

Board O'Gram

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Report of Rome Board of Education — Action Compiled by Dr. Mike Buck, Assistant Superintendent

Choir Prelude to Board Meeting: Lead by Choral Director Mrs. Jennifer Williams, the Rome High Choral group sang a few selections for the Board and audience. The Choral members included: Jacob Bowman, Alexandra Carlton, James Douglas, Steven Godfrey, Avery Harris, Jackson Hodges, Zach Kinsey, Charlie Langlois, Dalia Maisonet, Jerica Maisonet, Michael Nedvin, Tony Roberts, Diana Romo, Andrew Smathers, Patrick Tarrant, and Hannah Campbell.

Rome High School All-State Chorus: On behalf of the Board, Mr. Wilson presented members of the Rome High School Chorus with a Certificate of Recognition for their individual accomplishment in All-State Chorus competitions. Fifteen students from Rome High School were selected for the 2010 Georgia Music Educators All-State Chorus. Mr. Wilson stated that this is the highest number of students ever selected for All-State Chorus from Rome High School. Being selected for All-State Chorus is a prestigious honor, as only 11% of all students who audition are selected. To be selected, students must pass a challenging audition process, which includes singing several scales, performing a solo, completing tonal memory examples, and sight-reading three lines of music. All chorus students who made the 2010 Georgia All-State Chorus will meet in Savannah, Georgia on February 25 -27, 2010, for several intensive rehearsals with world-renown clinicians and a concluding concert. The Rome High chorus students are under the direction of Jennifer Williams. The students who earned the recognition include: Jacob Bowman, Alexandra Carlton, James Douglas, Steven Godfrey, Avery Harris, Jackson Hodges, Zach Kinsey, Charlie Langlois, Dalia Maisonet, Jerica Maisonet, Michael Nedvin, Tony Roberts, Diana Romo, Andrew Smathers, and Patrick Tarrant.

Rome High School All-State Reading Chorus: On behalf of the Board, Dr. Jones presented the Rome High School "All-State Reading Chorus" members with a Certificate of Recognition for their accomplishments. According to Dr. Jones, the Georgia All-State Reading Chorus was established three years ago to showcase students with exceptional sight-reading ability. The All-State Reading Chorus audition is even more challenging than the regular All-State Chorus audition, as students are required to sight-read five lines of college level vocal music. Only 100 students from schools throughout Georgia are selected for this honor. The All-State Reading event will be held January 28 -30, 2010, in Savannah. The students will participate in three days of rehearsal with a guest conductor, during which they will sight-read approximately sixty pieces of music, and will conclude with a concert at the Savannah Trade Center. The five Rome High students who were selected for the 2010 Georgia All-State Reading Chorus are: Jacob Bowman, Hannah Campbell, Avery Harris, Zach Kinsey, and Andrew Smathers.

Rome High School Drama All-Star Cast Member: On behalf of the Board, Mr. Swann presented the Certificate of Recognition to Rome High School student Kristan Mayo who was named a "Drama All-Star Cast Member." Mr. Swann reported that Kristan had been selected to participate in the Sub-Region Drama All-Star Cast, one of ten chosen from over 120 participating students. Kristan was very involved in chorus and drama at Rome Middle School, and continues her involvement at Rome High School. She played Cassandra in the Rome High School Drama production of "Saving the Greeks: One Tragedy at a Time," in the main stage production and in the competitive One-Act performance. Her portrayal of the innocent, absent-minded prophetess earned her this recognition.

Fourth Month Attendance: Dr. Cooper reported the attendance for the fourth month of school. He stated that Anna K. Davie Elementary School had the highest percentage of student attendance, 99.13 percent. It was also noted that Rome Middle School had 96.66 percent of student attendance for the fourth month of the school year. The school with the highest percent of staff attendance was Anna K. Davie Elementary School, 98.04 percent. Dr. Cooper congratulated Mr. Portis on the outstanding student and staff attendance.

New Personnel: On a Jones/Collins motion, the Board unanimously approved Dr. Cooper's personnel recommendations:
Certified Employment 2009-2010 : Josie Baudier/ SE and Caitlin Clark/RMS
Support Employment 2009-2010: Brenda Giles/SE and Edna V. Todd/EC

Focus On Student Achievement – North Heights Elementary: At Dr. Cooper's request, Mr. Gordon Scoggins presented the Focus on Student Achievement for North Heights Elementary School. Accompanying Mr. Scoggins were: Greg Moss, Amy Walker, Carly Newberry, Emily Matheny, Esther Ann Burger, Natalie Lizin, and Dana Smith. He reported that North Heights has been named a Distinguished Title I School for five consecutive years and was also named a 2008 No Excuses

School by the Georgia Public Policy Foundation. The school's focus has been on continuous improvement by applying collective ownership of student performance data, celebrating successes, and embracing opportunities to improve.

Mr. Scoggins reviewed the grade-level Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) results from the spring 2009 administration. He reported that he was proud of their scores, but they still had room for improvement. He is especially proud of the CRCT improvements in fourth grade and sixth grade math. In both grades, they increased their scores by about 30%. The State Superintendent of Schools, Kathy Cox, awarded the school a "Superintendent's Distinguished Achievement Award."

Mr. Scoggins summarized the CRCT results with four key observations. First grade scores declined over the previous year. Across the school, reading is a strength, with second thru sixth grade scores approaching or above 90%. Math scores increased in the second thru sixth grades, and fourth and sixth grade math scores increased more than 30 percentage points.

