

AGENDA

⚡ We Believe In Public Education ⚡



“New Basics for a New Millennium” Focus of Board Retreat

On May 7-8, 1999, the GSBA Board of Directors met in a special retreat to examine, “The New Basics for the New Millennium.” The Mescon Group, a strategic planning consulting firm, was retained to facilitate discussions and present material to the members of the board of directors for their consideration.

The purpose of this year’s discussion was to begin a process that addresses the changes nonprofits must face and open discussion for refinements to the existing GSBA Long-Range Strategic Plan.

In his opening comments, Dr. Michael H. Mescon of the Mescon Group, stated, “For nonprofits, business as usual will put them out of business. The line between profit and non-profit has disappeared.” He added that to succeed in the new millennium, nonprofits must determine what kind of business they are in, identify the customer, develop an ambitious and effective sales and marketing strategy, and make structural changes. After opening comments by Dr. Mescon, staff from The Mescon Group reviewed the areas of change and the “new basics” to consider in the new millennium.

Areas of Change:

- Environment
- Community/Customers
- Technology
- People

“New Basics”:

- Execute strategy faster.
- Make structure flexible.
- Build relationships first.
- If you want commitment...commit!
- Don’t wait on education...educate!
- Master change.
- Align the organization to the customer.

- Personalize every customer relationship.
- Blend technology and people and add value.

“The retreat provided us an excellent way to regroup and examine our strategic plan and where we need to go with it,” said Gary Ashley, GSBA executive vice president. “The Mescon Group did an excellent job of taking the group from analyzing changes over the last 10 years, how public schools have changed over the last five years and what changes we expect over the next five in the areas of change the Mescon Group defined.”



The GSBA Board of Directors meets to examine new strategic directions for the Association.

The group discussed what will be the new basics for Georgia’s public schools and then for GSBA. Retreat participants cited strategic plans, flexibility in delivery systems, relationship building, alternative sources of funding, accountability, change masters, use of technology, maximizing the effectiveness of personnel and school size as upcoming issues of prime importance.

For GSBA, retreat participants identified a number of new basics, including making training more customer oriented, meeting the needs of the customer (board members), spending more resources on communicating, focusing on continuous improvement, building stronger relationships with other educational groups and with legislators, and recognizing that board member values and behaviors have changed.

“Over the summer months, the GSBA staff and the board of directors will work on revising the Association’s Long-Range Strategic Plan in light of the information we gathered at the retreat,” said Gary Ashley. “We greatly appreciate the efforts of our Board of Directors in setting us in this direction and we look forward to unveiling a revised strategic plan sometime in the coming fiscal year.” ⚡

The Newsletter of
the Georgia School
Boards Association.

May/June 1999

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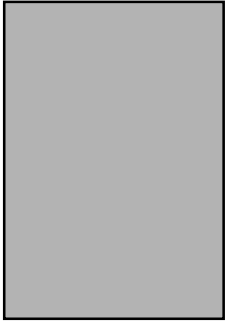
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From the Executive Vice President...

We Can Laugh and Learn at the Same Time

By Gary Ashley



Gary Ashley
GSBA Executive Vice President



“...despite their humor and entertaining quality, their message was clear. Accountability starts with each of us individually. We must stop trying to pass the buck. Let's take an objective look at what's right about education and what needs improvement. Then let's lead by example.”

—Gary Ashley

I always enjoy GSBA's conferences and training activities because the Association really shines in these moments. Without a doubt, GSBA puts on the finest of educational conferences and our training programs are second to none.

Aside from the great pride I feel about the Association and its staff during these occasions, I also manage to learn something from the speakers we engage. The presenters at our recent Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly, and at the training workshops offered the days prior to it, were some of the best we've had. With humor and poignancy they managed to bring home the message that accountability as an educational issue is here to stay and we had better pay close attention to it.

Having been with GSBA for over 20 years, I've heard a lot of speakers. We've always selected appropriate and skilled presenters. But I also remember a time when humor was the mainstay of an effective keynote address. Today, we've learned that content is the key. Of course, content peppered with humor always makes the message more palatable. This was the case with this year's speakers. Let me give an overview of what we learned about accountability from our keynoters. I'll apologize up front for not being as “entertaining” on the written page as they were on the stage, but again, it's the message that is really important.

