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 May 21, 2015.

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Highlights and Recognitions

District Honors Retirees with More Than 25 Years of Service

Educators with more than 25 years of service were recognized and celebrated for their dedicated service to education in Bibb County. Those honored for their contributions to education included:

- Ronald Aaron, a teacher at Central High School. Mr. Aaron has served the District for 30 years.
- Brenda Adkison, a bus driver in transportation, has served the District for 31 years.
- Teena Baxter, a teacher at Riley Elementary, has served the District for 31 years.
- Martha Carter, a Nutrition Assistant at Ballard-Hudson Middle School, served the District for 31 years.
- Patricia Dye, a teacher at a Heritage Elementary, has been with the District for 30 years.
- Faye Finney, a Special Education Aide at Southwest High, has been with the District for 28 years.
- Gailtricia Fogg, a teacher at Rutland High, has been with the District for 30 years.
- Tina Graham, a media specialist at Burghard Elementary, has served the District for 29 years.
- Judy Hart, a paraprofessional at Porter Elementary, served the District for 25 years.
- Sherrie Jamison, a Central High teacher, has served the District for 25 years.
- Emma Mackey, a Nutrition Manager at Riley Elementary, served the District for 26 years.
- Patricia McCall, a teacher at Central High, has served the District for 30 years, and worked in education for 34 years.
- Carey McPhail, a Skyview Elementary teacher, worked in the District for 30 years.
- Catherine Morgan, a Skyview Elementary teacher, served the District for 40 years.
- Rita Nable, Rice Elementary teacher, has served the District for 29 years.
- Teresa Potts, a Taylor Elementary teacher, has served the District for 27 years, and worked in education for a total of 35 years.
- Marsha Sanders, a clerk at Howard High, served the District for 31 years.
- John Sheffield, HVAC Mechanic in the Maintenance Department, has served the District for 35 years, but has worked for a total of 45 years.
- Melissa Shepard, a Vineville Academy teacher, has served the District for 29 years, but has worked in education for a total of 34 years.
- Katrina Simmons, Rutland Middle secretary, has been with the District for 27 years.
- Dennis Staten, the Director of Custodial Services, retires after 30 years with the District.
- Kimberly Tyson, a teacher at Vineville Academy, retires after 31 years with the District and a total of 32 years in education.
- Annie Ussery, a custodian at Northeast High, has served the District for 28 years.

- Pamela Webster, a Springdale Elementary teacher, has been with the District for 27 years, and a total of 28 years in education.

Central High Student Honored as Gates Millennium Scholar

One Bibb County student was named a Gates Millennium Scholar out of 1,000 high school seniors nationwide. Central High School's Nicole Wiggins will receive up to $250,000 toward her college education. The program is funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. It was established in 1999 to provide outstanding low-income minority students with an opportunity to complete an undergraduate college education.

Central High Senior Honored as National Merit Scholarship Finalist

Central High School senior Grace Martin was named a finalist for the National Merit Scholarship. Students enter the program by taking the PSAT or the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. Each year, about 15,000 students out of 1.5 million go on to become finalists. Winners earn recognition and scholarships.

Rutland High School Student Receives GaDOE Award of Excellence

Rutland High School senior Jonathon Adams earned the Georgia Department of Education's Award of Excellence for academic and extracurricular achievement.

High School Teacher Named Patricia Behring Award Winner

Howard High School teacher Katie Barton was honored as the 2015 Patricia Behring Award winner for her outstanding work for the National History Day program. She received the award at the National History Day Competition in April. Strong applicants demonstrate an array of qualities, which include, but are not limited to: creative teaching methods, active learning projects and an innovative use of primary resources, and an overall commitment to the intellectual development of individual students, according to the National History Day website.

Westside High School Faculty and Staff Recognized with SSTAGE STAR Award

The Student Support Team Association for Georgia Educators named Westside High School as one of two schools in the state to receive their new award: The Rising STAR Award for Promising Practices. Westside Principal Dr. Julia Daniely and her staff have been invited to present a workshop session in January to share these Promising Practices.

