



Board chooses new leader of WV schools

Deputy takes the helm as state superintendent

The West Virginia Board of Education in late June selected Steve Paine, Ed.D., as state superintendent of schools. He begins his post on July 1, replacing David Stewart, who retired June 30.

The board voted unanimously on June 22 to elect Paine to the state's top educational policy position and reaffirmed its vote in a second meeting June 27. That second vote was conducted because officials didn't give the proper required public notice for the board's June 22 meeting, which was discovered by *Charleston Gazette* reporter Chandra Broadwater.

Paine served as deputy state superintendent since January 2003. Before that he was superintendent of Morgan County Schools and a principal, assistant principal, teacher and curriculum director in Harrison, Upshur and Morgan counties.

"This is an exciting time for education in our state," Paine said in a statement on the West Virginia Department of Education's Web site. "Student achievement is on the rise, but I understand that I have a big job ahead of me especially regarding the continued implementation of (the federal) No Child Left Behind (Act), closing the achievement gap and mathematic achievement initiatives. I am honored and humbled by the opportunity to serve the students of West Virginia."

West Virginia School Boards Association President Dr. Rodney Thompson (Wayne) said Paine was the best choice.

"Dr. Paine will provide the type of leadership West Virginia

needs for our school system to continue to progress as it did under the leadership of Dr. David Stewart and the state board," Thompson said. "On behalf of the West Virginia School Boards Association, we welcome Dr. Paine's appointment."

The state board of education began a nationwide superintendent search following Stewart's retirement announcement in March.

The board was intent on making its selection by June 30, according to news media reports. The board didn't reveal the number of applicants for the position, but nine finalists were interviewed on June 13 and June 18.

Three finalists included Paine, Larry Parsons, Ed.D., superintendent of Mason County Schools, and Ron Duerring, Ed.D., Kanawha County Schools superintendent.

West Virginia School Boards Association Executive Director Howard M. O'Cull, Ed.D., was one of the nine interviewed for the position. He said he supports Paine and his appointment as state superintendent.

"I look forward to continuing working with Dr. Paine as he leads the state in terms of educational accountability," O'Cull said. "His leadership is critical because we all want to keep improving student achievement. His educational experience and work as deputy superintendent give him the depth and ability to perform well in the position."

Paine is a Milken Award winner.

Overview

STATS

2004 Regular Session:	<i>Adjourned Sine Die</i>
Days Until 2005 Regular Session:	204
Interim Meetings Remaining:	July - January 2006

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QUOTE

"In representative government, all 134 legislators should have a role in shaping the appropriations, not just a few." — *Charleston attorney Dan Hedges in discussing the state Supreme Court's decision regarding the legislative Budget Digest. Hedges filed the original suit last year.*

West Virginia says no to pension bond amendment

In a June 25 special election, West Virginia voters rejected the proposed constitutional amendment that would have allowed the state to borrow up to \$5.5 billion to bail out three of the state's pension programs.

According to the West Virginia Secretary of State, 160,528 people voted in the special election for the proposed amendment, which failed to pass by 14,786 votes. Nearly 87,000 voters, or 54 percent, opposed the amendment, while about 74,000 voters, or 46 percent, voted in favor.

In response to the amendment's defeat, Gov. Joe Manchin said that citizens had "spoken" and that he doesn't plan to place the amendment before voters again.

Some newspapers and broadcasters credit amendment opponent Don Blankenship, a Massey coal executive, as galvanizing opposition to the amendment in a well-financed campaign that caught amendment sponsors off guard.

See **PENSION BOND FAILS** on page 5

MU, WVU to study school aid formula

Subcommittees look at several education matters in interim meetings

The West Virginia Legislature will conduct a multi-year review of the school aid formula by teaming with Marshall University's Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER), and West Virginia University's Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER).

County population changes and transportation will be the primary focus, but support of technology, definitions of enrollment, employment issues, and incorporation of educational performance into the formula also will be considered, according to Dr. Tom Witt, BBER's associate dean.