In his address, “Accountability vs. Victimhood: Happily Ever Afters Don't Just Happen,” Jim Bearden presented his view that the expectation of a fairy tale ending plunges us headlong into victimhood rather than taking responsibility for our actions. He characterized the cycle of “Happily Ever After” this way:

1. There's the new and exciting feeling. (Like your first day on a new job.)
2. The new wears off. (Your expectations of what things would be like begin to crumble.)
3. You're in denial. (You won't believe that you made an error in judgement.)
4. You cycle through fear, anger, blaming everything and everyone but yourself and wallowing in your sorrows.
5. You give up.
6. You start looking for something to give you that “Happily Ever After” feeling again.

Mr. Bearden didn't leave us hanging, but gave us ways to break this cycle. He said that we must

acknowledge ownership of the problem, create change-friendly environments, be able and willing to lead and empower our staffs to do their work. If we can do those things, he said, we could break the cycle of “Happily Ever After” and perhaps make real progress.

The accountability theme continued with our Saturday morning speaker, Greg Gray. Mr. Gray is a product of Atlanta's public schools and represented that system well. What I liked about Mr. Gray's presentation is that, from the beginning, he made it clear that when you talk about accountability, you had better look in the mirror first.

Mr. Gray contends that too often we blame others for a situation as opposed to examining our role in not meeting and/or exceeding expectations. He talked a lot about customer service. He's right. Even in education we must think about what excellent customer service entails. We must ask: Who are our customers? How do we serve them? What are their expectations? How are we doing at meeting their expectations? How do we respond to them when there is a problem? How do we let them know about the good news?

Think about all we've said about accountability over the last couple of years. All of this sounds familiar, or should.

Mr. Gray also made an excellent point that we shouldn't just satisfy the expectations of our customers. Rather, our goal should be to far exceed their expectations because any less is only meeting minimal standards.

These two gentlemen were but two of the speakers we heard during the Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly. There were other presentations that echoed some of the sentiments expressed by Mr. Bearden and Mr. Gray. I wanted to put the spotlight on them, however, because despite their humor and entertaining quality, their message was clear. Accountability starts with each of us individually. We must stop trying to pass the buck. Let's take an objective look at what's right about education and what needs improvement. Then let's lead by example.

You might say, “Where do I start?” For a board of education, an excellent place to start is with careful and close self-examination of policies and procedures. Of course, GSBA's “Standards for Local Boards of Education” is an excellent tool to use. Frankly, it's the only tool of its kind available to Georgia boards of education.

Another message I received from our keynote speakers is that as an Association, we also must ask ourselves these same hard questions about serving you,

Continued on page 8 ...

From GSBA's President...

Training, Accountability and Safety Remain Top Issues

By Y.N. Myers, Jr.

Having served on the GSBA Board of Directors a number of years now, I have witnessed a few issues coming and going. Then there are those that are so complex and have such deep implications that they stay with us and continue to challenge us.

As I begin my presidency of this great Association, I am mindful that we still have unfinished business from the last couple of years – those issues that have hung on. The longevity of these challenges is purely a testament to the fact that there are no easy answers. The issues to which I am referring are: increased need for board member training, accountability, and school safety and security.

I don't see it as our role to reinvent the wheel every time we have new leadership. Rather, I think we need to see the process to the end. The issues mentioned above are in various places in the process. They have been on our plates, so to speak, for a number of years now, and we've made substantial progress on them. Our board member training program is better than it has ever been, but we still need to get more board members properly trained. We've taken great strides with accountability through the GSBA Standards for Local Boards of Education, but we need more participation in the program and we need to continually raise the standards. I think we're looking at safety and security issues in a little different light since the tragedies in Colorado and here in Georgia occurred. There has been a lot of discussion on this issue mainly through the legislative process. School board members must remain involved.

Obviously much work is left to do on these three important issues. They will remain paramount during the next year at least and I look forward to doing my part to see that progress continues. It will be exciting to see educational leaders come together for a common cause – making our schools better. I am always happy and willing to get involved when our students are the benefactors.

It is an exciting year to be GSBA president. These challenges alone might be enough, but we also have a responsibility to watch closely the proceedings of the Governor's Education Reform Study Commission. (Wendy Martin and Smith Pass ably represent us.) The Commission has a tough assignment – "to shake things up." The Governor says he wants solutions not

excuses. It already sounds like accountability will be a central theme.

