

# Board O'Gram

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Report of Rome Board of Education — Action Compiled by Mr. Trevor Metzger, Special Education Specialist

Ms. Huffman called the meeting to order at 5:46 p.m. Mrs. Collins gave the opening prayer, and Ms. Huffman led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

At Ms. Huffman's request, Mr. Metzger called the roll and determined that the Board had a quorum.

On a Sims/Dixon motion, the Board unanimously approved the minutes for the November 10, 2015 regular board meeting, financial, and other reports.

## Public Recognitions

### Georgia Middle School Athletic Association (GMSAA) Eighth Grade Football Champions - Rome Middle School

Mrs. Beeman recognized the Rome Middle School eighth grade football team for winning the championship of the GMSAA 5A division for 2015. This team achieved this award by defeating the Sequoyah Middle School eighth grade team 14-0 in the championship game that was played on November 14, 2015, at Sprayberry High School.

The team progressed through the region schedule undefeated for the third year in a row. Over the past three years, they have won two championships and one runner-up trophy. They won the championship as sixth graders, the second place trophy as seventh graders, and the culmination of their middle school tenure with the championship this season. They were the region champion all three of their years while representing Rome City Schools in the GMSAA. The team lost only two games over the span of the three years. This eighth grade team represents what a school, a community, families, and especially a group of coaches and students can accomplish athletically when they devote their time and efforts over a period of time to be champions. Our thanks to the families, the coaches, the cheerleaders, and the student athletes - who are our champions!

Mr. Christian recognized the eighth grade football players and their parents:

Jabez Adams/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Demerta Palmer-Sewell

JoPaul Atwater/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Caroline Stallings

Brandon Bennett/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Angela Bennett

Will Bolyard/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Mike and Jennifer Bolyard

Nicholas Burge/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Marshall and Pascha Burge

JaDerricus Caldwell/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Lisa Caldwell

Drew Cromer/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Chris and Sherri Cromer

Brady Drummond/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Dean and Melony Drummond

Aidan Gaines/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Phillip and Tammy Gaines

Stephano Green/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Ninevah Hall

Odesmun Heath/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Sheary Heath

Jonathon Hernandez/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Miguel Auina and Aurora Gonzalez  
Cole Hickman/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Matt and Melissa Hickman  
Richard Hughes/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Richard Hughes  
Rayquan Jones/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of LaQuida Jones  
Tim Jones/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Tim Jones and Tangela Houston  
Alonzo Law/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Melissa McCluskey  
Trey Lawrence/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Neshanda Lawrence  
Quantavious Leslie/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Caroline Ferrell  
Trey Morgan/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Horace and Tiffany Morgan  
Jordan Neal/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Loretta Neal  
Simon Nguyen/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Raymond and Tracy Nguyen  
Jamie Perez/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Jamie Perez  
Aidan Rich/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Sammy and Jessica Rich  
RJ Roberts/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Glynda Roberts  
Alonzo Rodriguez/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Epimania Caldera  
Ethan Scales/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Yovonda Scales  
Andrew Shropshire/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Andrew Shropshire  
Ernest Smith/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Eva Law  
Malik Strickland/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Lois Burdette  
Nakyaus Waddell/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of James Adams and Deana Waddell  
Bryant Wilkinson/Rome Middle School/8<sup>th</sup> grade – son of Parke and Leslie Wilkinson

#### Boardroom Art Display

Ms. Huffman stated that the artwork in the foyer was prepared by the students and faculty at North Heights Elementary School.

#### **Superintendent's Report**

##### Attendance

Dr. Buck reported the attendance for the fourth month of school. Elm Street Elementary School had the highest percentage of student attendance at 97.46 percent. Rome Middle School had the highest secondary student attendance rate at 96.00 percent. The school with the highest percentage of staff attendance was Elm Street Elementary School at 96.83 percent.

On a Collins/Sims motion, the Board unanimously approved Dr. Buck's personnel recommendations:

Certified Employment 2015-2016: None

Support Employment 2015-2016: Ahna A. Dillard/EC  
Amanda K. Elmore/WC  
Kayla Anne Landrum/EC  
Jesse T. "Jay" Wilson, Jr./CO

## Focus on Achievement

At Dr. Buck's request, Ms. Tonya Wood presented the Focus on Student Achievement for North Heights Elementary School. Accompanying Ms. Wood from North Heights Elementary School were Dr. Washington, Ms. Ferguson, Ms. Guilford, Ms. Burger, Ms. Boutwell, and Mr. Boutwell.

Ms. Wood started her presentation with a review of historical data in reading. Students in third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grades have shown growth in their Lexile scores over the past three years (2013, 2014, and 2015). A comparison of sixth grade Lexile measures from 2013 to 2015 showed a thirty-four percent increase in proficiency scores and a sixteen percent increase in advanced scores. Another comparison of fourth grade Lexile measures during the same time period showed a thirty-six percent increase in proficiency scores. In addition to reading, Ms. Wood also presented data in math from the Global Strategy Stage (GloSS) assessment and the Individual Knowledge Assessment of Number (IKAN). Teachers are able to use the learning tools that accompany these math assessments to provide support to students who are not achieving grade-level proficiency.

North Heights Elementary School uses a reward system to celebrate student success in reading and math. In reading, students receive a "Brag Tag" for meeting grade-level goals. For example, students in kindergarten receive a "Brag Tag" each time they learn twenty-five new sight words. In math, students receive a certificate and kids meal coupon for mastering facts for addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. In addition to these rewards, students who master fact-fluency goals get their name placed inside a bubble gum machine. Teachers draw names out of the bubble gum machine at breakfast and students receive an assortment of rewards if their name is drawn.