On June 13, Witt and Calvin Kent of the CBER, presented before Education Subcommittee C, the legislative entity designated to explore the formula. "This is a big onion with various layers," Witt said.

The university research corporations will analyze various county pairings, with Marshall taking Cabell / Putnam, Raleigh / McDowell, and Greenbrier / Pocahontas counties, while WVU plans to focus on Monongalia / Preston, Ohio / Hancock, and Berkeley / Hampshire counties. The school funding mechanisms of West Virginia's bordering states also will be included in the study, Witt said.

Although no central counties were selected for pairings, general data will be collected from all counties and will help generalize the findings, Kent said. He added that the case studies will be "dynamic and developmental," whereby the Legislature will be briefed as the study progresses, allowing for immediate feedback and suggestions.

"Once a template is developed it could be applied to other

counties," he said.

Sen. Edwin Bowman, D-Hancock, stressed the importance of reviewing the adequacy of local tax bases, urging researchers to consider the implications of tax waivers for large nonprofit organizations.

The effects of tax increment financing on local school funding revenues should also be explored, said Sen. Donna Boley, R-Pleasants.

Increased usage of the West Virginia Education Information System for more accurate and timely reporting of student data could also aid in distributing equitable funding, according to Del. Brady Paxton, D-Putnam, a recurring proponent of such.

Each university is slated to receive \$75,000 in support for the effort. Final recommendations are expected by June 2006.

How to lower workers' comp premiums

The state Workers' Compensation Commission on June 13 presented several recommendations to members of the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability. The recommendations are intended to help county school boards lower their premiums, according to Becky Neal, the WCC's senior ombudsman.

She said the commission surveyed county boards across the state, and in doing so identified several "stumbling blocks" to managing premiums.

According to the document submitted by Neal to LOCEA: 1) county school boards should be required to pay only two thirds of temporary total disability benefits for an injured worker, the same rate that other employers are required to pay; 2) workers who do not receive year-round salaries should not be eligible to receive workers' compensation benefits during time periods in which they were not contracted to work; and 3) county school boards should be permitted to implement return-to-work programs for school service personnel, whereby such personnel may be required to perform other duties if they are not able to fill their original positions.

Neal said the commission had uncovered instances in which employees suddenly filed five claims before the end of the school year, and that in other cases personnel could work, although not in their original capacity. "We're just here as advocates for our customers, the county boards of education," she concluded.

"I don't want to take away deserved benefits," said Del. Eustace Frederick, D-Mercer, but he added that instances of abuse were "something to look into."

Other education matters before legislators

The West Virginia Department of Education has requested that more special education students be exempted from No Child Left Behind Act testing requirements, according to Deputy State Superintendent Steve Paine. He said the United States Department of Education is "beginning to realize that some students don't learn at the same rate as others." Such students include those with severe mental disabilities.

He also said a study on the high school senior year would be completed in July, with a report submitted to LOCEA in August.

WVDE Office of School Finance Director Joe Panetta said Policy 8224, which addresses projection of net enrollment increases, had been approved for comment by the state Board of Education. Comments may be submitted online at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/>

The Legislature provides county board of education members, state policymakers, school administrators, and others information, opinion and commentary regarding West Virginia legislative issues. This publication does not necessarily reflect the official views, opinions or policies of the WVSBA, unless specifically stated.

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through July 10.

In fiscal year 2004, three counties had deficits, and 10 counties were asked to develop correctional plans, with budgets most often improved by better managing personnel costs, purchasing, and increased usage of incentives granted based on child nutrition rates, according to Panetta.

Student math scores improving

Keith Butcher, an official with the WVDE's Division of Instructional and Support Services, commented on the state's five-year mathematics plan before members of Education Subcommittee B.

Butcher said all 55 counties have established a mathematics leadership team, and that fourth and eighth grade scores in the subject have been increasing on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) test.

