

February 15, 2018

The regular meeting of the Giles County School Board was held at 4:00 p.m. on February 15, 2018 in the School Administration Office Building Conference Room. Persons present were:

Marion C. Ballard
Melissa R. Guynn
Phillip A. Pennington
Stephen M. Steele
Mark A. Wilburn

Dr. Terry E. Arbogast II, Superintendent
Amanda J. Tickle, Clerk
Richard R. Franklin, Assistant Superintendent

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Board, on motion of Mr. Wilburn, with second by Mr. Steele and unanimous voting, approved the Superintendent's February 15, 2018 School Board Meeting Agenda.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Jeff Morris, Board of Supervisors member, distributed certificates to School Board Members in honor of School Board Member Appreciation Month.

Mr. Ballard presented Amanda Tickle, School Board Clerk, with a certificate in honor of School Board Clerk Appreciation Week.

On behalf of the School Board, the following were nominated for their Outstanding Efforts and Continued Support: Joseph Yost.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tanya Jewell and Tracy Ferguson attended the School Board meeting to voice their comments/concerns on the proposed 2018-19 school calendar.

Mrs. Ferguson stated, "Good afternoon! I hope all is well with each of you and your families.

I am speaking today to represent the Macy faculty and the majority of Giles County Employees who completed the recent survey on our calendar. That would be OVER 50% of our employees---who feel that it is not in our students' best interests to move the school start date even further back into August. I feel sure that everyone has seen the survey results by now and knows that, even though it was a slim majority, a majority it was. Dictionary.com defines a majority as 'the greater number,' and that is what was represented by the survey. The GREATER number of our employees wishes that the school start date not be pushed EVEN further back into August. While I understand that some feel it is better to start early for a small percentage of Giles County students, I disagree.

I have been in the elementary school for a long time and I feel that it is much better for the children to start school later in the summer, preferably as close to Labor Day as possible. When the calendar committee met a couple of years ago, the school board, with new members on board, specifically asked for the committee to come up with a calendar that would be CONSISTENT!!! Consistency was needed by our parents, teachers, administrators and even community members. The compromise was that we would start a week before Labor Day and that would be our CONSISTENT start date. Many people feared that a compromise would lead to a week more and another week more...which is exactly where we are at now....I think students need to be allowed to enjoy their summer before being pushed back into the stressful environment that schools have become. The 'transition' year that was 3-4 years ago resulted in some of the worst behavior that I have seen in elementary students in my entire time as a teacher, and I believe that it was a direct result of going back to school so early in the summer.

I have seen no hard data that says starting school earlier in the summer will lead to increased test results. However, I have seen teachers who stay late almost daily, work at home in the evenings, on the weekends and over breaks, these teachers spend a good portion of their pay to buy supplies, snacks, even food and clothing for their students--ALL while shouldering higher insurance rates that continue to make our paychecks head south, with no end in sight. **NO ONE** wants to 'leave any child behind,' we all want what is best for our students--and the majority of Giles County employees believe that starting school LATER in August is what's BEST FOR OUR STUDENTS. We respectfully ask that the board consider our wishes.

Thank you and good night!

Mrs. Jewell stated, “The debate for next year’s calendar has been intense. This is an issue that Narrows High School has raised previously, but settled because there was not consensus to support it. Again, this year we requested of the committee that we compromise with a ONE WEEK adjustment to the start date for school. This request was made because it would allow 84 days of first semester to be complete before Christmas break which is enough to be able to complete fall semester SOL testing before the two week break. We are making a sacrifice of a few instructional days in order to have a more sound and secure testing environment for our students. The testing situation we faced this January goes against every best practice we’ve been taught as educators. We should not face a schedule that puts kids in a situation where they do not know if they will have to take an SOL on the day they return from consecutive snow days.

The arguments presented against this schedule change have been, for the most part, teacher-centered. The arguments against it are about vacation days and personal desires, not what is best for our students. Regardless of whether or not Narrows is the smaller school, our students still matter. Their ability to pass SOL tests (which are required for graduation) still matters. Our job as a county is to provide an education to ALL of our students, regardless of what building they are in.

What NHS is forced to do with testing each year is ridiculous. It has been expressed before that the elementary schools do not like to have a long spring break because it cuts into their SOL prep time. They do not want to come back from a break and have students take SOL tests. This is exactly what we are asked to do each year.

Based off of data collected from our recent survey, the motion to start school a week early was only short 12 votes. This tells us that teachers on both sides of the county must have been in favor of the start date change. Changing this date benefits a significant portion of our students, both those who are strong and those who struggle. It will not hinder any of the students in the county. This only provides benefits for everyone. In fact, with the proposed calendar of 1 week early there are 161 days of instruction BEFORE May 1 (which is generally when the state spring testing window opens). It doesn’t just help NHS, but it provides more instructional days for every single student before SOL testing. Also, it prevents extra wasted days at the end of the year when many students will not come to school. This lack of attendance affects our percentages which will soon be a factor in every school’s accreditation.

Ultimately, this is not a decision that should be based on teacher wishes. It should be a decision made by the school board. You are the individuals this county has elected to make the important and tough decisions to ensure student success. Narrows, both high school and elementary, respectfully request that you make the decision in the best interest of our students.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEMS

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

A. Meeting Minutes

1. January 11th, 18th, 30th and February 6th, 2018

B. Financial Data

1. Payrolls to include January 31st and February 15th, 2018
2. Payment of Bills
3. January 2018 Revenue and Expenditure Reports
4. Appropriation Request for March 2018
TO: Christopher McKlarney
Interim Administrator for Giles County
FR: Dr. Terry E. Arbogast, II
Division Superintendent
RE: March 2018 Appropriation

The following is the appropriation request for the month of March 2018. This is for the ninth month of the fiscal year 2017-2018. 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.