We will watch, listen, get involved in the discussion and learn. From the Governor's Commission to the issues of board member training, accountability and safety and security, your new GSBA leadership will continue to carry the banner for excellence in public education. ❧

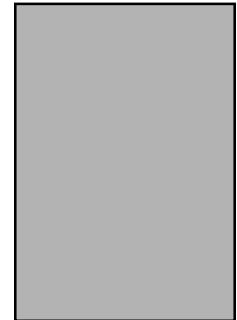
❧ GSBA PLANNER ❧

July 1999

- 1 Gov's Ed. Reform Commission
Accountability Committee Meeting
Atlanta
- 7-10 NSBA Southern Region Conference
Asheville, North Carolina
- 7 Gov's Ed. Reform Commission Funding
Committee Meeting
Atlanta
- 8 Georgia Board of Education Meeting
Twin Towers, Atlanta
- 18-21 GAEL Summer Conference
Jekyll Island Convention Center
- 26 Gov's Ed. Reform Commission Funding
Committee Meeting
Atlanta
- 27 Gov's Ed. Reform Commission Seamless
Education Committee Meeting
Atlanta
- 28 Gov's Ed. Reform Commission
Accountability Committee Meeting
Atlanta
- 29 Gov's Ed. Reform Commission School
Climate Committee Meeting
Atlanta
- 29-30 Education Risk Management Exchange
(ERME) Conference
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Macon

August 1999

- 1-5 NSBA Ex. Directors' Summer Institute
Sun Valley, Idaho
- 10 School Improvement Panel Meeting
State Board Room, Atlanta
- 12 Georgia Board of Education Meeting
Twin Towers, Atlanta
- 16 Gov's Ed. Reform Commission Meeting
Atlanta
- 24 GSBA Board of Directors' Meeting
GSBA Offices, Lawrenceville
- 30 Gov's Ed. Reform Commission School
Climate Committee Meeting
Atlanta



Y.N. Myers, Jr.
GSBA President



"The longevity of these challenges is purely a testament to the fact that there are no easy answers. The issues to which I am referring are: increased need for board member training, accountability, and school safety and security."

– Y.N. Myers, Jr.

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Executive Session: Legal Issues for Board Members

By *Harben & Hartley*
GSBA General Counsel

Student-On-Student Sexual Harassment

The long awaited decision from the United States Supreme Court in the Georgia case of *Davis vs. Monroe County Board of Education* raises legal concerns with school systems which have already focused on how to deal with safety threats posed by students against other students. The *Davis* case involved allegations by a fifth grade female student in the Monroe County School System that she had been sexually harassed by a male classmate and that school officials had done little or nothing to address the problem. Despite graphic allegations in the complaint of verbal abuse and physical touching, the United States District Court for the Middle District of Georgia dismissed the complaint ruling that a school district could not be sued for the actions of one student against another even the provisions of Title IX which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex.

A three judge panel of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals split two-to-one, but reversed Judge Owens, ruling that student-on-student sexual harassment should be treated in the same way that employee-on-employee sexual harassment is treated in the workplace and that under those rules the school district could be liable. The entire Eleventh Circuit court then reviewed the case and reversed the panel finding, agreeing with the district court, that Congress had never intended to create through Title IX a situation where a school district could be sued for the sexual misconduct of one student toward another. The decision was appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States and board members and school officials throughout the country awaited what was anticipated to be a very close decision.

On May 24, 1999, the Supreme Court, by a five-to-four vote, ruled that, under certain circumstances, the school district could be liable under Title IX for damages arising out of the sexual harassment of students by other students. Writing for the majority, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor asserted that a school district could never be liable for the actions of a student but could be liable for its own lack of action if the student had created a sexually hostile environment which substantially interfered with the other student's access to an education.

Justice O'Conner attempted to convince school boards and plaintiffs that proving such a case would be very difficult. First, the sexual harassment would have to be pervasive and severe to the point not only that the student's education was affected but also to the point that every other reasonable female student would have felt harassed and affected by the misconduct. Second, it would have to be shown that officials of the school district with authority to take action on behalf of the district were aware of the sexual harassment. There exist case law in Georgia which suggests that only the board of education or superintendent are able to act on behalf of the school district for Title IX purposes. Finally, the student would have to show that school officials not only were ineffective in the action they chose to take but were "deliberately indifferent." That is, that knowing about the harassment they took no action or no significant action to deal with the problem.

