

## December 18, 2014

The regular meeting of the Giles County School Board was held on Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. in the School Administration Office Building Conference Room. Persons present were:

E.G. Gentry  
R. B. Whitehead  
Drema K. McMahon  
J.L. Webb, Jr., Chairman  
Joe Gollehon

Dr. Terry E. Arbogast II, Superintendent  
Amanda J. Tickle, Clerk  
D. Scott Meade, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Board, on motion of Mr. Whitehead, with second by Mr. Gentry and unanimous voting, approved the Superintendent's December 18, 2014 School Board Meeting Agenda.

### SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

On behalf of the Professional Advisory Council, the following were recognized for their Outstanding Efforts and Continued Support: Kristen Corboy – EEMS, Angie Martin – EEMS, Rusty Castele – GHS and Gretchen Hagee – GHS.

The following students were recognized for their outstanding artwork and winning this year's Christmas Card Contest: Walker Gillespie – MMS, Anne Martin – EEMS, Zoe Burton – NEMS.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mrs. Melissa Conley attended the school board meeting on behalf of the GEA. She stated, "The National Assessment of Educational Progress says that almost half of the variation in average reading and math scores nationwide is linked to child poverty rates. However, politicians realizing they cannot impact basic social problems easily, focus on reforms such as measuring teachers' performance by students' test scores, providing vouchers for school choice, and setting goals for student achievement. These reform strategies pretend that economics don't matter. Touted school reforms-such as charter schools-do little to address the issues facing children who live in areas of concentrated poverty with high crime rates, high unemployment and elevated occurrences of child abuse and neglect. These strategies have little impact on graduation rates, test scores, or college attendance. Sean Reardon with Stanford University puts it this way, 'As the children of the rich do better in school, and those who do better in school are more likely to become rich, we risk producing an even more unequal and economically polarized society.' Virginia's public school students do better on tests if they are not economically disadvantaged than if they are. Virginia defines economically disadvantaged as:

- Free or reduced lunch students
- Students on Temporary Aid for Needy Families
- Students on Medicaid
- Homeless or migrant students

The gap between students occurs throughout the state. In Arlington County, for instance, 93% of students not economically disadvantaged passed the 3rd grade reading test while only 74% of economically disadvantaged passed. Washington County in 8th grade math showed 94% of those not disadvantaged passing while, for disadvantaged children the pass rate was 82%. Wythe County's Algebra II results showed a contrast of 92% to 76%. Statewide average for pass rates among not disadvantaged to disadvantaged are: For 3rd grade Reading 90-74; 8th grade math 88-73; 8th grade science 96-85; EOC Alg. II 92-84.

You have copies of data that outlines assessment results for each area in Virginia. This is very interesting information. The data is very disturbing. Another sad statistic showing that people living below the poverty level in Giles County is 13.3% compared to the 11.3% overall in Virginia. This is extremely disheartening. Giles County children deserve better. Student achievement is closely linked to adequate financial resources. It's time for local and state policy makers to address issues outside the school building that help children achieve. Adequate housing, good nutrition, access to health and dental care, rigorous pre-school programs, and quality teachers who are respected and appreciated are important factors in educational achievement.

On December 10, 2014 Gov. McAulliffe announced a \$17.5 Million Federal Preschool Expansion Grant. This grant is going to bring money to high risk 4 year olds in Giles County. VEA was a vital contributor to this grant and we are very grateful for their assistance. GEA feels that this is a good step by our state government but we also feel there are things that can be done at a local level as well. We addressed a few proposals in the budget hearing. One area the GEA is passionate about is the area of a daycare service. We feel that not only could this be an educational opportunity for our students but it could also provide an essential service to students, employees, and the community. There are grant opportunities that could make this a viable opportunity. This service could help with dropout rates and help our young mothers to be successful. Stopping the cycle of poverty is a process and services such as these are just the beginning of that process. GEA feels there are many more opportunities available that need to be researched and explored. Giles County children deserve the same opportunities for success as other children in the state. It is our job to do our best to help their dreams come true.”