"This is HUGE for us. Receiving this award means that we are doing the right work to achieve success for ALL students. Faculty, staff and students have worked diligently in achieving specific academic and behavioral goals as determined by the SEA, LEA, and school. We are well on our way to becoming a high-performing school," Dr. Daniely said.

SSTAGE noted that Westside High School has "demonstrated excellence" in its current processes to develop the Response to Intervention framework, process and procedures. The SSTAGE committee told Westside High School leaders that their "enthusiasm, team collaboration and dedication will be an inspiration to education leaders across the state of Georgia."

"Once again Bibb County Schools has shown that with leadership that has its faculty and staff working as a team, there is no limit to the heights they can reach in the improvement of educational opportunity for all students," Assistant Superintendent of School Improvement Sylvia Hooker said. "This year SSTAGE was looking for turnaround leaders, exemplars of Rewards and Priority schools that faced seemingly insurmountable odds, yet accelerated and excelled in meeting their academic goals. Westside's principal, Dr. Julia Daniely, demonstrates 'Leadership You Can believe In' as it is her quest to hold her district support, teachers, students and parents accountable for their school's continued success."

Miller Magnet Middle School Wins 'Green YOUR School' Competition

Miller Magnet Middle School's Green Team, led by adviser Tera Roberson, won the Middle School Division as part of the High Performance Healthy Schools in Georgia from the United States Green Building Council Chapter. The team was recognized for its new recycling program the students initiated where they collect recyclables from each classroom and deposit them into larger recycling bins. Their award will go toward building an outdoor classroom and garden.

District Parent Serves on Parent Advisory Council for Migrant Education Program

District parent Sandra Sainz was selected to serve as President for the Regional Parent Advisory Council for the Georgia Migrant Education Program. The Migrant Education Program provides supplemental education and support services to eligible migrant children and youth. It helps migrant farm workers overcome the disruption in education and other obstacles they might encounter. The Migrant program is required to gather feedback from parents on how the program has been implemented in the state. These meetings are known as Parent Advisory Councils, otherwise known as PACs. Georgia has two regions and Ms. Sainz is the President of Region 2, elected by members from across the region.

Young Georgia Authors Competition Winners Named

The Young Georgia Authors Writing Competition is an annual contest sponsored by the Georgia Department of Education. It encourages students to develop their writing skills while celebrating the successful writings of all students. Any type of writing may be submitted, and one winning entry per grade level from the District is submitted to the Georgia Department of Education. The following students were first place winners in the District.

- Katelyn Cline, kindergarten from Heritage Elementary, "The Princess"
- Lawrence Brown, first grade, Taylor Elementary, "A Plane Turning into a Submarine"
- Kaitlyn Buker, third grade, Heritage Elementary, "A Special Person Watching Over Me"
- Victoria King, fourth grade, Skyview Elementary, "The Shadow"
- Emma Crammer, fifth grade, Heard Elementary, "The Mermaid Adventure"
- Gabrielle Floyd, seventh grade, Howard Middle, "A Date with Destiny"
- Janaveyah Head, eighth grade, Miller Magnet Middle, "No Escape But Death"
- Hannah Strudwick, ninth grade, Howard High, "The Dust Man"
- Talareah Howard, tenth grade, Southwest High, "My Last"
- Jazmin Carswell, eleventh grade, Howard High, "Mommy"
- Holly Carter, twelfth grade, Hutchings College and Career Academy, "Her Reflection"

Annual Readers' Cup Winners Announced

Second and third grade students from seven elementary schools - Alexander II and Burdell-Hunt Magnet Schools and Bernd, Carter, Bruce, Skyview, and Lane Elementary Schools - competed as teams of four in a 'quiz-bowl' setting for the Readers' Cup Trophy.

