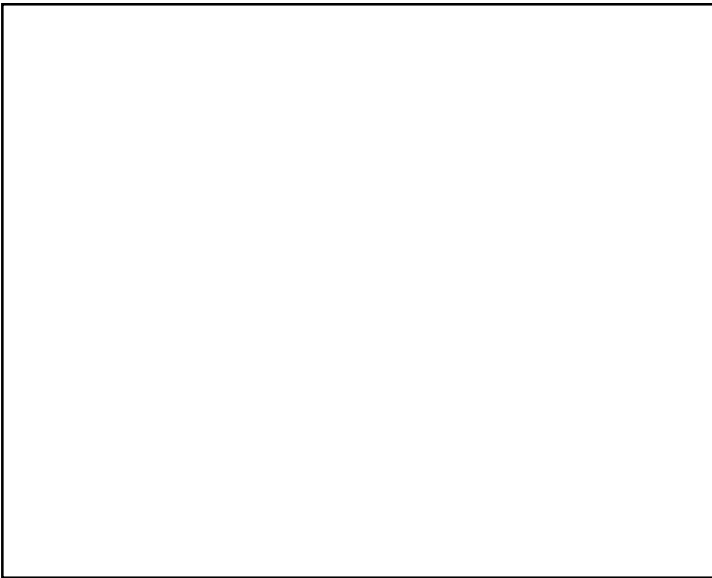


AGENDA

We Believe In Public Education



The Focus is on Implementing the A+ Education Reform Act



School board members enjoyed the opportunity to talk with the Governor after his speech at the GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly.

From the pre-conference training opportunities on June 21-22 to the Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly on June 23-24, GSBA was the vehicle by which 500 school board members and other educational leaders became better informed on the many facets of the A+ Education Reform Act of 2000. The pre-conference training opportunities included the GSBA New Board Member Orientation, Communications Workshop and Policy Workshop. All of the activities were held at the Hyatt Regency in Savannah.

The conference was highlighted by keynote addresses by Governor Roy Barnes, University System of Georgia Chancellor Stephen Portch, State School Superintendent Linda Schrenko and U.S. Representative Johnny Isakson. Conference participants also had the opportunity to hear from and ask questions of a panel of experts on the

A+ Education Reform Act of 2000.

“This conference was comprehensive and very memorable,” said GSBA Executive Vice President Gary Ashley. “We heard from the major players on the A+ Education Reform Act and resolved some issues and learned more about what is to come.”

The conference opened with a special announcement of GSBA’s 50th anniversary, which begins with the fiscal year 2001 and a welcome by Diane Cantor, president of the Savannah-Chatham County Board of Education.

Dr. Stephen Portch addressed conference attendees at the first general session. With an often amusing demeanor, Dr. Portch

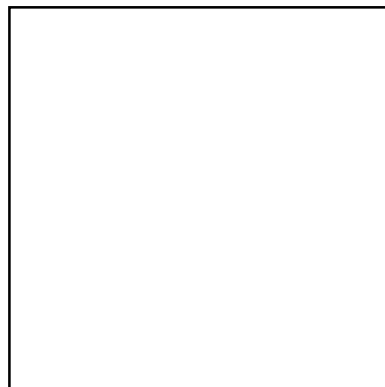
brought home several serious issues. On the crisis in school leadership he said that three to five years is not long enough to affect meaningful change in a school system. He called for boards to find ways to nurture and sustain leadership. “Hug your superintendent.

Don’t choke him or her.”

Chancellor Portch also decried the fact that there are too many teachers teaching out of field. “It’s not a blame issue,” he said. “Are we going to have the fortitude to set a date to fix this?”

During the second general session on

Continued on page 6



University System of Georgia Chancellor Stephen Portch is greeted by school board members whom he entertained and enlightened.

The Newsletter of
the Georgia School
Boards Association.

May-July 2000

Volume 5

Number 5

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Wachovia Bank Full Page Ad

From the Executive Vice President...

GSBA Conference: A Foundation for Building Bridges

By Gary Ashley

Gary Ashley

GSBA Executive Vice President

The A+ Education Reform Act of 2000 has created a great challenge for educators at all levels. The changes we will go through as a result of this legislation will push and pull school boards, superintendents, school administrators and teachers. At the GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly, it was comforting to hear from our state leaders and one U.S. Representative not only acknowledgment of this, but offers of real assistance in the year ahead.

