

**SCOTT COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR MEETING, TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2008**

The Scott County School Board met in regular session on Tuesday, March 4, 2008, in the Scott County School Board Office Conference Room in Gate City, Virginia, with the following members present:

Joe D. Meade, Chairman

ABSENT: None

James Kay Jessee, Vice Chairman

Gloria E. "Beth" Blair

Lowell S. Campbell

Katherine J. McClelland

Dennis C. Templeton

OTHERS PRESENT: James B. Scott, Division Superintendent; Darryl E. Johnson, Director of Operations; John Sigmond, School Board Attorney; Loretta Q. Page, Clerk; Karen C. Linkous, Deputy Clerk; Johnny Trent, Scott County Education Association President, Salary, Fringe Benefits & School Calendar Committee Representative; Clifford Jeffery, Kingsport Times News; Gerald Miller, Duffield Mayor; Nancy Godsey, Gate City Community Member; Tracey Stallard, Hilton Elementary School Vice Principal; Greg Ervin, Gate City High School Principal; James "Bucky" Meade, Rye Cove High School Principal; Mike Lane, Twin Springs High School Principal; Valerie Rhoton, Fort Blackmore Primary School Principal; Sammy Parks, Yuma Elementary School Principal; Otis Bowen, Duffield Primary School, Kelsey Taylor, Nickelsville Elementary School Principal; Renee Dishner, Rye Cove Intermediate School Principal; Jason Smith, Weber City Elementary School Principal; Jennifer Meade, Dungannon Intermediate School; Patricia Currier and Kari White, Salary, Fringe Benefits & School Calendar Committee Members; and Pam Baldwin, Citizen of Marion, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Joe D. Meade, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. and presided. Chairman Meade thanked everyone in attendance at the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: On a motion by Mr. Templeton, seconded by Mr. Jessee, all members voting aye, the board approved the agenda with additions as follows: Item IX. E. School Closings and F. Retirement Request.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no comments from the public.

PRESENTATION OF SCHOOL AWARDS: Superintendent Scott reported that the school system received Governor's Excellence Awards according to three tiers. He also reported that a Governor's Excellence Award was presented to Scott County Public Schools as a whole and he expressed congratulations to students and staff. He explained that the Governor's Excellence Awards are the highest honors under a new incentive program for the schools. He reported that there were only 89 schools in the state receiving awards in Tier 1, with four of those schools being from Scott County and he stated that no other school division in the state had this recognition. He explained that some of the school personnel from the Tier I category (Governor's Excellence Award), Mrs. Kelsey Taylor, Nickelsville Elementary School Principal; Mrs. Renee Dishner, Rye Cove Intermediate School Principal, and Mr. Jason Smith, Weber City Elementary School Principal, traveled to Richmond recently to receive the Governor's Award for Educational Excellence for their school. The school board members presented the Governor's Excellence awards to the principals and expressed congratulations and commended their school's achievement. Awards presented by board members were as follows:

GOVERNOR'S EXCELLENCE AWARD- TIER 1

Hilton Elementary School – Tracey Stallard, Assistant Principal

GOVERNOR'S VIP EXCELLENCE AWARD – TIER 2

Fort Blackmore Primary School – Valerie Babb, Principal

Gate City High School – Greg Ervin, Principal

Twin Springs High School – Mike Lane, Principal

GOVERNOR'S VIP COMPETENCE TO EXCELLENCE AWARD – TIER 3

Duffield Primary School – Otis Bowen, Principal

Dungannon Intermediate School – Jennifer Meade, Principal

Rye Cove High School – James "Bucky" Meade, Principal

Superintendent Scott expressed thanks to everyone in the school system for their contribution to the school division's awards. School board members and Superintendent Scott expressed congratulations and best wishes to the three high school teams, Gate City High School Boys Basketball Team, Rye Cove High School Girls Basketball Team and Twin Springs High School Boys Basketball Team; since they would be playing in the state quarter final

games this Saturday. Board members were pleased with the success of the school division in both academics and athletics.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: On a motion by Mr. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Jessee, all members voting aye, the board approved the minutes of the Public Hearing and Regular Meeting held on Tuesday February 5, 2008 and the Joint Meeting, Thursday, February 21, 2008 as submitted.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS: On a motion by Mr. Templeton, seconded by Mrs. McClelland, all members voting aye, the board approved payroll and claims as follows:

School Operating Fund invoices and payroll in the amount of \$1,227,182.88 as shown by warrants #8085149-8085601 (#8083002, 8082502 and 8083998 voided).