Plymale requested the division establish measurable goals and look at successful math districts for insight.

Such goals and action steps are being developed locally, according to Butcher.

Lastly, Jorea Marple, assistant superintendent within the WVDE's Division of School Improvement Services, presented a sta-

tus report on professional development schools within the state, which came about because of 2004 legislation.

Marple said that "closing the achievement gap" specialists were active within the ten counties identified by the Legislature. "They are becoming part of the schools," she continued.

Eight counties have paid half of the funding for these specialists, according to Marple, who said the counties were encouraged to maximize federal Title II money for such.

In response to a question from Del. David Perry, D-Fayette, Marple said approximately \$24,000 was available to each county for professional development.

Perry, who also is a school principal, said he was frustrated that the majority of state funding for the professional development schools was going to salaries.

"We don't need another person in the school to tell us what we already know, we need funding for programs," he said.

— *Editor's note: The writer is a public relations consultant. Keeling Strategic Communications is based in Cross Lanes. Keeling has provided limited consulting to the Governor's Minority Students Strategy Council, which advocated for the 2004 legislation.*

In Brief

Supreme Court lifts Budget Digest freeze

The state Supreme Court voted June 29 to lift a freeze on legislative Budget Digest expenditures. Since the state's fiscal year 2006 budget takes effect July 1, the court's 3-2 ruling will allow lawmakers to approve their traditional list of spending recommendations for the new fiscal year.

Whether the Legislature could approve a digest by then appears unlikely, though lawmakers could adopt one later in the budget year, according to the Associated Press.

Justices Robin Davis and Brent Benjamin voted against lifting the freeze on Budget Digests, which the high court imposed in December. Legislative leaders had asked the justices to reconsider that decision at a June 15 hearing.

House Finance Chairman Harold Michael said he hopes lawmakers can complete a Budget Digest next month, though probably not until after the July 10-12 interim meetings.

A pending lawsuit alleges past Budget Digests have earmarked millions of taxpayer dollars for pork and pet projects instead of properly funding important programs like the state Ethics Commission. As part of that lawsuit, the state Supreme Court ordered the freeze pending a judicial review of the Budget Digest process.

Kanawha Circuit Judge Jim Stucky will review the case to ensure the Legislature is heeding prior Supreme Court decisions that require a public and well-documented digest process that involves more than just a handful of legislative leaders.

The digest approved last year recommended \$27 million for more than 1,500 purposes, including specific fairs, festivals, libraries, nonprofit groups, senior centers and schools.

Hampshire woes continue

On June 27, the Hampshire County Board of Education voted to extend Superintendent David Friend's medical leave until Dec. 31. The board was considering the appointment of an interim superintendent but reportedly was advised against it because Friend con-

tinues to officially serve as superintendent, according to board sources.

The board has not selected a replacement for former member Cindy Smith who resigned in May. They expect to have a replacement by July 11, according to board president Brenda Pyles.

RESA VIII fixing its problems

The West Virginia Board of Education continues to monitor actions by Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) VIII to correct hiring and financial discrepancies.

Recently, RESA VIII Director John Hough, Ph.D., shared recommendations developed by an Improvement Consultant Team. Those recommendations include:

- Review of documentation for Medicaid reimbursement in Hampshire County
- Develop detailed procedures regarding the handling of grant money
- Develop a process for revising the personnel and fiscal policies
- Complete a follow-up investigation to resolve a personnel issue related to an employee being paid for time not actually worked

RESA VIII council members have fully cooperated with the consultant team and have complied with its recommendations. The team, which is composed of 11 members with extensive knowledge of school procedures, school finance, school administration, personnel and certification, recently visited RESA VIII and Hampshire County Schools.

Earlier this year, the Board of Education learned of questionable financial practices and hiring practices in RESA VIII and the Hampshire County district offices. According to an Office of Education Performance Audits' (OEPA) report, several violations of state code and West Virginia Board of Education policies occurred.

