

# Board O'Gram

Vol. 33  
No. 3  
Oct. 9, 2007

Report of Rome Board of Education — Action Compiled by Dr. Robert A. Young, Dir. of Administrative Services

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**Musical Performance:** Rome High School Vocal Soloists performed before the Board and audience prior to the meeting being called to order. Ms. Jennifer Williams' high school members included Caleb Lewis, Chip Byars, and Hannah Campbell.

**National History Day Competition:** Ms. Huffman presented Cheryl Culp and Haley Shore with a certificate of recognition for their accomplishment in the National History Day competition (NHD).

The National History Day student competition is the nation's oldest and most highly regarded history program for students in grades 6-12. NHD is one of the rare programs that helps students refine critical thinking and research skills used in all subject areas. For more than 25 years, NHD has promoted systemic educational reform related to teaching and learning in America's schools.

This academic challenge engages more than half a million students annually. In this year's competition, two Rome High students, Cheryl Culp and Haley Shore, advanced through local, district and state contests to earn the honor of representing the state in the Senior Group exhibit category at the national contest at the University of Maryland. Their project titled *Elizabeth Blackwell* was chosen by the judges at the national contest as the Most Outstanding Project for the State of Georgia. Congratulations to Cheryl and Haley for earning this national-level academic honor.

**Young Georgia Authors' Writing Competition:** The purposes of Young Georgia Authors' Writing Competition are to encourage students to develop writing that represents their best efforts; provide a context for schools to support and celebrate the writing successes of all students; and encourage and recognize student achievement in writing throughout Georgia. Students may submit essays, stories, or poems to be judged on criteria such as imagination, originality, and correctness.

Mr. Wilson presented Emily Williams and Laura Hatcher with a certificate of recognition for becoming District Winners in the Young Georgia Authors' Writing Competition.

At the end of last school year, Emily Williams, then a ninth grader at Rome High School, submitted her entry "Accidentally" and Laura Hatcher, then a twelfth grader at Rome High School, submitted her entry "Fluff".

**Second Month Attendance:** Dr. Cooper reported that the student attendance figures for the second month were not available due to a software change. He did report that the school with the highest percent of staff attendance for the second month was Anna K. Davie Elementary School, 98.85 percent.

**New Personnel ;** On a Swann/Huffman motion, the board members present unanimously approved Dr. Cooper's personnel recommendations:

Support Employment 2007-2008: Nicole Burdette/RMS ; Chrystial Hudson/RHS; Cynthia Couch/MN; Jennifer Smith/AKD; Lynn Herrin/ES; and Amy Steadman/NH.

**Focus on Student Achievement - East Central:** At Dr. Cooper's request, Mrs. Wood presented the Focus on Student Achievement for East Central Elementary School. Mrs. Wood introduced the members of her faculty in attendance: Parke Wilkinson (Assistant Principal) and Patty Acree (Math Coach).

Mrs. Wood stated that East Central has been a Title 1 Distinguished School for five (5) consecutive years, named a School of Excellence, and earned the 2006 Georgia Platinum Award. Mrs. Wood then reviewed their students' 2007 Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Test results by grade level.

Mrs. Wood stated that their math scores in the second and third grades are not where she wants them to be and that the change from the Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) to the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) was partly responsible for their shortcoming. She stated that this performance drop was observed throughout Georgia.

Mrs. Wood very proudly presented the sixth grade results. She stated that students at East Central tend to improve their test scores the longer they remain at East Central. She said that this is supported by their great scores this past year. Mrs. Wood then discussed the "Level 3" percentages on the CRCT stating that they are constantly working to bring every child up to the exceeding standards category.

The reasons that Mrs. Wood gave for their students' success include teacher planning, Science/Math Night activities, Georgia Youth Science and Technology Center (GYSTC) programs, and community support. In conclusion, Mrs. Wood said that students, parents, and teachers at East Central work collaboratively for the instructional success of their students.

**Etowah GYSTC:** At Dr. Cooper's request, Mr. David Wright discussed educational programs offered by Etowah Georgia Youth Science and Technology Center (GYSTC). He stated the mission and discussed in some detail the components that make it special for the students of the Rome City Schools: "Increase interest and enthusiasm in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, (STEM) particularly among elementary and middle school teachers and students."

Etowah GYSTC members include Rome City Schools, Bartow County Schools, Polk County Schools, Chattooga County Schools, Department of Education (DOE), and Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA).

Mr. Wright said that the program includes instruction and staff development in the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) and embedding professional development in the program. He said that there are several activities that GYSTC facilitates including Family Math and Science Nights, Summer Camps, Field Trips and Star Parties. Additionally GYSTC helps with Textbook Adoption and Math Science Partnership Grant applications.

The success of the program is measured in several ways. First it is measured by the enthusiasm stimulated in the students and teachers. It is also measured by the level of implementation of the GPS based Science Curriculum in K-8. Additionally, it is measured by the level of achievement students earn on the CRCT in Science and Math. Finally, the success is measured by the number of students who elect to take STEM courses in high school and in college.

**Rome High School Credit Recovery Program:** At Dr. Cooper's request, Dr. J. Tygar Evans reported on Rome High School Credit Recovery Program. He stated that the reason for the initiatives is to increase the graduation rate of Rome High School and provide more opportunities for students to be successful. The programs that have been employed include Summer School, NovaNet, and ninth grade math and reading intervention classes for at risk students. The programs are designed to provide high school students with as many opportunities as possible so they can earn their diploma by the completion of their fourth year at Rome High School.

**SPLOST Update:** Dr. Cooper gave an update on the SPLOST II revenues. He stated that the July '07 collections of \$519,429.17 were \$81,929.17 above projections for the month (\$437,500.00).

#### **Other Announcements:**

- Dr. Cooper announced that the Teacher of the Year and Support Employee of the Year banquet would be held at the conclusion of the Board meeting at Rome Middle School.
- He also announced that Friday, October 12th, the Rome Wolves would travel to Dalton to play the Dalton Catamounts at 7:30 p.m.
- Finally, Dr. Cooper announced that the Peach State Marching Festival will take place on Saturday, October 27th at Barron Stadium.
- Mrs. Sims told the audience that they should make it a point to see the billboards that have been strategically placed around Rome, applauding Rome High School's SAT achievements. She said that it is a tribute to the students, parents, and faculty of Rome City Schools. In conclusion, Mrs. Sims said, "It is clear that the teachers of Rome City Schools are going above and beyond the call of duty and they have a clear vision for their students."