

CTAE rolls out cross-curricular programs for 2018-2019

By Mark Smith
North Georgia News
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The Union County Schools Career, Technical and Agricultural Education

Program held its yearly Advisory Board Meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 12, in the Multipurpose Room of Union County High School.

Teachers, staff, students and community stakeholders were present at the meeting, where the various CTAE groups separated into breakout sessions following the introductions.

The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the community to and involve them in cross-curricular planning.

"This is one of the most important meetings of the year, because it kicks off the mixture between community and what we actually do in our school," said UCHS Principal C.T. Hussion. "We get to hear a lot. We get a lot of feedback."

"What we've (done) in the past is to stress employability

skills," said Hussion. "Our students are extremely smart coming out of school, but then they don't really have that applications side. And that's normal. They're young, they're kids."

Hussion said the solution they've come up with is to combine the CTAE Program with academic and fine arts courses. He referred to this as cross-curricular learning.

"You can take geometry and forestry, for instance, and forestry does tree height and diameter," said Hussion. "But geometry can go out there and see the circumference of the trees and how high it is using the Pythagorean Theorem, and they can really see (the academics) in action."

Hussion's favorite cross-curricular activity this year is combining barbecue with chemistry.

"If any of you know, when you cook Boston butts, something happens at about 160 degrees, right?" said Hussion. "So, our teachers are researching and will teach them the chemistry side of that."

There will be 50 to 70 cross-curricular classes like these, said Hussion, "plus, we get to eat. So, we're excited."

CTAE Director Josh Davis said the programs are career-related pathways or electives at Union County High School.

"A pathway consists of three classes that students take at the high school level," he said. "We do offer 11 CTAE



Union County Schools CTAE Director Josh Davis at a recent stakeholder meeting involving school representatives and members of the community.

Photo by Mark Smith

pathways here at the high school, and we also have two at the middle school."

The capstone to a CTAE pathway is the work-based learning program, said Davis, where students get to go out in the community and do an internship in their chosen field.

"In the State of Georgia, the average graduation rate for high schools is about 80 percent for seniors," said Davis (though UCHS is much higher). "For seniors that take and complete the CTAE pathway, that graduation rate jumps up to 97 percent."

"The reason for that, or the way a lot of people think of it, is because these students are engaging and getting involved

— (they're) able to apply their academic skills in real world settings."

One misconception about the CTAE Program, said Davis, is that some people think students are being forced to choose a career before they're ready. What the CTAE Program does is allow students to explore the possibilities while they're in high school.

"Labor trends show that the average person changes jobs seven to 10 times in their lifetime," said Davis. "Why not start making some of those decisions as early as you possibly can?"

The high school has brand new health care labs and a science lab, all of which are truly state-of-the-art.

Health care providers at Union General Hospital who have toured the health care labs at UCHS have spoken very highly them.

Mitch Griggs, executive director of the Union County Development Authority, said that the high school now has state-of-the-art equipment for an engineering lab that was originally meant for the North Georgia Technical College.

Griggs said the lab facility planned for the NGTC campus never came to fruition, so a partnership was struck with the high school, which had the facility, and the equipment was installed there.

Both the high school CTAE students and NGTC students use the facility at the high school now.



The purpose of the school stakeholder meetings is to bring students and faculty together with business and other community leaders as another step toward employability after high school.

Photo by Mark Smith

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to at 14.8 percent. That's really what we needed.

"But I also decided in the end that we should really have to work at it, work hard at it — make sure we try to keep our taxes as low as we can and still provide the services we think are necessary."

"Then, if something happens and we can't bring it back up, and I have to come back to the public next year, I may raise it that other little bit. But I'm hoping in the meantime that we'll have some other good fortunes."

Paris made it clear that he has no intentions of lowering the high standards of equipment and care that make the various county services, like emergency medical, fire and law enforcement, top of the line as they are today in Union County.

The commissioner was also thankful that Hurricane Florence didn't come knocking on Union County's door, and

he reiterated the compassion Union County residents had expressed for the victims of that storm.

In new business, Paris is requesting that the City of Blairsville annex county property in and around Union County High School, totaling 86.12 acres.

As previously reported, the Blairsville City Council voted on Sept. 4 to approve the annexation of 86.12 acres from the county as proposed by the Union County Board of Education.

The annexation will make emergency response by the City of Blairsville easier for the school system.

An agreement between Union County and the Georgia Department of Transportation was struck in the amount of \$31,374 for the period July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019. GDOT will cover half the operational cost of the Union County Public Transportation bus.

A lease for office space at the Pat Haralson Memorial Civic Center, 185 Welborn Street, Suite 8, between Ninth District Opportunity (www.ndo.org) and Union County was approved in the amount of \$230 per month for a total of \$2,760 for the period Oct. 1, 2018, to Sept. 30, 2019.

Union County will purchase its propane gas from Freeman Gas for \$1.19 per gallon for the period Sept. 1, 2018, through Aug. 31, 2019.

Paris proclaimed Sept. 17 through Sept. 23, 2018, to be Constitution Week, and Sunday, Sept. 17, 2018, to be Constitution Day in Union County.

He also proclaimed Oct. 21 through Oct. 27, 2018, to be Friends of the Library Week in Union County.

September 2018 was proclaimed to be both Suicide Prevention Month and National Recovery Month in Union County.

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Mr. Aaron Patterson," said Lt. Osborn. "The sheriff called it in, and deputies responded to write citations because he had a suspended driver's license, no insurance on a motorcycle, defective tires and more."

"The sheriff knew what was going on with this stolen property, knew I was looking, so he contacted me. We brought Patterson to jail on his traffic offenses."

Deputies circled back on Sept. 19 to arrest Meeks at his home for the alleged crime of theft, according to Lt. Osborn.

Correction:

In an article dated Sept. 19, 2018, titled "Hospital sets new record with 71 births in August," the North Georgia News incorrectly identified Sheila Whitener as the wife of Dr. David Breedlove. Whitener is a midwife in Dr. Breedlove's family medical practice. Shelly Breedlove is the wife of Dr. David Breedlove, and they have been happily married for many years.

Osborn believes he's found the owner of the Honda four-wheeler, but the rest of the suspected stolen property

remains part of an ongoing investigation, according to Lt. Osborn.