Four justices strongly dissented arguing that the decision forced school officials to over react to childhood flirtations and teasing. More significantly, the dissent noted that school officials who identified a student as being a "harasser" might well be setting up a claim on behalf of that student under special education law, since a student guilty of severe and pervasive sexual harassment of another student might well argue that he must suffer from some emotional disorder or other disability.

From a practical point of view, while the majority decision sets a very high standard which must be proven for a school district to be liable in such a case, lawyers will be able to draft lawsuits in a way which will insure that judges cannot dismiss them without lengthy discovery to establish the facts. While many school systems may be able to prevail on a motion for summary judgment and avoid a jury trial, substantial attorney's fees will be incurred or settlements reached to avoid the incurring of such fees. Perhaps more significantly, school administrators will be forced on a day-to-day basis to evaluate how serious each act of student misconduct is with the risk of making the wrong decision being a lawsuit.

What steps should boards of education take in response to this decision: First, carefully review existing policy. Board policies should make clear that the school district does not tolerate sexual harassment (and the same rationale would apply to harassment based on race, national origin or disability), but a policy should not be so specific that it removes all discretion from school administrators in handling specific cases. Just as importantly, boards must insure that students are

encouraged to report incidents when they believe they are being harassed to a counselor, an administrator or even a teacher. Teachers and school personnel must be trained to take seriously acts which are or may be construed as sexual harassment. Administrators must be trained to investigate allegations and use sound discretion in determining when punishment is appropriate or when other steps are necessary to allow the alleged victim to feel protected. As long as school officials take reasonable steps in response to serious allegations, the school system should be safe from liability. It is not possible to always anticipate decisions of the courts or lawsuits, but the prepared board of education will initiate policy and training measures, using the guidelines set by the Supreme Court, which should help to provide reasonable assurance against large verdicts or judgments. ☞

Report of the 1999 GSBA Delegate Assembly

Delegates representing 131 local boards of education met at the GSBA Delegate Assembly on June 11 at Jekyll Island. During this meeting, the delegates had two main responsibilities – to assist in mapping out the Association’s legislative program for the coming session of the Georgia General Assembly and to choose GSBA’s leaders for the coming year.

It’s during the Delegate Assembly that GSBA’s legislative program is fine-tuned. The way the process works is to first give every local school board the opportunity to submit legislative positions to the Governmental Operations Committee. That’s the first opportunity for input from member boards. The Governmental Operations Committee is comprised of 37 members and is led by the Association’s president elect – this year that was Mr. Y.N. Myers, Jr. who is now GSBA’s president.

The GOC then considers all of the submitted proposals and develops a legislative package for the consideration of the delegates. The second opportunity for input then comes when delegates and boards can submit amendments and new positions the morning before the Delegate Assembly.

Then, the action packed part of this process... the Delegate Assembly. This year was no exception. A couple of major changes were made to the Association’s Legislative Positions.

First, before the meeting, the GSBA staff, upon the request of members of the GOC and the delegates last year, revised the legislative package so that it is now

one document. Last year, there were documents entitled: “Standing Positions,” “Policy Statements” and “Federal Positions.” This year there is one document that includes all of GSBA’s legislative positions. This made it a lot easier for the members of the GOC and for the delegates to get through all of the information.

The GOC approved many updates to the legislative positions that were needed because of new laws and regulations and because some of the old positions no longer applied to our work today.

Some of the new positions proposed by the GOC and approved by the delegates included ones to:

- revise language currently in the law dealing with board member vacancies
- revise GSBA’s position on county digests,
- and to address the continued underfunding of QBE.

At the Delegate Assembly in June a submitted proposed new position was approved by the delegates. This position deals with student safety and discipline and urges the General Assembly to hold parents and guardians more accountable for crimes and violent acts committed by their children. The Delegate Assembly was also marked by much discussion surrounding the student transportation issue.

GSBA will mail copies of the approved legislative positions to all members in July. In the meantime, the legislative positions are available on the Association’s web site (www.gsba.com).