— *Sources: News media accounts, the Associated Press and the West Virginia Department of Education.*

Grants aim to clean up old bus emissions

Deadline for \$7.4 million EPA program is July 22

By Constance Gratot Lewis

Some 3 million children in the United States ride aging, dangerously dirty school buses to school every day. This spring, Union of Concerned Scientists and Clean School Bus activists around the country successfully petitioned the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to adjust its focus for the 2005 Clean School Bus USA grant process.

The EPA has agreed to increase its focus on older, dirtier school buses and in-cabin pollution — two areas of great risk to our children. This grant process is now under way. The application deadline is July 22.

Please contact your state's director of pupil transportation today and ask him or her to participate in this year's grant cycle. A strong response to the application process can help ensure that the most at-risk children are a priority for this program, and help secure much-needed federal attention to this issue in future years.

County boards should send a letter, such as this, to the following decision maker(s):

State Director of Pupil Transportation Service
Subject: Please Participate in the 2005 Clean School Bus USA Grant Program

Dear Administrator,

I am writing to ask that you actively participate in the 2005 Clean School Bus USA grant program. The Environmental Protection Agency is currently taking grant applications from states and school districts, with a deadline date of July 22.

Diesel exhaust from school buses is a mixture of smog-forming pollutants, soot particles, and other toxic constituents. These small particulates can penetrate deep into the lungs, exacerbating a wide variety of respiratory problems including asthma; a growing health problem that now afflicts over 4 million American children.

Smog and soot also exacerbate cardiac disease with particulate matter directly linked to premature death. More than 40 compounds found in diesel exhaust are believed to cause cancer. These harmful emissions pose an especially high risk to children because their respiratory systems are still developing and they spend more time outdoors than adults, increasing their relative exposure to air pollution.

Indeed, there is no known safe level of exposure to diesel exhaust for children. According to a Yale University study, children riding buses were exposed to 5-15 times more particulate matter than normal ambient levels.

The 2005 grant process is an important one for two reasons. First, the EPA has revised its guidelines, putting additional emphasis on replacement and retrofit programs that would help reduce in-cabin emissions from school buses and get the oldest, dirtiest school buses off our nation's roads. This change is a very positive development that will help protect the health and safety of our children.

Second, while the \$7.4 million the EPA has to spend in 2005 is more than previous years, it falls significantly short of the long-term fiscal need to address this national children's health issue. While we hope all applications for our state are successful, even applications that are not accepted will help to build demand for a more robust future program to adequately address this issue for our kids.

More information:

The EPA was given \$7.4 million this year for Clean School Bus USA program grants. Previous grant cycles put more emphasis on tailpipe reductions and retrofits than in-cabin pollution and old bus replacement.

Retrofitting post-1990 school buses with cleanup technologies such as particulate filters and oxidation catalysts may be most cost-efficient on the basis of "dollars per ton of pollutant reduced." However, older buses, which may have safety issues as well as being major polluters, need to be replaced entirely.

Oxidation catalysts, the only pollution control device verified for pre-1990 buses, only reduce soot pollution about 25 percent. Replacement with a cleaner bus can provide a 99 percent reduction in toxic soot. According to the UCS School Bus Pollution Report Card, about 150,000 pre-1991 school buses remain on the roads, carrying upwards of eight million children to school.

Please help protect the health and safety of children in our state and around the country by becoming actively involved in this grant cycle. You can find out more on the application process by going to: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/schoolbus/funding.htm>.

— *Editor's note: Lewis is a representative of the West Virginia Environmental Council.*

Program recognizes excellence in student literary magazines

Here is a great opportunity for middle, junior high, and senior high schools. If your school does not have a student literary magazine program, please consider starting one.

