

Board O'Gram

Vol. 31
No. 4
Nov. 8, 2005

Report of Rome Board of Education Actions Compiled by Dr. Robert A. Young, Dir. of Administrative Services

Berry Math League: Mrs. Huffman presented certificates to the Rome Middle School students who competed at the Berry Math League Competition on Thursday, October 27th, at Berry College. There were 16 teams from the northwest Georgia area. RMS finished in first place and team member Spencer Hyde placed third in the individual competition. The competition consists of three phases. The first phase is a 20 question written test that the participants have 20 minutes to complete. Next is the ciphering portion. Students are given ten questions, one question at a time. Students raise their question sheet when they have the answer. If they get it correct in the first minute, ten points are awarded. Five points are awarded for students that correctly answer the question during the second minute. The final phase of the competition is the team questions. Each team is given five questions to work during a period of 12 minutes. Each correct answer earns the team ten points. Rome Middle's total score was 495. Team members include: Emily Williams, Caitlin Connell, Ting Wang, Spencer Hyde, Hamzah Mansoura, Ben Hayes, and Matt Rice. Mrs. Sandye Ashley, the team coach, was also recognized.

Young Georgia Authors' Writing Competition: Mr. Swann presented three Rome City Schools students with certificates for being named Region Winners in the Young Georgia Authors' Writing Competition. The Young Georgia Authors' Competition is a student writing contest sponsored by the Georgia Department of Education for students across the state in grades K-12. Public school students in all grades may submit original writing entries of short stories, poetry, essays, journals, or personal narratives for judging. These entries enter into school level, system level, regional level, and finally on to state level competition. The RCS students who won their grade level competition on the regional level were Christopher Fincher, second grader at East Central Elementary School; Caleb Neibar, third grader at West Central Elementary School; and Elizabeth Bibb, ninth grader at Rome High School.

National Hispanic Recognition Program: Mrs. Collins presented Mary Lou Romero, a senior at Rome High School, a certificate for being selected by the National Hispanic Recognition Program as a 2005-2006 Scholar. Mrs. Collins reported that the College Board program provides national recognition of the exceptional academic achievements of Hispanic high school seniors. The program names qualifying students as Scholars or Honorable Mention Finalists. Students enter the program by taking the Preliminary SAT as high school juniors and by identifying themselves as Hispanic. The student's GPA is also taken into consideration when selecting students that will receive the honor. From more than 150,000 students nationwide, only 4,500 students were recognized by the prestigious program as either Scholars or Honorable Mention Finalists. According to her principal, Dr Tygar Evans:

"Mary Lou Romero represents the success and diversity of our academic programs here at Rome High School. Her outstanding achievements are greatly admired by fellow students and faculty. The mission of Rome High School is to continue a tradition of excellence in providing comprehensive educational opportunities by a qualified and caring staff who will prepare students with the knowledge and necessary skills for becoming responsible and productive citizens in a global society."

Third Month Attendance: Dr. Cooper reported the attendance for the third month of school. He stated that West End Elementary School had the highest percentage of student attendance at 98.41 percent. It was also noted that Rome Middle School had 96.54 percent of student attendance for the third month of school. The highest percent of staff attendance was Southeast Elementary School at 97.14 percent.

New Personnel: On a Wood/Clark motion, the Board unanimously approved Dr. Cooper's recommendations for certified employment 2005-2006: Jonathan Weaver/WE

Focus on Student Achievement – Main Elementary School: At Dr. Cooper's request, Dr. Bynes presented the Focus on Student Achievement for Main Elementary School. Dr. Bynes listed the reasons that he believes his school has been able to maintain a high level of success over the past years. According to Dr. Bynes it all comes down to successful people and programs. He said that Main has a dynamic staff; they are all willing to work hard to accomplish the goals that they have set for their students. He also said that while educators often say that they believe that all students can learn, the teachers at Main Elementary School believe that all students will learn. The staff understands their success is the direct result of the success of everyone else in the building, across grade levels, and within grade levels. Dr. Bynes also attributes the success at Main Elementary School to the programs that they have adopted. The programs implemented at Main Elementary School and throughout the system complement each other rather than impede each other. New programs that Dr. Bynes outlined include Book of the Month, Dibels, Literature Exploration, Math Coach,

and Math Connections. Highlights from the test scores that Dr. Bynes reported include third grade Math CRCT, 100 percent achievement; sixth grade Reading CRCT, 100 percent achievement; fifth grade Writing Test, 100 percent achievement at the Experimenting, Engaging, and Extending levels; and finally from the Performance Index Calculations Main Elementary School has been named a Distinguished School.

2005-2006 Writing Workshop Program: At Dr. Cooper's request, Mrs. Debbie Downer, Literacy Specialist, presented the 2005-2006 Writing Workshop Professional Learning Program. Mrs. Downer reported that Writing Workshop is the application of Best Practices based on research. The basic tenets of Writing Workshop include common sense strategies. We should be developing student ownership in their work by having them write about things they are interested in and using less teacher controlled decision making. Class time should be used to teach the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) rather than just giving the students an assignment and leaving them to their own resources to get the task completed. Teachers need to show their students work that they have written to model the process and product. Writing mechanics should not be taught in isolation but rather should be embedded in the instruction of the writing process. Mrs. Downer stated that writing is a process, a tool for thinking, and is best developed when students actually sit down and write. While the system wants students to be successful on standardized tests, Mrs. Downer stated that the long-term goals of Rome City Schools writing program are that the students will be able to write in a variety of genres (narrative, descriptive, informational, persuasive, etc), will develop a deepening connection between reading and writing, will learn the habits and process of writing, and they will master the conventions of print. In conclusion, Mrs. Downer said that our goal is really to give the students a love for writing. "We all learn to write by writing."

SPLOST II Update: Dr. Cooper gave an update on the SPLOST II revenues. He stated that the August '05 collections of \$520,638.26 were \$103,532.78 over projections.

In other business:

- Dr. Cooper announced the home football game against Chamblee this Friday at Barron Stadium beginning at 8:00 p.m.
- Thanksgiving holidays will be November 23–25, 2005.
- The 2007 Teacher of the Year and Support Person of the Year banquet will take place Tuesday evening at Rome Middle School at 7:00 p.m.

Please Note:

Beginning with the December issue, Board-O-Grams will be distributed electronically via email.