

AGENDA

Third Quarter Issue

“We Believe in Public Education”

May 2005

GSBA eBoard Offers Innovation and Savings

In the year 2000, GSBA’s first “client” for GSBA eBoard, its “paperless” meeting solution, was the association’s own Board of Directors. The vision for this resource has always been more far-reaching than simply a way to reduce the amount of paper shuffled at meetings. The goal is to assist in making the entire process of communicating at the governance level more efficient and meaningful.

Today, 16 local school boards in Georgia are using GSBA eBoard. In addition, the Georgia Board of Education began using it a year and a half ago. Other state departments of education, state agencies in Georgia and other school boards associations have also expressed interest in the service.

GSBA’s Assistant Executive Director Mark Willis, who oversees technology initiatives of the association, attributes the success of GSBA eBoard to several factors: higher comfort levels with technology; boards modeling the use of technology; current best practices that call on the use of technology at the governance level; and the fact that GSBA eBoard is easy to use and comes with unparalleled training and support.

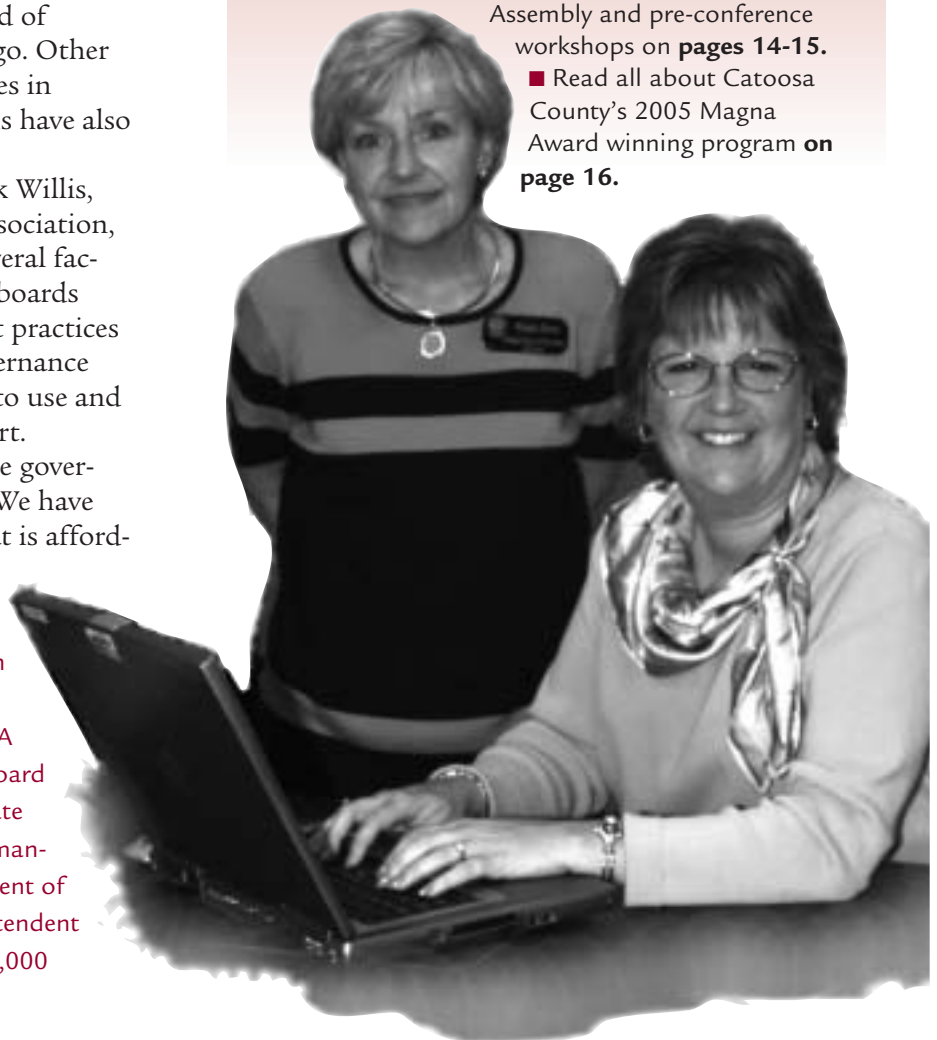
“Our mission is to ensure excellence in the governance of local school systems,” said Willis. “We have gone to great lengths to create a product that is affordable for all school systems, that can work in

Continued on page 6...

Pictured at right: Georgia Board of Education Chair Wanda Barrs, left, and State Schools Superintendent Kathy Cox say that using GSBA eBoard has improved the efficiency of state board meetings. Ms. Barrs reports that Georgia’s state board is the envy of other state boards in its management of information between the department of education and state board members. Superintendent Cox and her staff also report a savings of \$50,000 since implementing the use of GSBA eBoard.

In This Issue...

- GSBA President Sadie Dennard says board members need to be “big picture” leaders. **See page 3.**
- “Local Control: A Right and a Responsibility” is the focus of GSBA Executive Director Sis Henry’s column **on page 4.**
- One subscriber says of GSBA eBoard, “What More Could a Girl Want?” **See page 7.**
- “Over Ruled” **on page 8** is Harben & Hartley’s companion piece to the insert mailed with this issue.
- Find important news about the GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly and pre-conference workshops **on pages 14-15.**
- Read all about Catoosa County’s 2005 Magna Award winning program **on page 16.**



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President's Message



Board Members Need to Keep Vision on the Big Picture

By *Sadie Dennard*
GSBA President

The work of effective school boards requires a willingness to be knowledgeable on a myriad of topics: student achievement data and issues, school finance, intergovernmental relations, the legislature, and accountability to name a few. Boards that are focused too much on issues of today will fall short of ensuring a brighter future for tomorrow. All too often, school board members are like firefighters on the ground, battling the flames when they should be in a helicopter above the fire, able to see how extensive the blaze is, which way the wind is blowing, and where the resources need to be deployed.

School board members have an important role to play at a higher level where setting the vision and policy with clear expectations and accountability systems sets a tone for what our communities want of their school systems. How we do that means we have to invest time in becoming informed educational leaders. Local boards should spend time together, gaining knowledge and understanding of what it takes to achieve success for all. GSBA and the National School Boards Association (NSBA) offer excellent opportunities for becoming actively involved



GSBA President **Sadie Dennard** and other Georgia board members meet with U.S. Senator **Johnny Isakson** in Washington during the NSBA Federal Relations Network (FRN) Conference in January. See more photos on the following pages

and engaged in activities that can broaden your skills as an advocate and a school board member.

In January, more than 800 school board members from all over the country gathered in Washington, D.C., to urge Congressional leaders to consider significant changes to No Child Left Behind and increase federal funding for education. Twenty-five Georgians representing the state's 13 congressional districts were there to advocate for those issues and others. The event, the NSBA Federal Relations Network Conference, is one that offers participants a unique perspective on educational issues from the national level.

