

**News Release  
Giles County Public Schools  
Regular School Board Meeting**

*Dr. Robert C. McCracken*

*Division Superintendent*

**\*School Board Approves Consent Items**

- Regular Meeting Minutes – August 22, 2003
- Payment of Bills
- Payroll
- Appropriation Request for October 2003
- Declaration of Surplus Items
- Field Trip Confirmation
- Approval of Phase II Applications of No Child Left Behind

**\*Recognition**

The Superintendent and Board Chairman recognized the local police departments and New River Valley Criminal Justice Training Academy for their exemplary police training for school administrators at Giles High School July 2, 2003. Represented were the Giles County Sheriff's Office, and the Pearisburg and Narrows Police Departments to receive plaques of recognition. Other departments recognized were Glen Lyn and Rich Creek, as well as the training academy.

Mr. Howard Spencer, Board of Supervisors Member presented a plaque to the School Board Chairman, Mr. Buckland for the Giles County School System on behalf of the Virginia Department of Education for outstanding leadership and excellence in the Virginia Learn and Serve K-12 Program for 2002-03.

**\*Educational Feature**

Howard Spencer, Executive Director of the Partnerships for Excellence Foundation, Inc. attended the meeting to share various projects of the Partnership. He expressed his appreciation to the Board for their support of projects for the betterment of students in Giles County Schools. He stated that approximately \$1.7 million was received in grant money last year. He also reviewed several ongoing projects including "Hammering in the Hills" which allows people to work while completing required GED, with 2 houses being completed from the ground up and a third one to be started within the next few weeks. He explained that the Giles County Incubator now assists with VEC services and VA Tech in accepting applications for employment. Also, funding has been renewed for WIA and Career Scope, an assessment tool for WIA is being implemented. He welcomed Scott Meade aboard as the schools' contact person. He spoke of the following completed projects: New wing at Riverview Nursing Home/NR Health Care; Powell's Mountain and Marville Water Projects and Radon Testing. He also mentioned that although there is no grant money available for School Resource Officers in the schools, they will continue to research avenues for grant money for such an important cause. He conveyed thanks to Sandra Spangler and Joyce Hill for working with him faithfully in transitioning funds for projects. The Chairman commended Mr. Spencer and the Partnership for the outstanding job that is done on behalf of students and adults in the community.

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

The Board confirmed the following personnel action:

- Mitzie Sadler-Thorne – NEMS Special Ed. Teacher, effective 9/15/03, for the remainder of 2003-04
- Amy McCroskey – MMS Full-time Teacher Assistant/Student Specific 2003-04
- Michelle Blankenship – MMS Full-time Teacher Assistant 2003-04
- Michelle Jackson – MMS Part-time Teacher Assistant/Student Specific 2003-04
- Lisa Ratcliffe – MMS Part-time Teacher Assistant/Student Specific 2003-04
- Lisa Johnston – EEMS Full-time Teacher Assistant/Student Specific 2003-04
- Melinda Wilson – NEMS Full-time Teacher Assistant/Student Specific 2003-04
- Michelle Steele – GTC Part-time Health Occupations Clinical Assistant
- Resignation of Tara Johnson – NHS Custodian, effective September 26, 2003
- NHS MACC Assignments
- GHS MACC Assignments

- 2003-04 Substitute Teachers to Date, and to include Sue Wheeler
- New Applicants for Substitute Bus Driver, currently in CDL Class

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

- The Superintendent shared opening school information with the Board. Currently, 2543 students are enrolled in Giles County Schools. We closed the 2002-03 school year with 2521, which indicates that our enrollment is remaining consistent. He shared other statistics for the first day of school, 339 breakfasts were served as well as 1622 lunches. 34 regular buses ran on schedule the first day, transporting 2090 students for a total of 1270 miles.

He also shared that the cafeteria managers had met earlier the day of the Board meeting and voted unanimously not to use centralized menus. They had tried it in all schools the first few weeks and decided it was more sensible for each school to plan their own weekly menus.

- The School Board was surprised when the Superintendent (AKA – Uncle Sam w/hat and all!) distributed a test for each of them to complete to compare to 2002-03 cell results as indicated by the state regarding Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) from student SOL tests and the “No Child Left Behind” plan that is being implemented across the nation. The comparison reflected the cell results for each school, and even though Narrows and Giles High Schools missed only one cell out of 12/13, the term “failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)” was indicated in the AYP Report. Dr. McCracken had “rigged” the test for Board members so that each would miss at least 1 answer, and as a result they were each categorized as “failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)” for simply missing 1 question. The Superintendent stressed the extreme importance of making people aware of the process that is in place where 100% of students will be required to pass all SOL tests by the year 2014, including all groups of children, whether they be disabled, disadvantaged, etc. He encouraged folks to speak to their legislators who will eventually have an impact on this process. This AYP has resulted from the Federal Government plan of “No Child Left Behind (NCLB)” to include all fifty states. The Board members certainly have a better understanding of this plan of action now and how difficult it truly will be to make it successful.
- The Board approved policy revisions as recommended by VSBA Policy Services and administration.

#### **\*School Board Takes Action on Other Items**

- The next regular School Board meeting will be held Wednesday, October 29, 2003 at 5:00 PM at the School Board Office. The annual budget meetings will be held that week, October 28-30, in the schools.
- The November regular School Board meeting will be held Tuesday, November 18, 2003 at 1:30 PM at the School Board Office. Annual school tours by the School Board are also planned for that day in honor of American Education Week.

#### **\*Positive Comments**

- The Board was appreciative of the positive meeting that was held with administrators prior to the Board meeting. Each commented on the young group of aspiring administrators and the fine job they’ve all done filling the shoes of those that have retired.
- Thanks were conveyed to the local police officers that attended the meeting to be recognized, for the effective training provided to our administrators on July 2, 2003. We appreciate being prepared for any emergency that should arise.
- Howard Spencer was commended for the fine work of the Partnership. The term “astronomical” described the total \$1.7 million in grant money that had been received last year for projects. It is awesome the work that is done for students and adults!
- A letter was received from Pat Duncan, Director of the SWVA Governor’s School, who had recently visited the 2 high schools. She was very complimentary of the staff and students at the two schools and appreciated such courtesy and friendliness in the schools.

- The Governor's School current enrollment is 149 students, with 34% of that being Giles County students. The school is 6 away from their maximum capacity. The first 6 weeks ended for Governor's School on September 19<sup>th</sup> due to their early beginning.
- Colleges continue to recruit at the Governor's School. The most recent ones to visit are George Mason and JMU.
- Congratulations were conveyed to Amy Spears, who recently wrote an article for the Roanoke Times about Josh Davis, a GHS graduate who is in the military and has spent time in Iraq. The article was very well written, great job!
- Mrs. McMahon raised a question regarding smoking at football games. The Superintendent responded that he would refer her concern to Athletic Directors and administrators.