North Heights plans to continue to improve by implementing the following best practices: quality GPS instruction; benchmark assessments that drive instructional practice; redesigned literacy intervention (K-3) and math intervention (4-6) programs; and implementing "Learning Enrichment Activities Demonstrating Standards" (L.E.A.D.S.) Enrichment Program. The LEADS program is open to all students in grades 3-6. It give students a choice of activities. The assessment employs weekly criteria for participation based on a performance rubric. The goal is to create an enrichment program that serves as an academic and a behavioral motivator. Dr. Cooper congratulated Mr. Scoggins and the staff of North Heights on the outstanding improvements on the CRCT.

Rome High School Technical Program: Dr. Cooper reported on Rome High School's technical program and career pathways. He identified the programs and reported the student participation in each program over the past three years. The programs include Air Force Jr. ROTC, Business & Computer Sciences, Construction, Family & Consumer Sciences, Government & Public Safety, Graphic Arts, and Healthcare Sciences. Dr. Cooper also noted that we would begin offering a cosmetology program in the fall of 2010.

Rome High School Bridge Program: Dr. Cooper reported on the Bridge Program between Georgia Northwestern Technical College and Rome High School. He identified the classes taught at the high school and the classes taught at Georgia Northwestern Technical College over the past three years. He expressed confidence that these programs would continue to grow and benefit our students.

Rome High School AP Physics Seminar: Dr. Cooper discussed the AP Physics seminar that took place at the University of West Georgia. He reviewed the daily schedule for the two-day visit and gave the highlights of the program. In conclusion, he shared part of a letter that was sent to the college President Dr. Beheruz N. Sethna from the instructor Dr. Bob Powell:

"I found these students from Rome High School to be highly intelligent and highly motivated. They resonated with the demonstrations and did excellent work in the lab. Interacting with them was a wonderful academic experience." (December 4, 2009)

SPLOST III: Dr. Cooper gave an update on the SPLOST III revenues. He stated that the September '09 collections of \$415,788.71 were \$86,940.79 below the anticipated collection amount. The anticipated amount was \$502,729.50 for the period. Dr. Cooper reminded the audience that Rome City Schools is on a "pay as you go" plan and that the collections are adequate for paying for the 12-class addition being constructed at Rome High School.

Rome News-Tribune Basketball Tournament: Dr. Cooper announced the Rome News-Tribune Basketball Tournament would begin on Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2009, with the RHS Girls playing the Calhoun Yellow Jackets at 7:30 p.m. at Berry College. The RHS Boys will play Thursday, Dec. 17th against the Pepperell Dragons at 7:30 p.m. at Berry College

Regular Monthly Meetings for 2010: On a Wilson/Huffman motion, the Board unanimously approved the 2010 Rome City School's Board Meeting date, time, and location. The regular monthly meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of each month. The caucus will begin at 5:00 p.m. in the superintendent's office, and the regular session will begin at 5:45 p.m. in the Boardroom. The Board will reserve the fourth Tuesday of each month for possible work sessions.

Board Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson Elected: Mrs. Sims turned the meeting over to Board Attorney Bill Byington to conduct the election for the 2010 Board Chairman. On a Swann/Collins motion, Mrs. Sims was nominated to serve as 2010 Board Chairman. On a Wood/Swann motion, the Board unanimously decided to close the nominations, electing Mrs. Sims as the 2010 Chairman, by acclamation.

Mr. Byington turned the meeting over to the newly elected Chairman, Ms. Sims. On a Huffman/Wilson motion, Mr. Wood was nominated to serve as 2010 Board Vice-Chairman. On a Jones/Swann motion, the Board unanimously decided to close the nominations, electing Mr. Wood as the 2010 Vice-Chairman, by acclamation.

Georgia School Board Association (GSBA) Notes: Mrs. Sims invited the Board members to discuss what they learned at the Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) meeting.

Dr. Jones stated that he appreciates the chance to share what Rome City Schools is doing and hearing about what other boards are doing to resolve the issues and challenges facing school boards today.

Mrs. Collins reported that she learned to stress rigor, relevance, and relationships in her role as a board member and an educational leader. She also learned how some systems are trying to do more with less. She said that some systems have even changed their school calendars to make up for financial shortfalls. Mrs. Collins also mentioned that of the 20 superintendents nominated as the Georgia Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Cooper was one of the top four!

The presentation by Dr. Adolf Brown III was enjoyed by Mr. Wood. He said that the children in our system live in a variety of circumstances and conditions. Some do not have all of their utilities or enough proper clothing for the seasons, and face other financial and emotional hardships. As professional educators, we need to keep this in mind as we work with the children under our care.

Dr. Cooper praised the Board, saying that the Rome City Schools Board of Education members represent the school system and community well by the professional way they perform their duties and the dedication they apply to their responsibilities.

Ms. Huffman discussed the legal session and related how the program was taught through a simulated school system: the Hard Time School Board. She is glad to be working with a professional group of board members and educators in the Rome City Schools.

Mr. Wilson most enjoyed getting a national and international perspective on education. He said that it gave him a better feel for how the Rome City Schools fits within the larger field of view.

Mr. Swann stated that he enjoyed the legal seminars - especially those conducted by Harbin and Hartley. He echoed the sentiment that the Rome City Schools has a wonderful professional Board.

Mrs. Sims stated that when the list for Georgia Superintendent of the Year was presented, Dr. Cooper was introduced with the comment that he has developed an enviable program in the Rome City Schools. Ms. Sims said that Dr. Cooper is our Superintendent of the Year!

Mr. Byington stated that he learned a great deal from the legal seminars and will be sharing some new ideas with the Board soon.

Other Items:

- On a Collins/Swann motion, the Board unanimously adopted the Precipitous Decline resolution as presented by Dr. Cooper.
- Dr. Cooper announced that Student Winter Holidays will be held December 18, 2009 – January 4, 2010. Classes will resume January 5, 2010.