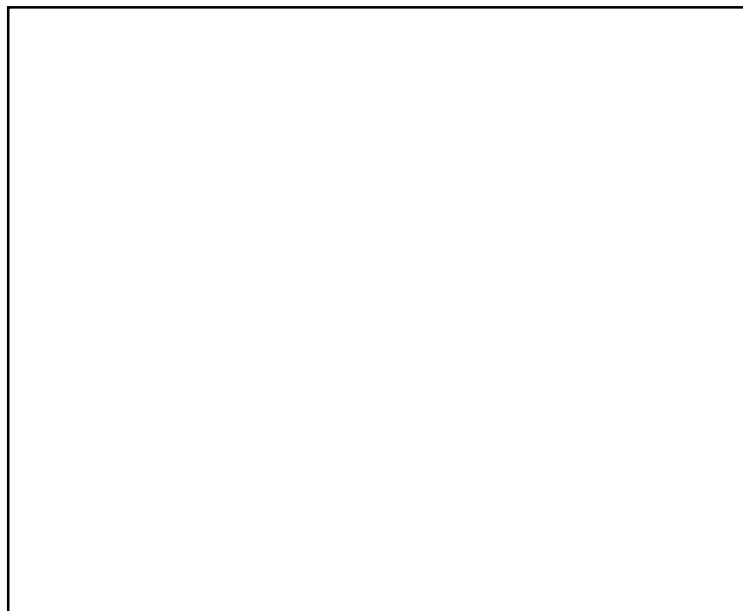
Chancellor Portch of the University System of Georgia offered his guarantee that students graduating from the education fields will be competent. If they aren't, the University System will retrain and reeducate them at their own expense. I call that putting your money where your mouth is.

Governor Barnes said that he realized that the legislation has created great needs in several areas, among them the need for more classrooms. He pledged to work with the General Assembly in raising the amount of capital outlay for all school systems, not only the metro area mega-systems. He also said that the state will share responsibility for finding qualified teachers by creating a certification system that is "competency-based, not an impediment to teaching."

The Governor was also conciliatory. Placing blame on anyone in trying to improve education was never his intention he said. His intent simply was to make the case that by most objective measures, Georgia has to improve its public education system. "I may have made mistakes, but they're mistakes of the heart, not the head," he said.

State School Superintendent Linda Schrenko appeared before conference attendees with a pledge to implement the law while continuing to lobby to fix the parts that she and her department feels need work. She pledged that her department would work with GSBA on getting school systems and school boards the training they need to get local school councils up and running, efficiently and effectively.

The person whom I consider to be one of our foremost advocates for public education, Johnny Isakson, appeared before our group with news from the national scene. As a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, he brought the good news that Congress will increase IDEA funding and in five years the bill should be fully funded. He also said that some



GSBA Executive Vice President Gary Ashley introduced U.S. Representative Johnny Isakson (right) as Georgia's foremost advocate for public education.

of the discipline constraints of IDEA have been stripped away from the bill so that violent children, regardless of their educational level, can be effectively disciplined. And lastly, Mr. Isakson said that Congress will use a good portion of surplus funds on unfunded mandates in education legislation.

All of this is tremendous news. We needed to hear from all of these leaders, and their messages hit many targets. There seemed to be an air of comradeship in Savannah. Friends and foes, figuratively speaking, seemed to get in step with each other because, as Mr. Isakson said, "Come August and September, a million plus public education students will arrive at the doors of our schools. They won't know what HB1187 is, but they will expect and deserve a quality education." ❧



"The changes we will go through as a result of this legislation will push and pull school boards, superintendents, school administrators and teachers... it was comforting to hear... not only acknowledgment of this, but offers of real assistance in the year ahead."

- Gary Ashley

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GSBA's New President Pledges to Open New Lines of Communication

Tricia Smith, a board member from Camden County, became GSBA's president at the installation ceremony at the Summer Conference in Savannah in June. Mrs. Smith has served as GSBA president elect, vice president and as a district director. She also is a member of the Governmental Operations Committee. After her swearing in, Mrs. Smith said, "I will take this responsibility seriously and pledge to do everything I can to make GSBA stronger and better so that our governance structure can be stronger and better."