Original Monthly Appropriation Request: \$ 2,283,819.50
(Operating + Flow-thru)

Total: \$ 2,283,819.50

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.
/at

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. Pennington, with second by Mrs. Guynn and unanimous voting, confirmed the following **Employment:** Kayla Evans – GTC Drafting Instructor (4-3-18), Melissa Langley – School Nurse (3-5-18)
 2. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Steele, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous voting, confirmed the following **Resignations:** Desiree Weiss – School Nurse (2-9-18)
 3. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Ballard, with second by Mr. Steele and unanimous voting, approved the **Athletic Contracts:** Sam Wright – GHS Asst. Track, James Rorrer - GHS JV Baseball Volunteer, Tootie Gillispie – GHS Head JV Baseball

CONCERNS/COMMENTS

Mr. Pennington thanked Mr. Morris and the Board of Supervisors for all they do. He also thanked Amanda Tickle for all she does as a board clerk.

Mrs. Guynn reiterated what Mr. Pennington said.

Mrs. Guynn stated that she really enjoyed the Spelling Bee.

Mrs. Guynn stated that she really enjoyed the most recent lunch for her at Narrows High School.

Mr. Wilburn stated that his thoughts and prayers go out to all of the families in the recent school shooting. He stated that we have done so many great things as far as security in our schools for many years.

Mr. Wilburn stated that he expressed his condolences for the family of Mr. Lang, who recently passed away. He was a past custodian at Giles High.

Mr. Steele stated that this board has set through a couple retreat days already. He has heard many challenges. He stated that our staff face these challenges every day. His hats go off to each and every one of you for all that you do. He stated that our board will try to do everything that they can to help out.

Mr. Ballard thanked all the individuals who presented at the retreat the last couple weeks.

Mr. Ballard stated that they know what our staff is going through with the budget and they hope to do all they can do.

Mr. Ballard discussed the VSBA Business Honor Roll. He stated that we need to figure out if we want to nominate someone for that this year.

Mr. Ballard congratulated all the individuals in the Spelling Bee. He congratulated Mr. Pauley for winning the Spelling Bee.

Mr. Ballard stated that the preliminary NHS SOL scores look pretty good.

Mr. Ballard thanked Mrs. Martin for her STEM newsletter that she sends out.

Mr. Ballard congratulated Maggie Guynn for receiving the All Timesland Scorer! Great accomplishment!

Dr. Arbogast stated that our enrollment as of today is 2,390.

Dr. Arbogast stated that the STEMposium has been set for April 25th from 6 – 8 p.m. at Giles High School.

Dr. Arbogast stated that we now have the Giles County Public Schools app to download on their phones.

Dr. Arbogast congratulated Haley Hansen and Coleton Yopp. They were selected as delegates for the All-Virginia State Chorus. Also, Aidan Deighan, Quinne Jiminez and Cale Daniels were selected as alternate to the All Virginia Chorus.

Dr. Arbogast congratulated Maggie Guynn for becoming the All time leading scorer in the Timesland area.

Dr. Arbogast stated that we had 2 very good days for our retreat.

Dr. Arbogast congratulated the Varsity Swim Team on a strong performance at the Regional Swim meet on Saturday:

NHS: Elana Pierson placed 3rd in the 500 free, which qualified her for the state meet.

GHS: Seth Elliot, Ben Hart, Cole Moye, Knox Robertson, Jessica Church, Haley Hansen, Emily Hart, Maddie Robertson and Makenna Williams

Dr. Arbogast congratulated the Spelling Bee school representatives. They are as follows: Emy Young, Autumn Bowles, Ethan Wilhelm, Russell Pauley (Winner), Jasmine Whittaker.

Dr. Arbogast thanked board members and Mrs. Tickle for all they do as part of School Board Appreciation Month and School Board Clerk week.

IN OTHER ACTION...

The School Board, on motion of Mrs. McMahon, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous voting, approved the Charles J. Colman Aviation and Aerospace Scholarship.

There was a discussion with the School Board on who to nominate to the VSBA Honor Roll. The board will discuss at their next work session, which is March 13th at 3 p.m.

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Wilburn, with second by Mrs. Guynn and unanimous voting, approved the following Field Trip: GHS/FFA – M. Dove 3/23-24 to Doswell VA.

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Pennington, with second by Mr. Steele and unanimous voting, approved the Transfer of Mandy Havens from GHS to GTC ITRT (18-19).

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Wilburn, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, approved the revision of policy DLC-R to reflect mileage reimbursement rates.

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Pennington, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous voting, approved the following Volunteer Agreement: Brittany Johnson – GHS Assistant Girls Softball

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Wilburn, with second by Mr. Steele and unanimous voting, approved the Resignation of Andrew Simmons for the GHS Head Coach for JV Soccer to accept the position of Head Coach for Girls Varsity Soccer.

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Steele, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous voting, approved the following Athletic Coaching Contract: Steven Malik – Head JV Soccer Girls Coach.

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Pennington, with second by Mrs. Guynn and unanimous voting, approved the bid from Liberty Paper for services specified in IFB-1-2018 (duplicating paper).

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next School Board Meeting will be held March 15, 2018 at 4:00 p.m.

The Chairman, on motion of Mr. Wilburn, with second by Mrs. Guynn and unanimous voting, adjourned the meeting.

Chairman

Clerk