In addition to the Association’s legislative package, the delegates approved the 1999-2000 slate of officers. And they are:

Y.N. Myers, Jr., Richmond County – president
Tricia Smith, Camden County – president elect
Zenda Bowie, Fulton County – vice president
Deloras Moon, Jones County – treasurer

Delegates also confirmed the election of various GSBA district directors. The directors filling new terms beginning in July are:

District 1 – Tony Tyson, Bulloch County
District 2 – Jerry Plowden, Dougherty County
District 3 – Russ Childers, Sumter County
District 4 – Brad Bryant, DeKalb County
District 5 – Zenda Bowie, Fulton County – (With Ms. Bowie’s selection as GSBA’s incoming vice president, a new District 5 director will be chosen during the district meetings in the fall.)

Filling the unexpired term of Tricia Smith is Virgil Carter of Appling County in District 8. ☞



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GSBA's Associate Members demonstrate their commitment to furthering the work of the association.

AAA Modular Buildings
P. O. Box 9083
Columbus, GA 31908

Apple Computer, Inc.
904 Iroquois Trail
Goodlettsville, TN 37072

Beers Construction Co.
70 Ellis Street
Atlanta, GA 30303

BellSouth Corporation
1155 Peachtree Street
Atlanta, GA 30309

**Blue Bird Body Co.
National Bus Sales**
P. O. Box 937
Ft. Valley, GA 31030

E. R. Mitchell & Co.
2875 Bankhead Hwy.,
Atlanta, GA 30318

Ga. School Equipment
137A North 85 Parkway
Fayetteville, GA 30214

Continued on page seven...

Association News

• **Billy Johnson has been named GSBA's Professional Development Specialist**

"This is a newly created position," said GSBA Executive Vice President Gary Ashley. "We're responding to the fact that the issues and challenges faced by school board members are becoming even more complex. Mr. Johnson's role will be to take GSBA's professional development program including workshops and conference curriculum to even greater heights."

Prior to accepting his new position, Mr. Johnson worked as a private consultant for state government agencies, private companies and individuals. From 1982 to 1996 he worked for the Georgia Department of Education as a division director, assistant state superintendent and associate state superintendent with responsibilities including statewide curricula services, vocational education programs, testing and evaluation services, textbook adoptions and media services.


Before working for the state education department, Mr. Johnson served as a teacher, coach, assistant high school principal, elementary school principal, high school principal and local school superintendent from

1964-1982. He worked in Bartow County Schools, Dodge County Schools, Dublin City Schools and Laurens County Schools.

Mr. Johnson holds a bachelor's degree in science from the University of Georgia and a master's degree and sixth year degree in education administration and supervision from Georgia Southern University. He resides in Conyers, is married and has three children.

• Wendy Martin, Lee County Board of Education member and the NSBA Southern Region Director, and Smith Pass, Coweta County Board of Education member, have been named to the Governor's Education Reform Study Commission. Ms. Martin was named chair of the Seamless Education Committee. Ms. Pass was named chair of the School Climate Committee.

• The Forsyth County School System will be listed on NSBA's Resource Exchange Network web site. Work that the Forsyth system is doing with regard to community engagement will be included in a database with similar topics.

• GSBA's superintendent search process received praise from *The Press Sentinel* in Jesup, Georgia. GSBA assisted the Wayne County Board of Education in selecting a new superintendent. 

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From NSBA's President...

New Millennium Presents New Possibilities

*By Mary Ellen Maxwell,
1999-2000 President,
National School
Boards Association*

Greetings to the members of the Georgia School Boards Association.

As the new millennium approaches, public

education is challenged by endless possibilities. We will be bombarded with new technologies, new methods, and new ways of governing. Through the countless possibilities, we must still maintain our basic interest in what is right – being good citizens, educating the young and serving our fellow man. I have a basic commitment and belief in public education and I believe school boards have the ability to create meaningful futures for all children.

As president of the National School Boards Association, I remain convinced we as good leaders must be agents of hope. I believe education is a precondition of hope and that we as a people must continue to look to the public schools as a wellspring of hope for America's children. School board members can open minds to possibilities and serve as the catalysts of hope that we need to be.

As advocates for the Key Work of School Boards, we must better inform ourselves, raise expectations, ask tough questions, and share the accountability we demand of our teachers and administrators. We must recognize if public education is to remain successful, and improve, it must be an inclusive enterprise. We must demonstrate an unequivocal commitment to student learning and make that our primary mission.