The deadline for submissions to National Council of Teachers of English Program to Recognize Excellence in Student Literary Magazines (PRESLM) is June 30, 2006. This program recognizes student literary magazines in senior high, junior high, and middle schools.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals has placed the program on its advisory list of national contests and activities for 2005-2006. Obtain the instructions and registration brochure from NCTE at www.ncte.org/about/awards/student/preslm or send an e-mail to preslm@ncte.org; or call 800-369-6283, ext. 3608.

PENSION BOND FAILS

continued from page 1

Additionally, amendment supporters didn't effectively convey their message, according to West Virginia MetroNews Talk Line host Hoppy Kercheval.

"The proponents had a hard time explaining the plan and why it was a smart thing to do," Kercheval said. "First, they had to admit that the problem started years ago when state government mishandled the pension programs. Then they had to say, 'But things have changed, so let us borrow \$5.5 billion and this time we'll do better.'"

"That's a tough sell. Trust in government has been declining steadily since the 1960s. A Harris Poll a few months ago found 77 percent of Americans distrust political parties and 55 percent distrust government. Manchin and company were asking voters to 'trust' them with \$5 billion dollars.

"Like I said, tough sell."

Kercheval said bond amendment proponents may have erred in advertising spots featuring the governor discussing Blankenship's opposition to the amendment and that their campaign may have been ill-focused, primarily geared toward getting constituents, especially teachers, to vote in blocs for the amendment.

Callers to Charleston newspaper "vent lines," as well as radio commentators, said the timing of the bond issue made it difficult to persuade voters.

"The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), Democrats and others are (saying) that investing Social Security money in the stock market is a risky scheme," Kercheval said. "Polls showed older West Virginians — the ones who vote — agreed. Now, here comes the pension bond campaign asking voters to allow the state to borrow an enormous amount of money and invest it in the stock market with the hope the return will be greater than the interest rate.

"If voters are skeptical about the Social Security plan, they're certainly going to be skeptical about the pension bond amendment."

The proposed amendment, first considered by the Legislature in the late 1990s, would have allowed the state to sell bonds to cover unfunded liability indebtedness in several state pension plans with the moneys "saved" from a previously adopted payment plan designed to make the retirement plans "solvent" then reinvested.

In doing so, bond proponents argued the state wouldn't have to shell out escalating amounts of money for the unfunded pension plan liabilities under a 40-year arrangement approved by the Legislature in 1994.

Current unfunded liability costs the state \$350 million annually. It is projected to increase until 2034 when pension plan payments may total \$724 million annually. Manchin administration officials said the escalating payments will hurt future governors more than him.

Mark Muchow of the state tax department said West Virginia's general revenues aren't expected to grow fast enough to cover the rising pension payments, meaning the state may be forced to raise revenues or cut services — a point reiterated by House Finance Committee Chairman Harold Michael, D-Hardy.

Manchin administration officials denied a tie between the bond

amendment's passage and money for proposed teacher and public employee pay raises, which will be considered in a special legislative session this fall. The administration — and lawmakers — clearly wanted the additional revenue generated by the bond sale, although Manchin said the special session will be held despite the amendment's failure.

The West Virginia School Boards Association Executive Board in May voted to endorse the bond amendment's passage.


WVSBA, however, wasn't included in bond proponents' advertising as an amendment supporter. "Vote Yes For West Virginia's Future" leaders said the omission was an oversight.

Robert Rupp, a West Virginia Wesleyan College political science professor, said he sees Blankenship having an increasing impact on West Virginia politics and possibly running for an elected office. Blankenship's efforts were noted last year in the defeat of Supreme Court Justice Warren McGraw, primarily through an IRS-527 political group.

The amendment fared best in the southern coalfield counties and worst in the Ohio valley counties, according to an analysis published by the Charleston Gazette.

— Sources include West Virginia newspaper stories and Kercheval's June 27 commentary.

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The Legislature

COVERING WEST VIRGINIA EDUCATION

Imagination 1st step to new school

By Dawn Miller
The Charleston Gazette

Sometimes, I lift my spirits by fantasizing about what I'll do when I win the lottery. I would establish a school.

