

News Release
February 16, 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**

Pastor Shahn Wilburn attended the School Board meeting. He stated first that he appreciated the School Board's hard work and service to the county. He presented the School Board with additional documents to be considered to be added to the historical document display at Narrows High School.

Ms. Sonya Meekins attended on behalf of the GEA. "I'm here today on behalf of the GEA, which represents 189 of the school board employees. Our mission is to stand up for the children of Giles County Public Schools. The financial situation surrounding public education in Virginia is very dire. We ask you to join us and call your senator and delegate to let them know that it's not acceptable to harm our public schools by cutting funding. As you know, the state government would like to cut hundreds of millions of dollars from public education, the federal jobs bill money is running out, and the VRS contribution rate is increasing. The bottom line is that public schools in this county need money from our localities to help offset the shortfall. If we don't have more money come in from our county, there will be terrible consequences. The people that the monies shortfall will affect the most is our students and their future, so please do all you can to save the positions that service our students. Please do all you can do give your employees a fair salary."

Mr. Michael Etzler attended the School Board meeting to discuss the budget. "I appreciate what you do for us. I know it's a hard job. I just want to remind you that it's my 12th year teaching at Giles High School and I'm getting paid at a level of 7 years' experience. I understand fully that the economy is bad and a lot of sacrifices have to be made. I truly feel that the teachers have made sacrifices and perhaps more than our share. Teaching is one of the most important professions in our society. I'd like to say this... it's not our teachers who are failing us, it's our society who is failing our teachers. Attitudes towards public school teachers and education are becoming pitiful! I have a foreign exchange student who is so alarmed that she might one time get a B. She's afraid of what her parents might think as to why she didn't get an A. Too many students and parents are just happy that their kids are just passing. Politicians and administrators are more than willing to invest in technology and buildings, but the most important investment is often overlooked and that is our teachers. Many want to take away the incentives that people have to join and stay in this profession. Great workloads and documentation seem to be the norm. Low salaries are also something we are dealing with quite often in Virginia. My grandmother gave me this blanket. As you know, I joined this profession later in life than usual. My grandmother is 93 now and she is probably the proudest person that I'm a teacher. It says: "Teachers inspire the hopes of today and the dreams of tomorrow." Folks, who is inspiring our teachers? Some of us are at a breaking point. I feel like I do a hard job, to the best of my ability, and I work until almost exhaustion day in and day out for my students. I ask you to turn the tide folks and make teachers one of your top priorities. You need to help inspire us with your decisions. Please don't disappoint us more. Thank you."

***Special Presentations**

On behalf of the Professional Advisory Council, the following were recognized for their Outstanding Efforts and Continued Support: Lisa Johnston – EEMS, Debbie Poff – EEMS, Carol Spangler-Hale – EEMS, Angela Rice – EEMS, Marsha Kessinger – EEMS, Juanita Sweeney – EEMS, Heather Frazier – EEMS, Sharon Wilson – EEMS, Dorothy Williams – EEMS, Teresa Link – EEMS, Dee Meredith – EEMS, Barbara St. Leger – EEMS, Renee Meredith – MMS, Brenda Hayes – NEMS, Luke Robins – NHS

Mrs. Barbara Hobbs, Giles County Board of Supervisors Chairman, attended the meeting to distribute certificates to School Board Members in honor of School Board Member Appreciation Month.

On behalf of the School Board, Amanda J. Tickle, School Board Clerk, was presented with a certificate by the School Board Members for School Board Clerk Appreciation Week.

***Educational Feature**

Sheriff Millirons, along with Deputies Teddy Vaughn and Jon Bowman, attended the meeting to update the School Board and Superintendent on what the School Resource Officers do on a daily basis in our schools. Sheriff Millirons stated that two weeks ago he was at the General Assembly and begged and pleaded with Senator Edwards and Delegate Yost to remember Giles County this year. The first priority of the School Resource Officers is safety within the schools. The officers that we have in the schools are certified police officers and they enjoy being able to interact with teachers and students. We have been very fortunate to be able to keep our School Resource Officers in the schools. They offer counseling sessions to help with bullying or even home life. This year, they are going to bring "McGruff" back. The Sheriff had previously used him a lot and the kids really enjoyed him. They want to educate our children, our faculty, and our community on how to make their home life safer. Officer Bowman then spoke on how he enjoys being at Narrows High School and how he takes pride in his school. He thanked the School Board for everything and appreciates having a job! He is very happy to be a part of the community in Narrows. Officer Bowman helps teach law to seniors, does fatal vision goggles with 10th graders, helps with bullying prevention to 8th & 9th graders, teaches D.A.R.E. to 6th graders, teaches Halloween safety to Kindergarten, as well as many other things. A lot of teaching is done in the schools. The main reason they are at the school is for safety and security reasons. Officer Vaughn presented information that demonstrated what he does at Macy McClaugherty during the school year. This includes teaching D.A.R.E. to 6th grade students, teaching internet safety to 6th & 7th graders, attending the Olweus Bully Prevention Program at Macy, helping to reduce truancy by meeting with parents and court action, assisting parents with students in the evenings by directing traffic on Henson Avenue, attending safe school training in Christiansburg, continuing with Caught Being Good program for all students at Macy, assisting office staff with custody papers, checking exterior doors and ensuring all are locked except the main front doors, assisting teachers and students with any problems that may arise each day at Macy, etc. He also discussed information that he has been using in D.A.R.E. class, called "faces of meth." He showed a PowerPoint to the board that illustrated the effects of meth.

