

March 11, 2010

School Board Announces Finalists for NCSS Superintendent

After reviewing more than fifty applications and interviewing six candidates, the Newton County Board of Education has selected the following candidates (listed in alphabetical order) as finalists in its search for superintendent:

- **Steven Excell Ballowe, Ph.D.**
- **Timothy Gerard Lull, Ed. D.**
- **Gary Steven Mathews, Ph.D.**

“We reviewed all of the applications that met the qualifications set out by the board through GSBA and were very impressed by the caliber of applicants,” said Cathy Dobbs, Chair of the Newton County Board of Education. “We interviewed six of those candidates over a two-day period and have now narrowed it down to our final three. The board members will now work together to determine who would be the best person to lead our school system. Our next step will then be to negotiate a contract with that person. Our hope is to have this done as soon as possible.”

Information on the three finalists is listed below in alphabetical order:

STEVEN EXCELL BALLOWE, Ph. D.

Dr. Steven Ballowe currently serves as principal of Glynn Academy in Glynn County School District, Georgia, where he has been employed since 2008. From 2001 to 2008, Dr. Ballowe served as School Superintendent for Gainesville City Schools, Georgia, where he earned state and national recognition for developing the “Gainesville Model” which he implemented in his district to improve student achievement. At the time, Gainesville City Schools was a Title I district with over 75 percent minority students. Test scores in the district routinely ranked in the bottom quartile for the state. By 2008, student achievement in Gainesville City Schools reached the top five percent of school districts in Georgia and the Georgia School Boards Association was routinely utilizing the “Gainesville Model” as a presentation model for new school board members.

Dr. Ballowe has extensive school system leadership experience, having also served as a Deputy Superintendent for Beaufort County Schools, South Carolina; Executive Director of Governors School, Virginia; and Superintendent of Hopewell Schools in Virginia. He has also served as a principal and assistant principal two South Carolina school districts. Dr. Ballowe began his career in education as a teacher in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Dr. Ballowe earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in History from the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia, in 1971 and his Masters in Education from Lynchburg College, Virginia, in 1977. He earned his Education Specialist from the University of South Carolina in 1982 and his Doctor of Philosophy from the University of South Carolina in 1986.

Dr. Ballowe has authored *Georgia MAGIC* and *The Gainesville Model* and has presented at numerous workshop sessions for the Georgia School Board's Association. When not at work, Dr. Ballowe enjoys spending time with his family. His hobbies and interests include fishing and sports and he recently earned his green belt in Taekwondo.

TIMOTHY GERARD LULL, Ed. D.

Dr. Timothy Lull served as Superintendent of the Walton County School System, Georgia, from April 4, 2004 until his resignation in September, 2009. He previously served as Superintendent of Opp City Schools in Opp, Alabama from 2001 to 2004. Dr. Lull also has numerous years of experience as a principal and assistant principal of schools in Alabama. He began his career in education at a teacher and coach in Huntsville, Alabama.

Dr. Lull was appointed by the Georgia Governor's Office of Workforce Development to the Policy Academy Bio-Tech Team to develop strategies to attract bio-tech industry to Georgia in 2007. Dr. Lull has been an adjunct professor for Troy State University at Dothan and was an instructor at the Alabama Renaissance Technology Academy for School Leaders at the Alabama State Department of Education, where he worked to improve computer skills of superintendents and principals and encouraged the greater implementation of technology in the schools.

In addition to his career in education, Dr. Lull has extensive experience in the military, having served approximately 30 years in the Alabama Army National Guard. During that time, Dr. Lull served as a platoon leader, unit commander, and deputy commander. He also served on the staff of the Adjutant General before retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel in 2001.

Over the years, Dr. Lull has volunteered his time by serving on the Board of Directors of the Walton Career Academy, the Walton County Board of Health, the Walton County Chamber of Commerce, the American Heart Association of Morgan County, and the Boys and Girls clubs of Morgan County.

Dr. Lull earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education from Florence State University, Alabama, in 1972 and his Masters in Physical Education from the University of Tennessee in 1973. He received his certification in Educational Leadership from the University of North Alabama in 1984 and his Education Specialist Degree in Education Leadership from North Alabama in 1997. Dr. Lull earned his Doctor in Education from the University of Alabama in 2000.

His outside interests include the construction and renovation of homes, jogging, photography, traveling, water sports, and weightlifting.

GARY STEVEN MATHEWS, Ph. D

Dr. Gary Mathews currently serves as the Superintendent of the Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools in Williamsburg, Virginia, a position he has held for five years. Overall, Dr. Mathews has over 18 years of experience as a school district superintendent. He previously served as superintendent of Carroll Independent School District, Texas; Rockwood School District; Missouri; East Baton Rouge School District, Louisiana; and St. Johns County School District, Florida. He also served as an Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services for the Spring Branch Independent School District, Texas and

the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum for Jackson Public Schools, Mississippi. He also has experience as a high school principal. Dr. Mathews began his education career in 1976 as a high school teacher at JFK High School in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Dr. Mathews has earned numerous awards and honors throughout his career in education. The Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development named him Virginia Curriculum Leader of the Year in 2007 and the Education Technology Think Tank, Washington, D.C., awarded him the ET3 TEC Champion Leadership Award in 2006. Dr. Mathews was named the Louisiana Superintendent of the Year in 1998 and in 1996 the Public Relations Association of Louisiana named him the Louisiana Communicator of the Year.

Dr. Mathews is a member of the American Association of School Administrators, the American Educational Research Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Kappa Delta Pi, Phi Delta Kappa, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, and the Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. He has also served in numerous civic organizations including: Big Brothers/Big Sisters; the Rotary Club; YMCA; Boy Scouts; United Way; and Little League.

Dr. Mathews earned his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Louisiana State University in 1975 and his Masters in Educational Administration from Loyola University, Louisiana in 1979. Dr. Mathews earned both his Education Specialist in Educational Administration and his Ph. D. in Educational Administration from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1981 and 1982 respectively.

His hobbies and outside interests include the Rotary Club, Little League Baseball, swimming, fishing, college and professional athletic events, and the arts.

The applications of each of the three candidates may be seen at the Newton County Board of Education Office located 2109 Newton Drive, NE, Covington, Georgia, 30014. The superintendent will be chosen from the list above at a future meeting of the Newton County Board of Education.

For more information, contact Ms. Sherri Viniard, Director of Public Relations by email at viniard.sherri@newton.k12.ga.us or by phone at 770-784-2908.