Cafeteria Auxiliary Fund invoices and payroll \$139,675.61 as shown by warrants #1010565-1010672.

Scott County Head Start invoices and payroll \$64,692.97 as shown by warrants #6779-6871.

APPROVAL OF OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIP REQUESTS: On the recommendation of Mr. Darryl E. Johnson, Director of Operations, and on a motion by Mr. Campbell, seconded by Ms. McClelland, all members voting aye, the board approved the overnight field trip request received from Gate City High School students to perform at the Wright Patterson Air Force Museum in Cincinnati, Ohio, on May 17-20, 2008. On the recommendation of Mr. Johnson and on a motion by Mr. Jessee, seconded by Mr. Templeton, all members voting aye, the board approved the overnight field trip request received from Rye Cove Intermediate School Accelerated Reader students to Natural Tunnel on May 13-14, 2008.

PRESENTATION FROM SALARY AND FRINGE BENEFITS COMMITTEE: Mrs. Kari White, Salary, Fringe Benefits & School Calendar Committee representative, presented a list of members serving on the committee, a Regional Comparison of Salaries for 2007-08 for the school systems of Bristol, Dickenson, Lee, Norton, Russell, and Wise. She explained that the comparison shows Scott School System ranking #1 in minimum (beginning) salary \$34,700 and #4 in maximum salary \$51,820. Ms. White also presented a report showing Contract Days/Hrs Per Day/Steps/Beginning Salary/Per Day/Per Hour/Ending Salary/Per Day/Per Hour for the classifications of teaching assistant, secretary, custodian, and cafeteria employees. Superintendent Scott pointed out that there are salary items listed in the Contract Days/Hrs Per Day/Steps/Beginning Salary/Per Day/Per Hour/Ending Salary/Per Day/Per Hour report that are incorrect and stated that there is a \$3,000 one time supplement paid by the board at 30 years of service and he stated was not reflected in the regional comparison of salaries. After discussion of these items, Ms. White presented the committee's proposal for the 2008-09 school year as follows:

1. The committee recommends a 4% salary increase based on actual salary for all full-time employees.
2. The committee recommends funding the step increase for the 2008-09 school year.
3. The committee recommends continuing the funding for the \$3,000 incentive for classified and \$1,500 for non-classified employees during the 30th year of employment.
4. The committee recommends continuing (a) to maintain health insurance premiums for employees at the 2007-08 rates without a reduction in benefits, (b) to offer the sick leave bank to employees, (c) to provide duty free lunch for elementary teachers, and (d) to issue employee contracts as early as possible before the end of the 2007-08 school year.
5. The committee recommends that the School Board evaluate and equalize all support staff salary scales.
6. The committee recommends that the School Board consider adding additional money for teachers at the 25th step.

Committee members expressed thanks to the school board members and Superintendent Scott for the salary increases that employees have been receiving each year and expressed that the committee knows some school divisions do not always get a salary increase each year. Board members expressed thanks to the committee.

PRESENTATION FROM SCHOOL CALENDAR COMMITTEE AND APPROVAL OF SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR 2008-09 SCHOOL YEAR: Mr. Johnny Trent, Scott County Education Association Representative/Salary, Fringe Benefits, and School Calendar Committee Member, stated that he was pleased that the school division was honored with the Governor's Awards and that the three high schools will have teams represented in the state playoff games. He expressed pride in the school system and that he was fortunate to serve on the committee with the other representatives.

