

The Board Brief

This edition of *The Board Brief* is a summary of the information and recognitions presented and actions taken at the Board of Education's Committee and Board Meetings on August 16, 2016.

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Highlights and Recognitions

District Awarded with Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has awarded the Bibb County School District with the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 17th consecutive year for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the Fiscal Year that ended June 30, 2015.

The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management, according to the GFOA.

Only a handful of school districts in the state of Georgia prepare a CAFR. Doing so enhances a District's bond rating, leads to transparency in terms of accounting records, and adds credibility to a District's financial statements.

Northeast Paraprofessional Honored with District Hero Award

The District presented the District Hero Award to Northeast High School paraprofessional LaTashi Vinson. She administered CPR after a student collapsed and quit breathing until paramedics arrived and took over at the scene. In December 2015, Ms. Vinson had taken a CPR and First Aid Class with District Risk Management Director David Gowan.

Quick Think Competition Winners Recognized

Last spring, second grade students from each elementary school competed in the District's Quick Think Competition. Sponsored by the Macon Exchange Club, the Quick Think Program teaches second grade students about life and personal safety issues as well as how to address them.

Each second grade classroom in the District hosts this competition, and the top two participate in their school competition. The school winner then competes at the District level. The top three winners in Bibb County were Camry Maxwell from Taylor Elementary School, first place; Becca Ogden from Heard Elementary School, second place; and Jayda Thomas from Bruce Elementary School, third place.

Six District Students Attend Governor's Honors Program

This summer, six students from Howard High School participated in the Governor's Honors Program. Governor's Honors is a four-week enrichment program for talented rising high school juniors and seniors, and is held at Valdosta State University. It is the longest continually running summer enrichment program in the nation.

Schools nominate about 3,000 students statewide each year for the program. Students go through an intensive interview process in January and February before the final pool of students is chosen. Finalists are chosen for one of 17 majors, and spend six days a week in classes in their major and minor, with extracurricular activities like seminars, art shows, concerts and academic tournaments in the evenings and on the weekends.

Students who attended were:

- Savannah Banks, Dance;
- Madison Jackson, Communicative Arts;
- Jenny Lee, Science;
- Heeju Lim, Music;
- Hannah Strudwick, Theatre; and
- Dustin Testa, Engineering.

Union Elementary Media Specialist Named Middle Georgia Library Media Specialist

Union Elementary School Media Specialist Adrienne Denson was named the Library Media Specialist of the Year for the Middle Georgia District. She was selected for the honor by the Georgia Library Media Association and the Georgia Association of Instructional Technology.

Mrs. Denson has been the Media Specialist at Union Elementary School since 2012. Prior to that, she was involved in education as a recruiter at Middle Georgia State University for 23 years.

As a media specialist, Mrs. Denson does a little bit of everything. Not only does she encourage students to read, she holds instructional classes providing corresponding lessons to the material students are learning in their other classes, as well as teaching research skills.

Mrs. Denson was honored as the Library Media Specialist of the Year for the Middle Georgia Region, which services seven counties. She received this honor after being named the Bibb County Media Specialist of the Year in 2015.

Actions Taken

Board Approves Resolution Opposing Opportunity School District

On Tuesday, August 16, Board members approved a resolution opposing the [Opportunity School District](#), which is on the ballot in November and if approved would allow the state to take over locally operated failing schools. Other Boards of Education in the state, such as those in Chatham and Newton Counties, have voted to pass a similar resolution. To read the resolution, [click here](#).

Board Authorizes Final Adoption of Millage Rate

The Bibb County Board of Education voted on Tuesday, August 16, 2016, to adopt the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 / Calendar Year (CY) 2016 Tax Levy, which proposed that the millage rate for the Bibb County School District increase from 17.945 to 19.945.

The Superintendent's Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Recommended Budget approved by the Board on June 23, 2016 required a millage rate higher than the rollback millage rate. Before the Board could adopt a final millage rate, Georgia law required three public hearings to be held to allow the public an opportunity to express their opinions on the increase. Public hearings were held Tuesday, August 9, 2016 at 11:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., and Tuesday, August 16, 2016 at 6 p.m.