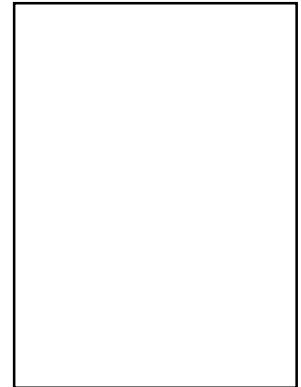
To Mrs. Smith, an important component of leadership is effective communication. To that end, she has developed an area on GSBA's website where board members can let her know their thoughts and share ideas. In her message on the site, she says: "Quality leadership at the governance level of public education has never been more critical or challenging. Parents, students, administrators, teachers—indeed the entire communities we serve—are more dependent on the leadership provided by local boards of education than ever before. Your Association is dedicated to providing the tools, resources and leadership that local school board members need to more effectively perform the demanding duties required to effectively govern local

school systems. I, along with my fellow officers, board of directors, the Executive Vice President and staff at GSBA, want to pledge our support and leadership to the principles of improving public education for every boy and girl in Georgia."


Mrs. Smith has developed a list of goals for the year as well. They are:

1. Enhance our training program to develop to its fullest the character, commitment, and knowledge base of every school board member.
2. Refine our services to create positive, informative, and timely communications and training opportunities on the A+ Education Reform Act of 2000.
3. Continue to develop effective communication with each local school board particularly regarding GSBA's mission and legislative responsibilities.
4. Emphasize GSBA's main purpose of striving for quality education for the boys and girls of Georgia.

Tricia Smith is serving her 14th year on the Camden County School Board. She was chairperson of the board for ten years. ☘





Tricia Smith, GSBA President for 2000-2001, addresses conferees.



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AUTHORS:
SAM S. HARBEN, JR.
PHILLIP L. HARTLEY

PUBLISHED BY:
THE GEORGIA SCHOOL
BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Scheduled for publication later in 2000, this guide will provide a comprehensive resource for school board members, administrators, educators and attorneys to the law which govern our public schools in Georgia. The book will be organized by topics with a question and answer format which will explain in lay terms the essential laws which every school board member and school administrator must know in order to govern our public schools. There also will be available a yearly update service to keep your guide up-to-date.

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Continued from page one...

Friday, panelist John Culbreath (Dougherty County superintendent), Sam Harben (GSBA general counsel), Herb Garrett (GSSA executive director), Tom Upchurch (GPEE executive director), Don Rooks (GSBA legislative specialist) and Gary Ashley (GSBA executive vice president), presented their views on various aspects of the A+ Education Reform Act of 2000. The session was moderated by Wendy Martin, who fielded questions from the audience. Among the concerns addressed were the need for training for local school councils, greater requirements for teacher evaluations, different pay scales for different teaching fields, school health programs, providing feedback to the Implementation Task Force, new middle school rules, and school choice considerations.

With a press core in tow, Governor Roy Barnes addressed conferees in the afternoon. He said that everything in the A+ Education Reform Bill has been talked about over the years as a “recipe for success.” Quality instruction, good leadership and higher standards are the central issues addressed in the bill said the Governor. He acknowledged the hardships that implementation will place on boards. He also commended those boards who have made the hard decisions in the spirit of improving public education.

In closing, the Governor asked for patience and understanding with the implementation. He said that the underlying reason for the bill hasn’t changed -- to improve education in Georgia. He pledged his support in assisting in fixing the parts of the bill that need fine tuning.

The next day, conference participants heard from State School Superintendent Linda Schrenko and U.S. Representative Johnny Isakson. Ms. Schrenko said that she and her department are working to do their part in implementing the A+ Education Reform Act of 2000, but that they will continue to identify areas that need to be fixed. She said that training on key elements of the bill, such as local school councils, will be essential and that the Georgia Department of Education would be working with GSBA on a training program.

Closing out the conference was Johnny Isakson. The theme of his remarks was that change is good and that school boards and school system administrators need to empower principals and teachers to improve schools and find ways to bring “the

GSBA Past President Y.N. Myers, Jr., confers with State School Superintendent Linda Schrenko after her address at the Summer Conference.

missing person” - the parent - back into the schools. He said that lowering the teacher to student ratio in the classroom is essential to improving public education. Congressman Isakson brought good news from the federal level. He predicted that IDEA will be fully funded in about five years and he said that discipline constraints under IDEA have been taken away.

Report on the Delegate Assembly

On Friday, June 23, 2000, at the GSBA Delegate Assembly in Savannah, 112 delegates met to vote on the legislative positions that will carry GSBA forward during the 2000-2001 General Assembly. Delegates approved all of the changes brought before the body by the GSBA Governmental Operations Committee (GOC). The GOC met in May to deliberate on amending and adding to the Association’s existing legislative positions document. Most of the changes made to the positions were deletions due to new legislation making them obsolete, or amendments to clarify language.

At the Delegate Assembly, there was one new position and one amendment offered from delegates that were approved during the assembly.

