



## Happy Holidays!

### *Member input is critical at Jan. 7 planning meetings*

*By Debbie Thompson, WVSBA president*

November and December — typically the two busiest months of the year for me — have certainly taken their toll on my health! I came down with the old-fashioned flu Nov. 9, which later was complicated by double pneumonia. Needless to say, I have spent most of my time confined to the sick bed! I'm feeling better, although I still am battling head and chest congestion.

Although I was unable to attend, Pleasants County welcomed WVSBA Executive Director Howard M. O'Cull, Ed.D., to our traditional legislative luncheon Dec. 7. Each year we invite a wide segment of our county government officials, local business leaders, school administrators, community service organization coordinators, religious leaders and health care providers to an enjoyable luncheon with our state senators and legislator, and later discuss their legislative concerns.

Again the luncheon proved successful. Dr. O'Cull discussed the legislative priorities for the school boards association, focusing on matters relating to the school aid formula. This issue is of grave importance to all local school boards!

Speaking of legislative issues, I want to remind all members of the association's Committee on Legislation (COL) that we will hold an important planning meeting Jan. 7 at the Flatwoods Days Inn. We will discuss legislative priorities and philosophies for the 2006 legislative session. Complete details are forthcoming. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. If you are your board's representative to the COL and know you will not be able to attend, please send an alternate. Your county's input is invaluable and the results of this meeting are critical to the effectiveness of our association.

We plan to hold two additional committee meetings on Jan. 7. We hope to schedule a meeting of the Communication Committee and the Constitution and By-laws Revision Committee. I am so proud of all the hard work by our association

committees. Thanks for your invaluable input and for taking the extra time to help improve the productivity of WVSBA.

I am pleased to report the Safety Committee met with Dr. O'Cull on Dec. 10 in Charleston to discuss revisions to our association's safety manual. Bill Raglin (Kanawha) and Steve Chancey (Jackson) are spearheading the changes. I really appreciate their efforts and apologize for not being able to attend the very successful meeting.

The WVSBA/WVBE School Board Member Training Standards Review Committee (TSRC) met in Charleston on Dec. 14. Approval for the association's February Winter Conference agenda was granted. A report also was given by WVBE member Sheila Hamilton, chairwoman of Subcommittee A, which was appointed to address school board members who do not receive their required hours of training. The committee confirmed that the seven hours of required training for all school board members must be approved training provided through the association.

In closing, I would like to share a poem with you that best depicts my sentiments for the holiday season.

### **Keeping Christmas**

May we all, in keeping Christmas,  
Look beyond the wrap and bows,  
Size and shape and colored tissue,  
To what matters far below.  
May we find our joy in giving,  
Not in counting what we get,  
Sharing all that is within us,  
Without grudging or regret.

May we all, in keeping Christmas,  
Always find the time to be  
Sweet and gentle and more loving,  
To those not as blessed as we.  
For it's not just friends and family,  
We should care about, you know,  
It's the young, the old, the lonely,  
Who are everywhere we go.

Life is short and time is fleeting,  
Fill the years with things that count,  
It takes more than good intentions,  
God demands the full amount  
Of our strength and our emotions,  
We must cast all else aside,  
He was born for us, and also  
It was for us that He died.

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# Briefly...

