

**November 22, 2022**

The regular meeting of the Giles County School Board was held at 6:00 p.m. on November 22, 2022 at the School Board Office. Persons present were:

Jason B. Buckland  
Phillip A. Pennington  
Stephen M. Steele  
Mark A. Wilburn

Dr. Terry E. Arbogast II, Superintendent  
Amanda J. Tickle, School Board Clerk  
Lisa Mustain, Assistant Superintendent  
Michael Brown, Director of Operations

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, approved the Superintendent's November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 School Board Meeting Agenda.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The School Board on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous voting, opened the public hearing for comments on the 2023-2024 budget. There were no comments on the budget. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, closed the public hearing on the 2023-2024 school budget.

Numerous individuals attended the meeting to speak regarding the discussion of consolidation:

Mrs. Karen Turner spoke first regarding the issue of consolidation. She stated that we need to take our funding and concentrate on upgrading our grade schools to alleviate overcrowding. Consolidation will cause overcrowding. She wanted to know how consolidation would affect governor's school. Parent's feel like smaller schools are more beneficial and children get lost in larger schools. She stated that statistics prove that dropout rates are higher for larger schools. Jobs will be lost if we consolidate. Taxes will also increase with consolidation. Consequences of consolidation include physical violence, low self-esteem, angry parents, greater chance of a school shooting, more social and psychological issues, less funding, etc. He stated that the western end of the county is being bullied.

Mrs. Christen Poe spoke regarding consolidation. She wanted to know what is the goal here? She stated that NHS has lower enrollment because GHS has two elementary schools funneling into it. She stated that Narrows has always been "the little engine that could." She stated that the board should take the pot of money and work on the buildings/assets. She has seen more people move in here recently than ever before. She said all indicators report to growth. She said hold taxes, hold consolidation and maintain. She stated that nothing she has said today is related to sports. Mrs. Poe asked Mr. Wilburn if he was told that a middle school is not an option, are you for or against consolidation? Mr. Steele directed him not to answer. She then asked someone to explain to them where the \$24 million is coming from? Mr. Buckland told Mr. Steele that we have operated since he has been on the board to respond to questions.

Mr. Joe Goorskey attended to speak on consolidation representing the Town of Narrows. He stated they have received their recent FOIA request. The Town of Narrows wants the board to know why they have requested FOIA information. They would like to have an economic impact study. The economic impact study will affect every town in the county. He said that Narrows High School is clearly an amenity of the Town of Narrows. He shared ways that consolidation would hurt The Town of Narrows. The loss of a school will affect many things for the Town of Narrows. He stated that there will be higher student teacher ratios, no additional advanced learning courses, a building near capacity, etc. He stated that rural areas need all the help they can get when trying to attract growth or future tax revenue streams. They cannot afford this and we must stop allowing the taxpayers to believe in all the assumed benefits of these proposals without showing them the true costs and lack of actual benefits being received. Mr. Buckland told Mr. Goorskey that he doesn't support the economic impact study from this board. He stated that the county may want to look at this.

Mrs. Carolyn Kirby attended to speak on consolidation. She stated that they have talked about the educational disadvantages of consolidation. Today she wants to talk about one community that a negative impact on consolidation will have on it. She stated that she believes that taxes are a part of life but many people struggle with paying taxes and struggle in this economy. There is no doubt in my mind that this decision will have a negative impact on the people sitting behind her. She said that consolidation of schools will result in destruction of a community, its business and its spirit. She stated that the board would have to live with that for the rest of their lives. She

said that the closing of Narrows High School seemed to come out of nowhere. Speculation is that someone is planning to make profit from that building in another way.