The heart of leadership lies in the hearts of leaders. If we are about courage, spirit and hope, we will not fail. As leaders of our public schools we must nurture the aspirations of our children and our communities by demonstrating that our most difficult problems can be solved, that our collective efforts matter, and that as a people, and a nation, we can become whatever we want to be.

We must never lose sight of the fact that we are about children and their common welfare. I, as your president, will be a voice for the Federation, a voice for putting children first, and a voice for building hope for public education. ☞

Governor's Ed. Reform Study Commission is Underway

The Governor's Education Reform Study Commission, authorized by the 1999 Georgia General Assembly, held its first meeting. Governor — and Commission Chairman — Roy E. Barnes, called the Commission together on June 7.

The first day's agenda included swearing in members, the Governor's address (charge to the Commission), a talk relating experience in school improvement delivered by Johnston County (North Carolina) Superintendent Dr. James Causby, and committee meetings. The four committees are: School Climate, Funding, Accountability and Seamless Education.

In his charge to the Commission, Governor Barnes told the members that "this is the most important thing you will ever undertake." He emphasized that results are paramount. He stated that "excuse-based" education must become a thing of the past. The Governor told members that they must come to the table, pool ideas, and develop a steel resolve to do what it takes.

The Governor alluded to accountability by stating that there is a college preparatory curriculum warranty, and when students who graduate with the CPC must take remedial college courses "damages need to be paid." Students, he said, should also never get far enough along to take the high school graduation test and fail it. No better results were achieved during the past ten years, he said, even though dollars for education have nearly doubled. He also said a seamless education system — pre-kindergarten through college — must be created.

As to school climate, the Governor said that violence must be reduced; education must become student-centered, and we must work together to find new and innovative ideas that are successful.

Committees met independently of one another. Each was given broad latitude in where their deliberations would lead them; however, each was also provided specific issues with which to deal. For example, the Funding Committee is expected to address adequacy and equity of funding, whether some items funded outside the QBE formula should be brought under the formula, whether the size of a base-size school should be altered. The Accountability Committee, on the other hand, will address (among others) the need for test accountability, the need for diagnosis and instruction, drop-out rates and the need for accountability generally. ☞

*Associate Members,
Continued from page 6*

Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce

5110 Sugarloaf Parkway
Lawrenceville, GA 30043

H + M Construction Co.

P.O. Box 200
Jackson, TN 38302-0200

Heery International

999 Peachtree St., N. E.
Atlanta, GA 30367

M. B. Kahn Construction Company

P. O. Box 1179
Columbia, SC 29202

Marriott School Services

200 Continental Drive, Suite 400
Newark, DE 19713

National Teacher Associates, Inc.

5220 Spring Valley Rd., Ste 400
Dallas, TX 75240

nSchool.com

6700 Dawson Blvd., Suite 2C
Norcross, GA 30093

Parrish Georgia, Inc.

221 Industrial Drive
Perry, GA 31069

Reid & Morgan

2849 Paces Ferry Rd., Suite 640
Atlanta, GA 30339

SIEBE Environmental Control

117A Ravenwood Court
Albany, GA 31701

SSC Services Solutions

406 Willow Ave., Box 19
Knoxville, TN 37901

Southern A&E LLC

7800 The Bluffs, NW, Ste. A
Atlanta, GA 30168

Turner Construction Company

3424 Peachtree Road, NE,
Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30326

United Design, Inc.

7 Posey Street
Savannah, GA 31406

VALIC

200 Ashford Center, N, Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30338

Wachovia

P. O. Box 4148, Mail Code 700
Atlanta, GA 30302

Waterford Early Reading Program

404 Half Hitch Court
Woodstock, GA 30188



As of June 18, 1999, the following boards of education have joined previously announced boards in verifying their compliance with the "Standards for Local Boards of Education."

Lowndes County Board of Education

Thomaston-Upson Board of Education

Jackson County Board of Education

News Briefs

- Georgia's 1999 Teacher of the Year Andy Baumgartner was named the National Teacher of the Year. Mr. Baumgartner was honored by President Clinton in a special ceremony at the White House on April 19.
- Amy Monroe Denty, a sixth grade science teacher at Arthur Williams Middle School in Wayne County, has been named the Georgia's 2000 Teacher of the Year.
- Two Georgia students, Tyler Martin of Roswell High in Fulton County and Allison Presley of Memorial Middle in Rockdale County, were honored in Washington, D.C. for outstanding service to their communities during the presentation of the 1999 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. The two young people, along with over 100 other top youth volunteers from across the country, each received \$1,000 awards and other special recognitions. Tyler founded and manages a voter registration project at his high school that aims to register all eligible students when they turn 18. Allison is an active junior

volunteer at several senior citizen homes in her community.