Dr. Arbogast spoke regarding the most recent calendar committee meeting. He first clarified an issue from the last board meeting and calendar committee meeting. He wanted to clarify that it was portrayed that the calendar committee developed the new calendar proposal, but the calendar committee was actually given a proposal with direction given by the School Board to end first semester prior to Christmas break. He then went on to share information from the last calendar committee meeting. First, he gave data from the calendar committee meeting regarding the idea of transitioning the 15-16 calendar into the 16-17 calendar. For the 15-16 calendar, the votes from the schools were as follows:

NEMS -	12 (Teachers start August 17 <sup>th</sup> ) 18 (Teachers start August 24 <sup>th</sup> )
MMS -	10 (Teachers start on August 17 <sup>th</sup> ) 31 (Teachers start on August 24 <sup>th</sup> )
EEMS -	5 (Teachers start on August 17 <sup>th</sup> ) 4 (Teachers start on August 24 <sup>th</sup> ) o No one else voted – feel like it doesn't matter what they think
GHS -	33 (Teachers start on August 17 <sup>th</sup> ) 8 (Teachers start on August 24 <sup>th</sup> ) 15 – Abstain
GTC -	9 (Teachers start on August 17 <sup>th</sup> ) 1 (Teachers start on August 24 <sup>th</sup> )
NHS -	Response from representative was it was an overwhelming vote for teachers to start on August 17 <sup>th</sup> .

He then spoke on the comments shared by the calendar committee representatives regarding the 2016-2017 calendar. They are as follows:

- o Definite “NO” to 16-17 calendar
- o Second semester is going to get hit with weather
- o “Why don't we have a say so?”
- o People are convinced it's all because of NHS
- o People feel like the 16-17 calendar is going to do more harm than good
- o Concerned about being light out until after 9 and trying to get kids in the bed and rested
- o Not truly a “summer break” because summer break is truly June, July and August
- o Continued to question why the school board is not listening to what teachers and community individuals are saying
- o Concerned about staff “canning” during the August months
- o Concerned about economic impact for individuals and community (teachers and students working)
- o Continue to feel that they have no say on the calendar
- o Has a lot of people concerned that this will do more harm than good
- o What kind of impact will this have on our schools and/or results (no data out there right now to help determine this)
- o Admin concern is that they will need a plan to get the buildings ready and the master schedules done in time
- o Can we meet in the middle on the 16-17 school calendar (compromise) - Is this a done deal or will it be reconsidered? It would go a long way with teacher morale and they would feel like they would have a say so...

Mrs. Ellen Hawks spoke regarding the proposed calendars. She stated that she has tremendous respect for our school system, board members and our faculty/staff. She feels there are no perfect school systems, but Giles County is one of the best ever and she is thrilled that her kids are here. When she was told about the proposed start dates (she stated she is neither for nor against), she has no information right now to form an educated opinion. She has been trying to gather information from some

credible, reliable sources. She said the reasons she has been told were that they would like to see the first semester end at Christmas break and therefore start a new semester after break, this would tremendously help NHS, that all the other school districts are going to this schedule and that the board feels like there is a lot of wasted time at the beginning of the school year and at the end after SOL's. She stated she wanted to know what the teachers think and wants to know if there is an academic advantage. She stated that there would be some economic disadvantages in this county. She stated that she has had several teachers contact her privately and was not told of any teachers that were in favor. She stated that her questions are these: What are the academic advantages for this change?, What do our teachers say? (She stated that our teachers are terrified of the repercussions of speaking out in regards to the board decisions – Our teachers should be heard), Is this academically advantageous?, Are these days a done deal? (Are you still willing to listen to what people have to say?), Were the educators aware of the changes prior to the October calendar committee meeting?, Were any educators involved in this decision or only School Board members? She thanked them for her time.