Mrs. Sara Bowles attended to also speak on consolidation. She thanked them for accepting concerns and questions from the public. She stated that she is wearing the hats of a wife and a mother. She stated that they deserve to know answers. She would like to ask a question as a constituent from the western end and one that may personally affect her family. She asked Mr. Pennington your stance on the topic of consolidation – specifically the closure of Narrows High School. She encouraged him to let everyone know soon. Also, she would like to address the board as a concerned wife and mother. She is aware of the RIF policy that is in place for current teachers. Has there any been any thought of how the alignment of administrations will occur should consolidation come into effect. Mr. Buckland stated that the board has not talked or considered that. He stated that Brian is a friend of his and Mrs. Boggess is in the audience. If this happens, he thinks we are setting administrators up for failure if we do not look outside this community. She stated that this is a jagged pill to swallow since her family was uprooted years ago to come to this community. She stated that it has been stated that there would be no new courses and enhancement – only larger classes, their home that they have worked has worked so hard on will lose decrease value, the town that she serves and gives her whole heart to may crumble and now her husband, that was recruited and has dedicated over 25 years to education and given his soul to the community, may lose his job. Is this how you treat your loyal employees? You are potentially going to lose talented educators and families. In the end, are you really going to save money? Maybe enough for a Fieldhouse, but our children's education is worth far more than a Fieldhouse.

Mrs. Gautier attended to speak on consolidation. She first asked why they would not answer questions anymore? Mr. Steele stated that they needed time to prepare to answer questions and it didn't need to be a "back and forth" thing. Dr. Arbogast was asked the current student count at Narrows High School. He stated that it was 291. She asked that since the whole point of closing Narrows High School is because they are not utilizing all of the space, but none of the schools are utilizing all of their space. So are you going to close every school because you aren't utilizing all of the space? She stated that she can't get any board members to say why they are talking about it again. She stated that there are laws in other states that prohibit kids from riding a bus for a long period of time.

Mr. Chucky Buracker attended the meeting to also speak on consolidation. He thanked board members for listening to his comments. He stated that instead of talking about consolidation, we should be figuring out a way to improve test scores. We should be focusing on education and push the topic of consolidation off to a later date. He stated that he works with a guy from this area and he stated that "it was a done deal." He's not sure where this is coming from. He stated that there needs to be lots more information on consolidation to be able to make a decision. The number one priority in our schools should be the focus on education of our children.

Mrs. Nicole Price spoke regarding consolidation. She stated that after the last few weeks, she has been approached by individuals on both ends of the county to attend and speak. She stated that everything she has to say is her opinion only. She would like to be able to build a bridge to be able to communicate better and together. They have become more divided in the last couple of months than she has seen her whole lifetime and our kids are listening to this. She wanted to address the western end of the county. She applauded them for speaking their passionate concerns and what they feel is right. She stated that a lot of them on the central and eastern end of the county is hearing them, but she feels like they (the western end) don't think they feel heard. She stated that she is not for any of the options, but just doing something "better." She is leaning on board members to provide information for the community. Anything is better than what we are doing. Mr. Buckland stated that he brought this up because he heard from the county administrator that we are going to vote on consolidation real soon and it's going to save a lot of money. To him, this was frightening to him. Also, what he said last meeting to get folks to love Giles High School as much as people love Narrows High School, he did not mean to offend any teachers from Giles High School. He thinks they do a good job. He thinks we have two good buildings. We should be focusing on making what we have better. Mr. Steele thanks all the public speakers that signed up. He feels like they should field public comments, listen and take notes and put together the answers. As a board, we have to be mindful that our job is to take all the questions in and then bring them back answers. Mr. Buckland stated that there has been a comment made to Mrs. Guynn that we are going to vote on this by this time next year. Mr. Buckland would like to have a more structured path moving forward.

#### **APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEMS**

The Board, on motion of Mr. Wilburn, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting (Mr. Buckland abstained), accepted the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the following consent items:

**A. Meeting Minutes**

1. Regular – October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022
2. Special – October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022
3. Special – October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**B. Financial Data**

1. Payrolls to include November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022
2. Payment of Bills
3. Revenue and Expenditure Reports – October 2022
4. Field Trips
5. Surplus
6. Committees
5. Appropriation Request for December 2022  
TO: Christopher McKlarney  
Interim Administrator for Giles County  
FR: Dr. Terry E. Arbogast, II  
Division Superintendent  
RE: December 2022 Appropriation

The following is the appropriation request for the month of December 2019. This is for the sixth month of the fiscal year 2019-2020. 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.

