

**November 23, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Giles County School Board was held at 4:30 p.m. on November 23, 2021 at the School Board Office. 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, School Board Clerk  
Lisa Mustain, Assistant Superintendent

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, approved the Superintendent's November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 School Board Meeting Agenda.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Aidan Williams attended the board meeting to address the board regarding a requirement for an education law class that he is attending. He stated:

"Good evening.

Article 1 § 15 of the Virginia Constitution requires the General Assembly to provide for a system of free public schools for all children of school age throughout the Commonwealth...but it stops short of requiring any sort of equitable funding arrangement across divisions.

The Supreme Court of Virginia held back in 1994 that while K-12 public education is a fundamental right, it is only aspirational that the legislature establish a high-quality program. Basically, the Court said that the General Assembly can do what it wishes, so long as it is providing some sort of system of public schools. And while the legislature accounts for each locality's composite index in its funding formula, many funding categories like capital outlay are left out of the state-share of funding altogether—as you all know.

Therefore, as this Board also knows, you have school divisions like Lee County that spend around \$12,000 per pupil, while affluent divisions like Falls Church spend over \$20,000 per student. Some divisions can afford luxurious school buildings and programs, while others can barely afford to replace leaky roofs on the 80-year-old facilities they have. And many of the recession-era funding cuts continue to hurt rural divisions more than the wealthier localities.

Therefore, for the past two General Assembly Sessions, Senator Bill Stanley has proposed constitutional amendments that would require the state legislature to fund "equal" or "equitable" educational opportunities for all students—regardless of their zip code. So, the children born in Southwest Virginia and urban areas can receive the same education as those in the wealthy suburbs in Northern Virginia.

While Senator Stanley has been successful in earning bipartisan support for the Amendment in the State Senate, Northern Virginia Democrats in the House of Delegates have killed the proposal for two straight years.

We expect Senator Stanley to file the amendment again this legislative session.

Today, I am asking that this Board considers passing a resolution in support of the equitable K-12 school funding amendment once it is filed. The new constitutional language could benefit rural divisions like GCPS, by establishing new legal authority that finally requires the General Assembly to recognize and act upon the enormous funding disparities among school divisions across our Commonwealth.

Thank you.

Mr. Steele read two comments that were presented to Mrs. Tickle for the board to read at the meeting:

Dear Giles County School Board Members,

I am writing this email to you all to try to persuade you to give students and staff a choice of whether they want to wear masks or not.

As of Friday, November 19, 2021, there were only 11 total COVID-19 cases in Giles County Public Schools: two students at Macy McClaugherty School, one staff member at Macy McClaugherty School, one student at Narrows Elementary/Middle School, three students at Giles High School, one staff member at Giles High School, two students at Narrows High School, and one student at Giles Technology Center.

The vaccine has recently been approved for ages 5-11. All students and staff are now eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine.

According to the Health Department statistics for Giles County, cases peaked back in September. As of November 19th, 2021, the 7-day average for new cases in Giles County was three. The last time cases were this low was mid-August, before school started on August 23rd. Giles County Public Schools opened under Phase I, where we could have a mask exemption. Now that cases are back down to where they were then, why can't we move back from Phase II to Phase I?

Here are some reasons why I don't like wearing a mask Monday through Friday for six hours. I can't breathe in a mask. I have trouble concentrating on my school work. I have trouble understanding my teachers and peers when they are talking. I can't see their smiles or facial expressions. I get sores behind my ears from having to wear a mask 30 hours a week. When I wear a mask, it makes me hot.

I'm asking you to please consider moving back to Phase I, and letting us have a medical or religious exemption again, or even just letting our parents decide. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,  
Hannah Monday

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Dear Giles County school board members:

I am writing this to talk about removing masks for Giles County Public Schools..

As of November 19th 2021 there were only 11 covid 19 cases in giles county public schools, two students at Macy Mcclaugherty one staff member at Macy Mcclaugherty, one student at Narrows elementary middle/school, three students at Giles High School, two students at Narrows High School, and one student at Giles Technology center.

The vaccine has been approved by the FDA for ages 5-11.

We are in phase II right now, although the COVID-19 cases in Giles County Public Schools are back where they were when we were in phase I so why aren't we back in phase I and not have to wear masks and have an exemption.

With Respect  
- Kenzi Hamilton

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The School Board on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, opened the public hearing for comments on the 2022-2023 budget. There were no comments on the budget. The School Board, on motion

of Mrs. Guynn, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous voting, closed the public hearing on the 2022-2023 school budget.