Dr. Webb stated that he has also heard the concern of "If it's not broke, don't fix it", but when he understands that GHS has lost its accreditation and an elementary school had to fall back on its 3 year average for accreditation, that concerns me. They want to change this because of GHS. When the statistics came out in the summer and that GHS had lost its accreditation, he thought they would have a room of people concerned about their child's education. As the students' progress through high school and graduate, they may not get into the college they want to because colleges look at the school where they come from. The Board is not professing that this is a silver bullet. He stated that GHS is a great school. Dr. Webb gave an example of what real economic impact is here in the county. He stated that over the past 3 months, he has had the opportunity to talk to many business leaders in this county. Individuals that have talked to Dr. Webb have expressed their concern over GHS and their accreditation. With the business people that he has talked to, one in particular stated that he had hired an individual whose salary was going to be 2 – 3 times that of a salary in Giles and the gentleman checked on housing and schools within Giles County. He found out that GHS had lost its accreditation, so he bought a house in Montgomery County. He stated that this was true economic impact. Mrs. Chidester stated that they are talking about lost wages from teachers who have summer jobs to make ends meet and teenagers who work summer jobs. She is not talking about the pools. If we go back earlier, the teachers and students will lose wages. Mrs. Hill stated that when we are talking about economics, we are talking about families having daycare, preschool availability and our children passing tests (SOL tests are different than a year ago). All of these factors are playing a bigger impact than the pools. She stated that a few weeks of school will affect a small child extremely. They are looking at how this is going to affect a small child. She stated that there is not a teacher in this county who is worried about their summer vacation. She stated that SOL's are going up higher and we expect the world from these little ones at an early age and they are going to high school and they are done because they have been tested to death. Dr. Webb stated that he understands exactly what she is saying, but he has heard individuals say that they are concerned about their summer. Dr. Webb mentioned the 2015-2016 calendar and Mrs. Ferguson stated that it was not decided at the calendar meeting because everyone says the board is going to do what they are going to do. She stated that what she is trying to say is that they are the ones that are dealing with the children and looking at this knowing what is going to be best for the kids. As a parent, she doesn't want her kids in school August 8<sup>th</sup>. She stated that she loves Giles County and she has been pleased with her child that is now in college. She stated that we don't have the money that Montgomery County has. She stated we need to work with what we have for resources in our community. She stated that a month earlier for a small child who does not know how to cut will not be beneficial. Another thing she has not heard brought up is that this year SOL's were made more stringent. Across the state, SOL scores went down, so we shouldn't punish GHS for their scores. Dr. Webb stated that we are not punishing GHS by any means. He stated that he doesn't think we have the leisure of waiting to see what happens and that they need to start reacting. Mrs. Ferguson stated that there are other ways to react. She stated that we are giving experienced teachers money to walk out of the door and we are reaping some of those benefits. She stated that experience matters. Dr. Webb stated that they make a lot of decisions and sometimes ask the Superintendent to ask other divisions for their input because we can gain from the input from other divisions. He stated that Roanoke City Schools, and normally we would not compare Giles to Roanoke, has been dealing the last 5 years with accountability problems and accreditation problems. They are doing everything in their power by increasing remediation, altering the school calendar and a combination of events to try to help their problem. If all we were doing is changing the school calendar around, we probably wouldn't see a lot of changes, but we can put that with other changes. Mrs. Ferguson asked if the DOE gave the recommendation to start school earlier. Dr. Webb stated that they have not received any recommendation yet from DOE. Mrs. Gentry asked if we do not become accredited, do we lose control of our school system. Dr. Webb stated that DOE could gain control if we lose accreditation. She stated that she is willing to do what it takes to help our schools become accredited. She doesn't want the federal government to come in here

