

News Release
April 12, 2012
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. Diana Blanton spoke on behalf of the GEA. She stated that “the concerns of the GEA remain the same and the budget concerns are dismal, but we would please ask that you do all you can to save jobs and to give your employees a fair salary. Considering all the changes in the VRS contributions and years of declining money from the state, the responsibility will fall to the locality. We would ask that you work with the board of supervisors to provide funding. Next, GEA would like for you to consider changes to the emergency sick leave policy. Currently, if an employee has an immediate family member with an emergency illness, you have to take 5 sick leave days and then a personal day or day without pay in between. We would like you to consider changing that policy so that personal days do not need to be used and the number of sick leave days is unlimited if an employee were to have enough sick leave days. Another change we would like for you to consider is bereavement days. Currently, an employee can only use a sick leave day to go to the funeral of an immediate family member, so a personal leave day must be taken to go to the funeral of an aunt, uncle, close friend, etc. We would like the policy changed so that sick leave can be used to attend funerals. We feel that this change would be a cost effective way to support employees.

Finally, on a happier, brighter note, I wanted to talk about our award that we will present today. The goal of GEA is to provide a great public school for all the children in the county and we all feel the best way to accomplish that is to have highly qualified personnel from every level from administrators to teachers to assistants and education support professionals such as secretaries, bookkeepers, custodians, and bus drivers, which are the backbone of our schools. They work for very little pay, yet perform vital services to help our children receive an appropriate education, so I’m excited to announce that the GEA, with the help of the School Board developed the Giles County Education Support Professional of the Year award to help, promote and uplift these individuals. We want to make sure that they receive the respect and recognition that they deserve. I would like to thank you all for helping us implement this award for this year. This year’s recipient is Mr. Rick Ratcliffe, NEMS Head Custodian.

***Special Presentations**

On behalf of the Professional Advisory Council, the following were recognized for their Outstanding Efforts and Continued Support: Tracy Ferguson, Caterpillar/Bert Preston & Grant Snider (Pearisburg), Caterpillar/Ronnie Anderson (Pulaski), and Patrick Enterprises/Mark & Dwight Collins (Pembroke).

On behalf of the School Board, the following individuals were recognized for their hard work and dedication to students with autism (Autism Awareness Month): Anissa Dudding, Kim Kantsios, Debbie Green, Andi Guynn, Heather Frazier, Lisa Ratcliff, Jackie Robertson, Linda Vaught, Venita Skidmore, Tammy McGuire, Tonya Burton, Robyn Taylor, and Angela Rice.

On behalf of the School Board and Giles Education Association, Rick Ratcliffe was selected as the Giles County Education Support Professional of the Year. This award is in recognition of his hard work and dedication to Narrows Elementary/Middle School and Giles County Public Schools as a head custodian.

On behalf of the School Board, the following individuals were recognized for their participation in the 2012 Blue Ridge Regional Art Contest: Kendra Johnston, Nikki Hodges – 1st Place (High School Category), Benjamin Hart.