North Heights Elementary School is seeking Science, Technology, Mathematics, and Engineering (STEM) certification. Ms. Wood stated that the skills students learn through the STEM program align with the objectives from the Rome City Schools strategic plan and provide them with an opportunity to learn and explore critical skills that are necessary in today's job market. So far this year, students have participated in two engineering days. The first day focused on science standards that were aligned to weather. Students in first grade had an opportunity to be meteorologists and present in front of a "green screen." Students in fourth grade learned how to build a thermometer. Activities that students completed on the second day focused on food science. Students in sixth grade used the knowledge they gained from a field trip to the water treatment plant to filter water and determine the best way to get it as clean as possible. In addition to the STEM days that all students participate in at North Heights Elementary School, twelve students recently participated in a regional technology fair at Georgia Highlands College. Two groups of third graders won awards in the categories of device modification and digital photography.

At the beginning of the school year, North Heights Elementary School was one of eleven schools in the state to receive an Innovation Fund Planning Grant to support their STEM initiative, Growing up Green, and address a community need for fresh produce. In 2013, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Access Research identified that the school is in a food "desert" because of the distance between North Heights Elementary School and a grocery store. Throughout the year, students will be involved in project-based learning opportunities that allow them to gain real-world marketing, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy experiences. Currently, students maintain a garden at the school, and the grant will be used to build a greenhouse.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is another initiative being implemented at North Heights Elementary School this year to improve the school climate and support improved academic outcomes for all children. North Heights Elementary School has adopted the acronym PAWS to detail the schoolwide expectations. This acronym stands for Prompt, Accept responsibility, Work hard, and Show respect.

Ms. Wood concluded her presentation with an example of how recent technology updates allow her students to use Google Hangouts to present the morning announcements into every classroom.

### United Way Campaign

Dr. Buck reported on the 2015-2016 United Way Campaign for Rome City Schools. Personnel from Rome City Schools generously gave \$17,825.06 during the 2015-2016 campaign. He stated that Rome City Schools has a four-year total of \$78,421.55 for giving to United Way.

### SPLOST IV

Mr. Byars, Chief Operations Officer, gave an update on the SPLOST IV revenues. He stated that the November 30, 2015 collections for the tax period of October 2015 were \$427,759 which was \$6,241 below projections for the month (\$434,000).

### Georgia Milestones

Dr. Dawn Williams, Director of Title I, presented an overview of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System. The new assessment focuses on college and career readiness whereas the Criterion-Reference Competency Test (CRCT) was a basic competency test. The Georgia Milestones is more rigorous, contains constructed response and extended response items for English Language Arts (ELA) and math, and has different "cut scores" than the CRCT. The new assessment also classifies student scores into four different levels of learners: Beginning, Developing, Proficient, and Distinguished. Dr. Williams stated that these differences make it impossible to compare the two assessments.

Dr. Williams provided a snapshot comparison of scores between Rome City Schools and the state average in ELA and math. The system average was above the state average in eighth grade ELA and math, American Literature, and Analytic Geometry. Test scores from this assessment have been analyzed by the District Data Team and additional resources and support have been provided to all schools. From the district level, adjustments have been made with formative assessments and grade-level test banks have been created. Additionally, testing resources have been added to the district website. At the school level, data teams are receiving training on analyzing these test results all the way down to the student level. Dr. Williams said that Title I funds are being used to purchase any new resources that are necessary to meet student needs.

### **Under Other Items, Dr. Buck announced:**

- On Thursday, December 10, 2015, the Band Christmas Concert will be held in the main gym at Rome High School at 6:30 p.m.
- The Rome High School girls' and boys' basketball teams will play the Cedartown Bulldogs on Friday, December 11, 2015, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

- The Chorus Christmas Concert and Art Showcase will be Friday, December 11, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. in the Rome High School auditorium.
- *Rome News-Tribune* Basketball Tournament will begin Tuesday, December 15, 2015. The Rome High School girls' team will play the Calhoun Lady Jackets on Wednesday, December 16, 2015, at 5:30 p.m. at Georgia Highlands College. The Rome High School boys' team will play the winner of Monday's Trion/Pepperell game on Wednesday, December 16, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. at Georgia Highlands College.
- The Community Advisory Committee will meet in the Boardroom at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 15, 2015.
- Student Winter Holidays will be December 21, 2015, through January 4, 2016. Teachers will return on Monday, January 4, 2016, for an in-service day. Classes will resume Tuesday, January 5, 2016.
- The school district will be closed December 23, 2015, through January 1, 2016.

## **New Business**

### 2015 Rome Board of Education Meetings

On a Swann/Beeman motion, the Board unanimously approved the 2016 Rome City Schools 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.

### Georgia School Boards Association Reports

Ms. Huffman invited the board members to discuss what they learned at the 2015 Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) meeting. All board members attended the GSBA meeting on December 4-5, 2015.

Dr. Dixon stated that the board members heard several inspiring speeches during the event. One of the presentations discussed "Good vs. Great" and the importance of getting things done. In another session, Dr. Adolf Brown presented about the importance of having a "Common Sense Degree." A very important point that was expressed in his presentation was understanding the importance of accepting students as they come and then adjusting teaching to their learning needs.

Mrs. Beeman also shared information from Dr. Brown's presentation. In his presentation, he shared the importance of the 4 "F's" in education: Fun, Fair, Firm, and Faith. Mrs. Beeman stated, "If you need to be reenergized, then go back to the 4 F's of education."

Dr. Buck shared that it is very encouraging to have a school board that puts children first in everything they say and do. He stated, "We were very well represented at the conference."

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.