***School Board Approves Consent Items**

- Meeting Minutes – January 19, 2012
- Bills in the amount of \$ 454,156.24
- Payroll, January 31st, 2012, and February 15th, 2012
- Revenue for January 2012
- Expenditure for January 2012
- Appropriation Request for March 2012
- Additional 2011-2012 Field Trips

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

The School Board confirmed the following **Retirement**: Jane Crank – GHS Teacher Assistant (effective 6/30/12)

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

The School Board confirmed the following **Athletic Coaching Contract**: Craig Johnson – GHS Head Varsity Baseball

The School Board confirmed the following **Volunteer Athletic Coaching Agreement**: Jerry Huffman – GHS Varsity Track

The School Board accepted the bid from Contract Paper Group, Inc., for services specified in IFB #1-2012 (duplicating paper).

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

The School Board approved the updated Division Technology Plan for 2011-2015. Giles County Public Schools is committed to improving student achievement. The school division believes the effective use of technology and software applications in assessment, instruction, remediation, and data analysis by school personnel will improve student achievement. The division technology plan has been updated for 2011-15 and

identifies strategies that support the school division's vision to use technology to prepare students for their future roles in a technological society.

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

Mr. Whitehead discussed information on the Governor's School regarding the award winners from the 2012 Science Consortium. Kyle Chafin from Giles High School placed honorable mention in the Chemistry category. Maya Williams from Giles High School placed honorable mention in the Consumer Science category. Alex Shelor from Giles High School placed honorable mention in the Environmental Science category. Carson Squibb from Giles High School placed 3rd in Environmental Science. Alex Eaton from Giles High School placed honorable mention in Mathematical Sciences. Kearsley Dillon from Giles High School placed 2nd in Physics and Astronomy. Elena Anderson from Giles High School placed 1st in Physics and Astronomy. Avery Mahaney from Giles High School placed honorable mention in Psychology: Social Interactions. Emily Harrell from Giles High School placed 3rd in Psychology: Social Interactions. Giles High School students, Bree Carr, Gabrielle Stiff, and Margee Ragsdale received research awards. Elena Anderson from Giles High received the Alternate Grand Award in Physical Sciences. First and second place winners will progress to the Blue Ridge Regional Highlands Science Fair to be held March 2-3. Students will submit research papers to the Virginia Junior Academy of Science and if accepted, students will be invited to the annual meeting on May 22-24.

School Board members and the Superintendent thanked the School Resource Officers for the educational feature and for all of their hard work and efforts in the schools.

Mr. Gollehon and Mrs. McMahon stated that we had a very interesting and good two full days for the School Board retreat. It's always nice to hear what's going on in the schools.

Mr. Gollehon stated that he was glad that NHS now has a chorale program. They gave an exceptional Christmas concert this year.

Dr. Webb commended the comments made by Mrs. Meekins! The board is concerned about the same issues.

Dr. Webb stated that they have now completed 5 of the 6 school tours. They have been eating very well at each school and it amazes him each time they go to the schools on the cleanliness and overall great condition of our schools. The staff and custodians take great pride in the upkeep of the schools.

Dr. Webb had the opportunity to attend the bullying program at Macy and was very pleased.

Mrs. McMahon thanked Macy for a very nice welcome this week. She was invited there in recognition for School Board appreciation month. She was very moved by the children.

Mrs. McMahon thanked the elementary schools for including the parents in many of the activities that they conduct during the year.

Mr. Buckland thanked Mrs. Meekins for her comments. He understands where the teachers are coming from. He also stated that he took exception to one of Mr. Etzler's comments about the buildings and technology. He feels we have not wasted any money there.

Dr. Arbogast shared updated SOL scores from NHS.

Dr. Arbogast stated that beginning in spring 2013, the writing tests are going to be administered online, so we have begun participating in online field testing for the writing tests at Giles High School and will complete this at the other schools in March.

Dr. Arbogast discussed the Studio STEM program, which is a grant through Tech. Eastern has 24 students (5th – 7th grade) participating and Macy has 39 students. It is an after school program on Tuesday's and Thursday's from 3:30 – 4:30 and is a 3 year program.

The Superintendent stated that the Tech Center nursing program was evaluated recently by Virginia Board of Nursing. Based on their review, they recommended continued approval of the nurse aide education program.

The Superintendent stated that Narrows Elementary/Middle School conducted a "Title I Family Night" on Monday evening of this week. They had about 100 people (38 kids) attend this activity. They participated in Math and Reading activities and rotated through groups. Students were given prizes at the end.

The Superintendent stated that EEMS will be recognized by Channel 10 for their "Cool School" submission.

The Superintendent thanked each school for adopting a School Board member for February, which is School Board Appreciation month.

***In Other Action**

The School Board approved the Employment of Chris Payne (NEMS Custodian), effective 2/13/12.

The School Board approved Volunteer Agreements for Samantha Canterbury (NHS Asst. Softball Coach/Volunteer Athletics) and Loyd Castele (NHS Volunteer Athletics).

***Next School Board Meeting**

The next School Board Meeting will be held Thursday, March 15th, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. The Quarterly Dinner Meeting with Administrators will follow at GHS at 5:30.