Our own Georgia School Boards Association offers many exceptional opportunities for grassroots advocacy. This year alone, GSBA hosted the statewide Advocacy Workshop in Dublin, six Legislative Site Visits and the GSBA/GSSA Day at the Capitol. At our conferences in June and December we offer legislative updates. In addition, GSBA frequently called on school board members to either make personal contact with legislators from their home district or to testify at the Capitol before committees about important issues and to give a school board's perspective.

I was concerned to see the attempts to circumvent local control of education

Georgia Board Members Who Participated in the NSBA Federal Relations Network Conference

- **David L. Banks** - Thomaston-Upson County
- **Julia Bernath** - Fulton County
- **Zenda J. Bowie** - Fulton County
- **Becky Carter** - Liberty County
- **Carrol Ann Coleman** - Bryan County
- **Gillis R. Dawkins** - Houston County
- **Sadie Dennard** - Atlanta City
- **Carroll E. Gay** - Jenkins County
- **Emmett D. Johnson** - Atlanta City
- **Willie E. Latimore** - Burke County
- **Deloras T. Moon** - Jones County
- **Ed Murray** - Douglas County
- **Vernon Payne** - Clarke County
- **Franklin L. Pinckney, Sr.** - Ware County
- **Louise Radloff** - Gwinnett County
- **Nancy Roche** - Forsyth County
- **Diane R. Sandifer** - Harris County
- **Laura Searcy** - Cobb County
- **Judy Sims** - Rome City
- **James T. Stone** - Jones County
- **Robert Tatum** - Troup County
- **Sylvia S. Vann** - Lee County
- **James Walker** - Muscogee County

Continued on page 5...

Executive Director's Message

Local Control: A Right and a Responsibility

By Jeannie M. (Sis) Henry

GSBA Executive Director



The idea of local control of education was born when citizens in towns and villages in America wished to keep decisions concerning their one-room schoolhouses “close to the people.” The duty of monitoring what the school children were learning and how the schoolhouse was being run fell to school boards dedicated to the education of the community’s youth.

As our nation’s one-room schoolhouses grew into multi-room mega educational centers connected via a school district, the idea of lay control of public education has remained central to our democracy.

It’s important to understand this historical perspective because local control is under siege. The Georgia constitution grants to school boards the authority for “management and control” of the state’s public school systems. Yet, in the 2005 Georgia General Assembly there were numerous legislative attempts to circumvent the legal authority of local school boards. One of the best examples was the delay in start date legislation.

In the March 9, 2005, issue of *Education Week*, William G. Howell discusses the issue of declining local control of public education and asserts that the number of school boards is dwindling and those remaining are “weaker in stature.” He also draws a correlation between the funding levels that school systems receive from local, state and federal sources and the amount of regulation schools find themselves under:

In 1920, public elementary and secondary schools relied on local governments for 83 percent of their funds, state governments for 17

percent, and the federal government for less than 1 percent. By 2000, on a national average local revenues constituted just 43 percent of total expenditures, while the state and federal governments kicked in for 50 percent and 7 percent respectively. Accompanying these funds are increasing numbers of regulations affecting what schools teach, how their contracts are written, who is hired, and when they can be fired.

How is the evolution coming about? Mr. Howell suggests in his article that there is a shift from a top down hierarchy that has been our history to one where parents and citizens are calling for a “bottom up accountability system, whereby schools attempt to attract and retain students whose parents enjoy a wide range of educational options.” He uses as examples

vouchers, intra- and inter- district public school choice, magnet schools and charter schools, all with the intention of “introducing choice and competition to an expanding marketplace.”

I maintain that there also are other factors at work. In and around education circles there is a lot of mistrust. Big dollars are at stake. Tremendous responsibilities are on the shoulders of local educational leaders, educators and state leaders who are called into question when test scores (as one example) don’t measure up to expectations. In addition you have the rare, but well-publicized, instances of unethical behavior of boards themselves. When you

have board members who don’t understand their roles, or others who misuse funds, their actions taint the institution.

Tom Walker of the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* recently* interviewed John Knapp of the Southern Institute for Business and Professional Ethics who said, “Today’s climate is unforgiving. Leaders have to be more vigilant than ever before to avoid loss of trust and confidence. More important than that, they must proactively work to build trust by establishing ethical principles. In the past we assumed we had that public trust — it was taken for granted. Now, it’s incumbent on leaders to build trust on a day-to-day basis.”

* March 27, 2005, edition of *Atlanta Journal Constitution*

...The Georgia constitution grants to school boards the authority for “management and control” of the state’s public school systems. Yet, in the 2005 Georgia General Assembly alone there were numerous legislative attempts to circumvent the legal authority of local school boards...

Executive Director's Message, Continued from page 4...

Mr. Knapp was also asked whether he thought there is more wrongdoing today, or if we simply are aware of it today because it is reported. Referring to corporate scandals, Mr. Knapp replied he thought it was the latter because “what we’ve learned from recent years is that a relative handful of executives proved they could not be trusted to behave ethically – so everybody is paying the price.” I believe the same is happening in public education.

The core of GSBA’s mission is ensuring excellence in the governance of local school systems. We are dedicated to providing information, training and guidance to new and veteran school board members on issues ranging from ethics and roles and responsibilities to school finance and policy. We offer boards numerous opportunities to become involved in the legislative process and, through Capitol Watch Online, send regular information on Georgia’s General Assembly. GSBA is only a “mouse click” or a phone call away for anyone needing information about our services. We welcome assisting any Georgia board of education in becoming a more effective governing body. Just a note: the vast majority of school boards in America model excellence and in Georgia, we make every effort to use boards and board members in our training programs to share best practices.

Mr. Knapp says, and I agree, “to be successful... requires people to trust each other and act ethically.” He continues, “And to the extent that we fail to do that, we become less free because we have to substitute laws instead of self restraint.”

It is vitally important that we are all aware of the increasing encroachment that legislation, rules and regulations have on the idea of local control of education. It affects the underlying fabric of public education. The beauty of having lay control of public education is having a community choose who it wants to govern its own school system.

While we need to be wary of increased attempts to take away decision-making powers that are best left to a local board to make on behalf of the electorate, we also need to remain vigilant in our responsibility to model excellence in boardmanship. **GSBA**

“Today’s climate is unforgiving. Leaders have to be more vigilant than ever before to avoid loss of trust and confidence. More important than that, they must proactively work to build trust by establishing ethical principles.”

— John Knapp, Southern Institute for Business and Professional Ethics



From left: **Ed Murray**, Douglas County board member; **Don Rooks**, GSBA legislative specialist; **Judy Sims**, Rome City Schools board member; **Phil Gingrey**, U.S. representative; **David Banks**, Thomaston-Upson board member; **Laura Searcy**, Cobb County board member; and **Julia Bernath**, Fulton County board member, visit during the NSBA FRN Conference.