There's a spot on Charleston's West Side that I like. I would count up the school age children in the surrounding neighborhoods, figure out how many children my building could serve and draw a circle around the school on a map. All children living in that circle would be invited to attend.

The school is technically private, but public in its philosophy. No one pays. The only requirement for admission is that you live in the neighborhood. I would pay bonuses to teachers who lived in the neighborhood, too.

We would do all the usual stuff - read, write and compute. We would also paint, draw and play musical instruments because it nourishes the spirit as well as stimulates the mind. Because children, rather than adolescents, are best able to acquire second and third languages, we would study foreign languages.

I've long been impressed by Dr. Maria Montessori, an early 20th-century Italian pediatrician, who found that even impoverished, disadvantaged children living on the streets of Rome could learn. She introduced the idea of child-size furniture and low open shelves so students could reach the educational toys she had made for them. This school would draw heavily on her teachings.

Children would sew, or knit or crochet, because children who do these things develop a capacity to figure out how things are constructed and how to puzzle out the steps required to get to a desired end.

Children would be read to, long after they are able to read for themselves.

Special education teachers have always impressed me. They seem to meet students where they are and work from there. This school would rely heavily on special ed teachers.

We would test, and use the tests to make sure each child mastered necessary skills. No child capable of learning to understand what they read, to write and to do math would leave without those skills.

I know what you're thinking. It's a great fantasy, but it won't work in a neighborhood full of children who do not have stable homes, whose parents struggle to keep their jobs and whose parents may not even value education. It won't work in places where too few parents can contribute time and money

to extra-curricular activities, where too few parents had good school experiences themselves.

Ah, I thought of that. This is my lottery fantasy, and I can afford to spend more than the typical \$5,000 a year or so per pupil. There is no reason to brag about running a school as cheaply as possible. There is no honor in assuming that some children will not learn and ignoring solutions that might help them because those solutions are considered too expensive. My fantasy school has a full-time nurse and at least one full-time social worker. These professionals would be responsible for helping families reach the other professionals they need. But the school would reach children even before the children reached school age. The school would employ a team of home visitors. They would identify all the new babies born in the neighborhood and offer their services from birth. Home visitor

programs - whether the professionals are nurses, teachers or just very knowledgeable fellow parents - have proven themselves again and again. They can monitor for developmental delays and show parents how to do that, too. They spot warning signs of abuse or neglect. They help parents to be the sort of parents they want to be. That can

mean helping a parent at risk of becoming abusive or neglectful, or it can simply mean sharing tips with parents.

So, by the time children entered school, there would not be one child in the class who did not know how to hold a book or who missed valuable help for a developmental delay.

We would take a six-week break in summer and frequent breaks throughout the school year because schools that have done that find that children retain what they learn.

In February, we would plant peas, and then measure their progress up their trellises. In March, we would start seeds indoors and move them outside in May. We would watch the plants convert sun, water and soil nutrients into delicious fruits that we would eat in our cafeteria.

The school would work with WVU or Marshall University or anyone else interested in studying early childhood education over a long time. Over the decades, the research would guide changes and improvements.

In all of this fantasy, I don't have one groundbreaking idea. All these features have been tested somewhere. This is the sort of school I wish for any child. If only someone had several million dollars to invest.

— *This commentary was originally published in the June 25, 2005 Saturday Gazette-Mail and was reprinted with permission.*

Group helping WV students enroll in college

Workshops target first generation college students

By Randy Shillingburg

College Summit, a national nonprofit group whose mission is to increase the college enrollment rate of low-income students, this summer will conduct seven workshops for as many as 280 rising high school seniors in West Virginia to ensure more students who can make it in college actually make it to college.

The students who participate in a College Summit workshop undergo an almost magical transformation from not knowing what it takes to get to college to becoming prepared, confident and ahead of other students in their class. They learn how to select a college and how to apply for admission and financial aid.