***Educational Feature**

Mr. Greg Canaday, Eastern Elementary/Middle School (EEMS) principal, along with several teachers and students, attended the School Board meeting on behalf of the educational feature. Mr. Canaday first distributed a sheet to board members regarding future and past events at EEMS and he discussed these events briefly with school board members. Next, Mr. Canaday discussed a program called "Words Their Way". Words Their Way is an approach to teaching phonics, spelling, and vocabulary that has grown out of developmental spelling research and theory. This approach to word study teaches students to look closely at words to discover letters, vowel patterns, syllable structures, and spelling-meaning connections in English orthography. Teachers started preparing for this program last spring with monthly professional development. There is now full implementation of this program in Kindergarten, with 1st and 2nd grade implementation during intervention time. Teachers who attended the School Board meeting to discuss this program were Mrs. Sarah Woods, Mrs. Crystal Ramos McCall, Mrs. Toma Eaton, Mrs. Toni Robertson and Mrs. Lori Evans. Kindergarten students who attended to demonstrate this program were Devin and David Robertson, Kylie Douthat, Dru Munsey, Sally Ford and Abigayle Schlueter. Mrs. Sarah Woods showed a Power Point regarding this program. This word study program begins with assessment and is connected to reading and writing. There is direct instruction, with gradual release of responsibility to student control. The goal of word study is to teach children how to compare and contrast word features so that they can conceptualize the predictable patterns of English spelling. The purpose of word study is to provide connection between learning to read and spell, provide developmental approach to spelling instruction where students work on instructional level, allow students to compare and Contrast categories of word features through hands-on opportunities, provide a link between word study and text, provide systematic scope and sequence of word-level skills, increase students specific knowledge of words (spelling and meaning), and reveal consistencies in our written language system. Mrs. Woods showed examples of the stages of word study, discussed the tiers of development, discussed the benefits of the word sorting approach and showed a sample weekly schedule for elementary students. The students then paired up with the School board members and Superintendent to participate in a word study activity.

***School Board Approves Consent Items**

- Meeting Minutes – March 15, 2012
- Bills in the amount of \$ 503,443.79
- Payroll, March 30th, 2012
- Revenue for March 2012
- Expenditure for March 2012
- Appropriation Request for May 2012
- Additional 2011-2012 Field Trips
- Confirmation of Educational Technology Resolution
- Teacher of the Year Resolution

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

The School Board confirmed the following **Employment:** Jarrod Alls – EEMS Cafeteria Monitor, Michelle Burton – Substitute Bus Driver

The School Board confirmed the following **Athletic Coaching Contract:** Brittany Moye – GHS Varsity Girls Tennis

The School Board confirmed the following **Resignation:** Melissa Conley – NHS Varsity Softball Coach (effective 2/3/12)

The School Board confirmed the following **Volunteer Agreements:** Paul Short – GHS Soccer

The School Board confirmed the following **Supplemental Contracts:** Larry Greer – NHS MACC Social Studies/Senior Class Sponsor, Alleta Morrison – NHS MACC Math, Betsy Wood – NHS MACC English, Randy Weddle – GHS MACC Social Studies

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 School System for the 2012-13 school year. Due to the uncertainty of the budget, only teachers were submitted at this time.

The School Board accepted the bid from Newberry Ford for services specified in IFB #2-2012 (purchase of drivers education vehicle).

***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 new teacher evaluation model that was designed and proposed by the teacher evaluation committee.

The School Board approved the 2012-2013 school calendar that was designed and agreed upon by consensus of the School Calendar Committee.

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

Mr. Gollehon stated that he is always amazed at the student programs!

Mr. Gollehon commended Nikki Hodges for her first place win in the high school category in the Blue Ridge Regional Art Contest.

Board members commended Lisa White for receiving the County Teacher of the Year award. Also, congratulations to all other Teacher of the Year candidates!

Mr. Whitehead shared information regarding the Southwest Virginia Governor's School. Forty-eight SWVGS students submitted papers to the Virginia Junior Academy of Science (VJAS); papers from Giles County students are highlighted. VJAS is a state chapter of the American Academy of Science and they invite students to submit specifically formatted research papers describing their science fair projects. Submitted papers are reviewed by a panel of three readers and those that are top-ranked are invited to the annual VJAS research meeting to present their research in a ten minute oral presentation. VJAS is dedicated to the advancement of science by discovering and encouraging scientific aptitude among Virginia's middle and high school students. VJAS has been ranked among the top three Junior Academies in the nation for nearly three decades. SWVGS is extremely pleased to have increased participation from students; in 2009, only three SWVGS students submitted papers. More than 36% of the students submitted papers in 2012, and are anxiously waiting to hear who will be invited to the research symposium at Norfolk State University, May 22-24. The individuals below submitted papers from Giles County:

Elena Anderson - Grade 12 – Physics - A Study of the OIII to Visual Flux Ratio of Astronomical Objects