President's Message, Continued from page 3...

during this session of the Georgia General Assembly. I know that the efforts of school board members to advocate for local control made a difference in defeating several pieces of legislation. Clarifying the need for local control is a responsibility we all bear. We must continue to know the issues and help our constituents and legislative delegations realize that we understand the needs of our children and community best at the local level. GSBA’s Capitol Watch Online is invaluable in that regard.

I believe as good stewards of our public education systems, we must model excellence in school board governance. We must convey to the leadership in our community the value of public education and the role of local board members. Hopefully, if we model good boardmanship, strong leaders in our communities will want to serve in this important public service role.

It has been my honor to serve as president of GSBA. You will not find a school board association that is run better. If you are not taking advantage of the resources and talents of GSBA, you have a new opportunity coming your way. Last but not least, I would like to encourage you to attend the GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly. This conference offers opportunities to learn more about legislative issues, advocacy, professional development and networking. For board members new to GSBA, the delegate assembly is the meeting where representatives from each board vote to adopt the legislative positions of the association and elect officers for the coming year. Go to www.gsba.com for more information about the conference and pre-conference training opportunities and to register. **GSBA**



The Forsyth County Board of Education, above, is considered “state of the art” in its implementation of GSBA eBoard, but other boards are successfully using the service with more “low tech” configurations. Pictured from left: **Ann Anderson**, superintendent’s secretary; **Jeffrey Stephens**, former board member; and **Ann Crow**, board member.

all types of environments whether the board has dedicated laptops or not, and GSBA eBoard is a service in which GSBA stakes our reputation of serving school systems in Georgia.”

Some of the key features/benefits of GSBA eBoard include:

- ease of use
- support from GSBA’s staff
- a web-based solution requiring that nothing be installed on your computer (GSBA eBoard works equally well on a PC or Apple platform.)
- a system that automatically tracks progress towards a board’s goals
- links together board meeting materials with board policies and a legal reference manual so that everything is accessible from one source
- includes a note taking feature
- can be used even if Internet access is not available during meetings through an offline version
- multiple security levels allow custom access to board agendas and/or individual agenda items.

Willis says that the new version to be unveiled in June will bring further enhancements. “We continue to improve and revise the software based on feedback from subscribers,” he said. “As we secure more subscribers, we get more feedback and we can make further improvements. Our customers drive this. We are focused on school boards and helping them succeed.”



“We use GSBA eBoard, ePolicy and eLaw together. This has really made this superintendent’s life easier.”


– Valdosta City Schools Superintendent Sam Allen

What do subscribers have to say about using GSBA eBoard and other eSolutions products?

Dawson County Superintendent Michael Lupo said, “We’ve completed two work sessions and two regular board meetings using GSBA eBoard. It has been excellent. Two things that I really value is the structure the submittal process requires of the staff, including me. It helps us get everything done through the proper channels and in a timely fashion. The other part I value so much is the ability to link our goals to the meeting agenda.”

Bailey Mitchell, Forsyth County executive director for technology, said, “Our electronic – and essentially paperless – approach helps us keep board members better informed, allows for greater public comment in a variety of forms, and enables us to respond to citizens’ requests faster. In the end, GSBA eBoard meetings save money, time and trees.”

Valdosta City Superintendent Sam Allen said, “With GSBA eBoard I can work on my board agenda at the office, home or on the road. No more having a courier hand deliver board agendas or faxing large amounts of materials to my board and staff. I am able to use ePolicy to research policies from other systems to assist us in drafting our own policies. We also use eLaw. It’s like having the expertise of Harben and Hartley on my computer for a small subscription fee. And, if I ever get stuck, GSBA gives immediate assistance; you don’t have to thumb through massive manuals for assistance. WHAT A DEAL!”

For more information on GSBA eBoard or GSBA eSolutions, GSBA’s family of online tools to improve the governance of education, go to www.gsba.com. 



Patsy Gant of Rockdale County Says of GSBA eBoard:

What More Could A Girl Ask For?

By Patsy Gant

Rockdale County Schools Webmaster

On March 1, 2005, my life, as the creator of local board agendas, took a drastic turn. We had recently purchased GSBA's eSolutions package and this was the day that Mark Willis was

coming to teach us to prepare board agendas with eBoard. All I can say is, wow! We should have jumped on the eBoard wagon years ago.

As the person appointed to pull all the pieces together to prepare an agenda document, I was a little nervous as I entered our training session. After all, I had been following the same steps for agenda preparation for 15 years now. When I assumed this task, the agenda was actually being prepared using memory typewriters. I was the first person in Rockdale County to begin to develop the agenda using electronic tools, such as MSWord®. After hours spent preparing multiple electronic files, there were still hours to go to get the final document printed, collated and bound. And then a staff member drove all over the county hand delivering large envelopes to each board member. So, I walked into the training session a little worried. I wasn't even sure if I would like this new method because, after all, I had developed the old method and changing to GSBA eBoard would be something akin to abandoning a child.

I worried needlessly. The four of us, Superintendent Ruel Parker, Assistant Superintendent for Management Services Bonnie Knight, Secretary to the Superintendent Donna Johnson, and I moved swiftly and effortlessly through our training under Mark's direction.

Just three short days later, it was time for me to log on and begin a whole new way of agenda preparation. Again, needless worry. Staff members submitted items and I compiled the agenda. The superintendent reviewed the agenda, added his own items, and then gave me the go-ahead to publish.

As I worked during that first month, my few questions were readily answered either by referring to the manual or making a quick call to Jeanne Frazier or Sandy Vanags on the GSBA staff. These ladies were always available and always had an answer. But, most important, they were always patient and never once did I feel as if I were taking up too much of their time.

In GSBA eBoard we have found an intuitive agenda preparation tool that has amazingly streamlined our processes.

Our very first attempt at producing a paperless agenda went off without a hitch. But the icing on the cake was the immediate feedback from employees and parents visiting the website. There was no learning curve. Under the excellent training session provided by GSBA and Mark Willis, we were able to jump in feet first and immediately create a very "friendly" document for our website.

In GSBA eBoard we have found an intuitive agenda preparation tool that has amazingly streamlined our processes. Bonnie Knight produces the majority of board approval items and she found that she was able to submit items quickly and the program was so intuitive that she was able to walk through the process without even having to refer to the manual. Adding or removing approval items at the last minute is much easier than our older methods of printing and re-numbering

items. Just after one month of using the tool, Bonnie is raving to everyone about the ease of use, increased efficiency as well as productivity, and, then ultimately, the cost savings to the school system.

We once printed 50 copies of every agenda. GSBA eBoard has helped us realize quite a savings in print costs as well as employee time in generating the agenda with its supporting materials. Our board members will be receiving their laptops and training prior to the May meetings, at which time we will become completely paperless.

