

**Giles County Public Schools
Regular School Board Meeting
American Education Week
School Tours
November 18, 2003**

Dr. Robert C. McCracken

Division Superintendent

***School Board Approves Consent Items**

- Regular Meeting Minutes – October 29, 2003
- Payment of Bills
- Payroll
- Appropriation Request for December 2003
- Confirmation of Surplus Items
- Field Trip Confirmation

***Recognition**

The Superintendent and Board Chairman recognized those recommended by the Professional Advisory Council the following for their outstanding efforts: Steve Songer – NHS Head Custodian.

***Public Comments**

There were no regular public comments or input/comments for the 2004-005 School Board Budget.

***Educational Feature**

Kay Lucas, Nursing Instructor at the Giles County Technology Center attended the meeting with two of her students, Matthew Wagel, a student in the Practical Nursing Program and Shawna Smith, a student in the Adult Nursing Program, who assisted her in presenting the software program “Virtual Clinic Excursions”. Mrs. Lucas explained the interesting computer program that allows students to virtually visit a hospital setting from start to finish, beginning at the hospital entrance, logging in to use records, and then assisting in patient care. In the process, a student can “click” to get to vital signs, which demonstrates step-by-step instructions in taking a patient’s vital signs. The program contained “live” patient pictures and audio as part of the teaching process. Mrs. Lucas called it “wonderful software” that assists students before they actually go into a hospital for the hands-on experience making them less apprehensive in the patient care setting. Shawna Smith, student of the adult program, was very pleased with the program. She commented it helps students tremendously to feel more at ease once they have to work with patients; students learn how to talk with patients with an appropriate bedside manner. The book and software is \$40 and is truly worth it!

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

- The Board confirmed the following employment for the remainder of the 2003-04 school year: Sara Tate, Charles Sanders, and Judy Perkins as NEMS full-time Special Education/student specific teacher assistants; Dan Taylor - NHS 8th Grade Boys Basketball and Jody Bragg - NHS 8th Grade Girls Basketball; Maurice Milton – GHS 8th Grade Boys Basketball; all substitute teachers to date to include Trish Muldoon.
- The Board confirmed the resignation of Sabrina Gautier, effective January 5, 2004.
- The Board approved the following GHS coaches for the 2003-04 school year: Jason Mills – Head JV Baseball Coach and Whitney Turner – Head JV Girls Softball Coach.

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

- As part of the instructional update the Superintendent shared information regarding the computers GTC students are re-constructing and that it is a great experience watching their self-esteem and pride along with their skills in the project. They are extremely pleased with what they do and have even asked if they, the students themselves, could purchase them as well. The Superintendent also commented on all schools being accredited, with NHS very close to follow, within five points in English and 9 points in Math of being accredited. We can be proud of all of our schools in their dedicated efforts to become accredited!

- **Energy Education Update**

David Graham, NHS Ag. Teacher and school division's part-time Energy Planner, attended the meeting to update the Board on the Energy Education Project that is currently in place. Mike Rodriguez of Energy Education was on hand to assist Mr. Graham and answer any questions the Board may have. The purpose of the project is to save money in the school system by conserving energy used in utilities, i.e., electricity, heating and air conditioning. Mr. Graham shared the presentation with Board members that reflected primary goals, cost avoidance, tracking performance and changes in the district and figures from the past five months. They are continuing to strive to maintain a comfort level in facilities and at the same time, use common sense regarding various equipment and lights, etc. that can be turned off when not in use. Although gas is currently increasing, all other utility areas are decreasing or holding their own. The overall savings for that period of time has been \$25,000. Mr. Graham also distributed a "Cost Avoidance Summary" handout to Board members that reflected an 18.28% savings through September 2003. He was deeply appreciative to all the custodians for making the program succeed thus far. They have done everything they have been asked to do to make it work. It is hopeful that we can get a handle on gas in the future, which will be extremely beneficial.

***Next School Board Meetings**

- The December School Board meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, December 9, 2003 at 7:00 PM at the School Board Office. The quarterly dinner meeting will be held at Eastern Elementary/Middle School at 5:30 PM, prior to the Board meeting.
- The January 2004 Board Retreat/School Board meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, January 20, 2004 with the retreat beginning at noon, followed by the Board meeting at 5:00 PM. A closed session will be held at 4:00 PM.

***Positive Comments**

- John Mills, Giles County Building Official, attended the Board meeting to share his positive comments about the Energy Education Program. He thanked the Board and staff for the good relationship. He, too, commended the custodians for the good job they are doing, specifically with the filter changes. He also commented the during a recent visit, the State Fire Marshal stated she had never dealt with a school district that handled fire/safety as well as Giles County. Mr. Mills was very appreciative of the relationship. Mr. Arbogast, in turn, commended Mr. Mills for always being available when any meeting was needed.
- Thanks were conveyed to Dave Graham and Mike Rodriguez for sharing the Energy Education information. It's good to know we're working together to save utility costs.
- The Board Chairman commented that there is no county in Southwest Virginia that has a better relationship with their Board of Supervisors and Building Official. He commended John Mills as a "real jewel" to work with on renovations and the Energy Education Project.
- Board members had a good day visiting schools in honor of American Education Week. It's always good to see what's going on in the schools and seeing teachers in their environment. It's good to see this year's new teachers on site after seeing them at the August School Board meeting.
- Mrs. McMahon recently attending a mandatory conference with Mary Henderson, Health Coordinator regarding the nursing grant at NEMS. She felt it was a good meeting where ideas could be shared with other agencies as well as comparing needs.
- Ms. Duncan, Governor's School Director, recently visited GHS and NHS for student recruitment. She was highly complimentary of the reception in both schools! She felt very welcomed!
- The Governor's School recently found out that there will be no funding cut for them for the 2004-05 school year.

- Mr. Whitehead distributed handouts to Board members of a list of colleges that visit the Governor's School recruiting students. Currently 13 colleges schedule visits.
- The Superintendent shared with the Board a new course that Gary Hinson is requesting to add for Biology II students, "Introductory Plant Biology". It was the consensus of the Board to allow the class to be added.
- The Superintendent commented that since the annual site budget meetings, there has been work to fix certain discussion items that could be addressed immediately. Thanks were conveyed to the Board Chairman, Mr. Buckland, for donating striping paint for certain school parking lots. He also commented that regarding communication issues at MMS, meetings are being held with teachers for their input.
- The Superintendent shared that a good vendor has offered a reasonable solution regarding the lighting at GHS and NHS for lights, not towers however. After checking out the situation, it's been found the GHS is doable; NHS will have a problem supporting the new lights, so Dusty Stump, GTC Welding Instructor, will review the issue to see if repairs can be made.
- The Superintendent also shared with the Board members that it means a lot to school employees to have them visit schools during American Education Week to give them a pin of appreciation. It's very positive that Board members take time to do that for our employees. Thanks!
- The Superintendent commented how amazing it is that a software program and book as effective and informative as the nursing program Kay Lucas used for the educational feature is only \$40. It is full of knowledge and virtual hands on experience for students; that's a small price to pay for a great learning instrument!
- The Superintendent also shared various school district accreditation information. Giles County is in the average range at 80%; there are a total of 132 school divisions, with 70 counties at 80% or higher, and 72 counties at 79% or lower.