and control our school system. She wants to start the process to get us back in accreditation. Mrs. Conley stated that the conversation is getting into “bashing” GHS and we should not be doing that. She stated that we don’t have enough time in the day to work together. She feels we need to come up with other ways to help our teachers. This negativity is not the direction we need to go in and this needs to be changed. She stated that in the calendar, we need to figure out how to help the teachers have workdays and professional development workdays, etc. Mr. Gentry stated that being new to the board, when he was running for the board, he heard without doubt that the Board doesn’t make any changes, so when the opportunity come up to make some changes to the calendar, it makes sense that those last days after we finish exams to the beginning of the year. He feels you can get more quality time in the beginning of the year. If we keep on doing the same thing, we are going to get the same results. If we can have an opportunity to get more educational value, we need to try that. As far as the comments about the vacation, Mrs. Ferguson, that is the first thing you told him the other day. Mrs. McMahan stated that we need to let Dr. Webb finish what he has prepared to say. Dr. Webb stated that when you look at spring testing dates (14-15), the writing SOLs, you now have 26 weeks from the beginning of school until the tests are administered. If we went to the proposed calendar where we finish first semester at the Christmas break, it goes to 30 weeks, which is more instructional time. The writing tests are usually the ones we struggle with heavily. If we go to the non-writing, there is not a lot of advantage to be gained (maybe 5 more days’ of instructional time). Mrs. McMahan stated that the state numbers were lower because of the testing changes. We have been looking at everything because we want things to improve and just want the best education for the kids in Giles County. We frequently have heard comments after SOL’s, those days are not used as the best learning experience for the kids. We started looking at numbers and dates and what about starting earlier in August. She stated that she has been really shocked about the comments that they have heard about starting early. They looked at this and thought, they have the curriculum, technology and best teachers in the state, so what can we do to improve the education for our kids? They (the School Board) think the days in the beginning of the year are more beneficial than the days in the end. She stated all they are here for is for the best interest of our students. Dr. Webb told Mrs. Hawks that she had stated something that was disturbing to them. She mentioned that several teachers had been told by their administrators not to discuss this in public. He stated that this really disturbs him. He asked her to go back to those teachers and have them speak to him. Mrs. Hawks stated that 90% of the teachers she has spoken to, there is true fear for their jobs. She stated that who knows better than what our students need academically than our teachers. Dr. Webb stated that our board could not be more supportive of our teachers here in Giles County and our facilities. He stated that he feels we do not have the luxury to sit back and just wait for changes to happen. Mrs. Hawks stated that we hired the teachers, so trust them to have an open, honest discussion. Mrs. Ferguson stated to give the teachers the support they need. Mrs. McMahan asked her if she feels like she has not been supported. Mrs. Ferguson stated that in some instances “yes”. Mrs. McMahan asked her to give her one example. Mrs. Ferguson stated that the insurance was one. Mrs. McMahan told her that she had insurance. Mrs. Ferguson stated the thing is the morale of the faculty does play part in your school atmosphere and she thinks you made some great points. She thinks that when people don’t know what’s going on, the feeling of being ignorant quickly turns to bitterness and confusion. Mrs. McMahan stated that they did not realize there was going to be such a big response. They look at class sizes all the time and they like to see a small student to teacher ratio, but we don’t have a lot of money. It was a tremendous loss when we had to release some of our paraprofessionals, but we just don’t have any money. We only have what we are given. Mrs. Ferguson stated that they just like support and to get the input of the staff as to how they can help make this happen, instead of just making a decision to start early and not give a whole lot of reasons, but also trying to get additional paraprofessionals. Dr. Webb stated that we have been fortunate so far to not have to get rid of a teacher because of the budget. In the last 5 years, the state has hurt these small, rural divisions. We have lost some teachers that have retired and we have not replaced those positions and those do hurt class sizes. Dr. Webb feels that something positive could come out of starting early, along with some remediation. He stated that change is not easy for anyone, but if you have a certain attitude about it, you may have a preconception that it is not going to work. We are trying to increase the instructional opportunity for these students and not just take away their vacation. He stated that the reason for doing the calendars concurrently is to make an easier transition from one year to the next. Mrs. Ferguson says it is not the summer, it is the drasticness of the change. She has heard that a lot of people would like to meet in the middle on the calendar. Dr. Webb feels that they don’t feel like they have the time to wait on a change to happen. Mrs. Corboy went back to the discussion where individuals were concerned about the number of students starting earlier in the year. It was mentioned about the grant for preschool. She wanted to know if we could look at that as part of the puzzle for this problem. She asked if there are strings attached to the funding. Dr. Webb stated that since it was a grant, usually the money is very specific to where it is used. Dr. Arbogast stated that it is earmarked just for the VPI-Plus program. Mrs. Chidester stated that she thinks they are all in agreement as to starting earlier and for the 15-16 school year, we will be technically be starting 3 weeks earlier. She thinks if we start any earlier, the children are not going to want to be

