GHS Chemistry Teacher (effective end 10-11 school year), Judy Keating – EEMS Elem. Teacher (effective end 10-11 school year), Shari Tripp – EEMS Elem. Teacher (effective end 11-12 school year), Brenda Caldwell – NEMS Elem. Teacher (effective end 10-11 school year)

The School Board confirmed the following **Resignation:** Greta Quesenberry – NEMS Elementary Teacher (effective end 10-11 school year), Erin Halsey – MMS Elementary Teacher (effective end 10-11 school year)

The School Board confirmed the following **Volunteer Agreements:** Dale Meredith – GHS Baseball, James Doffin – GHS JV Baseball Assistant, Kylie Galyen – GHS Soccer Coaching, Brian Spangler – NHS JV Baseball

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 2011-12 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 a scholarship offered by the Narrows High School Class of 1965. The purpose of this scholarship is to assist and encourage the recipient to continue his/her education. The recipient shall have maintained scholastic performance to the best of his/her ability, must exemplify high moral character and shall be sensitive to opportunities to render service and assistance to others, to his/her school, and/or to his/her community. A committee represented by Alumni of the Class of 1965 shall be responsible for the selection process. The “committee” will base selection on the following criteria: 70% need, 15% citizenship, and 15% Academic.

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

Board members thanked the contributors for the VSBA showcases for success (Macy Mentors, EEMS After School Reading Program & Gifted Art Program). There were 3 entries. There are a lot of good things going on in the county.

A board member thanked Mr. Etzler for the copy of the Spartonian.

A special thanks for all those teachers and parents for their hard work with the Academic Fair! It was very successful!

A board member had the opportunity to go to Macy last week for the balloon release for Autism Awareness Month. It was a breathtaking event! Thanks to the Virginian Leader and Roanoke Times for coming out to this event.

A team of Narrows High School students won a Third Place Award in the High School and Community College Game Programming Contest. These students consisted of Alec Frazier, Mary Hetherington, and Robbie Wills. Rick Fisher, Computer Science instructor coached three teams of SWVGS students for this competition. Also, 5 Giles County students exhibited their research projects at the Virginia State Science and Engineering Fair. Giles High School students participating were Alex Eaton and Avery Mahaney. Narrows High School students participating were Alec Frazier, Neileen Polintan, and Lindsey Trent.

Mr. Gollehon thanked EEMS for taking care of him during February for School Board Appreciation Month!

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 Giles High School educational feature! It's amazing to go in and see the plants at the greenhouse!

Board members commended the maintenance guys for all they do!

It was shared that it was anticipated that renovation at EEMS should be finished by July 15th.

The Superintendent shared information from the SkillsUSA State Conference. Chelsea Barnett and Thomas Hart are eligible to compete at National SkillsUSA in June. The results are as follows: Chelsea Barnett

1st Place – Promotional Bulletin Board, Thomas Hart 1st Place – Technical Drafting, Fallon Klecak 1st Place – Fantasy Manikin, Jared Lawson 1st Place – Current Events, Miranda DeHart & Courtney Songer 2nd Place – Occupational Scrapbook, Trevor Dudding 4th Place – Job Interview, Casey Lucas 4th Place – Precision Machining Technology.

The Superintendent stated that there are several students that placed in the State HOSA Leadership competitions. They are as follows: Amie Copper, Afton Lane & Victoria Shaver – 1st Place for Community Health Education – Project on “The Choking Game”, Cara Ganoë – 1st Place for Extemporaneous Writing – the subject: “How HOSA Makes a Difference”, Gwendolyn Ribbe – 3rd Place for Researched Persuasive Speaking – the subject: “Probiotics – A Miracle Cure.”

The Superintendent commended and thanked Macy McClaugherty, Mrs. Webb, Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Farmer and whoever else was involved in setting up the Autism Awareness activity at Macy. This was a great activity to go and be part of!

Renovation at EEMS is progressing and we are making headway. About 95% of the stuff is done at the Tech Center. The completion date for EEMS is tentatively set for July 15th.

***In Other Action**

The School Board approved the 2011-2012 budget as proposed by the Superintendent. The total amount for the 2011-2012 Operating & Flow-thru budget is \$25,055,099. The local revenue will be reduced by \$204,265. To get to that point, a retirement incentive was offered to employees with 25 years of service or more within Giles County Public Schools. Some of those employees will be replaced, but not all of them. In addition, we have 8 teacher assistant positions and 4 teachers that we will be covering out of the federal jobs money next year. What that means is starting the 2012-2013 budget discussion, we will have a deficit of about \$415,000. The Superintendent also stated that the budget includes funding to address the school's bandwidth issue.

The School Board approved the resignation of Melanie Garland – NEMS Speech Language Pathologist (effective of the 10-11 school year).

The School Board approved a one year rollover on the following bids: 3-2008 (fleet insurance with State Farm), 5-2008 (dairy items with Pet Dairy), 6-2008 (bakery items with Heiner's), and 7-2008 (cafeteria items with Sysco).

The School Board approved additional 2010-2011 field trips. These include one from Sandra Kelly to attend the SkillsUSA National Conference. She will travel to Kansas City, MO by plane from June 20-25, 2011. There will be 2 students involved in this field trip. The second one is from Shelia Rice to attend the HOSA National Conference by plane from June 21-27, 2011. There will be 4 students involved in this field trip.

The School Board approved a local art elective class for Giles High School (1 semester – Art 8 foundations). The course is designed primarily to provide a general knowledge of art concepts, skills, and explore the study of concepts that make connections between art and life. Classroom participation is required. The textbook Arttalk is used throughout the course, and students will utilize and develop the basic art elements of: shape, form, line, value, space, texture, and color. This encompasses chapters 1-7 in the “Arttalk” textbook. Students are also given the opportunity to explore a variety of basic art media. Classroom activities include: pencil, colored pencil, pen and ink, scratchboard, tempera, watercolor, pastel, clay, and various craft projects. Assessment of course: class participation, class art projects, and written tests. Instead of doing an art exploratory class, they are changing to Art 8 foundations so they can give a half credit.

***Next School Board Meeting**

The next School Board Meeting will be held Thursday, May 19th, 2011 at 4:00 p.m.