<b>Original Monthly Appropriation Request:</b>	<b>\$ 2,750,000</b>
<b>(Operating + Flow-thru)</b>	
ESSR III - NEMS HVAC	\$142,027.85
ESSR III - READING SPECIALIST	\$108,744.96
Additional Requests for Carry Over 19-20	
NHS Tennis Courts	\$41,567.00
Industrial Floors - Cafe Floors	\$110,770.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 3,153,109.81</b>

**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. Wilburn, with second by Mr. Buckland and unanimous voting, confirmed the following **Volunteer Agreements:** Jeremy Hagerman – GHS Asst. Wrestling Coach, Deborah Childress – MMS General, Logan Conley – NHS Boys Basketball, Alyssa Bishop – NHS MS Girls Basketball, Alyssa Bishop – NHS Girls MS Basketball, Nancy Quesenberry – NHS Girls Basketball, Sara Miller – MMS General
2. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, confirmed the following **Employment:** Transfer of Deb Parcell from GHS to EEMS (10/20/22), Justin Romanello – Sub Bus Driver
3. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Pennington, with second by Mr. Buckland and unanimous voting, approved the following **Athletic Contracts:** Derrick Reed – NHS Asst. Boys Varsity BBall Coach, Patrick Bailey – NHS Head Boys BBall Coach, Bradley Sutphin – NHS Head Girls BBall Coach, Byron Brown – NHS Asst. Girls BBall Coach, Josh Sparks – NHS Scholastic Bowl Coach, Todd Guynn – NHS Head Girls MS BBall Coach, Brock Lusk – NHS Head Boys MS BBall Coach, Tara Johnson – NHS Head Girls JV BBall Coach, Roger Shephard – NHS Head Boys JV BBall Coach, Matthew Burns – GHS Head Wrestling Coach, Kelsey Lucas – GHS Head Girls Varsity Basketball, Jimmy McCroskey – GHS JV Head Baseball & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Head Boys Basketball, Gretchen Hagee – GHS Theater Assistant, Cassie Miller – GHS 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Head Varsity Basketball, Ashley Snider – GHS Head 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Volleyball
4. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Pennington, with second by Mr. Buckland and unanimous voting, approved the following **Resignations:** Eric Hubble – MMS PE Teacher (12/31/22 – pending a suitable replacement), Kelli Pennington – MMS Elementary Teacher (11/25/22)
5. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous, approved the following

**Retirement:** Anna Bostwick – Bus Driver (12/30/22)

B. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, approved the bid IFB 9-2022 B (rebid) (Streamers for MMS/GHS) from Douglas Equipment. This is for two convection gas steamers and includes installation. Bid prices are listed below:

Douglas Equipment: \$48,928.28

Hooten Equipment: \$52,892.00

**CONCERNS/COMMENTS**

Dr. Arbogast stated that of today, our enrollment is 2,196 – 2,187 in person & 9 virtual in county. In addition, we have 1,274 STRIDE students (non-residential virtual students) for a total of 3,470.

Dr. Arbogast stated that as the board is aware, a requirement of receiving ARP Act/ESSER funds, we must review our Return to In Person instruction plan every 6 months. We are now on our 3<sup>rd</sup> review; a draft update to this plan has been posted on our website since November 10<sup>th</sup> and ends on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Following this date, we will finalize posting the updated plan by the December 31<sup>st</sup> due date.

Dr. Arbogast stated that we have been required to update our ARP ESSER spending plan by December 31<sup>st</sup>. We will post a draft update to this on our website and it will be there for a couple weeks to receive public comments and then we will submit by the December 31<sup>st</sup> deadline.

Dr. Arbogast congratulated our Teacher of the Year candidates. They are as follows: NHS – Teresa Lowe, GHS – Luke Craig, MMS – Emily Moye, EEMS – Seth David and NEMS – Kelcie Lowe.