there and they will have a hard time focusing. She's not sure that a whole month earlier is going to be beneficial for elementary students. She stated that the high schools may be different. She said that the GHS calendar committee representative stated that the reason they were not accredited were Algebra I and Math 8, which both belong in middle school. Instead of us focusing on starting so early, maybe we should focus on the preschool classes, which in turn can help them throughout school and down the road. She stated that it seems every year, our kids get further and further behind. Mrs. Sable stated that we are almost creating a population because of the kids getting further and further behind. She stated that the ones that have support at home are going to make it, but some of the ones that don't aren't going to make it through. She stated that they already have some of the students coming in handicap even when school starts now, so it will be worse a month earlier. She stated that she has children that have never held scissors and she hasn't seen that in a long time. She thinks preschool will help this problem. Mrs. McMahon asked if they thought finishing before Christmas break would be beneficial. The elementary teachers stated that it would not be beneficial. Mrs. McMahon stated that every year, they look at test scores of 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders. She stated that the scores of 7<sup>th</sup> grade are better than the others. Mrs. Meekins stated that they are not coming to school ready and then they get to high school and hit the wall. She said regardless of whether you start school early (first of August or 1<sup>st</sup> of September), the last few weeks of high school are not down time for secondary level. Mrs. Hawks asked if we could hold off on starting a month earlier and see how starting a couple weeks earlier would help our test scores. Dr. Webb stated that if we get into the 15-16 school calendar, we are certainly not against tweaking the calendars. Dr. Webb stated that he doesn't feel like we have the luxury to sit back and wait for results. Mrs. Chidester said that if we start that early, high school students will be "done" before the SOL tests in the spring. Mrs. Sable says that preschool will help the testing problem, but it will take about 7 years. Mrs. McMahon stated that we don't just sit on the outside trying to find out information that goes on in the inside. She understands that each grade level has committees on how they are going to improve. She wishes they had the money to give them smaller class sizes. Mrs. Sable stated that if we ever get monies from the state, to please stick them in the younger grades, especially Kindergarten. Mrs. Chidester asked if we were going to compromise on the calendar. Dr. Webb stated that the board is still in discussion and stated that he is going to take all the facts from the meeting into consideration. Mr. Gentry stated that he talked with a friend of his whose wife is an elementary teacher and she held her children out for a year and they have done better. Dr. Webb thanked everyone for their input tonight. Mr. Gollehon stated that he taught for 38 years and has been on the school board for 21 years. The years that he taught school, he has seen so many changes. There have been changes in the schools and the way the school board operates. Teachers used to not have any say so at all. Since he has been on this board, he has seen this board make so many changes that the teachers asked for and we would have made a lot more if we would have been able to. He thinks this group will make the best decision they possibly can to help the students' progress in Giles County. Mr. Gentry stated that this has been talked about enough and wants to know if we can bring it to a vote. Dr. Webb feels that after tonight, we still need to discuss this as a board, whether it is right now or somewhere down the road, but he doesn't want this to go on forever. Mrs. McMahon stated that she is very concerned with some of the information that was shared tonight. She stated that she talked with a teacher at Montgomery County (secondary teacher) to see about attendance, etc. with the starting earlier and she stated that attendance was not a problem in starting early. On motion of Mrs. McMahon, with second by Mr. Whitehead, with voting 3-2 (YAY: Mrs. McMahon, Mr. Whitehead, Dr. Webb; NAY: Mr. Gentry, Mr. Gollehon) made a motion to table the voting of the school calendars (16-17) until January so it can be discussed further. Dr. Arbogast stated that there has not been a final proposal to be voted on. Dr. Webb stated that it is very important to tie these two calendars in because of the transition phase. Mr. Gentry stated that his personal feelings are for the students to start the 15<sup>th</sup> and teachers start the 8<sup>th</sup> of August during the 16-17 school year. There was discussion on when to have another meeting solely to discuss the school calendar. It was the consensus of the Board to have a special meeting on January 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. to discuss the school calendars. They welcomed any calendar committee representatives that want to attend.

### **APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEMS**

The Board, on motion of Mr. Whitehead, with second by Mrs. McMahon and unanimous voting, accepted the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the following consent items:

- A. Meeting Minutes**
  - 1. Regular – November 13, 2014
  
- B. Financial Data**
  - 1. Payrolls to include November 25<sup>th</sup>, December 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014

2. Payment of Bills to include November 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and December 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014
3. November 2014 Revenue and Expenditure Reports
4. Appropriation Request for January 2015  
TO: Christopher McKlarney  
Interim Administrator for Giles County

RE: January 2015 Appropriation

The following is the appropriation request for the month of January 2015. This is for the seventh month of the fiscal year 2014-15. I would appreciate the Board's consideration of this request. The request for the operating budget is consistent with the approved operating budget submitted by the School Board.