Josalyn Buchanan – Grade 11 - Medicine and Health - A Study of Water Source and Carcinogens in Giles County

Breannah Carr – Grade 12 – Psychology - Distracted Driving and How It Affects You

Brianna Massaro – Grade 11 – Psychology - Determining the Pitch Recognition Abilities of Students at Giles High School

Hunter Mathias – Grade 11 – Psychology - Only Children Families Versus Multiple Children Families

Margaret Ragsdale – Grade 12 - Medicine and Health - Muscle Fatigue and Muscle Recovery: A Test of Athletes versus Non-Athletes

Alexandra Shelor – Grade 12 – Engineering - Quicklime and Water Heater 2.0

Carson Squibb – Grade 11 - Environmental Science - The Presence of Cattle on Nitrate Levels in Freshwater Streams

Gabrielle Stiff – Grade 12 – Psychology - Correlation between Major Choice and Academic Strength

Elizabeth Williams – Grade 11 – Psychology - Electric Powered Cars v. Gasoline Powered Cars

Dr. Webb commended the “Save the Penguins” STEM program at Macy McClaugherty that he was able to attend. This program is doing exactly what it was designed to do!

Dr. Webb stated that he participated in Career Day at Macy McClaugherty and it was a very good experience!

Board members offered their sympathy to the Howard Morris family in his recent passing. Mr. Morris supported the Giles County school system.

Mr. Buckland commended the GEA for presenting the award to Mr. Rick Ratcliffe!

Mrs. McMahan stated that she appreciated the teachers and students who participated in Giles County Clean Up Day!

Mrs. McMahan thanked the Narrows Athletic Fund for their \$17,000 donation to Narrows High School!

Mrs. McMahan thanked Shelor for their donation of 10 laptop computers to Narrows Elementary/Middle School.

The Superintendent commended the students who attended the Health Occupation Students of America State Leadership Conference in Williamsburg on March 16th – 18th from the Giles Tech Center. Fourteen students participated in competitive events at the conference with eight of those placing in the top 5 in the state. Kristen Shady (LPN student) placed 1st in Basic Health Care Concepts; Jessica Chrupcala (LPN student) placed 2nd in Pharmacology, Melissa Adams (LPN student) placed 3rd in Human Growth & Development, Kayla Murray (CNA student) placed 4th in Personal Care and Ashley Estep, Samantha Myers, Amber Sanders and Makayla Sarver (CNA students) competed on a team and placed 5th in Emergency Preparedness.

The Superintendent commended FBLA students from Giles High School who attended the New River Region Competitive Events on March 16th, 2012. In addition to the great results, Jazzon Symn will be serving as Regional Vice President and running for State Vice President at Large in April 2012. The following students received awards:

First Place:

Tiffany Cook – Client Services, Jennifer Bradley – Accounting I, Gina Modica – Accounting II, Thomas Brown – Computer Problem Solving, Jacob Gilmer – Cyber Security

Second Place:

Sam Myers – Business Ethics, Bryce Nester – Business Ethics, Nikki Reynolds – Business Law, Jacob Roach – Networking Concepts

Third Place:

Taylor Johnson - Economics

The Superintendent commended all students who submitted art work for the Blue Ridge Regional Forum, especially Nikki Hodges, who received first place in the high school category.

The Superintendent commended the individuals who took part in the educational feature!

The Superintendent thanked Mr. Meade and the teacher evaluation committee for all of their hard work in developing our new teacher evaluation model.

The Superintendent commended the STEM activity that was held at Macy McClaugherty School. The students seemed to have a great time!

The Superintendent thanked all individuals who helped with Career Day at Macy McClaugherty School. Everyone did a great job speaking to the students.

***In Other Action**

The School Board approved the April 13th payrolls.

The School Board approved funding for 20 slots for students to attend the Southwest Virginia Governor's School. This agreement is for the next two academic years, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014.

***Next School Board Meeting**

The next School Board Meeting will be held Thursday, May 17th, 2012 at 4:00 p.m.