Ms. Patricia Currier, Salary, Fringe Benefits, and School Calendar Committee representative, presented the school calendar for the 2008-09 school year. Superintendent Scott and school board members were pleased with the school calendar that was presented and commended the committee for their efforts. On the recommendation of Superintendent Scott and on a motion by Mr. Templeton, seconded by Mrs. McClelland, all members voting aye, the board approved the school calendar for 2008-09 school year as follows:

JULY 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

AUGUST 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

SEPTEMBER 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1 X	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

OCTOBER 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	(17)	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

NOVEMBER 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4 X	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 X	27 X	28 X	29
30						

DECEMBER 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22 X	23 X	24 X	25 X	26 X	27
28	29 X	30 X	31 X			

AUGUST 12 PRESERVICE- SCCTC 8:30 A.M.
AUGUST 13-14 REPORT TO SCHOOLS
AUGUST 15 SCHOOL BEGINS FOR STUDENTS

SEPTEMBER 1 LABOR DAY-SCHOOLS CLOSED

OCTOBER 17 1ST NINE WEEKS ENDS

NOVEMBER 4 ELECTION DAY-SCHOOLS CLOSED

NOVEMBER 26-28 FALL BREAK

DECEMBER 19FIRST SEMESTER ENDS

DECEMBER 22WINTER
JANUARY 5 BREAK

JANUARY 5 TEACHER
WORKDAY/SCHOOLS
CLOSED

JANUARY 6 SECOND SEMESTER BEGINS

MARCH 9 THIRD NINE WEEKS ENDS
WORKDAY 3:30-6:30 P.M.

MARCH 30 SPRING BREAK
APRIL 3

APRIL 10 GOOD.FRIDAY/SCHOOLS
CLOSED

MAY 25 SECOND SEMESTER ENDS

MAY 26-27 TEACHER WORKDAYS

MAKE-UP DAYS

# DAYS	MAKE-UP DAY	# DAYS	MAKE-UP DAY
1	May 26	10	March 30
2	May 27	11	March 31
3	May 28	12	April 1
4	May 29	13	April 2
5	June 1	14	April 3
6	June 2	15	June 8
7	June 3	16	June 9
8	June 4	17	June 10
9	June 5	18	June 11

SYMBOL	EXPLANATION
X	SCHOOL CLOSED
[SEMESTER BEGINS
]	SEMESTER ENDS
()	END OF NINE WEEKS
W	TEACHER WORKDAY

MONTH	DAYS
AUGUST	11
SEPTEMBER	21
OCTOBER	23
NOVEMBER	16
DECEMBER	15
JANUARY	19
FEBRUARY	20
MARCH	20
APRIL	18
MAY	17

JANUARY 2009						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1 X	2 X	3

4	5 W	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

FEBRUARY 2009						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

MARCH 2009						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	(9)	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 X	31 X				

APRIL 2009						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1 X	2 X	3 X	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 X	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

MAY 2009						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25]	26 W	27 W	28	29	30
31						

JUNE 2009						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

APPROVAL OF RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION REQUEST: Superintendent Scott reported that the religious exemption request received was for one student and, upon review of the request it was determined that the guidelines have been met to grant approval. On the recommendation of Superintendent Scott and on a motion by Mrs. McClelland, seconded by Mr. Campbell, all members voting aye, the board approved religious exemption request number 070803: Student “A.”

NON-APPROVAL OF EMPLOYMENT FOR 2008-09 SCHOOL YEAR FOR TEACHERS AS LISTED: On the recommendation of Superintendent Scott and a motion by Mr. Campbell, seconded by Mrs. Blair, all members voting aye, the board approved the non-renewal of contracts for the 2008-09 school year for teachers as follows: Julie Bowen, Jeremy Collins, Jeremy Culbertson, Jennifer Gose, Summer Hyder, Nathan Kilgore, Tashina McCarty, Luke Osborne, and Frank Wright.