Lane Elementary School Champions were Janelle Alexander, Janiya Chappell, Avaree Crockett, Charsolyn Digby, Serenity Harrell, Ty'Tianna Harris, Anthony Hughes, Lily Morgan, Merlin Ramirez Perez, Twain Saffold, Courtney Walls and Kourtney Warren.

Second places winners from Burdell-Hunt Magnet School were Rayanna Odoms, Albert Simmons, Deja Preston, Kiya Wiliams, Calvin Felds, Nevaeh Odoms and alternates Adaysha Thorpe and Dellas Frazier.

Team RoboBibb Recognized for Outstanding Year

In its second season, the District's high school level robotics team was recognized for its highlights this academic school year. During the 2014-2015 school year, the multi-high school robotic team, RoboBibb, participated in multiple events and competitions. Next, the team plans to compete in a summer competition.

RoboBibb students were recognized from each school.

- Central High School: Alexis Jackson, Caleb Lindsey, Ogechi Nwokeocha, Jordan Pitts, Elijah Rutland, JaShawn Vinson, Johnathan White, and adviser Wylene Dickey
- Howard High School: Chloe Garland, Mitchell Holcombe, Landon Johnson, Sebastian Lauterbach, Chase McCard, Thomas Perez, Erin Rodenroth, Bailey Smith, Tate Testa, Taishawn Toney, Jason Wise, Cameron Wright
- Hutchings College and Career Academy: Khabiyr Dawkins, Elise Harris, Lailah Judd, and adviser Derwin Binion
- Northeast High School: Auriel Wright and adviser Chique Taylor
- Rutland High School: Ryota Tsutsumi, Zachary Turner, and adviser April Wade
- Westside High School: Kaitlyn Benz, and advisers Mary Beth Barnes and Sidorva Johnson
- Mentors: Aaron Bonilla, Brandon Borah, Brigette Moten, Aakash Patel, Spencer Penley, Monya Rutland, Charles Rutland and Monica Smith
- Advisers: Dr. Cassandra Washington, Jason Weiss and Charles Baima

Math Team Competition Winners Recognized

Each year, students compete as individuals and as teams in the District's Math Team Competition.

The first place team at the elementary school level was Springdale Elementary School. Springdale's team included students Aidan Ayerbe, Amelia Farris, Varnika Guduri, Landon Juang, Shreya Ranabhotu, Sophia Tang and their coach, Dr. Deborah Russ.

The second place team at the elementary school level was Alexander II Magnet School. Alexander II's team included students Marley Boyd, Wilson Bridges, Haden Churchwell, Saad Munshi, A'nne Wilcox, Ryan Williams, and their coach, Cheryl Sjoquist.

Elementary individual winners were Sophia Tang, Springdale Elementary School; Landon Juang, Springdale Elementary School; and Varnika Guduri, Springdale Elementary School. Varnika Guduri and Sophia Tang both won the speed round as well. Christian Faulks and Leo Zhang from Carter Elementary School won first and second place during the speed round.

The first place team at the eighth grade level is Miller Magnet Middle School. Miller's team is represented by students Nicole Hill, Virginia McArthur, Naved Momin, Keefer Nelson, Stephanie Rawls, David Ren and their coach, Ashley Tarver.

Middle school individual winners were Sami Momin, Miller Magnet Middle School; David Ren, Miller Magnet Middle School; and William Hoang, Weaver Middle School. The speed round winners were David Ren and Naved Momin from Miller Magnet Middle School.

Actions Taken

Board Gives Approval of Tentative FY 2016 Budget, Waives Fund Policy

On Thursday, May 21, Board members voted to give tentative approval of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Superintendent's Recommended Budget. To view the most recent copy of the FY 2016 Budget, click here.

