

# Board O'Gram

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Report of Rome Board of Education — Action Compiled by Dr. Robert A. Young, Director. of Administrative Services

**West Regional Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl:** Dr. Jones recognized East Central Elementary School and the students who won first place in the West Regional Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl. According to Dr. Jones, the Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl is open to grades four through six across the state of Georgia. The participants read sixteen to twenty books from the current years' Georgia Children's Book Award Nominees. The students compete in a quiz bowl format with questions based on these books. Two teams from each Georgia school system are eligible to compete in their Regional District Bowl. The team from East Central Elementary School represented Rome City Schools in the West Regional Bowl at the University of West Georgia on February 7, 2009. East Central team members practiced many days after school and almost every day at their lunch table during lunch. Each team member read all or almost all of the books required for the elementary school level competition. They were also required to create practice questions in order to prepare for the contest. The East Central team took first place after winning every round at the West Regional Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl. The Reading Bowl participants included: Ashley Alred, Jeremiah Hayes, Asia Jones, Alan Loveman, Maryam Mansoura, and Matthew Nedvin. Coaches are: Haley Pyle, media specialist at East Central, and Tara Alred and Juhaina Omran; parents of East Central students.

**US Girls Wrestling Championship:** Mr. Wilson recognized Amy Hou, an eighth grade student at Rome Middle School, for participating in US Girls Wrestling Championship in Michigan during spring break. Mr. Wilson stated that Amy finished sixth in the middle school division. Coach Bryan Aspera, the middle school wrestling coach, stated that Amy is one of the hardest workers on the team, and that she displays outstanding wrestling technique. She is in the band (flute), serves on the yearbook staff, wrestles, and still makes all A's! She runs three to five miles three days per week, and she lifts weights two or three days per week. Her parents are Mr. Dongque Hou and Shutoug Qin of Rome.

**Young Georgia Authors Competition:** Mrs. Collins recognized the system winners in the Young Georgia Authors Competition. Mrs. Collins reported that the purposes of this award are to encourage students to develop writing that represents their best efforts; provide a context for schools to support and celebrate the writing successes of all students; and encourage and recognize student achievement in writing throughout Georgia. Students may submit essays, stories, or poems to be judged on criteria such as imagination, originality, and correctness. The system winners will advance to state level competition through our RESA district. The system winners include:

K	WC	Thu Truong	"Visit to Vietnam"
1st	NH	Madeleine Olson	"Madeleine Goes Skiing"
2nd	EC	Grant Grodeman	"Championship Football Game"
3rd	WE	Samuel Godfrey	"G.R.O.S.S."
4th	WE	Charlotte Roberts	"The Birth of My Brother"
5th	SE	Norma Rodriguez	"The Night an Alien Landed on My House"
6th	EC	Maryam Mansoura	"The Locket; Book One"
7th	RMS	Lucy Lansing	"Music"
8th	RMS	Jonathan Williams	"Red"
9th	RHS	Joshua Michael Porter	"Love or Lust"
10th	RHS	Anita Guzman	"Black Snow"
11th	RHS	Kerem Trolander	"Time For Thought"
12th	RHS	Sarah Godfrey	"Romeo and Elaine"

**Governor's Honors Program:** Mr. Swann recognized students who earned the opportunity to participate in this summer's Governor's Honors Program (GHP). Mr. Swann stated that GHP is a six-week summer instructional program designed to provide intellectually gifted and artistically talented high school students challenging and enriching educational opportunities not usually available during the regular school year. GHP has been funded by the state of Georgia since 1964. Students study in the major instructional area of the nomination and also get to choose other areas of interest as minor studies.