- **Online Training.** The West Virginia School Boards Association online training module regarding the state's Open Governmental Proceedings Act (OGPA) is now available on the WVSBA Web site, [www.wvsba.org](http://www.wvsba.org). The WVSBA staff encourages all county board members to participate in the online training. Members will receive one (1) hour of training for participation. A second online training module is planned for early April.
- **Self-assessments.** The county board member self-assessment deadline has been extended to Jan. 31, 2006. Legislation enacted in 2003 requires county boards of education to conduct self-assessments annually using an instrument approved by the state Board of Education. If county board members or superintendents have questions regarding the assessment instrument, please contact WVSBA Executive Director Howard M. O'Cull, Ed.D., at [hocull@wvsba.org](mailto:hocull@wvsba.org).
- **Committee on Legislation.** The Committee on Legislation (COL) will meet Jan. 7, 2006 at the Days Inn in Flatwoods. The meeting begins at 10 a.m. and concludes no later than 2 p.m. Lunch is on your own. The WVSBA staff encourages all committee members to attend and welcomes any board members who wish to participate.
- **Communications Committee.** The Communications Committee will meet Jan. 7, 2006 at the Days Inn in Flatwoods at 11:45 a.m., a luncheon meeting in conjunction with the COL meeting. All committee members are encouraged to attend this meeting, which relates to WVSBA communication efforts.
- **Policy and Resolutions Committee.** The Policy and Resolutions Committee is scheduled to meet Jan. 14, 2006 in Morgantown at 11 a.m. Meeting information will be mailed to committee members next week. The WVSBA staff encourages all committee members to attend.
- **Constitution and Bylaws Committee.** The Constitution and Bylaws Committee will meet Jan. 7, 2006 at the Days Inn in Flatwoods at 9 a.m. All board members are welcome to attend.
- **Winter Conference.** The WVSBA Winter Conference is Feb. 17-18 at the Charleston Marriott. A joint legislative reception with the West Virginia Association of School Administrators will be at 6 p.m. on Feb. 16 (Thursday) at the Marriott. Friday, Feb. 17, has been set aside for a legislative visit to the Capitol. Board members are required to make their own appointments with their legislators. The first general session of the conference begins Friday, Feb. 17 at 1 p.m. The conference will conclude on Saturday, Feb. 18 at 11:15 a.m. Registration information has been forwarded to county board executive secretaries. Please contact your county board office to register for the conference.
- **E-News.** Beginning in 2006, electronic editions of *WVSBA Monthly* and *The Legislature* will be in HTML format for easy online reading. This format also will allow site visitors to immediately access a copy of the bill or legislative proposal being reviewed. The WVSBA staff encourages members with Internet access to use this method to receive the publications. If you wish to join our electronic mailing list, please notify Shirley Davidson at [sdavidson@wvsba.org](mailto:sdavidson@wvsba.org) before Jan. 1, 2006.
- **Web site updates.** Members are encouraged to access the WVSBA Web site, [www.wvsba.org](http://www.wvsba.org), for updated state, regional and local news. The site also has information on grant sources, educational resources and programming.

**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.

W.Va. School Boards Association  
PO Box 1008  
Charleston, WV 25324  
(304) 346-0571  
(304) 346-0572 fax

**WVSBA.ORG**

Debbie Thompson (Pleasants), President  
[debthom@charter.net](mailto:debthom@charter.net)  
Howard M. O'Cull, Ed. D., Executive Director, Editor  
[hocull@wvsba.org](mailto:hocull@wvsba.org)  
Diane Slaughter, APR, CAE, Layout and Design  
[info@homesteadlane.com](mailto:info@homesteadlane.com)  
Shirley M. Davidson, Administrative Assistant,  
Production and Circulation  
[sdavidson@wvsba.org](mailto:sdavidson@wvsba.org)

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## HAPPY HOLIDAY

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So this year, in keeping Christmas,  
Mindful of what you're about,  
Use love as your legal tender,  
For it never will run out.  
You can never over-spend it,  
For no matter what you do,  
All the love you give to others,  
...Will be given back to you!

*Grace E. Easley*

May all that Christmas really means — peace, joy, and love — be yours this season and throughout the new year!  
Until next time...be kind to one another!

*Debbie*

# Training Committee addresses required training hours and grant program

The West Virginia School Boards Association/West Virginia Board of Education School Board Member Training Standards Review Committee (TSRC) met Dec. 14 in Charleston. The agenda covered county board members' training hours, the WVSBA Winter Conference program and the West Virginia School Board Effectiveness Project Grant (WVSBEP).