The budget recommendation is directly aligned to the mission and core values of the Bibb County School 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 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; however, it is encouraging to note that for the first time in 5 years, the District experienced an increase in enrollment in FY 2015. Even with all of the challenges facing the District, the Administration, the Cabinet, and the Board worked closely together to ensure the process remained focused on the goals of the District and primarily on the instructional needs of the students. This is evidenced by the fact that 72.8 percent of the General Fund expenditure budget consists of Instruction, Student Services, Improvement of Instruction, and Educational Media Services.

Some of the highlights of the FY2016 Superintendent's Recommended Budget are listed below.

- Includes full funding of the recommendations made in the Compensation, Classification, and Job Leveling Study and the implementation of a new Classified Salary Schedule.
- Conversion of the Hutchings College and Career Academy from a charter school to a charter program.
- Continuation of no employee furloughs.

- Increase in classified health insurance rate of $150 per month per eligible employee. This budget includes the increase for 12 months but current indications are that the increase may not go into effect until January 1, 2016.
- Full 180-day school year for students and full 190-day school year for teachers.
- Additional State QBE Revenue derived from a decrease in the Austerity Reduction and increased enrollment.
- Maintained millage rate at 17.945 for the sixth consecutive year though the District has not yet received even a preliminary tax digest.
- Continuation of state-mandated certificated step increases.
- Elimination of freeze on salaries for classified personnel.
- Elimination of transfer for capital projects.
- Completion of the multi-year phase out of District contribution to employee dental insurance.
- Addition of the District's second charter school, the Macon Charter Academy.
- Continuation of the revision of the School Staffing Allocation Formula, which provides for a minimum of one full-time Assistant Principal at every school.
- Reinstatement of the Warehouse Operations.
- Establishment of the W[I]SH: William S. Hutchings Image Printing Services print shop.
- Additional funds for the District's Technology Upgrades.
- Continued upgrades at the District's state of the art Computer Data Center at Hutchings.
- Increase in Teacher Retirement Rate from 13.15 percent to 14.27 percent.
- Continuation of the PLC (Performance Learning Center) program.

When comparing the Original FY 2015 to Recommended FY 2016 Budget, the administration anticipates a $7.9 million decrease in General Fund Balance reserves from $19.6 million to $11.7 million. The FY 2016 projected ending fund balance of $11.7 million represents 6.26 percent of the total projected expenditures and transfers. This balance does not meet the 8 percent minimum fund balance required by Board Policy DCL: Fund Balance; therefore, Board members approved a resolution to waive the 8 percent requirement for the FY 2016 Budget based upon plans to return the General Fund Balance to 8 percent or better over the next several years.

A public hearing on the budget is scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, at 6 p.m. Board members are scheduled to give final approval for the FY 2016 Superintendent's Recommended Budget during the regular session Board meeting on Thursday, June 18.

Board Authorizes Changes to 403(b) Plan and More

On Thursday, May 21, Board members approved the following items: an amendment to the District's 403(b) plan; a 457(b) adoption agreement; and PlanMember as an authorized vendor of services. To learn about these items, click here.

Board Approves Leadership Initiative for Two Elementary Schools

Board members on Thursday, May 21, approved plans to implement the Leader in Me initiative at Burdell-Hunt Magnet School and Carter Elementary School during the 2015-2016 school year. Leader in Me is a philosophy designed around Stephen Covey's "7 Habits of Highly Effective People." Mr. Covey's "7 Habits" are widely respected and used in businesses around the world.

The Leader in Me process grew from principals using and adapting these habits with children in schools.

There are many facets to implement the process. Leader in Me first trains all building staff to use a common language of the habits that become pervasive throughout the building. Students are then introduced to the habits one at a time. Classes spend time in discussion on how the habits relate to students lives. Teachers then embed the language into everyday classroom experiences and use opportunities in academic lessons to build connections.

