Gaston County Schools
Board of Education
Monday. March 15, 2021
Meeting 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The Gaston County Board of Education met in a regular session on Monday, March 15, 2021 in the Board Room, 943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC. The Board of Education meeting was held virtually and conducted in accordance with social distancing requirements related to the coronavirus pandemic. The meeting was live on Spectrum Cable Channel 21 and the Gaston County Board of Education YouTube page. Those Board Members in attendance were: Chairman Jeff K. Ramsey, Vice Chairman Dot Cherry, Kevin Collier, Justin Davis, Lee Dedmon, Dot Guthrie (virtual), Steve Hall, Robbie Lovelace and Brent Moore.

Additional attendees include: Superintendent Dr. W. Jeffrey Booker, Attorney Sonya McGraw, Associate Superintendents Melissa Balknight (virtual) and Gary Hoskins (virtual), Chief Communications Officer Todd Hagans (virtual), Administrative Assistant Andrea Stephens and Board Clerk Dana Luoto.

Chairman Ramsey called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Invocation
Superintendent Booker led the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance
Superintendent Booker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Adoption - Action
The Board considered Agenda Adoption – Action

Motion to adopt the Agenda as presented was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

Good News – Information
Typically, we open each Board Meeting with "good news" about our schools, students and employees. While due to circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, we are unable to have appearances of guests we still have individuals and events worthy of recognition this afternoon. Superintendent Booker shared the following items of good news:

Superintendent Booker announced that we have 15 high school students who have been chosen to attend the prestigious North Carolina Governor's School program.

Superintendent Booker recognized the five outstanding school administrators who have been chosen as finalists for Gaston County Principal of the Year. The winner will be announced this spring as part of our Evening of Excellence celebration. The finalists are:

•Kevin Doran – Cherryville High School
•Jill Payne – Hawks Nest STEAM Academy
•Loretta Reed – Woodhill Elementary
•Torben Ross – Robinson Elementary
•Tyler West – Pinewood Elementary

Superintendent Booker recognized Stuart W. Cramer High School theater arts director Chuck Stowe who is serving this year as president of the North Carolina Theater Arts Educators organization. One of his duties as president is signing the statewide "Theater in Our Schools" Month proclamation that brings attention to the importance of theater arts in our schools.

Superintendent Booker thanked the Greater Charlotte Auto Dealers Association for donating more than 3,000 bottles of hand sanitizer to Gaston County Schools.

Superintendent Booker congratulated Bessemer City High School senior Kaytlinn Lawson who won first place in the Keep Gastonia Beautiful Arbor Day art contest.

Superintendent Booker reported that Page Primary has installed a new art kiln at the school which was bought with funds raised through the school's virtual dance-a-thon.

Superintendent Booker reported that New Hope Elementary collected more than $12,000 for the American Heart Association.

Superintendent Booker thanked the community volunteers from the United Way's Reading Soul Mates program who are working virtually with students at Sherwood Elementary to build their literacy skills and a love for reading.

Superintendent Booker thanked teachers at Pleasant Ridge Elementary who teamed up with the Gaston County Virtual Academy to provide engaging and interactive experiences for fourth grade students in the following areas: art, music, physical education, band, innovation station and counseling.

Public Expression – Information
Ryan Simms
105 N. Woodcliff Lane
Mt. Holly, NC 28120
RE: Retiring the Red Raider Mascot

Lena Ware
2161 Southridge Drive
Belmont, NC 28012
RE: Retiring the Red Raider Mascot

Vy Hoang
228 River Loop Road
Belmont, NC 28012
RE: Retiring the Red Raider Mascot

Mike Davis
107 Piedmont Road
Belmont, NC 28012
RE: Retiring the Red Raider Mascot
Although Mr. Davis completed the Request to Speak Form, he did not appear at the meeting.

Natalie O'Connor
3248 Ashwood Park Drive
Belmont, NC 28012
RE: Retiring the Red Raider Mascot

Rebecca LaClaire
No address given
RE: Retiring the Red Raider Mascot
Although Ms. LaClaire completed the Request to Speak Form, she did not appear at the meeting.

Wendy Moore
P.O. Box 1685
Pembroke, NC 28372
RE: Retiring the Red Raider Mascot
Although Ms. Moore completed the Request to Speak Form, she did not appear at the meeting.

Hayley Brezeale
1850 Ashley Crossing Lane
Charleston, SC 29414
RE: Retiring the Red Raider Mascot

Jason Rumfelt
4502 Brent Wood Drive
Belmont, NC 28012
RE: Keeping the Red Raider Mascot

Lauren Frady
1327 Perfection Avenue
Belmont, NC 28012
RE: Retiring the Red Raider Mascot

Approval/Correction of Minutes
The Board considered Approval/Correction of Minutes – Action

Motion to adopt minutes of December 7, 2020 (Organizational Meeting), February 1, 2021 (Legislative Meeting), February 8, 2021 (Special Meeting) and February 15, 2021 (Regular Meeting).

Ms. Dot Cherry requested correction be made to the December 7, 2020 minutes (page 12 fourth paragraph should read Chairman Ramsey opened the floor for...).