APPROVAL OF HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN RATES AND BENEFITS FOR 2008-09 SCHOOL YEAR: Superintendent Scott presented a brief history that has led to the recommendation for the health insurance fund. He explained that the fund has a cap at \$125,000 per subscriber and that the fund is responsible for \$125,000 in claims and then the reinsurance “kicks in.” He also explained that a few years ago and for a number of years, the rates were decreased or remained the same based on the balance in the health fund, when, in fact, rate increases could have been made to keep funds available for high claim years. He reported that Mr. Matt Smith, Scott County Schools Health Insurance Consultant, reviewed past and present revenue and expenditures. He stated that Mr. Smith and the Health Insurance Fund Committee determined that due to the high number of health insurance claims and in order to try to have enough revenue for payment of claims for next year, it was necessary to recommend a change in the rates and health benefits for the 2008-09 school year. Superintendent Scott explained that Mr. Smith reported that there are also a huge number of prescriptions written for the plan; however, due to the tier rate changes made to the prescription tiers for this year, no changes would be recommended for next year. He presented the current health insurance plan rates and discussed the proposed rates for the next year.

Superintendent Scott also explained that it was decided that no changes would be made to the dental plan or premiums for next year since the amount of revenue received and claims paid are very close.

Mr. Campbell, school board member serving on the health insurance fund committee, reported that Mr. Smith expressed a concern that the committee did not implement enough changes.

Superintendent Scott reported that approximately \$197,000 was transferred into the fund during January to keep the fund solvent and reported that the balance is \$260,399.75 at this time.

On the recommendation of the Self-funded School Health Insurance Fund Committee and a recommendation of Superintendent Scott and a motion by Mr. Templeton, seconded by Mr. Jessee, the board approved the health and dental insurance plan rates and benefits for the 2008-09 school year, as follows:

<u>HEALTH</u>	<u>Employee Premium</u>	<u>Employer Premium</u>
Employee Only	\$100	\$350
Employee + Children	\$165	\$350
Employee + Spouse	\$265	\$350
Family	\$365	\$390
<u>DENTAL</u> <u>(Same rates as 2007-08)</u>	<u>Employee Premium</u>	<u>Employer Premium</u>
Employee Only	\$13	\$16
Employee + 1	\$26	\$16
Employee + 2 or More	\$46	\$16

Deductible: Change current \$300 individual/\$600 family to \$400/\$800 – The committee decided that in order to keep premiums down as much as possible, a change to the deductible would decrease cost to the plan since more expenses would be absorbed by subscriber utilization of the plan benefits.

Emergency Room: Change current co-pay from \$100 to \$150 + 15% - Mr. Smith reported that there is a high utilization of the emergency room. Therefore, the committee decided that with the after hours clinics and physician's offices available for this area, the co-pay fee would increase from the current \$100 to a \$150 co-pay plus 15% of costs. This change was made with the thought that maybe this would encourage subscribers to use those facilities available unless it is a "true" emergency.

Specialists Co-pay: Change current \$20 specialist's fee to \$30 (PCP \$20 co-pay would remain the same) – Mr. Smith reported that many plans are written with higher co-pay for specialists.

2008 VSBA SOUTHWEST REGIONAL FORUM: Superintendent Scott reminded school board members of the 2008 VSBA Southwest Virginia Regional Forum to be held on April 28, 2008 at Virginia High School and asked board members to notify the Clerk if they are interested in attending.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS: Superintendent reported that personnel are out in the county checking roads early during inclement weather. He also reported that at times the roads can be clear countywide when checked and then after buses are on the road, the weather sometimes changes fast. He explained that sometimes the highway department requests that the school system not allow the buses on the roads until their department has had an opportunity to work on the roads. He informed board members that there are situations at schools that have to be dealt with when school closes early such as the Rye Cove and Twin Springs students attending the Career & Technical Center that must be transported back to their school. He also explained that the schools deal with many different parent situations during the school closings or a delayed schedule. He reported that both school closings and delayed schedules create problems for parents, especially if both parents are employed. Also, he reported that the school bus drivers deal with situations of students going home early and there not being someone at the home; therefore, the school system is responsible for that child's safety until released to the parent. Superintendent Scott stated that these things have to be kept in mind while making decisions to ensure the safety of the students.

A board member expressed that he would rather have a delayed schedule when possible in order to allow more decision time. Another member mentioned the cold temperature during the morning but also stated that he wasn't sure a delay would help with that matter since the temperature probably would not change a lot during that timeframe. Superintendent Scott reported that 5 days have been missed so far during this school year.