Students are first nominated by their high school teachers. Transcripts of grades and records, nomination forms, endorsements and other pertinent information are submitted to substantiate the nominations. Local nominees may have a local interview/audition and all state level nominees undergo an interview/audition. It is a very competitive program and to be a finalist is a great honor. Two eleventh grade students from Rome High school are finalists:

Tyler Hope Van Riper - Spanish  
Spencer Crawford Hyde - Mathematics

**STAR Student and STAR Teacher:** Mr. Wood recognized the system STAR Student and STAR Teacher. Mr. Wood reported that Tereon Roden, a high school senior, has been named 2009 PAGE STAR student for Rome High School. The announcement was made recently by the Rome City Chamber of Commerce, local sponsor of the Rome STAR program. Tereon Roden selected Ms. Dawn Faulkner, literature teacher at Rome High School as her STAR teacher. Mr. Wood stated that the Page Student Teacher Achievement Recognition (STAR) program, in its fifty-first year, is sponsored by the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE) Foundation, the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and the Georgia Department of Education. Since its inception, the STAR program has honored more than nineteen thousand students and teachers they have selected as having had the most influence on their academic achievement. Students are selected on the basis of their SAT scores and class standing/scholastic averages. Each year high schools throughout Georgia select their STAR student who then chooses a STAR teacher to share in this recognition. The students and their teachers are honored by their schools and receive recognition in their communities from more than two hundred statewide civic organizations and businesses that sponsor local programs. Students then compete for school system titles, and those winners compete for region/state honors.

**Attendance for the seventh month of school:** Dr. Cooper reported the attendance for the seventh month of school. He stated that Elm Street Elementary School had the highest elementary school percentage of student attendance at 97.97 percent. It was also noted that Rome Middle School had 95.90 percent of student attendance for the seventh month of school. The highest percent of staff attendance was Elm Street Elementary School at 96.84 percent.

**New Personnel:** On a Jones/Collins motion, the Board unanimously approved Dr. Cooper's personnel recommendations:  
Certified Employment 2009-2010: Susan Cole/EC  
Laura Couts/RMS  
Todd Wheeler/RHS  
Support Employment 2008-2009: Gary Henderson/Maintenance

**Focus on Student Achievement - North Heights:** At Dr. Cooper's request, Mr. Gordon Scoggins presented the Focus on Student Achievement for North Heights Elementary School. Accompanying Mr. Scoggins were faculty members: PreK, Sue Gribble; first grade, Lucy Babcock; second grade, Carly Newberry and Amy Walker; third grade, Emily Matheny and Natalie Wolbert; fifth grade Ashlyn Ritch and Lauren Rodin; sixth grade, Chris Parker; SpEd, Virginia Wadsworth and Esther Ann Burger. Also attending were Greg Moss, Susan O'Dell, Renea DeAngelus, Counselor Nathalie Lizin, Chris Rodgers, Laura Gafnea, Ginger Rowston, and parents Laney Jasper (with William and Rachel) and Keidra Walsh.

The title of Mr. Scoggins presentation PowerPoint was: "Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day". Mr. Scoggins reported some accolades earned by North Heights: Named a Distinguished Title I School AYP for five consecutive years and named a 2008 No Excuses School by Georgia Public Policy Foundation. He thanked the Board for providing the faculty, staff, students, and parents with new renovations from SPLOST II funds which have instilled a rejuvenated level of enthusiasm and pride at North Heights.

Mr. Scoggins began his testing report by saying that the faculty and staff all accept ownership of all test results, both good and those needing improvement. After going over the results, he summarized his findings:

Reading scores are consistently strong.

Math scores declined significantly in fourth, fifth and sixth grades.

Third grade math scores are above Georgia and RCS average.

As we have witnessed across Georgia, achievement scores do decline during Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) roll-out years.

Mr. Scoggins discussed the "Three R's" at North Heights: Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships. Rigor is a challenging curriculum designed to instruct the proper Georgia Performance Standards and beyond. Relevance is intended to give the students a purpose and understand why what they learn is important to them. Relationships are tied to an understanding by the faculty and staff that children will not learn until they believe that the teachers care about them and that they are trustworthy.

The faculty and staff are working to maximize student learning and accomplish the Three R's by doing the following:

- Full GPS implementation;
- Use of benchmark assessments that drive instructional practice;
- Differentiated instruction based on individual student needs;
- Math and reading intervention programs that provide "safety nets" for students that are falling behind;
- Instructional "Best Practices";
- Establishing and maintaining Relationships; and
- Creating an academically rich learning environment that fosters a culture of mutual respect and caring.

In conclusion, Mr. Scoggins repeated a quote from an unknown source:

"Kids do not care what you know until they know you care."