Board members approved the final adoption of the budget on June 23, 2016. The Superintendent's FY 2017 Recommended Budget is directly aligned to the mission and core values of the District. It supports the three major goals of the District's Performance Scorecard – increasing academic achievement and student success; increasing operational effectiveness and efficiency; and increasing stakeholder satisfaction and support. The use of the Performance Scorecard as a roadmap positions the District to move toward ensuring that all students demonstrate strength of character, are college or career ready, and are provided the tools necessary for success in a 21st century global society.

The District continues to face many of the same challenges as districts across the state of Georgia and across the nation. Chief Financial Officer Ron Collier highlighted a summary of cost reductions over previous years that have allowed the District to balance the budget. For example, the District has gone from more than 1,800 teachers in 2009 to 1,523 teachers in 2015. Also, school closures and consolidations, and employee furloughs have been utilized to help reduce costs over the years. In addition, Mr. Collier explained the millage rate has not changed since 2009 when the District actually conducted a rollback of the millage rate from 19.7988 mills to 17.945 mills. Due to the rollback, the District has lost more than \$31 million over the years.

Highlights of the FY 2017 Superintendent's Recommended Budget are listed below.

- 3 percent salary increase for all employees
 - Will allow the District to hire and retain qualified teachers and staff, and to remain competitive with surrounding counties
- 14 additional teachers
 - Art, Music and PE
 - Will allow additional collaborative planning time for teachers
- 4 additional counselors
 - Appling, Heritage, Howard High and Northeast
- 14 PBIS Paraprofessionals for ISS support at elementary level
- Salary increase for bus drivers
 - Will assist with hiring and retaining bus drivers and allow District to be more competitive with surrounding counties
- Summer School (Grades 3, 5, 8)
- Increase in Paraprofessional work days (from 180 to 182 days)
- 30 additional minutes for all School-Based Clerk I positions (from 7.5 to 8 hours per day)
- 5 additional work days for School-Based Clerks at the elementary level (from 195 to 200 days)
- Continuation of SchoolCity Inc. (used for testing)
- District-wide reading intervention (System 44 Research Based Reading Intervention Program)
- Continuation of the Leader In Me Program (Carter and Burdell-Hunt Elementary Schools)

Next Phase of Cameras in the Classroom Includes High Schools

On Tuesday, August 16, Board members authorized the District to move forward with Progressive Communications to provide classroom cameras and audio enhancement equipment for all six high schools, SOAR Academy, the Professional Learning Center, and three additional rooms at Ballard-Hudson Middle School.

The District implemented cameras in the classroom last school year as part of a pilot program at Ballard-Hudson Middle School and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School. The initiative was expanded to all of the District's middle schools, and the equipment was installed during the summer. Classroom cameras and audio enhancement provide teachers with additional support for safety and security, as well as for professional development.

To see classroom cameras in action and to learn more about how they support schools, [click here](#). To read more, [click here](#).

Raiders United Initiative Could Benefit East Macon Community, Schools

On Tuesday, August 16, Board members authorized the Superintendent to collaborate with the United Way of Central Georgia to apply for a federal grant that would benefit the Northeast Zone. The purpose of the grant is to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children in one of Bibb's communities/school zones. The local initiative has been named Raiders United, and the deadline for submission is September 6, 2016.

The vision of the federal grant, named Promise Neighborhoods, is to ensure all children growing up in the selected neighborhoods have access to great schools and a strong system of family and community support, which will result in a successful transition to college and career. After diligent research, the United Way of Central Georgia decided this grant opportunity would focus on the Northeast Zone.