The new position called for the legislature to set and enforce clear standards for achievement and accountability while offering school boards some flexibility in implementation. It was offered by Cobb County and reads:

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**Facility Group/Passantino and
Bavier** - 2233 Lake Park Dr., Ste. 450,
Smyrna, GA 30080

*Continued in far right
column on page nine...*

Association News

● A number of Georgia school board members and educators took part in NSBA's Annual Conference in Orlando in April as presenters and/or moderators. They are:

- Andy Baumgartner, Georgia Teacher of the Year, Richmond County Schools, Presenter – “Preparing Students for Success as Learners and Citizens”
- Zenda Bowie, GSBA President Elect, Fulton County Board Member, Presenter — “Start With Communication, End With Results”
- Brad Bryant, GSBA Vice President, DeKalb County Board Member, Moderator— “What Matters Most: Accountability for Student Achievement”
- Stephen Dolinger, Fulton County Superintendent, Moderator— “Start With Communication, End With Results”
- Virginia Edwards, Savannah-Chatham County Superintendent— “Reading and Writing Programs for Success”
- Dale Freeman, Polk County Principal, Panelist— “Successful Initiatives for Family and Community Involvement”

- Paula Gault, Forsyth County Associate Superintendent, Presenter— “Standard Bearer School Districts- Using Systems Assessment to Organize for Results:
- Maryellen Hittel, Bartow County Board Chairman, Moderator— New Superintendent and New Board-Making Hay of the Honeymoon”
- Ron Jackson, Fulton County Board Member, Presenter— “Start With Communication, End With Results”
- Clifford Johnson, Georgia State University Executive Director, Presenter— “Changing the World, One Child at a Time”
- Mary Keating, Ph.D., Camden County Principal, Panelist— “Aligning Curriculum to Improve Student Achievement”
- Allene Magill, Forsyth County Superintendent, Presenter— “Standard Bearer School Districts- Using Systems Assessment to Organize for Results”
- Terri Matthews, Thomas County Schools Health Services Lead Nurse, Presenter— “School Nurse at No Cost to the System”
- Michael Mattingly, Houston County Schools Executive Director for Elementary Operations, Panelist— “Elementary -Level Literacy Initiatives that Work”

Buckley - Half Page ad

- John Munich, Sutherland, Asbil & Brennan Partner, Presenter— “Maintaining School Diversity in a Post-Unitary World”
- Y.N. Myers, Jr., GSBA Past President, Richmond County Board Member, Moderator— “Preparing Students for Success as Learners and Citizens”
- Dotti Overstreet, Savannah-Chatham County Executive Director, Panelist— “Reading and Writing Programs For Success”
- Robin Pennock, Bartow County Assistant Superintendent, Presenter— “New Superintendent and New Board – Making Hay of the Honeymoon”
- Katie Reeves, Fulton County Board Member, Presenter— “Start With Communicating, End With Results”
- Sherry Sagemuller, Forsyth County Board Member, Presenter— “Standard Bearer School Districts – Using Systems Assessment to Organize for Results”
- Tricia Smith, GSBA President, Camden County Board Member, Moderator— “Aligning Curriculum to Improve Student Achievement”
- David Stephens, Bartow County Vice Chair, Presenter— “New Superintendent and New Board – Making Hay of the Honeymoon”
- Karen Stroud, Douglas County Schools Director of Community Relations, Presenter— “Bringing Business Back to School”
- Terry Thornton, Bartow County Schools Board Member, Presenter— New Superintendent and New Board – Making Hay of the Honeymoon”
- Harold Wingfield, Ph.D. – Polk County Board Chair, Panelist— “Successful Initiatives for Family and Community Involvement”

- Three Georgia school systems participated in NSBA’s 2000 Education Excellence Fair. They are:
 - Carrollton City Schools – “Cutting Through Bureaucracy to Serve Children and Families”
 - Colquitt County Schools – “ STAR Program – Student Transition and Recovery Program”
 - Houston County Schools – “Working with New Principals – A Personnel Plan that Works”

● GSBA was called upon by the news media to serve as a credible source of information regarding the governance of public education during and after the passage of HB1187. Two examples of GSBA’s coverage in the press was a March 1, 2000, article in *The Wall Street Journal’s Southeast Journal* on whether Georgia should end tenure rights for future public school teachers. Gary Ashley, GSBA executive

vice president, “squared off” with Drew Albritten of the Georgia Association of Educators, taking the affirmative position. In another example, in a *Gwinnett Daily Post* column, Bill Shipp called GSBA a winner in the education legislation arena. He said that GSBA (and some other groups) “successfully lobbied Barnes and the Legislature to make the reform law more palatable to their constituents. Their nonconfrontational tactics will increase their influence with the General Assembly and Barnes.”