Howard M. O'Cull, Ed.D., WVSBA executive director, reported on the county board members' training hours. The TSRC approved Dr. O'Cull's recommendation to provide the WVSBA Online Training Module and videotapes to the few members who need to complete their seven hours of training by Dec. 31, 2005. Board members are allowed to obtain three hours of credit through videotape training. The TSRC also approved the second online training module "Effective Hearings." This module will be available by the first of April.

The WVSBA Winter Conference tentative program was presented to the committee for approval. The program will consist of general sessions of "Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills" and "The ABCs of Effective County Board Hearings" on Friday, Feb. 17 at 1 p.m. Three workshops are slated for Friday evening. The activities resume Saturday, Feb. 18 at 8:45 am with general session consisting of "Closing the Achievement Gap: Lessons for all County Boards" and "Regional Education Service Agencies and County Boards: Mis-

sion for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." The program as approved is tentative, as presenters may change.

Dr. O'Cull presented the proposed expenditures for the West Virginia School Board Effectiveness Project grant. The grant will be used for a third county board "Minutes Study," to "Develop a County Board of Self-Assessment Module Relating to Student Achievement," to "Develop a Second Edition – Handbook for County Board Members/Printing of Handbook" and to conduct a "Study Relating to Model County Board/Superintendent Relations Training." The committee approved the proposed \$25,000 in expenditures.

WVBE member Sheila Hamilton reported on the Subcommittee A recommendation about the Regional Education Service Agencies (RESA) providing county board member training. The subcommittee recommended the required seven hours of training be provided to county board members by WVSBA. Any additional training from RESAs would be approved by the TSRC as supplemental hours—not counting toward the seven required hours of training. All training programs must be approved by the TSRC. The TSRC accepted the recommendation.

The TSRC will meet in early April in Morgantown. All state and county board members are welcome to attend.



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Greg Bailey  
gbailey@bowlrice.com  
Claudia Bentley  
cbentley@bowlrice.com  
Norwood Bentley  
nbentley@bowlrice.com  
Rick Boothby  
rboothby@bowlrice.com  
Kim Coyle  
kcoyle@bowlrice.com  
Howard Seafar  
hseafar@bowlrice.com  
Rebecca Tindler  
rtindler@bowlrice.com



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# *West Virginia School Boards Association*

# Winter Conference '06

# Tentative Agenda

## **Thursday, February 16**

6:00 p.m. WVSBA/WVASA Reception with Legislators

## **Friday, February 17**

8:00 a.m. Capitol Visits

11:00 a.m. Registration

1:00 p.m. General Sessions I

*"Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills"*

Invited Presenters: Steven L. Paine, State Superintendent of Schools / Ken Kay, President, Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, Tucson, Az.

or

*"The ABCs of Effective County Board Hearings"*

Invited Presenter: Howard E. Seufer Jr., Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love, WVSBA Counsel

2:45 p.m. Repeat General Sessions I

4:15 p.m. Adjournment for General Sessions I

4:30 p.m. Delegate Assembly

Dinner on your own

7:00 p.m. Workshops: Choose one

*"Issues Relating to Student and Employee Code of Conduct/Bullying: County Board Responsibilities"*

Invited Presenters: Don Chapman, Assistant Director, Student Services and Health Promotion / West Virginia Department of Education

or

*"National Board of Professional Teaching Standards: County Board Role"*

Invited Presenter: West Virginia Department of Education Representative

or

*"Early Childhood Education: What the Research Shows"*

Invited Presenter: Cathy Jones, Coordinator, Early Childhood / Even Start / West Virginia Department of Education

8:00 p.m. Workshops Repeated: Choose 1

## **Saturday, February 18**

7:30 a.m. Breakfast

8:45 a.m. General Sessions II

*"Closing the Achievement Gap: Lessons for All County Boards"*

Invited Presenter: Assistant Superintendent, Division of School Improvement Services

or

*"Regional Education Service Agencies and County Boards: Mission for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"*

Invited Presenter: Chuck Nichols, RESA III Executive Director and Various RESA Executive Directors

10:00 a.m. Repeat of Above Programs

11:15 a.m. Winter Conference Program Adjournment