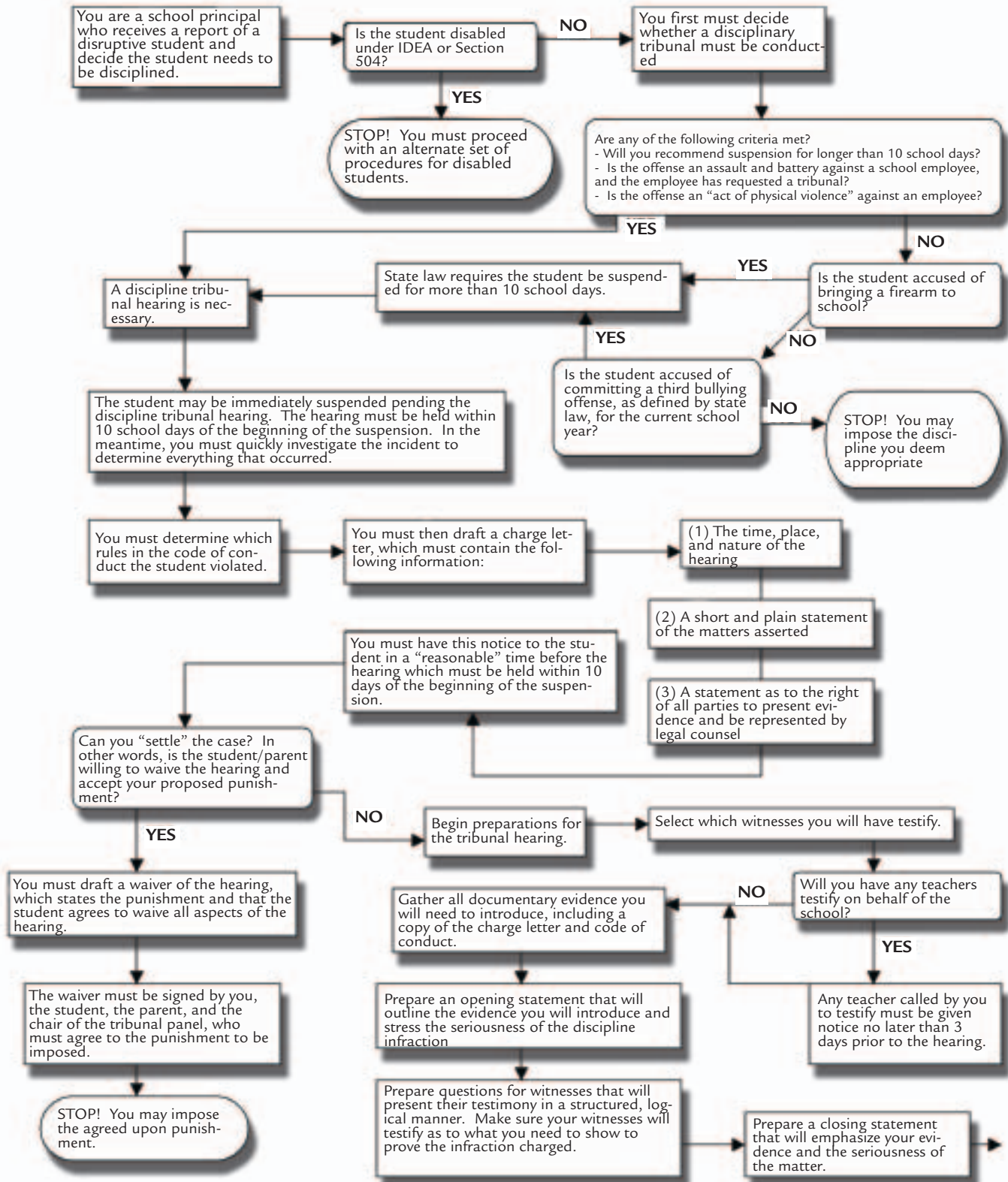
As we have now worked through two months of agenda preparation, I have developed a short list of "I wish I could's." The customer-service-oriented staff at GSBA just said, "Pass it on. We'll see if we can get our tech staff to find a way to grant your wishes."

What more could a girl ask for? 

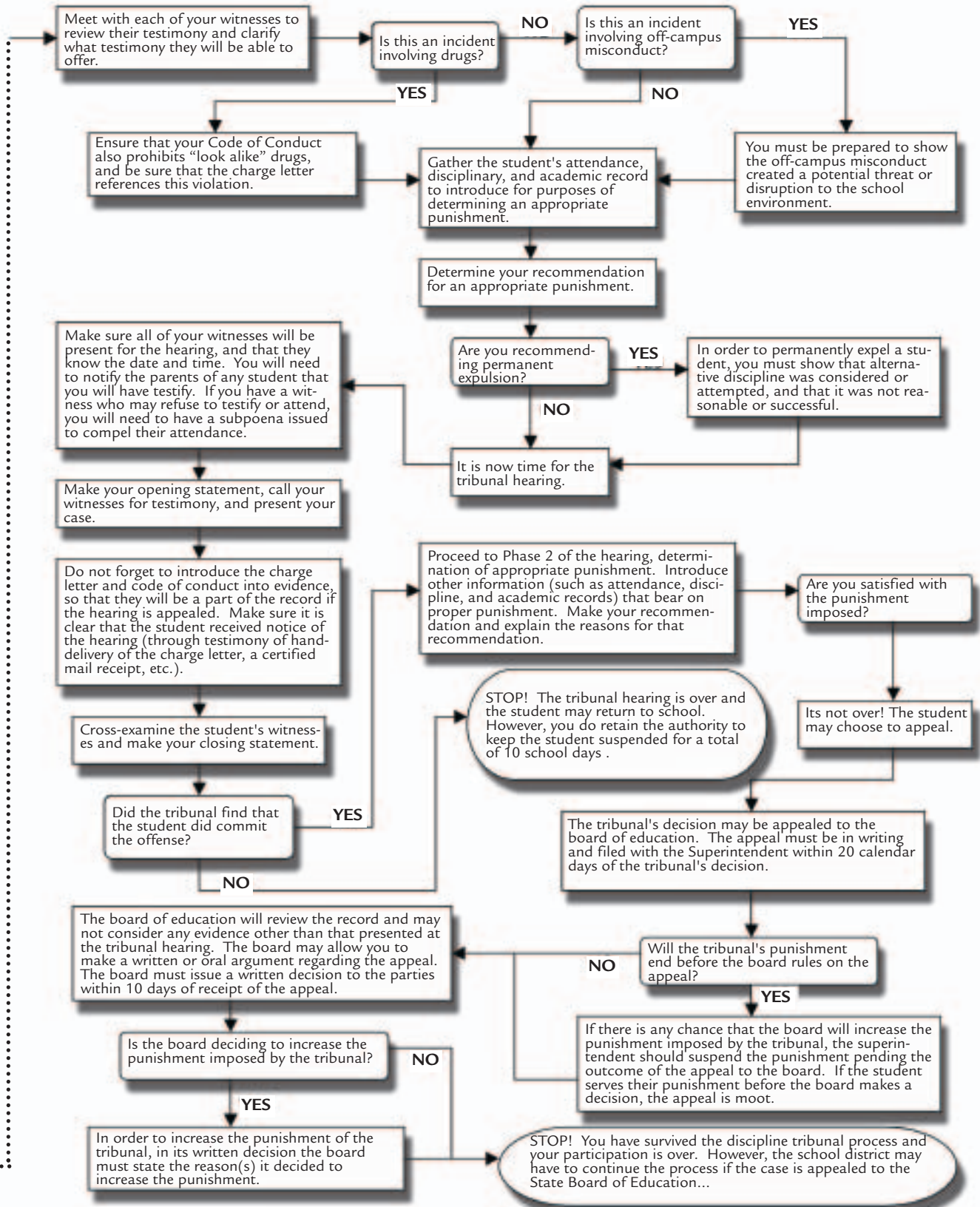
Over Ruled: The Burden of Law on America's Public Schools!