● GSBA General Counsel Sam Harben has been selected to serve on the NSBA Council of School Board Attorneys.

● GSBA President Tricia Smith has been appointed to the Nominating Committee of the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education.

● GSBA’s 1999 Progress Report was awarded a National School Public Relations Association

Continued on page ten...

Associate Members, continued...

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P.O. Box 740074, Atlanta, GA 30374

Forest Technologies, Inc.
765 Industrial Dr., Cary, IL 60013

Frazier Service Co., Inc.
3286 Buckeye Rd., Atlanta, GA 30341

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Princeton Review

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Reid & Morgan - 2849 Paces Ferry Rd.,

Suite 640, Atlanta, GA 30339

Scoreboard Sales & Service - 4255

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Siemens Building Technologies

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Software Systems Unlimited, Inc.

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Agenda - page 10

GSBA PLANNER

August 2000

- 6-10 NSBA Exec. Directors' Summer Institute
San Juan, Puerto Rico
- 9 Ga. Partnership for Excellence in Education
(GPEE)Board of Directors/Full Partnership
Meeting/Executive Committee Meeting
Atlanta
- 10 State Board Meeting
Twin Towers, Atlanta
- 17-20 The Joint NSBA/NASBE Retreat
(President's Retreat)
Hershey, Pennsylvania
- 23 GSBA Board of Directors Computer
Training
GSBA Offices, Lawrenceville
- 24 GSBA Board of Directors Meeting
GSBA Offices, Lawrenceville

Gary Ashley presents a \$50,000 dividend check to Risk Management Fund Chairman Vernon Payne who accepts it on behalf of the members of the Fund. The check was presented at a special ceremony at the Summer Conference.

Continued from page six...

"Educational legislation should set and enforce clear, unambiguous standards for achievement and accountability while allowing local districts flexibility in implementing these state standards."

The amendment offered at the Delegate Assembly strengthened GSBA's position on impact statements for new legislation. This also was offered by Cobb County and reads:

"Any legislator or legislative committee proposing a bill in the General Assembly should be required to attach a fiscal note detailing how consideration has been given to the bill's possible budgetary impact on local school districts and other governmental entities."

The final version of GSBA's legislative positions document for 2000-2001 is available on GSBA's website.

Another important job of the delegates is to elect GSBA's officers for the coming year. The following were elected by the delegates to represent the Association next year:

Zenda Bowie, Fulton County – President Elect

Brad Bryant, Dekalb County - Vice President

Deloras Moon, Jones County – Treasurer

Under GSBA's bylaws, the president elect automatically becomes president the following year. Tricia Smith, Camden County, who served as president elect this past year was installed as GSBA president for the year 2000-2001.

Y.N. Myers, Jr., becomes GSBA's past president. ❄

Continued from page nine...

(NSPRA) Award of Excellence. Out of 1,241 entries in its publications and electronic media contest, NSPRA awarded only 129 Awards of Excellence- the highest award in the contest.

● In response to confusion over legislation passed by the General Assembly (HB605 and SB177), GSBA offered workshops around the state in April and June to assist boards with the new laws. The HB605 Policy Workshop was offered twice in April at two locations in the state. For a minimal charge of \$40, participants learned about age appropriate codes of conduct, filing clear and consistent required reports, teacher authority to remove disruptive students from class, progressive discipline, other state laws that apply, and potentially sticky compliance requirements.

In June, GSBA partnered with the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia to offer six workshops in June on the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (SB177). The workshops were free and informed participants on what local boards of education and counties must do to get a tax digest approved under the new rules. ❄

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Publication Policy

Agenda is published bimonthly 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.

Gary Ashley, Executive Editor
Gil Parrish, Managing Editor
Laura Reilly, APR, Editor



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FAX: 770 962-5392
FAX: 770 962-1546

GSBA's Web Site: www.gsba.com

Superintendent Searches: The Status of GSBA's Process

GSBA is assisting in superintendent searches for the following school systems. If you are interested in any of these positions, call GSBA for information on application procedures.

Searches Underway

<i>School System</i>	<i>Application Deadline</i>
Chattahoochee County	Deadline has passed.
Franklin County	Deadline has passed.
Jenkins County	Deadline has passed.
Lanier County	September 1, 2000
Laurens County	August 11, 2000
Polk School District	July 21, 2000
Worth County	Deadline has passed.

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