

NEWS RELEASE

March 8, 2001
Giles County Public Schools
School Board Meeting

Dr. Robert C. McCracken

Division Superintendent

***School Board Approves Consent Agenda Items**

- Minutes of the February 12, 2001 meeting
- Bills in the amount of \$1,634,984.75
- Payroll for the month of February, 2001
- Revenue report for the month of February, 2001
- Appropriation Request for April, 2001
- Declaration of Surplus Items

***Public Comments**

Kim Wilson, GEA President and Cecilia McFaden, GEA President-Elect, asked the School Board to maintain the current teacher salary scale based on years of experience. They explained that they are requesting a salary scale where people are paid based on years of experience, as well as people with the same years of experience receiving the same pay. The Chairman commented that the Board agreed with everything that had been said. However, due to declining enrollment, we have lost 42 students in the last three months. He also commended the Board of Supervisors, who made quite a commitment to help get all facilities renovated. He said the Board will do all they can, but at this point, the budget doesn't look very promising.

***School Board Recognizes the following who were nominated by the Professional Advisory Council for their hard work and dedication by being presented plaques by the Superintendent and Board Chairman:** Two businesses: Sears/The Silvers'- Sterling, Jill and Michelle, and M&J Pet Grooming/ Mauricia Shanks were recognized for Student Support. Charles Lytton – Instructional Achievement, MMS; Malcolm Whittaker and Clay Bane – Outstanding Volunteers, EEMS.

***School Board Hears an Educational Feature by Narrows High School**

Mr. O'Brien, NHS Principal attended the meeting to introduce Betsy Wood, English teacher, who gave an overview of a project, "Scavenger Hunt" and the relationship to SOL's. Two students, Ashley Thorne and Rachelle Jessee, also attended the meeting to share their experience with the "Scavenger Hunt". Ashley explained how the students went to the library, were divided into groups by birth date, and had to find information without talking to each other or writing notes. Student, Rachelle Jessee explained how the project related to various SOL's, such as SOL 10-1, helped develop leadership skills, by not being allowed to talk during the project and SOL 10-2 taught cooperation, by working in groups. A video was shown and illustrated by Mrs. Wood, of students in action. They used a variety of media, went on-line, used card catalogs and magazines to obtain the information. Mr. Rupp, Librarian, also commented that it was amazing watching the students work. It was like they were on a mission, sure to accomplish!

***School Board Approves Recommendations Regarding Personnel Items**

The Board confirmed the following retirements and resignations, effective the end of 2000-01.

- Those participating in the Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP) for 2001-02: Trish Muldoon; Jim Wheeler; Pat O'Brien; Dean Rowe; Ron Skeens; Jennifer Sullivan; Eugena Thomas and Sue Wheeler.
- Other retirees effective the end of 2000-01: Ellen Harkrader; Sandra Clark; Judy Mann; Barbara Buckland; Vic Edwards; and Shirley Lockerby.
- Resignations effective the end of 2000-01: Kristi Gordon, Jessica Scotko, Jay Crockett

Also confirmed was retirement of Jack McCall, effective January 1, 2002 and Clara Whittaker's request for a 3rd Year Leave of Absence.

The School Board confirmed the following employment for the remainder of the 2000-01 school year: Mary Dalton – Bus Driver, Eastern District; Barbara Whitehead – GHS JB Softball Coach; and Kim Squibb – Part-time PALS Program at Macy McClaugherty School.

The Board approved the employment of Barbara Maxwell as Giles High School Math Teacher for the 2001-02 school year.

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

- The Superintendent shared comments from the schools regarding different strategies to boost students' SOL knowledge and interest. EEMS plans to email parents of 3rd through 5th graders, if the parents would like, various SOL material for them to review with their child. They also have what is called "Got A Minute", where prepared cards with SOL information are reviewed while students are waiting in line to go to the cafeteria or other "down" times, and teachers will have question/answer period. MMS second graders participated in a Monarch Watch Program, which supports the Science SOL 2.4 and 2.7 objectives. Students raised a Monarch from an egg to adulthood then tagged and released it. MMS third grade teachers use games such as Jeopardy and Vocabulary Bingo to practice and review SOL vocabulary words. NEMS have a "Math Wall" in the 4th/5th grade hallway to review math SOL vocabulary words whenever students are lined up in halls to change classes, etc. GHS Math 8 classes had fun with fractions by counting each color of candy in a bag of M&M's and comparing actual percentages to statistics provided on the Mars Company's website. NHS Algebra 1A students used money and bank accounts to understand positive and negative integers, and English 8 students were sent on a treasure hunt to the library to research topics of SOL content areas. The Superintendent's point was that lots of good things go on in our schools to help conquer the SOL's. He also shared that the Multiple Choice portion of the SOL Test was given on March 8th, and the Direct Writing Test will be administered next Tuesday, March 13th.
- Mr. Wheeler updated the School Board regarding the renovation projects. The punch list at Narrows High School is basically complete, and in the final stages at Giles High School. Both schools still have areas of concern that are being addressed in the roof and mechanical sections. There is still some question on the tile installation at GHS, on the ground floor and shop area, which is also being addressed.
- The Board approved policy revisions as recommended by VSBA Policy Services and administration.

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

- The School Board approved the 2001 graduation date as June 8th for Narrows High School in the evening and June 9th for Giles High School in the morning.
- The School Board approved the submission of a waiver to the Virginia Department of Education regarding the possibility of starting school before Labor Day.
- The School Board approved establishing an RFP for expanding the 125 tax shelter plan.
- The School Board confirmed RFP No. 2-2001 to low bidder, Eagle Fire Protection, for fire protection

services, in the amount of \$6,388.

- The School Board approved rate changes for Local Choice Health Benefits Program, which includes a \$1 increase in single and family rates.
- The School Board approved the Pulsar Field Trip for March 14-16 at Camp Bethel.
- The School Board confirmed professional leave for Steve Ragsdale, Jeff Williams, Bryan Strader and Jack Ellison of Giles High School to attend the Football Coaches Clinic at Clemson University.
- The School Board set the April meeting for Wednesday, April 11, 2001 at 7:00 PM, at the School Board Office.

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

- The Board members were deeply appreciative of the folks coming out to the meeting to support GEA.
- The Board met for their annual retreat today. It was a fruitful day with lots of information to absorb.
- Congratulations were conveyed to Gary Hinson, NHS teacher, and Courtney Olson, GHS student, for being the recipients of the American Electric Power Company's recent project – ELAB, where they will travel to Bolivia to study the rain forest.
- The group of employees that will be retiring were commended for their years of service. It is sad to approve this list of faithful employees that we will be losing in the next year or two.
- Tonight's recognitions were highly commended. People contribute because they are interested in helping students.
- Two teachers at the Governor's School are conducting a lab by digging a 4-foot ditch, in order to study the layers of the ground. Should be an interesting lab!
- The budget is a little disappointing this year, but the Board has worked to do their best in the past, and will work to do their best this year.
- Kim Wilson, GEA President, conveyed thanks to the School Board for listening to GEA concerns this evening.
- The Superintendent commented that the on-line testing project is getting closer. Everyone is invited to come in and sit through what the state is preparing for 2003. We can be proud of Giles High School's participation in this project.
- The Superintendent shared that the NEMS Character Counts Program has been invited to a statewide meeting through VCU for recognition. Congratulations!
- The Superintendent commended the Board's efforts and the Board of Supervisors' continued support of our school system. Thanks were conveyed to all.