A key component is that students take ownership of their own learning. Teachers work with students to set and monitor their own learning goals. Students keep a leadership notebook where they record their goals and data. The goals are revisited every nine weeks and students reflect on their progress. The notebooks are utilized as a resource during parent conferences. The school walls and classrooms are covered with the 7 habits, leadership quotes, and student work supporting academic goals. Leader in Me gives all students opportunities to take leadership roles in the classroom as well as throughout the school. Students apply for positions such as safety patrol, tour guides, news team, greeters, and leadership team. Teachers and students work together to identify strengths and talents students possess and how to best utilize their strengths. Students are recognized for all types of success, not just those related to academics.

The Business Education Partnership, or BEP, recognizes and supports the need for this process in Bibb County schools. The business leaders in BEP strongly believe that instilling these habits in children will help them become successful in life, which will in turn greatly benefit our community. With this understanding, the District will work in partnership with the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce and the Macon-Bibb Industrial Authority to cover the total cost of implementing the Leader in Me initiative in these two schools for 2015-2016. The total cost is about $93,000. The District, the Chamber and the Industrial Authority will each contribute $31,000 toward this effort.

To read a Memorandum of Understanding between the three organizations, click here.

Board OKs FY 2016 Five-Year Perkins IV Local Plan for CTAE

The Board voted to approve a Five-Year Perkins IV Local Plan for Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) and One-Year Funding Application for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016. All local school systems are required to submit this application annually for federal Perkins funds to support CTAE programs during the following school year. The Georgia Department of Education requires that the local Board of Education approve the application.

District to Purchase e-Reader Carts for Elementary, Middle Schools

On Thursday, May 21, Board members approved the purchase of e-Reader carts containing 28 Nook Glow Lights for each of the elementary and middle schools, the Performance Learning Center, as well as Alternate Education Department. The total amount for the additional carts and software will be about $145,197.

Two elementary schools (Taylor and Heritage) and one middle school (Bloomfield) volunteered to participate in a pilot program in fall 2014 to determine the efficacy of e-Readers in grades 3-8.

A cart containing 30 Nook Glow Lights was placed in each of the three school media centers and media specialists were instructed to use them in whatever way would most benefit their students. Through the Barnes and Noble free e-book management program, each device was pre-loaded with books and resources such as a built-in "Merriam Webster Dictionary."

The media specialists rated the Nooks as easy to use, easy to set up, and appropriate for students in grades 3-8. The media specialists believe the Nooks increase student engagement in the classroom, because students want to use the Nook and will behave better in order to be allowed to use them. The devices also support the special needs students by allowing them to adjust brightness and font size. Additionally, Nooks provide extra support for all students with easy access to dictionaries and other resource material.

For more information, click here.

Urban Development Authority's Heartbeat Incentive Program Receives Approval

On Thursday, May 21, Board members approved a request from the Macon-Bibb Urban Development Authority to continue an agreement called the Heartbeat Incentive Program that offers incentives including a tax abatement schedule for developers planning to build residential space within the urban core. To review the resolution approved by Board members, click here.

District Moves to Upgrade Cisco Communications (Phone) Services

On Thursday, May 21, Board members authorized the District to enter into a contract with Progressive Communications to provide the Cisco Unified Communications Manager upgrade to the District's phone services, including equipment, installation, licensing and engineering services. To view more information about the need for this project, click here.

District Establishes Print Shop through Agreement with Ricoh America

On Thursday, May 21, Board members approved a contractual agreement with Ricoh America. The agreement establishes the William S. Hutchings Image Printing Services program, a print shop in the District through which students in the Graphic Skills pathway will gain valuable real-world experience while providing services to the District's departments and schools. To read more about the establishment of the District print shop, click here.

Contracts Awarded for Construction Services at Southfield, Welcome Center and Bernd

On Thursday, May 21, Board members authorized various bids for construction services throughout the District. For more information about each contract, click here.

A contract with International City Builders was approved to provide construction services for the conversion of Bloomfield Middle to Southfield Elementary. The renovations to the facility will take place this summer and the renovated Southfield Elementary will open in August 2015 for students from Burghard and Rice Elementary Schools. The project will be paid for with Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (ESPLOST) funds.