Motion to adopt minutes as corrected was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. Brent Moore; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

COVID-19 Update – Information
Chairman Ramsey recognized Superintendent Booker who introduced Danny Benjamin, MD PhD Professor of Pediatrics, Duke University and Co-Chair, ABC Science Collaborative. Dr. Benjamin presented a PowerPoint on COVID-19 Update. Superintendent Booker presented a PowerPoint on Re-Entry Action Taken to Date. Discussion Followed.

Motion
Motion was made by Mr. Justin Davis; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry that the Board

> **Move to Plan A districtwide beginning April 12, 2021 four (4) days per week with Wednesday being a remote day for students and to authorize the Superintendent to temporarily close schools or classrooms based on exposures in the class or the school and to continue to suspend policies where necessary due to COVID-19.**

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

(View PowerPoints)

Operations Committee Report – Information
Chairman Ramsey recognized Ms. Dot Cherry of the Operations Committee who provided a summary of topics considered and discussed at the most recent meeting.

(View report)

Curriculum & Instruction Committee Report – Information
Chairman Ramsey recognized Mrs. Robbie Lovelace of the Curriculum & Instruction Committee who provided a summary of topics considered and discussed at the most recent meeting.

(View report)

Gaston County Schools Calendar 2021-2022 – Action
Chairman Ramsey recognized Mr. Joey Clinton who presented a PowerPoint on School Calendar Survey Data. Discussion followed.

Motion
Motion was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mr. Justin Davis that the Board

> **Approve the Gaston County Schools Second Draft Calendar for 2021-2022**

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

(View PowerPoint)

Gaston Early College Calendar 2021-2022 – Action
Chairman Ramsey recognized Mr. Joey Clinton who presented the Gaston Early College draft calendar for 2021-2022. Discussion followed.

Motion was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mr. Justin Davis that the Board

> **Approve the Gaston Early College Calendar for 2021-2022**

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

(View Calendar)

Chairman Ramsey requested a brief break at 7:15 p.m. due to the length of the meeting. The meeting resumed at 7:25 p.m.

2021-2022 Superintendent's Budget Request – Information
Chairman Ramsey recognized Mr. Gary Hoskins who presented a PowerPoint on Superintendent's Budget Request. Discussion followed.

(View PowerPoint)

Funding for Capital Projects – Action
Chairman Ramsey recognized Mr. Gary Hoskins who gave an update on funding for Capital Projects. Proceeds received from the sale of school bond funds are deposited by the County into an interest-bearing account. As the school district uses these funds, the funds are withdrawn from the County's interest-bearing account and used for the authorized capital needs of the school district. Over time, the interest earned on these unused school bond proceeds increases and needs to be reallocated back to the school district. We must request approval from the County to reallocate funds in order to be able to use these funds for the capital needs of the school district.

In 2016, the County issued $50 million bonds for the purpose of building the new Pleasant Ridge Elementary School and Stanley Middle School. These two schools were completed under budget resulting in unused proceeds of $707,550. We must request approval from the County to reallocate these funds in order to be able to use these funds for the capital needs of the school district. These reallocated funds would be used to provide funding for a paving project at Bessemer City Middle School.

Motion
Motion was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. Brent Moore that the Board

> **Authorize the Superintendent or his designee to request that Gaston County Commissioners reallocate interest earned from school bonds in the amount of $2,053,668 to be used to fund capital projects throughout the district. Also, authorize the Superintendent or his designee to request that the unused principal from the 2016 school bond in the amount of $707,550 be reallocated for the purpose of funding a paving project at Bessemer City Middle School.**

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Academic Services Update – Information
Chairman Ramsey recognized Dr. Balknight who introduced staff. Staff presented a PowerPoint on Academic Services Update. Discussion followed.

(View PowerPoint)

High School Exam Schedules – Spring 2021-2022 Traditional High Schools and Gaston Early College – Action
Chairman Ramsey recognized Mrs. Cristi Bostic who presented a PowerPoint on Exam Schedules. Discussion followed.

Motion
Motion was made by Mr. Justin Davis; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon that the Board
Approve Final Exam Schedule for Traditional High Schools and Gaston Early College

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

(View PowerPoint)

Consent Agenda – Action
The Board considered the Consent Agenda:
A. Recommended Personnel
B. Budget Amendments & Budget Transfers
C. Construction/Repair Change Orders
D. Ashbrook High School Elevator Update
E. Highland School of Technology Renovations
F. Hunter Huss Auditorium Renovation
G. Southwest Middle School Elevator Update
H. Contracts
—School Nurses Contract Update

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

Superintendent's Comments
Superintendent Booker announced that registration for kindergarten and pre-kindergarten is taking place now and parents can complete the registration process on the district website.

Superintendent Booker reported that one year ago Governor Cooper announced the closure of school buildings as concerns about the coronavirus swept across the country. That was the beginning of "unprecedented times" for school districts as we "navigated the uncharted waters" of conducting school like we never have before. All of us are cautiously optimistic that we are turning the corner with the pandemic, but we know that we must stay vigilant. As we continue to look forward to better days and an eventual return to normal, we cannot say "thank you" enough for the leadership and support we have experienced over the past year from the board room to the classroom.