Adapted by Harben and Hartley

You may have noticed a poster enclosed with this issue of Agenda. The Common Good Institute developed it, along with other materials, to bring to focus their mission of "restoring common sense to American law." As the cover of the poster states, "Today's schools are buried under law. In some places, it can take up to 105 school days to sus-



pend a disruptive student. With numbers like that, who has time to teach?" The poster details how many steps it takes administrators in New York to suspend a disruptive student. So that Georgia educational leaders could better relate to this issue, Harben and Hartley adapted this idea and developed the chart below that details the steps in a Georgia Discipline Tribunal.



Georgia School Board Members Were Out in Force This Year Advocating for Children



From left: Richmond County Superintendent **Dr. Charles Larke**, Georgia Senator **Charles Walker** and Burke County Board Member **Willie Latimore** meet during one of GSBA's Legislative Site Visits in Atlanta.



At a reception during the NSBA FRN Conference, Georgians networked with legislators and NSBA officers. From left: Forsyth County Board Member **Nancy Roche**, NSBA Past President **George McShan**, U.S. Senator **Johnny Isakson**, GSBA District 12 Director **Ted Stone** and GSBA President **Sadie Dennard**.



Senator **John Bullock** and Savannah Chatham County Board Member **Lori Brady** meet during a GSBA Legislative Site Visit in Atlanta.



The Districts 4 & 5 GSBA Legislative Site Visit in Atlanta was attended by: (first row) GSBA District 4 Director **Zepora Roberts**, GSBA President **Sadie Dennard**, Atlanta City Staff Member **Janice Monk Reardon**, Atlanta City Board Member **Emmett Johnson**, Atlanta City Board Member **Kathleen B. Pattillo**, Rockdale County Board Member **Wales Barksdale**, DeKalb County Board Member **Chip Franzoni**, GSBA District 5 Director **Julia Bernath**, (second row) Gwinnett County Board Member **Louise Radloff**, Fulton County Board Member **Liz Hausmann**, Fulton County Board Member **Katie Reeves**, Fulton County Staff Member **Vickie Perdue Scott**, Fulton County Board Member **Linda Schultz**, Rockdale County Board Member **Travis Collins**, Rockdale County Superintendent **Ruel Parker**, (third row) Seminole County Board Member **Billy Williams**, Decatur City Staff Member **Sherri Breunig**, Decatur City Superintendent **Dr. Phyllis Edwards** and Decatur City Board Member **Marc Wisniewski**.

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Association News

■ The Georgia Power Foundation awarded to GSBA a \$25,000 grant to assist a few smaller districts with implementing GSBA eSolutions, the association's family of online tools to improve the governance of public education. The tools include: GSBA eBoard, GSBA ePolicy and GSBA eLaw. Additional information will be sent out in coming months.

■ On Monday, March 14, 2005, 300 school board members and superintendents from Georgia's public school systems met in Atlanta for the third annual GSBA/GSSA Day at the Capitol. The day also marked the signing of a proclamation honoring school board members for their service. March 14-18 was School Board Member Appreciation Week in Georgia. (See photo at right.)

Attendees heard a legislative update in the morning session and then had the opportunity to meet with legislators. At the luncheon, attendees heard from House Education Committee Chairman **Brooks Coleman**, State Superintendent of Schools **Kathy Cox** and **Governor Sonny Perdue**.



Above: Governor Sonny Perdue, center, proclaimed March 14-18, 2005, School Board Member Appreciation Week in Georgia during the GSBA/GSSA Day at the Capitol.

■ GSBA President **Sadie Dennard** has been named to the National School Boards Association Nominating Committee.

■ During the past two legislative sessions, GSBA has organized "Legislative Site Visits" for each GSBA District. According to GSBA Legislative Specialist **Don Rooks**, "District Legislative Site Visits have become an invaluable part of GSBA's

Continued on page 13...

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advocacy efforts during the legislative session. Their value includes addressing 'hot' issues; relating their impact locally to legislators; and doing it face-to-face at the Capitol – the best way to communicate. Some of our issues that were better addressed because of District Legislative Site Visits were school calendar and delaying class size reduction, both of which were favorably decided from GSBA's point of view."


GSBA's 14 districts were grouped geographically to coordinate the meetings in Atlanta. GSBA provided a legislative overview to begin each Site Visit. About 141 board members attended the six meetings.

■ Congratulations to the following groups from Georgia for being chosen to present at the National School Boards Association Annual Conference held in April in California. Presenters from Georgia included:

- CDC, Division of Adolescent and School Health - *Improving the Health of Youth: Choosing Appropriate Health Education Curricula*
- Atlanta Independent School District - *BuildSmart: Capital Improvement Program*
- Camden County Schools - *Data Driven Decisions: Leave No Child to Chance*

- Camden County Schools - *Implementation of a School System Professional Enhancement Conference*
- Douglas County School System - *Shadowing for Success: Business and School System Collaboration Opens Career Doors for Students Through Shadow Day*
- Floyd County Schools - *A Timely Matter: Using the Modified Year Round Calendar and Intersessions to Improve Student Achievement and Meet the Demands of No Child Left Behind*
- Floyd County Schools - *Raising Standards on a Shoestring Budget: Innovative, Cost-Effective Means of Promoting Higher Student Achievement*
- Fulton County Schools - *Districtwide Accreditation: The Strategic Journey*
- Fulton County Schools - *The Balanced Scorecard and its Role in Strategic Planning*
- Marietta City Schools - *Preserving Democracy (and AYP) with Marietta Reads!*

■ GSBA gratefully acknowledges **Blue Bird Bus Corporation and National Bus Sales** for sponsoring the Georgia Delegation Breakfast at the National School Boards Association Annual Conference in April in California.