<b>Original Monthly Appropriation Request: (Operating + Flow-thru)</b>	\$ 2,160,084.00
<b>Total:</b>	\$ 2,160,084.00

This request is one-twelfth of the operating budget and includes the anticipated monthly expenditures in the flow-thru account. Our year to date appropriation and expenditures are contained in the monthly summary. If you have questions, please feel free to let me know. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

5. Confirmation of Field Trips

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

A. The Superintendent recommended action and Board approval of the following personnel/contractual items:

1. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Gentry, with second by Mr. Whitehead and unanimous voting, confirmed the following **Volunteer Agreements**: Robbie Patteson – NHS Boys JV Basketball Asst.
2. The School Board, on motion of Mrs. McMahon, with second by Mr. Whitehead and unanimous voting, confirmed the following **Athletic Coaching Contracts**: Dennis Kidd – NHS Varsity and JV Soccer Coach, Greg Robertson – NHS Boys Varsity Basketball Asst., Tasha Davis – NHS Girls Basketball Asst.
3. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Gentry, with second by Mrs. McMahon and unanimous voting, approved the following **Resignations**: Amber Bailey – NEMS Custodian (12/19/14), Jamie Burton – GTC Building Trades (11/14/14), Kayla Lively – NHS JV Softball Coach (11/21/14)
4. The School Board, on motion of Mrs. McMahon, with second by Mr. Gentry and unanimous voting, approved the following **Retirement**: Becky Weiss – MMS Nurse (01/31/15), Sarah Wheeler – NEMS Elem. Teacher (11/14/14)
5. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Gentry, with second by Mr. Whitehead and unanimous voting, approved the following **Employment**: Mike McClaugherty – GHS Bus Driver (11/17/14)
6. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Gentry, with second by Mr. Gollehon and unanimous voting, approved the following as provider of services as specified in RFP #10-2014 (sports officiating services). Proposals were received from:

Soccer (Roanoke Valley Soccer Officials Association)  
Softball (Roanoke Valley Softball Umpire Association)  
Baseball (Roanoke Valley Baseball Umpire Association)  
Basketball (Western Virginia Basketball)  
Volleyball (Roanoke Valley Officials Association)  
Football (Western Virginia Football Officials Association)

- B. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Gollehon, with second by Mrs. McMahon and unanimous voting, approved the proposed changes after the November board meeting to the county activities handbook. The concussion policy was added after it was approved last month. Mrs. McMahon stated that after reading this again, she didn't see anywhere where it stated that there would someone available at athletic events that was CPR/First Aid certified. She would like the verbiage changed in this policy to reflect this. Dr. Arbogast stated that we can add additions if there is something else they want added. Mrs. McMahon stated that she would like to at least have one individual available at each practice/event that was certified. She wants the handbook and coaching contract to say, "there should be someone certified in CPR/first aid at all athletic events." After discussion, it was decided to ask the athletic directors their thoughts on this matter. Mr. Gollehon, with second by Mr. Whitehead, rescinded the motion to approve the changes and table the discussion.
- C. The School Board, on motion of Mrs. McMahon, with second by Mr. Gentry and unanimous voting, approved a resolution from VSBA/VASS regarding funding for public education. VSBA and VASS are joining in this effort to amplify our voices to the General Assembly about our need for them to invest appropriately in public education. The Giles County School Board and its division superintendent, in conjunction with the Virginia School Boards Association and the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, call upon the Virginia General Assembly to immediately increase the state's share of funding for public education to the level of quality that is prescribed by them in the Standards of Quality and expected by all of the Commonwealth's citizens.
- D. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Gollehon, with second by Mr. Whitehead and unanimous voting, approved policy revisions as recommended by VSBA.

### **CONCERNS/COMMENTS**

Dr. Arbogast stated that Virginia was awarded 17.5 million dollar federal preschool expansion grant.

Dr. Arbogast stated that preliminary SOL results from Narrows High School writing were 87.2%, so this is a good start!

Dr. Arbogast stated that the Tech Center had students go over and visit the Lumenhaus (award winning 600 square foot solar home) at Virginia Tech. They visited Bishop-Favrao Hall where the college students presented lessons and models to the high school students demonstrating green building concepts.

Dr. Arbogast congratulated the Giles High School Varsity Football team and coaches on another great season!

