

September 7th, 2022

The Giles County School Board held a work session at 2:30 p.m. on September 7th, 2022. Persons present were:

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

Dr. Terry E. Arbogast, II, Superintendent
Amanda J. Tickle, Clerk
Lisa Mustain, Assistant Superintendent

The chairman called the work session to order.

Dr. Arbogast gave an update on enrollment. As of August 31st, enrollment was 2,208, which includes 2,188 in person and 20 virtual students. He stated that there are 964 out of county Stride students, making the full enrollment total 3,172.

Dr. Arbogast stated that the tennis courts at Narrows High School are complete. He stated that he has a meeting with the architect tomorrow to make sure everything is okay and then they will be opened back up.

Dr. Arbogast stated that we received the facilities assessment from CRA. He stated that there are some issues that need to be addressed with the assessment and another draft will be sent back out after changes are made.

Dr. Arbogast discussed the proposed \$1000 bonus from the State. They have allocated \$230,000 for bonuses for SOQ funded instructional and support positions. He stated that we have approximately 370-380 contracted employees, so we would need an additional \$140-150K to fund bonuses for all contracted employees. The consensus of the board is to do this for ALL contracted employees.

Dr. Arbogast shared information about the digital mapping grant through DCJS of our facilities. It is currently in the third review. Once it's completed, it will be sent out to emergency agencies.

Dr. Arbogast stated that all schools should be Accredited this school year. He stated that we have some various achievement gaps that need to be addressed and we are working on those.

Dr. Arbogast stated that the audit has been completed. He said overall things were well. Overall, there weren't any issues. Board members will be given a copy.

Mr. Buckland expressed his concerns about Narrows not having an athletic trainer. He stated that they shouldn't be playing without an athletic trainer, especially with spinal injuries. He stated that if Giles has an athletic trainer, that we should be coordinating with Giles to share the trainer. Mr. Wilburn asked why we didn't have one and Dr. Arbogast stated that Carilion has not been able to hire one. Board members asked if there were other options such as the school system hiring directly for an athletic trainer. Dr. Arbogast stated that he knows of some Narrows games that will be covered.

Dr. Arbogast gave an update on the Back of the Envelope submissions from the ESCOs. The plan is to invite all 4 companies back to present information about their BOE with the Facilities Committee.

Dr. Arbogast gave an update on NEMS. He stated that right now we currently have 33 portable AC units throughout the building and box fans in there as well. Maintenance has been there early in the mornings trying to get air moving through the building. Based on what they shared with us, best case scenario, they will have the air conditioning up and running by Friday, the 16th.

Dr. Arbogast discussed lights at the GHS football field. They are in need of repair or replacement. Dr. Arbogast stated that they will reach out to ZMM for possible solutions.

Mr. Wilburn discussed the ACCE luncheon at Mountain Lake on September 14th. He asked board members if anyone wanted to attend with him.

Mr. Steele stated that the board is tasked with replacing HVAC and roofs at the schools. He stated that we have to know what to tell the company that will be doing the work in the next 6-8 months what to do with the buildings. Mr. Buckland stated that he feels like Mr. Steele is fast tracking this whole thing. There needs to be time to do the proper studies which would be staffing, education and transportation. He would also like the public to have input. Mrs. Guynn stated that she was not aware that a decision needed to be made in the next 6-8 months. Mr. Steele stated that he has told the county that this board intends to make a decision on how we are

going to use our buildings before we spend 25-30 million dollars. Mr. Buckland thinks it is crazy to even think about closing a school. He stated that our class sizes are going to go up dramatically if we close a school. Mr. Buckland has a list of questions that he would like to have the Superintendent answer. The list of questions were compiled from some individuals that are in this room. Mr. Wilburn stated that he wants to fight for a true middle school (grades 6-8). Mr. Pennington stated that he does agree that we can't borrow money until we figure out what we are going to do with the buildings. Mr. Buckland stated that he doesn't see a way of not using all of our buildings. He stated that if we make a decision to close a building and then see a student increase down the road, we have nowhere to put them. Mr. Steele stated that when we pull the trigger to upgrade both high schools, then we are locked into debt that will keep us from doing anything else significantly for 25-30 years. We need to make sure that what we do is what our county needs for the next 25-30 years because if it's not, then we will be locked into debt because we decided to keep two high schools open because we thought there would be a massive increase in population. Mr. Buckland stated that Mr. Steele has pushed since 2016 to close Narrows High School. Mrs. Guynn stated that people are afraid and threatened to lose their community. Mr. Pennington stated that it would also be Giles that would lose their community as well. Mrs. Guynn stated that no matter what, we need to fix our buildings.

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Wilburn, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, adjourned the work session.

Chairman

Clerk