

Giles County Public Schools  
School Board Meeting  
February 21, 2002  
News Release

*Dr. Robert C. McCracken*

*Division Superintendent*

**\*School Board Approves Consent Items**

- Regular Meeting Minutes – January 14, 2002
- Special Meeting Minutes – January 9, 2002
- Bills in the amount of \$1,688,009.54
- Appropriation Request for March, 2002
- Confirmation of County-wide Textbook Adoption Committee
- Declaration of Surplus Equipment
- Confirmation of Resolution Regarding ½ Percent Sales Tax

**\*Pledge of Allegiance**

The School Board Chairman led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**\*School Board Recognizes the following for their hard work and dedication by being presented plaques by the Superintendent and School Board Chairman:** Lynn Williams, GHS Teacher – Virginia Society Sons of American Revolution 2002 Teacher of the Year Award. Mr. Clay Bane was also present from the local SAR chapter to present Lynn with a bronze medal.

Board of Supervisors Chairman, Jay Williams, attended the meeting to present certificates to all School Board members in honor of School Board Member Appreciation Month. GEA furnished delicious refreshments for the Board members to show their appreciation, prior to the regular meeting.

**\*Public Comments**

Mr. Jack Dunbar addressed the School Board members regarding the Bible Bus, with the request to add Grade 5 to the current Grade 4 that currently can participate in the Bible Bus Program. He stated he feels there is a need to reach our children, especially since the September 11, 2002 attacks. He also commented that he understands the SOL's are a vital part of 5<sup>th</sup> grade, but asked that consideration be given regarding the matter. He presented the School Board with petitions with names of support of the Bible Bus. Mrs. McMahan asked what the participation is currently. Bonita Fenstermaker, Bible Bus teacher, stated it is 94%. Mrs. Fenstermaker encouraged the School Board to review this request, due to many discipline problems in the schools and the fact that it is of no cost to the schools. She invited the School Board members to ride the bus with her and the students.

Prior to adjournment, the School Board discussed the issue and the concern of 5<sup>th</sup> grade SOL testing, but took no action on the issue.

**\*School Board Hears Educational Feature from Narrows Elementary/Middle School**

Mr. Skeens, NEMS Principal, attended the meeting to introduce 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers and 30+ students, who presented their skills regarding SOL's. Mrs. Hyatt began as Mrs. Hill (the "maid" as the students called her) distributed food items to all School Board members along with a menu titled, "A Taste of Third Grade". The menu consisted of an appetizer, "Alphabet Soup", which represented how students learn their sounds and sound associations. Mrs. Bradshaw led the students in the opening reading. The main entrée served consisted of "Reading Roast", which reflected students' reciting poetry in reference to George Washington and Abe Lincoln. "Hot Potatoes" was served next and represented the computer 3<sup>rd</sup> grade homepage which is currently under construction. Mrs. Frazier reviewed a test program with the help of a student, who presented the step to improve math skills. A computer lab is also open on Monday and Thursday nights from 5:30 – 7:30 PM for parents and students to access computers. "Compositional Carrots" were another vegetable served and students read what they liked best about 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

“Science/Social Studies Succotash” was a symbol for Jeopardy, where boys competed against girls, answering questions that pertained to the SOL’s. Lastly, a delicious brownie was served to remind Board members of the brownie points the teachers are working for! As a finale, the group sited the NEMS Character Counts Pledge and gave each Board member a gift basket, in honor of School Board Member Appreciation Month. Mr. Skeens informed the students that they had done such a good job, they would be given free ice cream the next day! And everyone left with a smile!

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

- The School Board confirmed the transfer of Donnie Burton to GTC Custodian from GHS Custodian, effective January 30, 2002;
- Also confirmed:  
Employment for the remainder of the 2001-02 school year: Debbie Coker – Part-time, Effective 2/1/02 For Individual Psychological Assessments; Dee Meredith from Part-time Teacher Assistant to Full-time Teacher Assistant – MMS/GHS; Supplemental/Coaching Positions: NHS – Kent Miller/Boys’ Tennis, Jimmy McCroskey/Track, Debbie Lusk/Ass’t. Track/ Marilyn Mustard/ Girls’ Tennis; and GHS – Jamie Jennell/Head Girls’ Tennis. Volunteer Coaches – GHS Track Assistants – Wendy Snidow and Anne Wheeler; Census Enumerators for 2002- Lois Clark/Western District; Jane Garrett/Western District; Sherry Stump/Central District; Barbara Meredith/Eastern District; , Todd and Debbie Lusk/Alternates, and Christy Lawson/Census Data Management; and

Retirees, effective the end of 2001-02 – Wilma Dunn, Jerry Albert, and Nancy David.