A contract with Roof Management Inc. was approved to provide services for roof replacement at the Annex/Welcome Center. The project will be paid for with ESPLOST funds.

A contract with Chris R. Sheridan and Co. was approved to provide the design build services for the renovation of Bernd Elementary School. Work will begin at the school this summer. The project will be paid for with ESPLOST funds.

Information Presented

Board Receives Update on Plans to Seek New ESPLOST

On Thursday, May 21, Executive Director of Capital Program Jason Daniel updated Board members on plans for the next Educational Special Local Option Sales Tax (ESPLOST) election. During the February 26 meeting, Board members authorized the District to call for an election to continue the current ESPLOST for educational improvements. The item would appear for a vote during the November 3, 2015 election.

The current ESPLOST was approved by county voters on November 9, 2009, and will expire in December 2015. The revenue from this sales tax has provided for many needed District improvements including:

- New Heard Elementary School
- New Miller Magnet Middle School Gym
- New Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School
- New Veterans Elementary School
- Technology upgrades (new computers, data center and infrastructure)
- Safety and security improvements
- Westside High School renovations
- Maintenance / Custodial Facility
- Elam Alexander Academy @ Burke renovation
- District athletic improvements
- New buses and maintenance vehicles
- Many other district-wide upgrades

During Thursday's meeting, Board members reviewed and discussed potential ideas for the next ESPLOST. They also received preliminary feedback from the District's two community forums on the proposed ESPLOST and the online survey regarding potential projects. The survey will remain open for feedback at www.bcsdk12.net through June 5. To view the update provided to Board members, click here.

About 1,250 to Graduate During Ceremonies Taking Place May 28-30

About 1,255 students are expected to graduate when the Bibb County School District celebrates its 2015 spring commencement ceremonies May 28-30. All ceremonies will be held at the Macon Coliseum, 200 Coliseum Drive, Macon.

May 28

Central High School, 7 p.m.

May 29
Hutchings College and Career Academy, 6 p.m.
Westside High School, 8 p.m.

May 30
Howard High School, 9:30 a.m.
Southwest High School, 12:30 p.m.
Rutland High School, 2:30 p.m.
Northeast High School, 5 p.m.

Each of the graduation ceremonies will be streamed live online and via the District's public information television channel. To view the ceremonies online, visit the District's website at www.bcsdk12.net. The District's public information television station is Channel 117 with Cox Communications Digital Cable, or Channel 93.1 with a Digital Tuner Ready TV or Digital Box.

To view graduation projections by school, click here.

Two Pre-K Classrooms to be Moved for 2015-2016
The District's Pre-K Program will move two Pre-K classes to other locations for the 2015-2016 school year. On Thursday, May 21, Board members reviewed Pre-K data and heard about plans to move one Pre-K classroom from Porter Elementary to Alexander II Magnet School, which currently does not have a Pre-K classroom. In addition, one Pre-K classroom will move from Taylor Elementary to Northwoods Academy. This will leave both Porter and Taylor Elementary with one Pre-K classroom each for 2015-2016.

The District's Pre-K Program has been serving students since 1992. Currently, there are 36 Pre-K classrooms funded in the District. After analysis of trend data for the past 5 years, it was determined these two moves would maximize the funding and effectiveness of the current program. To review more data about the District's Pre-K Program and enrollment, click here.

Charter Schools Provide Status Report
Representatives from the Academy for Classical Education (ACE) and Macon Charter Academy provided Board members with a status report on their schools on Thursday, May 21.

ACE is completing its first school year. The school plans to expand in August with an expected enrollment of 1,137 students in grades K-9 for the 2015-2016 school year. To read more about ACE's first year, click here.

Macon Charter Academy plans to open this fall for 900 students in grades K-8. The school is currently under construction. For more information about Macon Charter Academy, click here.