### EDUCATIONAL FEATURE

On behalf of the educational feature, Mrs. Shelley Boggess and Mrs. Brittany Johnson attended the meeting to update the board on their new Student Assistance Team (SAT) program. The SAT is a school team which includes the parent and when appropriate, the student, in a positive, problem solving, intervention process. It assists students by ensuring that the school and community are doing everything possible to make students' school lives successful. Students are most successful when there is a strong spirit of cooperation between home, school, and community. Based on this shared responsibility, the SAT meets to explore possibilities and strategies that will best meet the educational needs of the students as well as support the teachers and parents. Mrs. Johnson explained the purpose, the process and requirements of the SAT program. She also gave example case studies on what they have been doing. In closing, she thanked the committee members for making this program possible.

### APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEMS

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

**A. Meeting Minutes**

1. Regular – September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

**B. Financial Data**

1. Payrolls to include October 29<sup>th</sup>, November 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021
2. Payment of Bills
3. Revenue and Expenditure Reports – October 2021
4. Appropriation Request for December 2021  
TO: Christopher McKlarney  
Interim Administrator for Giles County  
FR: Dr. Terry E. Arbogast, II  
Division Superintendent  
RE: December 2021 Appropriation

The following is the appropriation request for the month of December 2021. This is for the sixth month of the fiscal year 2021-2022. 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>\$ 1,695,167.37</b>
<b>(Operating + Flow-thru)</b>	
<b>FY19 Carryover</b>	
<b>Track at GHS</b>	<b>\$160,000.00</b>
<b>FY20 Carryover</b>	
<b>Track at GHS</b>	<b>\$96,117.75</b>
<b>Admin Fees (Engineering)</b>	<b>\$7,426.46</b>
<b>Powers Fence (Track)</b>	<b>\$18,512.00</b>
<b>Trench (GHS Track)</b>	<b>\$11,402.55</b>
<b>Turf Football Fields</b>	<b>\$54,975.79</b>
<b>Tractors (Revels)</b>	<b>\$20,500.00</b>
<b>GHS Risers</b>	<b>\$12,685.00</b>
<b>Lift at Garage (1/3 cost)</b>	<b><u>\$23,213.08</u></b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 2,100,000.00</b>

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.

### 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. Pennington and unanimous voting, confirmed the following **Volunteer Agreements**: Chris Collins – GHS Athletics
2. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Pennington, with second by Mr. Buckland and unanimous voting, confirmed the following **Employment**: Transfer of Barbara Quesenberry from MMS Teacher Assistant to NEMS Teacher Assistant (11-10-21), Kiarra Lewis – MMS Teacher Assistant (11-1-21), Amber Reed – NHS Teacher Assistant (11-8-21), Transfer of Austin Cooper from GHS Special Education Teacher to PE Teacher.
3. The School Board, on motion of Mrs. Guynn, with second by Mr. Buckland and unanimous voting, approved the following **Athletic Contracts**: Jim Mahaney – GHS Head Swim Coach, Austin Cooper – GHS Varsity Boys Basketball
4. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous voting, approved the following **Retirement**: Tami Hall – MMS Teacher Assistant (1-1-22), Kathy Perdue – MMS Teacher Assistant (1-1-22)
5. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Pennington, with second by Mrs. Guynn and unanimous voting, approved the updated substitute list to date.

B. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, accepted the bid from Hooten Equipment for services specified in IFB #18-2001. School Nutrition Funds will be used to pay for these items. Bids were received from:

Hooten	\$104,115.00
Culinary Depot	\$93,537.74**
Santel & Son	\$107,546.40
Pueblo	\$108,990.02

\*\*Culinary Depot did not meet bid specifications

C. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Wilburn, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, approved a scholarship being offered by the Virginia War Memorial.

D. The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous voting, approved Policy Revisions as recommended by VSBA and Administration

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

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting, approved the October 21<sup>st</sup> Minutes.

The School Board, on motion of Mrs. Guynn, with second by Mr. Buckland and unanimous voting, approved the following Employment (using Grant funds): Morgan Stevens – COVID 19 Clinical Support (12-1-21), Tanya Patteson – COVID 19 Coordinator (12-13-21).

The School Board, on motion of Mr. Wilburn, with second by Mr. Pennington and unanimous voting (Mr. Buckland abstained), approved the following **Athletic Coaching Contracts**: Josh Sparks – NHS Boys Golf, Teresa Lowe – NHS Football Cheer Coach, Abby Taylor – NHS JV Football Cheer Coach, Teresa Lowe – NHS Basketball Cheer Coach, Josh Sparks – NHS Scholastic Bowl Coach, Henry Buchanan – NHS Head Soccer, Caitlyn Divers – NHS Girls Tennis, Chris Helvey – NHS Head Boys Baseball, Emily Buckland – NHS Asst. Soccer, Josh Sparks – NHS Boys Tennis.