■ **Sam Harben** of Harben and Hartley Law Firm, has been named secretary of the National Council of School Attorneys (COSA). 

GSBA "Standards for Local Boards of Education"

Boards that have already achieved and verified compliance with the Standards, and have distinguished themselves in additional key areas of organizational structure, are designated as School Boards of Distinction. The following boards have submitted the appropriate materials to be designated as School Boards of Distinction.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Camden County (2002) | Grady County (2002) |
| Fulton County (2002) | Thomas County (2004) |
| Houston County (2004) | Dawson County (2004) |
| Carrollton City (2003) | Habersham County (2004) |
| Gainesville City (2003) | Tattnall County (2002) |
| Jefferson City (2002) | Floyd County (2003) |
| Cherokee County (2003) | Harris County (2002) |
| Gordon County (2004) | Turner County (2004) |
| Pulaski County (2004) | Ware County (2003) |
| Coweta County (2004) | |

The following boards of education have verified their compliance with GSBA's "Standards for Local Boards of Education."

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Appling County | Heard County |
| Atlanta City | Houston County |
| Baldwin County | Jackson County |
| Banks County | Jefferson City |
| Barrow County | Jefferson County |
| Ben Hill County | Jones County |
| Berrien County | Laurens County |
| Bibb County | Lee County |
| Bleckley County | Lincoln County |
| Bremen City | Long County |
| Bulloch County | Lowndes County |
| Camden County | Lumpkin County |
| Candler County | Macon County |
| Cartersville City | Madison County |
| Catoosa County | Marion County |
| Cherokee County | McDuffie County |
| Chickamauga City | Meriwether County |
| Clarke County | Morgan County |
| Clay County | Muscogee County |
| Cobb County | Newton County |
| Coffee County | Paulding County |
| Colquitt County | Pulaski County |
| Commerce City | Randolph County |
| Coweta County | Richmond County |
| Dalton City | Rockdale County |
| Dawson County | Screven County |
| Decatur City | Stephens County |
| DeKalb County | Taliaferro County |
| Dougherty County | Tattnall County |
| Elbert County | Taylor County |
| Emanuel County | Terrell County |
| Fayette County | Thomas County |
| Floyd County | Thomaston-Upson County |
| Fulton County | Troup County |
| Franklin County | Towns County |
| Gainesville City | Twiggs County |
| Glascok County | Turner County |
| Gordon County | Vidalia City |
| Grady County | Washington County |
| Greene County | Ware County |
| Griffin-Spalding County | Wayne County |
| Gwinnett County | White County |
| Habersham County | Whitfield County |
| Harris County | Wilcox County |
| Hart County | Worth County |

Georgia School Boards Association Summer Conference & Delegate Assembly

June 24-25, 2005
Hyatt Regency, Savannah, Georgia



Pre-Conference Training Opportunities

- New Board Member Orientation - June 22-23
- GSBA Communications Workshop - June 23
- GSBA Policy Workshop - June 23

These are the last training opportunities offered by GSBA for this fiscal year. Workshops will include the following topics:

New Board Member Orientation:

- Foundations in School Law
- Foundations in Leadership
- Foundations in School Finance
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Foundations in Improving Student Achievement

Communications Workshop:

- Secrets of Effective Board/Superintendent Relationships
- Effective Meetings
- The SACS Accreditation Process: Where Do Your Schools and Your Board Fit In?
- Roundtable Sessions -
 - Open Records Q&A
 - GSBA School Finance Communication Kit
 - Study Circles/Engaging the Community
 - Roberts Rules of Order Q&A

Policy Workshop:

- Policy Issues Arising from Federal Law and Regulations - (Reauthorized IDEA; Hiring Highly Qualified Teachers)
- Policy Issues Arising from the General Assembly Session - (Virtual Schools and Charter Schools; Using Mentor Teachers and Redefining Nationally Certified Teachers)
- Policy Issues that Never Go Away - (When an Employee is Arrested; The Increase in Teacher Termination Hearings; The Role of SACS and Responding to a Complaint; School Finance)
- Building or Remodeling a Policy Manual

This Year's Speakers Include...



Governor
Sonny Perdue



Dr. James H.
Johnson, Jr.,
from the
University of
North Carolina
at Chapel Hill



State School
Superintendent
Kathy Cox



Georgia
Representative
Brooks
Coleman, Jr.,
Ph.D.

This year's GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly offers school board members, superintendents and other educational leaders one of the summer's best opportunities to hear from the state's leaders on issues such as high school reform, education legislation, and the current thinking on demographics and how this issue impacts decisions being made in boardrooms today. Friday's special interest clinics, will focus on the five roles of school boards:

- establishing, communicating and implementing a shared community vision for the district that is tied to accountability
- recruiting, hiring and evaluating the superintendent
- developing and adopting policies that clearly communicate how the school district will operate
- adopting and continually monitoring an annual budget that will provide the financial basis to implement the educational program goals
- advocating for children and maintaining ongoing, two-way communication with staff, students, and members of the community

Schedule of Activities*

Wednesday, June 22, 2005

Noon	Registration for New Board Member Orientation (NBMO)
1:00 p.m.	NBMO Begins
5:30 p.m.	NBMO Concludes First Day

Thursday, June 23, 2005

8:00 a.m.	NBMO Resumes
8:00 a.m.	Registration for Policy and Communications Workshop
9:00 a.m.	Policy and Communication Workshops Begin
Noon	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Workshops Resume
4:30 p.m.	Policy and Communications Workshops Conclude
5:00 p.m.	NBMO Concludes

Friday, June 24, 2005**

7:15 a.m.	Conference Registration Begins
8:15 a.m.	First General Session Speaker: Governor Sonny Perdue Performance by the Governor's Honor Choral Group Speaker: Dr. James H. Johnson, Jr.
10:30 a.m.	Second General Session - Panel Discussion: Reforming Georgia's High Schools - Panelists: State School Superintendent Kathy Cox, Gwinnett County Superintendent Alvin Wilbanks, and President of the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education Steve Dolinger Moderator: GSBA President Sadie Dennard
Noon	Luncheon
1:15 p.m.	Third General Session - Panel Discussion: Overview of the 2005 Legislative Session - Panelists: GSSA Research Director Jeffrey Williams, GSBA General Counsel Phil Hartley and Fulton County School Board Member Zenda Bowie Moderator: GSBA Legislative Specialist Don Rooks
2:45 p.m.	Delegate Assembly
2:45 p.m.	Special Interest Clinics for those not attending the Delegate Assembly

Saturday, June 25, 2005

8:30 a.m.	New President's Breakfast/General Session Remarks from GSBA's New President Speaker: Representative Brooks Coleman
10:30 a.m.	Adjourn

Pre-Registration Fee: \$235

Registration after June 17 or at the Door: \$260

*Times and program elements are subject to change.