- The Board approved the following: Retirement of Beverly Cheney, effective the end of 2001-02 school year; Employment for the remainder of the 2001-02 school year: Bonnie Young/GHS Custodian, effective 2/25/02; Sabrina Gautier/GHS Sp. Ed. Behavioral Assistant; Amy Miller – NHS Special Ed. Teacher.
- The School Board, upon recommendation, approved the decline of assistance regarding a health insurance request.

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

- The Superintendent commended NEMS for the fine educational feature. After the “doom and gloom” regarding the state budget, it was refreshing to see students with a positive spirit. He also reviewed instructional illustrations of classroom projects meeting the SOL criteria. One scenario was students working with a checkbook and credit card, having to balance and not exceed their limit. If they overspent, they had to pay back with 10% interest to the bank. Another example was students being paired in twos, as coach/athlete, etc., writing an interview summary on each other, and correcting the other’s punctuation. The Superintendent also reviewed the unofficial SOL results for NHS Fall Semester, 2001 SOL scores. All scores reflected an increase and continual growth from the Fall, 2000 scores.
- The Superintendent reviewed the necessary annual School Board Retreat information. The Board approved an elective course titled “Personal Living and Finances” for disabled students as requested by Patricia Muldoon, Director of Special Programs. Also, it was by consensus of the School Board that the Superintendent and Board Chairman present committee names to the Board in March for approval, regarding a committee to review technology/career education, formerly known as vocational education.
- Following discussion, the School Board approved policy revisions as recommended by administration and VSBA Policy Services, which included GHBD to add attending funerals of immediate family members. Also approved was JHCD-R, to include throat lozenges and cough drops not to be considered as over-the-counter medication.

- The Superintendent recommended that the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for employees' decision to retire remain as is, so that suitable replacements may be found for vacancies that open. With the national teacher shortage, it is highly important to attempt filling positions early on annually before the applicant pool is picked over.
- The Superintendent reviewed the consensus of the Honor Graduate Committee as a result of their meeting discussions regarding 2007 graduating class. The committee requests that all students with a 4.0 average or above be recognized and the valedictorian/salutatorian status be eliminated, beginning with the Class of 2007.

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

- A. RFP No. 1-2002 for duplicating paper to low bidder, JanPak, \$18.66 per case. Other proposals were received from General Sales and Wytheville Office Supplies.
- B. The School Board confirmed Thursday, March 21, 2002 for the next School Board meeting, with the quarterly meeting with administrators at 5:30 PM at Narrows High School, followed by the regular meeting at the School Board Office at 7:00 PM. If needed, a closed session will be held at 5:00 at NHS, prior to the quarterly meeting.

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

- The School Board was highly commendable of the NEMS 3<sup>rd</sup> grade educational feature. It is a pleasure to have students with us who enjoy their instructional environment. Teachers were commended for continuing to find innovative ways to tackle the SOL's.
- The School Board was also commendable of NHS test results. It's obvious that teachers, students and parents are continuing to put lots of effort into successful SOL scores.
- The School Board conveyed their sincere appreciation for the delicious food provided by GEA for today's meeting, in honor of School Board Appreciation Month.
- The School Board held their annual retreat prior to the regular meeting. It was a good session, there is always valuable information and good communication.
- Mr. Buckland, Chairman, welcomed Mrs. McMahon to her second meeting. He also commented that if anyone ever had any questions regarding the School Board Meeting Agenda format and wished to discuss it, to feel free to contact him.
- Mrs. McMahon recently attended New School Board Member Orientation in Richmond. She commented it was a very worthwhile trip, where she had the opportunity to speak to several new Board members, which was helpful. She also mentioned she has had the opportunity to speak with several of our teachers about various issues, and is impressed with their concern for their school and students.
- The Governor's School Director, Ms. Duncan, recently received two letters from Montgomery County parents requesting that their children be allowed to attend the Governor's School next year. Since the procedure is now handled through school systems where students are enrolled, parents must submit their requests there.
- Congratulations to all Governor's School Science Fair Winners! There were several winners from Giles County Schools. Good job!
- The Superintendent recently attended the VSBA Legislative Conference and had the opportunity to hear the new Governor, Mark Warner, speak regarding the budget. He addressed it as a real problem, and though it may take time, will hopefully resolve the dilemma.

- Kim Wilson, GEA President, commended the School Board for their hard work and efforts regarding our school system.