Dr. Arbogast commended NHS staff and students who went around Christmas caroling last week. They did a great job and I know everyone they visited enjoyed it!

Dr. Arbogast stated that Giles High senior, Hannah Johnson, participate in a poetry contest. Her poem titled "Him" has advanced to the semi-final round of the National Amateur Poetry Competition. As a semi-finalist, her poem will be published in the multivolume series, Beyond the Sea. Congratulations!

Dr. Arbogast recognized Mr. Whitehead for receiving his 25 year award from Virginia School Boards Association. Congratulations Mr. Whitehead!

Dr. Arbogast recognized Giles High School volleyball player/senior, Tori Belcher, for making 2<sup>nd</sup> Team All-state.

Dr. Arbogast stated that the flashing lights upgrades have been completed and training will be coming in the next couple of weeks.

Dr. Arbogast stated that he had the opportunity to go to the Tech center and see the nursing student projects. They did a nice job on them!

Dr. Arbogast discussed an update from VSBA about the governor's biennial budget update. Based on the information,

Governor McAuliffe has protected K-12 education from additional cuts, but reductions were made to localities, so it may come back to school divisions at some point.

Mr. Gollehon enjoyed having the Christmas card winners here at the board meeting.

Mr. Gollehon enjoyed having Christmas carolers come to his house from NHS.

Mr. Whitehead shared information about the Southwest Virginia Governor's School. He stated that, "Students at the Southwest Virginia Governor's School are currently conducting their independent research projects. Students developed their project topics and methods during the fall semester and are now completing their experiments. Below are brief summaries of projects belonging to a few students from Giles County:

- Nick Sink is testing new designs of plant microbial fuel cells that could provide a more continuous system with additional electrical output. He is specifically adding the cathode chamber inside the anode chamber and measuring the electrical current generated compared to generic models. He hopes that a new design would provide evidence of microbial fuel cell functionality in an ever-increasing biotechnological world.
- Victoria Agud is using video analysis to determine differences between different flag pole weights.
- Brandon Spangler is looking at the difference between practice swinging with a weighted vs. non-weighted bat for baseball.
- Cailin Henry is investigating whether there is a change in total nitrogen in the New River in the area surrounding the Celanese plant.
- Jordan McKinney is working at Nanosonic investigating the antifouling properties of some novel paint additives."

Mrs. McMahan welcomed T.J. Atkins with the Virginian Leader.

Mrs. McMahan thanked NHS for the caroling. It was a pleasant surprise.

Mrs. McMahan congratulated Mr. Whitehead for his 25 years of service!

Mr. Gentry stated that the GHS Chorale was invited down to the Roanoke Bellmont Christian Church to sing with them for the Hanging of the Greens. It was a great event!

Mr. Gentry discussed James Monroe Mavericks Volleyball and congratulated Narrows native, Renee Jessee, for her success with teaching and coaching.

Dr. Arbogast recognized GHS and NHS Chorale students who came to the board office to sing. Thank you!

Dr. Webb stated that the Chamber visit to look at the mural from Rhonda Colavecchio and students was great!

Dr. Webb stated that there was an article in the Roanoke Times regarding Montgomery County getting tablets for their 9<sup>th</sup> grades. This is coming from an e-learning backpacking intuitive. This is something that he would like to talk about at the retreat.

### **IN OTHER ACTION...**

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Gentry, with second by Mr. Whitehead and unanimous voting, approved the transfer of Sherry Wall from MMS to NEMS Title I (1/5/15).

The School Board, on motion of Mrs. McMahan, with second by Mr. Gentry and unanimous voting, approved the transfer of Amanda Dunbar from Student Specific Nurse to School Nurse @ Macy (effective January 2015).

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Gentry, with second by Mrs. McMahon and unanimous voting, approved the employment of Paul Baker – GTC Building Trades (1/5/15).

Dr. Arbogast mentioned the Joint Services Agreement, but the school board wanted to wait to hear back from a couple individuals before making a decision.

**\*Next School Board Meeting**

The next regular School Board meeting will be held **Thursday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.** There will be a special called meeting on Wednesday, January 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.

The Chairman, on motion of Mr. Whitehead, with second by Mr. Gollehon and unanimous voting, adjourned the meeting.

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Chairman

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Clerk