#### **CONCERNS/COMMENTS**

Dr. Arbogast stated that enrollment is 2,155 for in person students, 26 full time virtual and 1,281 nonresidential Stride students.

Dr. Arbogast stated that we have had conversations with administrators about band/choir activities. After consultation with the health department, schools will be scheduling them. Things may look a little different with not having everyone there at one time, but they will be able to have them.

Dr. Arbogast stated that we are looking to try to schedule the STEMposium in the spring and hopeful that it can be outside.

Dr. Arbogast congratulated all the high school athletic teams for their achievements.

Dr. Arbogast congratulated Coach Kelly Lowe on his 100<sup>th</sup> career victory.

Dr. Arbogast congratulated Coach Rusty Kelley for the dedication of the GHS track in his honor.

Dr. Arbogast informed board members that there would be a meeting on December 6<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m. with the GEA and Delegate Elect Jason Ballard.

Dr. Arbogast informed board members about a meeting on December 8<sup>th</sup> with Region VII. He will forward board members the zoom link for this meeting in case they want to attend.

Dr. Arbogast stated that he would like to have 2 board members on December 1<sup>st</sup> for the monthly meeting with the BOS and School Board members.

Dr. Arbogast stated that we will be holding a pre-construction meeting at NEMS on Monday, November 29<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. To make it official, the School Board, on motion of Mr. Buckland, with second by Mr. Wilburn and unanimous voting, officially approved Southern Air to complete this project.

Dr. Arbogast discussed more information about preventative maintenance for the cafeterias that has been discussed within the last year. This will be approximately \$13K per year. The consensus of the board was to move forward with this.

Dr. Arbogast had a discussion regarding water softeners for the schools. He doesn't anticipate what he put in the budget will cover this. It is recommended by ZMM to have a water softener for the whole building instead of just the cafeterias since upgrades will hopefully be made in the near future for HVAC. It is anticipated the cost will be \$75 – 80K per site to cover 4 schools. Board members asked Dr. Arbogast to gather additional information before proceeding to make sure a water softener for the whole building is necessary.

Dr. Arbogast stated that we are working on a retention/recruitment bus driver grant through the state.

Dr. Arbogast shared information about the outdoor classroom/picnic shelter at Giles High School. The cost of this would be approximately \$15K. The consensus of the board was to move forward with this.

Dr. Arbogast stated that we need to do some work on the lower concession stand roof at NHS. This will be about \$3K to replace the roof on the concession stand. The consensus of the board was to move forward with this project as well.

Dr. Arbogast stated that due to receiving ESSER funds, we have to reevaluate the Return to Learn plan and update that every six months. This was posted on our website several weeks ago for anyone to provide any public comments back. He has heard comments about removing temperature checks. This change will start December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Steele asked what data we are using to determine when and if we will go back to Phase I. He stated that these are questions that he is being asked. Dr. Arbogast stated that he is not sure we are ready to remove masks because we have heard from the health department about being concerned that we aren't masking with indoor athletic activities. Dr. Arbogast stated that he is not sure if anything will change after the first of the year.

Mr. Steele discussed the early release days for professional development for teachers, he asked if we need to consider more time for teachers to be able to get things done? Dr. Arbogast stated that teachers are being worn out having to cover classes.

Mr. Pennington thanked all of the staff for Giles County Public Schools. He knows it's a struggle, but we really thank you for all you do.

Board members commended GHS for their educational feature! They stated our kids really need this program.

Mr. Pennington and Mr. Buckland thanked Mr. Aidan Williams for his public comments and asked to keep board members informed.

Board members congratulated the sports teams for their achievements and accomplishments.

Mrs. Guynn thanked the students who submitted public comments regarding the masks and she understands how they feel.

Mr. Wilburn also thanked all the staff for everything they are doing.

Board members congratulated Rusty Kelley for having the GHS track dedicated to him. Mr. Kelley was very appreciate!

Mr. Buckland thanked the GHS staff, Law enforcement, Dr. Arbogast and Mrs. Mustain for doing a great job dealing with a situation at GHS recently.

Mr. Buckland also congratulated Kelley Lowe for his 100<sup>th</sup> career victory.

Mr. Buckland stated that the NHS Theatre Team is shining!

Board members wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!

Mr. Steele stated that they have a lot of money they need to get spent on maintenance/buildings/repairs, but he wants staff to know and understand that those certain funds are not able to be used on salaries and bonuses. He wants staff to know that they are not forgetting about them, but they are first and foremost on their list with salaries. He thanked everyone who took the time to put in budget requests.

#### **NEXT BOARD MEETING**

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

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

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Chairman

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Clerk