**SPLOST II Revenues:** Dr. Cooper gave an update on the SPLOST II revenues. He stated that the January '09 collections of \$383,999.63 were \$53,500.37 below projections for the month (\$437,500.00). He further stated that historically the January collections have all been low, so this month was normal. He also stated that the system collections remain very strong and the overall collections are \$458,284.56 above the projected amount.

**SPLOST III:** Dr. Cooper discussed the SPLOST III Rome High School twelve classroom addition and other matters. He showed the Board and the audience an aerial view of the location of the addition along with 9.9 acres of newly acquired property along the western border of the existing property. He also briefly discussed the construction of an access road that the City of Rome is working on between the back of the high school/middle school property and North Avenue.

**CRCT:** In Other Items, Dr. Cooper announced that students in grades one through eight were participating in the Georgia Criterion Reference Competency Tests (CRCT) during the next two weeks.

**Board Goals and Mission:** On a Swann/Wood motion, the Board unanimously adopted, on Second reading, Mission Statement and 2009-2010 Board Goals:

RCS MISSION: All students will graduate from Rome High School prepared for college or work.

2009-2010 Board Goals:

1. Increase the high school graduation rate.
2. Continue to support the instruction of the Georgia Performance Standards in all grades/subject areas that have been fully implemented.
3. Continue to focus on student achievement at the elementary, middle, and high school levels and improve test scores in all subject areas.
4. Continue implementation of Writing and Math Workshops in Grades K-8.
5. Conduct system-wide training in the effective teaching of reading comprehension in Grades K-8 through services and support of consultants and system literacy coaches.
6. Continue to train high school teachers/administrators on the Georgia Performance Standards for Math I and Math II.
7. Fully implement Math II classes for 10th grade students and implement Math II support classes for 10th grade students requiring additional help.
8. Construct a twelve classroom building at Rome High School to include a cosmetology lab, two science labs, and nine classrooms.
9. Continue to improve reading performance in the primary grades such that 90% of students meet Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) grade level benchmark expectations on the following:
  - i. Kindergarten: Phoneme Segmentation Fluency
  - ii. First Grade: Nonsense Word Fluency
  - iii. Second Grade: Oral Reading Fluency
10. Expand the Bridge Program, a dual enrollment collaboration of Rome High School and Coosa Valley Technical College, by offering a public safety curriculum to include emergency medical services (EMS), fire, and law enforcement.
11. Implement a Response to Intervention (RTI) Program in Grades K-12.
12. Improve student achievement in K-8 mathematics by implementing a system-wide math assessment tool and instructional interventions.

**State Capital Outlay Resolution:** The Board accepted the State Capital Outlay Funding Resolution as delivered by Mrs. Sims. Dr. Cooper stated that the resolution presented would:

1. Maximize the state capital outlay earnings and generate \$663,382.00 in funds for the twelve classroom addition at Rome High School.
2. Allow these funds to be collected by Rome City Schools on a monthly basis through a reimbursement process as the construction progresses.
3. Result in a combination of capital outlay and SPLOST III funds to pay for the \$3.7 million building.

**Teacher Appreciation Week Resolution:** The Board accepted the Teacher Appreciation Week Resolution (May 3-9, 2009) as delivered by Mrs. Sims. Mrs. Sims stated that the Board members will be delivering apples and service pins to the teachers and staff on Tuesday, May 5, 2009.

Mrs. Judy Sims	North Heights
Mr. Will Wood	Rome High School/Rome Middle School
Mrs. Faith Collins	West Central/West End/Greenwood Learning Center
Ms. Cheryl Huffman	Southeast/Anna K. Davie
Dr. Bruce Jones	Main/Rome Transitional Academy/Technology Center
Mr. Dale Swann	Maintenance Center/Elm
Mr. Chris Wilson	East Central/Central Office/Annex

**A. D. Black Scholarship Committee:** Mrs. Sims appointed Mr. Swann and Dr. Jones to work on the annual A. D. Black Scholarship Committee with Dr. Buck. The scholarship is for a student attending Georgia Tech, who was born in Floyd County, who has at least one parent who was also born in Floyd County, and is a student in good standing academically.