Reminder...
register today
online at
www.gsba.com!

Call TODAY to make your reservations at one of the overflow hotels! See below. To register for the conference or a workshop, go to www.gsba.com.

Registration Information

The easiest way to register for the GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly or one of the pre-conference training workshops is to go to GSBA's website (www.gsba.com) and click on the link to the summer conference page. From there, click on the registration button and you're halfway done! Online registration is the quickest way to make sure you are signed up for one of Georgia's best conferences for educational leaders.

The deadline for conference registration is June 17, 2005. Cancellations must be in writing and postmarked no later than June 17, 2005. A \$35 handling fee will be charged for all cancellations, no exceptions. School systems may send only one check for all registration fees. Send check and copy of registration form to: GSBA Registrar; 5120 Sugarloaf Parkway; Lawrenceville, Georgia 30043. Purchase orders are accepted. **Late Fee Policy:** There is a \$25 fee for registrations received (per registrant not per workshop or event) after June 17 and for all registrations received on site.

Questions concerning registration may be directed to: Karen Hodges at 1-800-226-1856, 770-962-2985, or khodges@gsba.com. Register online at www.gsba.com

Hotel Information

You should begin making your reservations as soon as possible. When calling one of the hotels, be sure to mention that you are attending the GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly.

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Note: If you drive to the Hyatt from any other hotel, you will be subject to a parking fee at the Hyatt.

Catoosa County Schools: A 2005 Magna Award Winner

Partnership 2000

Program: Partnership 2000

Program Objective: To engage the community in working together to promote student success.

School Board Chairman: Don Dycus

School Board Members: Melvin Edwards, Jane Everett, Billy Joe McDaniel, Garland Nance

Superintendent: Beth Kellerhals



An elementary school's Leadership Team at the Leadership Academy— part of Catoosa's Partnership 2000.

A school sponsorship program that partners the business community with the Catoosa County Public Schools is paying off in big dividends for students. Partnership 2000, a joint effort between the Catoosa County Board of Education and the Catoosa Chamber of Commerce, began more than a decade ago to help students overcome barriers to success.

Today, the partnership encompasses student and teacher enrichment, community awareness and support, the promotion of volunteerism and community service, and leadership development and active involvement in governance.

All these things work toward one primary goal: helping students achieve their potential. "As our superintendent always reminds us, it takes a community to educate and raise a child," says Don Dycus, school board chairman. "Aligning local businesses with individual schools gives ownership and relationship rather than distance and distrust. This is a win-win for our community—especially the children."

The program also has expanded beyond the chamber, involving several community groups and organizations. Board member Jane Everett belongs to the Ringgold Kiwanis Club, which has formed a partnership with Ringgold Elementary School. "We feel a strong sense of ownership about the school and pride in its achievements," she says.

Businesses give their employees time off from work to mentor students. The project began with targeting at-risk students in the high schools. Now, some of those same students mentor elementary school children.

That model gives younger children "a big brother or sister and gives the high school students the responsibility of being role models," says Beth Kellerhals, Catoosa superintendent.

In 2000, the school board created a full-time coordinator position for the program, which is paid for by the district and its partners. Since then, the program has more than doubled in size, with 180 partners from the business community participating in the effort along with social service agencies, local organizations, and churches. Nearly 300 adults and teens serve as mentors.

In the 2003-04 school year, partners contributed 21,000 volunteer hours and \$1.5 million. Activities they helped to fund include a leadership academy for students and events to reward students and parents for their improvements.

"Business and community members are more informed about our success and challenges and better equipped to encourage funding initiatives," says Kellerhals. "At the same time, parents and school system employees are inclined to use the services and goods of those faithful partners."

For more information, the district's website is www.catoosa.k12.ga.us. For more information about the Magna Awards Program, go to the National School Boards Association website: www.nsba.org.



Participants of the Annual Mentor/Mentee Picnic enjoy a day of fellowship.

State News

■ According to the May 5, 2005, issue of *Education Week* detailing the state of technology in the nation's schools, these are Georgia's statistics where this issue is concerned:

Internet Use:

- Students per Internet-connected computer: 4.1
- Students per Internet-connected computer in classrooms: 6.9
- Percent of instructional computers with high-speed Internet access: 89.5

To compare those statistics with national num-

bers, the following statistics were given for the U.S.:

- Students per Internet-connected computer: 4.1
- Students per Internet-connected computer in classrooms: 8.0
- Percent of instructional computers with high-speed Internet access: 87.5

■ **Dr. Brenda Shuman-Riley**, a 9-12 grade English teacher at Dublin High School in Dublin was named Georgia's Teacher of the Year.

■ The following eight schools were nominated as part of the 2004-2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools program. The Georgia

Department of Education nominates Georgia public schools based on test data and other important indicators. Schools are nominated in one of three federally established groups.

Schools in the top 10 percent of the state with at least 40 percent disadvantaged students:

- Rigdon Road Elementary, Muscogee County Schools
- Browns Mill Elementary, DeKalb County Schools

Schools with at least 40 percent disadvantaged students that have dramatically improved student achievement to high levels:

- Patterson Elementary, Pierce County Schools

- Matt Wilson Elementary, Tift County Schools
- Coosa Middle School, Floyd County Schools
- Bert Rumble School, Houston County Schools

Schools in the top percent of the state with fewer than 40 percent disadvantaged students:

- Walker Traditional Elementary, Richmond County Schools
- Sequoyah High School, Cherokee County Schools

■ Education GO Get It is a public-private partnership striving to:

- Enable and motivate every Georgia student to

Continued on page 18...



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reach his/her full potential.

- Increase Georgia's economic prosperity.

Georgia faces one of the greatest challenges in its history. Education GO Get It will unite all Georgians to meet that challenge. By the numbers:

- 40%: The percentage decrease in Georgia in the size of the 12th grade class compared to the 9th grade class four years earlier.

- \$17.6 billion: The direct economic impact of high school non-completion in Georgia.

- 84: The number of counties in Georgia where more than 30% of the adult population does not have a high school diploma.

Services and Programs
1. GO Kits - GO Kits contain college preparation presentations, notes, and activities for students from preschool through high school and their parents, mentors, and other "believers." GO offers these tools to community-based organizations for their use with the students and families they serve.
2. GO Centers - GO Centers are a grassroots


network of college and career access centers located in schools and communities across the state of Georgia.

Through GO Centers, students and adults will receive the message that high school graduation and college education maximize life's choices and are desirable, attainable, and affordable.

3. GForce - G-Force members are college students or community mentors who serve as the core volunteer force for GO – in GO Centers, in the school system, and in existing outreach efforts in community organizations.