As part of the grant process, the applicant (United Way of Central Georgia) must demonstrate that it has established a commitment from one or more entities in the public or private sector to provide matching funds. An applicant must obtain matching funds or in-kind donations equal to at least 100 percent of its grant award. The District would not be putting forth any additional funding toward this grant or grant application. To clarify, an example of how this grant could be implemented with a "match" from the District could include the grant application being written to provide federal funding for an additional counselor at each of the Northeast Zone schools; this would "match" what the District is already providing with additional support at these schools that the District might not be able to fund. Another example of how this grant could benefit the Northeast Zone schools includes implementing a healthcare facility for students and community members at one or more of the schools, similar to the healthcare facility located at Ingram-Pye Elementary School.

Proximity Learning to Provide Virtual Education

On Tuesday, August 16, Board members authorized the Superintendent to enter into a contract with Proximity Learning Inc. to hire three teachers as part of a pilot program. Currently, there are still several teacher vacancies throughout the District. In an effort to fill these vacant positions with high quality candidates, the District will partner with Proximity Learning Inc. to live stream

high quality virtual K-12 educators into District classrooms with teacher vacancies. The teachers will serve as highly qualified substitute teachers until a permanent teacher can be placed in the classroom. A paraprofessional or substitute will be placed in the classroom as support for the virtual educator. To learn more, [click here](#).

District Enters into MOU with Head Start

On Tuesday, August 16, Board members authorized the Superintendent to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Macon-Bibb County Economic Opportunity Council (EOC) Head Start to continue its educational programs at the Jones and Barden facilities. To read the MOU, [click here](#).

**An earlier version of this newsletter included incorrect information about Northwoods Academy being included in this MOU.*

Solution Tree to Help Implement Professional Learning Communities

On Tuesday, August 16, Board members authorized the Superintendent to sign a contract with Solution Tree to assist with the implementation of Professional Learning Communities. Solution Tree will provide training, coaching and monitoring to the priority and focus schools for the 2016-2017 school year. To read more, [click here](#).

Board Approves Policy After Second Reading

Board members approved one policy after a second reading on Tuesday, August 16. Policies must be read twice before they may be voted on.

- Policy GBRC – Professional Personnel Work Week

To view the policy, [click here](#).

Information

Results of 2016 Spring Administration of Georgia Milestones Discussed

Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Dr. Tanzy Kilcrease and Director of Research, Evaluation, Assessment and Accountability Tony Jones presented Board members with a review of results from the spring administration of the Georgia Milestones. In the second year of its administration, students in Bibb County showed growth across most grade levels, particularly in grades 3, 5 and 8 where promotion and retention are impacted by Milestones results.

Results are reported by proficiency levels that indicate student mastery of the tested grade-level standards. The levels are Beginning Learner, Developing Learner, Proficient Learner and Distinguished Learner. The goal is for students to be proficient and distinguished. In third grade, the percent of students considered proficient and distinguished grew in the subject areas of ELA and science. The percent of proficient and distinguished students in third grade math and social studies remained steady and did not show any decrease. In fifth grade, students showed growth in all subject areas. The percent of students considered proficient and distinguished grew by at least

2 percent in each subject area and as much as 6 percent in social studies. In eighth grade, students demonstrated growth in all subject areas except math. Here, the percent of students considered proficient and distinguished in social studies also increased by 6 percent.

Students in high school demonstrated increased proficiency across the subject areas of literature, math, science and social studies. In the area of economics, the percent of students considered proficient and distinguished grew by 7 percent.

“I’m excited to see the progress taking shape. Moving forward this year, I expect our focus on scheduling at the elementary level, as well as our continued focus on reading support programs and professional learning for teachers to impact our students in a positive way,” Superintendent Dr. Curtis L. Jones Jr. said.

Implemented in 2015, the Georgia Milestones replaced both the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT) and the End of Course Tests (EOCT). These rigorous tests require more from students than the CRCT and EOCT tests they replaced. The state revised these assessments in order to better prepare students for college and career readiness and to provide a more realistic picture of academic progress.

To view the presentation from the Board meeting, [click here](#). To read the press release, [click here](#).