APPROVAL OF HEALTH BENEFIT RETIREMENT PLAN REQUEST AND FOR EMPLOYEE TO RESCIND HEALTH BENEFIT RETIREMENT PLAN WITHIN 30 DAYS:

Superintendent Scott recommended approval of a Health Benefit Retirement Plan request received 10 days after the deadline. He expressed that he felt the request was reasonable considering the employee's situation and requested that the board give consideration should there be other requests received. On the recommendation of Superintendent Scott and on a motion by Mr. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Jessee, all members voting aye, the board approved the Health Benefit Retirement Plan employee request with the agreement that the employee could rescind the request within 30 days from March 4, 2008.

CLOSED MEETING: There was no request to enter into a closed meeting.

RETIREMENT: On the recommendation of Mr. Darryl E. Johnson, Director of Operations, and on a motion by Mrs. McClelland, seconded by Mr. Templeton, all members voting aye, the board approved the health benefit plan retirement requests of Elsie Davidson, Secretary; James Meade, Principal; Tony

Gardner, Mary McCarty, Jenny Peters, and Martha Vermillion, teachers; and Michael Brickey, Secondary Supervisor/Homebound Instruction; effective at the end of the 2007-08 school year.

EMPLOYMENT: On the recommendation of Mr. Darryl E. Johnson, Director of Operations, and on a motion by Mr. Jessee, seconded by Mr. Templeton, all members voting aye, the board approved the employment of Ron Sheppard, Gate City High School Volunteer Tennis Coach; Charlie Ratliffe, Gate City High School Volunteer Baseball Coach; Scott Tipton and John Kilgore, Gate City High School Volunteer Softball Coaches.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR PRINCIPAL: Superintendent Scott informed board members that there is a need to advertise for the employment of a principal for Rye Cove High School. He would like to complete interviews and make a recommendation to the board in the spring and have that principal placed by July 1, 2008.

Board members asked that Superintendent Scott advertise publicly through the newspaper and in-house for the principal position.

Superintendent Scott stated that several of the retiree positions will not have to be filled from new employees since it is possible to fill them with current staff.

ITEMS BY BOARD MEMBERS: Mr. Jessee expressed congratulations to the schools for their academic and athletic success.

Mr. Templeton asked Superintendent Scott about ensuring the success of the educational program in the face of increasing needs and decreasing revenue.

Superintendent Scott stated that many programs are available before and after school and various funds are available to work with struggling students to help them succeed. He reported that funds are also available through grants and stated that the reading specialists program is going well. He also reported that students are more often passing their Standards of Learning tests and receiving verified credits due to the assistance of the reading specialists program in the schools. He stated that it is important that the school system convince the county and board of supervisors of the need to fill teacher positions with the best possible teachers as soon as possible. Also, he stated the importance of continuing to provide funding for classroom supplies in order that the teachers have what they need to get the job done. He further stated that he believes the school system has done well with this since many teachers have stated that they have what they need. He commended the teachers for a great job in the classrooms at the schools.

Mrs. McClelland stated that the "How To Make Great Teachers" article received from Mr. Jessee was a good one and mentioned it could be sent to the principals. Mrs. Page, Clerk, will send the article to the principals.

Mr. Meade also thought that the article Mr. Jessee shared was interesting and he expressed pride in the academic and athletic success of the schools.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to discuss, the board adjourned at 7:18 p.m. to a budget work session on the Proposed 2008-09 School Budget.

PROPOSED 2008-09 SCHOOL BUDGET WORK SESSION: Superintendent Scott and school board members reviewed a draft of the Proposed 2008-09 School Budget and proposed salary scales. After discussion it was decided that salaries would be reviewed further; therefore, all members were in agreement to adjourn at 8:25 p.m. and meet for another work session on the Proposed 2008-09 School Budget at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, March 17, 2008 in the School Board Office Conference Room.

The next regular school board meeting is to be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, in the School Board Office Conference Room.

Joe D. Meade, Chairman

Loretta Q. Page, Clerk