Dr. Arbogast stated that as a reminder, Region VII has scheduled a date (December 6<sup>th</sup> @ 6:00 p.m.) to meet with local representatives for the General Assembly. The purpose is to share info with them prior to the General Assembly session.

Dr. Arbogast discussed increasing the trip pay to \$85/trip or \$13.50/hour, whichever is greater. The consensus of the board was to increase this from \$75/trip or \$12.50/hour to the new proposed \$85/trip or \$13.50/hour, whichever is greater. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, approved the recommendation. Also, he asked the board for their input on going ahead and ordering 2 new buses and a new van. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, approved the Superintendent's recommendation to order 2 new buses at a contract not to exceed \$300K. Mr. Steele applauded staff for getting us caught up on our school bus fleet.

Dr. Arbogast stated that we have been in contact with CMTA and will be meeting with them next Thursday to begin the IGA process. We will update again once they have met.

Dr. Arbogast gave an update on the governor's school situation. Radford University is also interested in having the governor's school students on their campus.

Dr. Arbogast congratulated the NHS Theatre team for capturing the Region C Championship in the One Act play. They hosted the Super Regional and placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. Congratulations to Andy Tawney, Taylor Sowers and Avere Smith for being recognized for their individual performances during the Super Regional. Congratulations to NHS Varsity football for being the Pioneer District champs and participating in Regional Semifinals. Also, congratulations to the NHS Volleyball team for participating in the Regional Quarterfinals.

Dr. Arbogast also congratulated the GHS Theatre group for advancing to Super Regionals and placing 5<sup>th</sup> there. Kayleigh Midkiff was listed as an "honorable mention" actor, and Rachel Hart landed third place in the "best actor" category. Congratulations to GHS Varsity football for participating in the region playoffs. Also, congratulations to the GHS Volleyball team for competing in the state semifinals.

Dr. Arbogast congratulated members of our FFA Junior Ag Mechanics team! They placed first at the Skyline Federation Contest last week.

Dr. Arbogast discussed a proposed calendar change for January 26<sup>th</sup>/January 27<sup>th</sup>. We missed school on Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>. The 1<sup>st</sup> make up day in the calendar is currently Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup> and January 26<sup>th</sup> is a Teacher Work Day. He would like to request that the board approve switching these 2 days (making January 26<sup>th</sup> a regular student day and making Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup> a teacher work day). The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous voting, approved this recommendation.

Dr. Arbogast stated that we received notification from DOE that we received \$127K from the 2022 school security grant program. This is for Giles High, Macy McClaugherty, Narrows Elem/Middle and Narrows High.

Mr. Pennington thanked Dr. Arbogast, Mrs. Mustain, Dr. Brown and Mrs. Tickle for all they do to keep them going in the right direction.

Mr. Pennington thanked the individuals who voiced their public comments today. He stated to please be patient as they get them some answers.

Mr. Pennington also congratulated all the sports teams, theatre, etc. on all of their achievements.

Mr. Wilburn agreed with everything Mr. Pennington said. He knows what the teachers do are remarkable and are the foundation of our school system. The reason he ran was for our kids. He tries to fight hard for our kids.

Mr. Buckland stated that he appreciates the work that our staff does throughout the school year. He also congratulated the sports and theatre teams for their achievements.

Board members wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!

Mr. Steele stated that we have done a tremendous job to get back in the buildings to create stability for the kids. The teachers have done a wonderful job!

Mr. Steele stated that he would like the community to be supportive of all of our buildings and teachers.

Mr. Steele stated that with the holidays coming up, please keep an out eye on the children and recommended individuals finding their favorite charity to help out these kids who may need it.

#### **IN OTHER ACTION...**

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, approved items from the Ag lab for surplus (rake and bush hog).

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Wilburn, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, approved the following Athletic Contracts: Mandy Havens – GHS Girls Assistant Basketball, Ashley Snider - GHS 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Head Volleyball.

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous voting, approved the following Substitute Bus Driver – Darrell Lucas.

#### **NEXT BOARD MEETING**

The next School Board Meeting will be held Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m.

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

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Chairman

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Clerk