District to Prepare Academic Calendars; 2017 Graduation Dates Identified

The District is preparing to establish academic calendars for the next two school years. These calendars will be brought before the Board for approval in October. Based on guidance from the Superintendent and feedback from various stakeholder groups, the District will create two calendars (2017-2018 and 2018-2019) to present to the community for feedback.

Also, dates for spring 2017 graduation ceremonies were shared with Board members.

Friday, May 26, 2017

5 p.m.: Westside High School

8 p.m.: Howard High School

Saturday, May 27, 2017

9 a.m.: Rutland High School

12 p.m.: Northeast High School

3 p.m.: Central High School

6 p.m.: Southwest High School

Back-to-School Report for 2016-2017

Superintendent Dr. Curtis L. Jones Jr. provided Board members with a review of the start of the school year, as well as an update on new initiatives and programs the District is focusing on this year. To view the presentation from the meeting, [click here](#).

District Revises Construction Manager Selection Process

Executive Director of Capital Programs Jason Daniel provided Board members with a review of the revised construction manager selection process, which puts more emphasis on local and minority participation in the review process. In revising the process, the District participated in discussions with Macon-Bibb County about the government's selection process. Also, the District reviewed the selection processes from the following counties: Savannah-Chatham County, Muscogee County, Colquitt County, Decatur City, Dodge County, Board of Regents, Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission, Southern Crescent, Monroe County and Bibb County Public Works. To learn more about the revised process, [click here](#).

SIG Funds Awarded for 2016-2017 School Year

Three schools have been awarded School Improvement Grant 1003(g) funding for the 2016-2017 school year.

Westside High School and Hartley Elementary School have been awarded \$1,470,144 and \$999,271, respectively, in SIG Sustainability funds. Westside and Hartley were part of Cohort 3, with the grants ending in September 2016. This sustainability funding provides support for an additional year, and has been granted based on the success seen at these two schools during their three years of SIG funding.

Southwest High School has been awarded \$957,161 in SIG Continuation funds. This is the third year of SIG funding for Southwest, which is part of the Cohort 4 schools.

SIG provides funds to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate the greatest need for funds and the strongest commitment to use the funds to turn around lowest-achieving schools. The grant funds have assisted participating Bibb County schools to expand educational opportunities in order to maximize student engagement, meet a variety of student interests, and ensure the relevance of learning. It has also helped schools increase the percentage of high school graduates who are college and/or career ready.

Flu Vaccinations to be Administered at Schools this Fall

Board members received information about a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Macon-Bibb County Health Department and the District. The MOU allows the health department to initiate the student flu vaccination program in all Bibb County schools during the fall semester of the 2016-2017 school year.

The flu vaccinations are offered free of charge to Bibb County students. Parents must sign a consent form for a flu vaccination to be administered to a student. The health department will not vaccinate a student at school, unless they possess a signed parent consent form.

To read more information, [click here](#).

Eight Students to Receive Scholarships Through State Initiative REACH

Eight students from Appling Middle School and Ballard-Hudson Middle School will receive scholarships through a state initiative implemented by Gov. Nathan Deal. The program, Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen (REACH), provides the students with scholarship

opportunities at partnering colleges and universities across the state, as well as mentors throughout their middle and high school years. To learn more about the program, [click here](#).

The District will host an Academic Signing Day for the eight REACH students on September 20 at 9 a.m. at Hutchings College and Career Academy at the Dr. Robert J. Williams Complex, 1780 Anthony Road. Gov. Deal is expected to be in attendance for the event.

High School Summer Opportunity Program Allows Students Additional Opportunities

The District offered four Summer Opportunity Programs to allow high school students an opportunity to either repair credit, recover credit or receive initial credit. In collaboration with the GEAR UP Department, the District was able to provide 1,075 students these additional opportunities to meet their graduation goals. The final results for the Summer Opportunity Programs indicate the majority of the students successfully completed course requirements and have been awarded credits. The schools' administrators and staffs worked diligently to provide the students with a quality summer program. To read more and view the data, [click here](#).