4. GO Networks - A statewide network of organizations is commit-

ted to GO's vision and goals. These organizations are from all sectors of society: Education (K-12, Higher Education, etc.), Corporate, Government, Community-based, and Faith-based. The purpose of the network is to provide a local and statewide effort to improve high school graduation rates, increase college enrollment and increase the economic prosperity for citizens of Georgia.
5. GO Multimedia Campaign - The GO multimedia component is a multifaceted statewide awareness campaign.

For more information go to www.georgiago.org, which was the source for this article. 

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Publication Policy

Agenda is published quarterly by the Georgia School Boards Association as a service to its member school boards. GSBA is a nonprofit organization for the state's 180 local school boards, which have joined together voluntarily to improve public education through cooperative effort. The articles published in each issue represent the ideas or beliefs of the writers and are not necessarily the views of GSBA, except where specifically stated.

You are invited to submit articles of 1,500 to 2,000 words dealing with topics of current interest to school board members. The editor reserves the right to determine whether the article is appropriate for the readership. Send manuscripts to Laura Reilly, *Agenda* Editor, Georgia School Boards Association, 5120 Sugarloaf Parkway, Lawrenceville, GA 30043.

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The mission of the Georgia School Boards Association is to ensure excellence in the governance of local school systems by providing leadership, advocacy and services, and by representing the collective resolve of Georgia's 180 boards of education.

Upcoming Meetings/Events

June 2005

- 22 GSBA Workshop: New Board Member Orientation, Savannah, GA
- 23 GSBA Workshop: New Board Member Orientation - continues, Savannah, GA
- 23 GSBA Workshop: Communications Workshop, Savannah, GA
- 23 GSBA Workshop: Policy Workshop, Savannah, GA
- 24-25 GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly, Savannah, GA
- 24 GSBA District Meetings - Districts 1, 2, 4 & 5 - 5 p.m. or following Delegate Assembly, Savannah, GA

July 2005

- 24-27 NSBA Southern Region Conference, Charleston, South Carolina

November 2005

- 30 GSBA Workshop: New Board Member Orientation, Atlanta

December 2005


- 1 GSBA Workshop: New Board Member Orientation-continues, Atlanta
- 1 GSBA Workshop: E. Freeman Leverett School Law Seminar, Atlanta
- 2-3 GSBA/GSSA Annual Conference, Atlanta

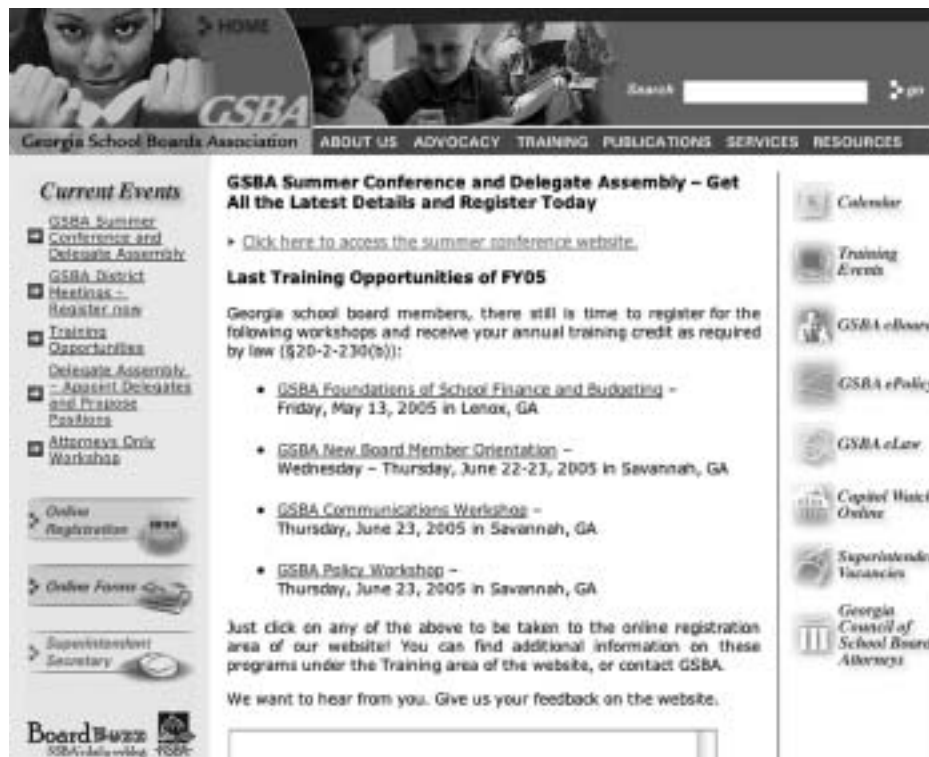
Update on GSBA

eSolutions

— There are 101 school systems subscribing to eLaw.
— There are 80 school systems subscribing to GSBA ePolicy.
— Currently, the following boards are using GSBA eBoard:

- Georgia Department of Education/Board of Education
- GSBA Board of Directors
- GSBA Worker's Compensation/Risk Management Fund BOT
- Banks County BOE
- Camden County BOE
- Catoosa County BOE
- Dawson County BOE
- DeKalb County BOE
- Floyd County BOE
- Forsyth County BOE
- Gordon County BOE
- Harris County BOE
- Jackson County BOE
- Jefferson City BOE
- Jefferson County BOE
- Lowndes County BOE
- Paulding County BOE
- Rockdale County BOE
- Valdosta City BOE

Go to www.gsba.com for additional information. 



The screenshot shows the GSBA website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, ABOUT US, ADVOCACY, TRAINING, PUBLICATIONS, SERVICES, and RESOURCES. Below this, there are several sections: 'Current Events' with links to 'GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly', 'GSBA District Meetings - Register Now', 'Training Opportunities', 'Delegate Assembly - Assist Delegates and Protect Positions', and 'Attorneys Only Workshop'. The main content area features a large banner for the 'GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly - Get All the Latest Details and Register Today' with a link to access the conference website. Below this, there is a section for 'Last Training Opportunities of FY05' listing three workshops: 'GSBA Foundations of School Finance and Budgeting' (Friday, May 13, 2005 in Lenox, GA), 'GSBA New Board Member Orientation' (Wednesday - Thursday, June 22-23, 2005 in Savannah, GA), and 'GSBA Communications Workshop' (Thursday, June 23, 2005 in Savannah, GA). A sidebar on the right contains links to 'Calendar', 'Training Events', 'GSBA eBoard', 'GSBA ePolicy', 'GSBA eLaw', 'Capitol Watch Online', 'Superintendent Vacancies', and 'Georgia Council of School Board Attorneys'. At the bottom, there is a 'Board Buzz' logo and a feedback form.

We hope you have had the opportunity to look at GSBA's new website and have found it to be even more user friendly and inviting than in the past. Go to www.gsba.com and check it out!