• Georgia is one of nine states that will receive a total of \$2.3 million in grants to work with local school districts and communities to assure that students learn values and ethics as a part of their lessons. Receiving grants, known as Partnership in Education Pilot Projects, are: Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma and Pennsylvania. As its share, Georgia will receive \$350,000.

• The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted to fully fund the E-Rate for \$2.25 billion next year. According to a list from the USA Schools and Libraries Division, Georgia will receive \$77,786,315 as its share of E-Rate funds. Georgia is fifth on the list in amount of funds from the program which aims at assisting school districts in providing Internet access in schools and classrooms. California, New York, Texas and Illinois top the list.

• The University of Georgia College of Education and Georgia Center for Continuing Education will be sponsoring a "Summit on School Violence" on December 7-8, 1999. It will be held at the Continuing Education Center. The summit is being held with the intention that decision-makers from school systems all over the state will come together to discuss strategies for ensuring the safety of Georgia's schools. Three of the country's top safe school experts will be present to lend their specialized knowledge and experience to Georgia's educational leaders. Superintendents, school board members, principals, crisis team leaders and others are invited to participate in the summit. ☞

From the Executive Vice President, continued from page two...

our customers. My pledge to you is that GSBA never stops looking for ways to better serve. Our goal is to always look at how we will get to the next level. I think we exceeded expectations with our Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly and I look forward to seeing the Association shine again at its next conference – the 1999 GSBA/GSSA Annual Conference, December 3-4 in Atlanta. ☞

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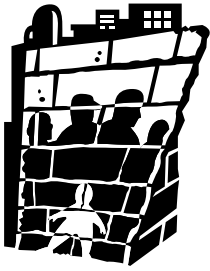
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Resources on School Safety

Additional information on safe-school strategies is available on the NSSC web site, www.nssc1.org, and on NSBA's site, www.keepschoolssafe.org.

Strategies for Safer Schools

The National School Safety Center (NSSC) has released a list of 10 strategies for school boards wondering what to do to make their schools a more safe place for students and staff:

- Take threats seriously and deal with them as acts of violence. Establish clear sanctions and procedures for handling such behavior.
- Use professional judgement and discretion. React without overreacting. Investigate rumors or threats, and report legitimate threats to law enforcement officials.
- Create a threat assessment protocol. Determine the responsibilities of students, teachers, parents and administrators for handling threats. Report all legitimate threats immediately to law enforcement officials.
- Increase adult visibility. The single most effective strategy for keeping schools safe is the physical presence of adults, including teachers, aides, coaches, police, parents and other responsible adult mentors and volunteers.
- Establish a local tip line. Involve students by letting them know it is in their self-interest to report crime or potential harm. Good tip lines offer anonymity, a prompt response, support and help for victims and immediate action.
- Develop a close working partnership with law enforcement. Invite law enforcement personnel onto the campus. At the beginning of each year, provide in-service training sessions on tactical strategies they will employ in a crisis and ways school personnel can work effectively with them.
- Establish a comprehensive crisis containment and management plan. The plan should include lock-down procedures, evacuation plans, command post location, assignment of roles, and other issues related to crisis prevention and resolution.
- Recruit the presiding juvenile judge as a partner on your crisis management and safe school planning team.
- Support the role of parents in school crime and violence prevention. Encourage parents to talk with their children about how they feel about school safety. 

James Buckley

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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.

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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>
McIntosh County	June 18, 1999
Hart County	September 3, 1999
Bibb County	Date to be determined.

Completed Searches

<i>School System</i>	<i>New Superintendent</i>
Candler County	Wendell Christian
Glynn County	Dr. William Young
Murray County	Dr. James Parker
Pickens County	Dr. Lee Shiver
Screven County	Dr. Whitney Myers
Stewart County	Dr. Betty Ray
Troup County	Dr. Roy Nichols

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