College Summit will sponsor seven workshops this summer at Bluefield State College, Concord University, Fairmont State University, Marshall University, the University of Charleston, West Virginia State University, and West Virginia University.

The transition to college can be overwhelming for students, especially if they are first-generation college students. College Summit has achieved remarkable results nationwide, dramatically improving the college-going rate for students who attend the workshops.

Seventy-nine percent of the low-income, academically mid-tier students who attend College Summit summer workshops have enrolled in college. The college retention rate for these students is 80 percent.

College Summit is a proven “college transition system” that includes intensive summer workshops, a comprehensive curricu-

lum guide to lead students through the high school-to-life transition, and online tools to help students and educators effectively and efficiently manage the transition process.

Teachers and counselors who attend the workshops use the College Summit Navigator, a step-by-step curriculum guide, to help other seniors through the transition. In addition, College Summit has developed online tools that enable students to save their senior portfolios, while providing teachers and counselors with the ability to track students through the entire process.

College Summit will serve 19 high schools in nine West Virginia counties this summer and during the 2005-06 school year. Participating high schools include: Clay County High School; South Harrison High School, Harrison County; all Kanawha County high schools; Duval High School, Lincoln County; Big Creek and Mount View high schools, McDowell County; Matewan High School, Mingo County; Clay-Battelle High School, Monongalia County; Roane County High School; and Spring Valley, Tolsia and Wayne high schools, Wayne County.

Earlier this year, College Summit was one of 25 non-profits selected to receive the 2005 Social Capitalist Award from Fast Company magazine. The leading business magazine named College Summit as one of “the top 25 groups that are changing the world.”

More information about College Summit is available on the Web at www.collegesummit.org or by calling College Summit West Virginia at (304) 346-1983.

— *Editor’s note: Shillingburg is director of development for College Summit West Virginia.*

WVSBA Meetings

WVSBA Fall Conference ‘05

September 16/17, 2005

Radisson Hotel, Morgantown

Presidents Retreat ‘05

October 7/8, 2005

Stonewall Resort, Roanoke

The November Workshop: School Aid Formula & School Law

November 5, 2005

Stonewall Resort, Roanoke

Wisdom

“The test of a vocation is the love of the drudgery it involves.”

— *Logan Pearsall Smith*



WVSBA

Soundbites

“Terrific.” — *Senate Education Chairman Bob Plymale, D-Wayne, on the West Virginia Board of Education’s election of Steve Paine as state superintendent of schools.*

“As the pension payments increase, there will be less money for teacher pay raises, or anything else.” — *Judy Hale, president of the American Federation of Teachers - West Virginia, discussing defeat of the proposed pension bond amendment.*

“This evening I speak directly to the educational bureaucracy of the State of West Virginia: It is a botched democracy when non-elected officials use their bloody hammer on elected school board members, parents, children and the taxpayers of Lincoln County. It is political and intellectual arrogance to run over us, with such cock-sure power, saying we are incapable of knowing what is best for our children. There surely must be a day of reckoning for educational bureaucrats, but it most certainly is not through a democratic process. Even our elected school board members have been required to sign up to speak at your hearings. What a travesty . . .” — *Thomas Ramey, a Challenge West Virginia fellow discussing school closure in Lincoln County.*

Meanwhile in Washington State . . .

In a move that could have profound effects on school funding and testing, the Washington State Board of Education will be dissolved at year’s end and replaced with a new mix of people, including seven handpicked by Gov. Christine Gregoire.

The revamped board will take on a new responsibility: setting standards for high-school graduation and the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). The panel that currently oversees those functions will be eliminated. The new board will jettison oversight of teacher training and certification. That role will be picked up by the educator-run Professional Educator Standards Board.

Proponents say the changes will transform the board from a low-profile workhorse into a high-profile leader that will drive the state’s education agenda. But opponents argue that the new board may become overly political and may lose valuable expertise.

— *Seattle Times* (June 27, 2005).

The Legislature

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