Superintendent Booker thanked our local healthcare partners, the Gaston County Department of Health and Human Services and CaroMont Health for their efforts to provide the COVID-19 vaccine for educators.

Superintendent Booker announced that report cards will be distributed for all grade levels on Thursday, March 18.

Superintendent Booker announced that Friday, April 2 is the spring holiday which means no school for students and employees and our central office locations will be closed. The week of April 5-9 is spring break week and our school buildings will be closed and central office buildings will be supporting any concerns.

Chairman Ramsey wished Mrs. Robbie Lovelace a "Happy Birthday."

Closed Session
Chairman Ramsey asked the Board to consider going into Closed Session under, N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) Consultation with Attorney and N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel

Motion to go into Closed Session was made by Mr. Kevin Collier; seconded by Mr. Justin Davis; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

The Board went into Closed Session at 8:23 p.m.

The Board returned to Open Session at 8:29 p.m.

On behalf of the Board Mr. Kevin Collier reported the following:

The lawsuit captioned *T.J. Solomon, II as Guardian Ad Litem for A. Payne vs. The Gaston County Board of Education, Joey Clinton and Lorinda Brusie*, in Gaston County Superior Court, Case No. 19-CVS-319 has been settled. The Board's insurer, Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, agreed to pay plaintiff $70,000 in exchange for a full dismissal of the litigation. The settlement is not an admission of liability, but rather a strategic decision by the Board's insurance company to avoid the costs of further litigation and to obtain a dismissal and full release of all claims. A copy of the settlement agreement will be maintained in the Board's records.

Adjournment
All business having been conducted, Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mr. Steve Hall; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

The Board Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Approved:

Jeff K. Ramsey, Chairman
[Corporate Seal]

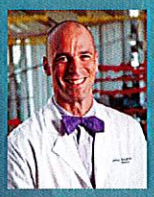
W. Jeffrey Booker, Secretary

Date Approved: 4/19/2021

Gaston County Schools

COVID-19 UPDATE

Presentation to the Board of Education **March 15, 2021**



THE ABC SCIENCE COLLABORATIVE

Danny Benjamin, MD PhD
Professor of Pediatrics, Duke University
Co-Chair, ABC Science Collaborative

Kanecia Zimmerman, MD
Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Duke University
Co-Chair, ABC Science Collaborative

- Pair scientists and physicians with school leaders to provide current information on COVID-19 to guide decision-making.

ABC Science Collaborative

Danny Benjamin MD PHD & Kanecia Zimmerman MD MPH

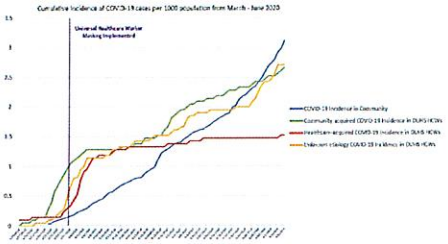
Danny Benjamin, MD, PhD
Co-chair
Distinguished Professor,
Epidemiology Therapeutics
4 children, CHCCS/college

Kanecia Zimmerman, MD
Co-chair
Associate Professor,
Critical Care
2 children, Durham

Dramatic care vs. routine Care

- Prior to being approached about schools, we had months of experience providing medical care in the pandemic
- There is a substantial difference in risk providing care for intubated, critically ill, COVID test+ patients and routine medical care
- Routine care: test status unknown, no symptoms, provider with a medical mask (not N95) and patient/family member with cloth mask
- In rooms 8' x 8', variable ventilation
- March 2020-December 2020
- January 2021-present

How we got started



- Prior to universal masking compliance (mid-April), the **red line** (HCW work-related infections) quickly rises throughout March and early April. Compare the slope of the **red line to the blue line** (community) prior to policy and widespread adoption. After we had the masking policy and widespread adoption, the new infections in HCW **related to being at work virtually stopped**.
- While work-acquired COVID-19 dropped to near-nil, HCW still acquired plenty of COVID-19. But April-December we got COVID-19 in the community, just not at work*
- So when school boards called in summer 2020, we talked to them about infection control rather than community metrics
- Key question for all of us: can we have a safe environment in schools
- Of note: these data have been replicated in hundreds of hospitals across physicians, nurses, technicians, cafeteria workers, transportation, custodial services, phlebotomists. This work has also been replicated in outpatient clinics, free clinics, health department clinics where the ventilation is poor

- *Now that we have been vaccinated, risk is extremely low

Secondary transmission in schools: results

Table 2. Description of the 11 Districts within the ABC Science Collaborative

District	County Population	Staff 2019	Students 2019	Hispanic[1]	African American	Asian	White	Multiple Races[2]	Students in Person	Primary Infections
1	38,755	967	4971	11	4	1	78	5	3972	60
2	28,150	626	3087	12	<1	<1	82	4	2163	43
3	43,965	1073	6354	15	7	1	72	5	5068	69
4	223,842	3847	31116	15	22	2	54	7	19434	315
5	N/A[3]	727	4359	26	19	5	40	10	2835	24
6	184,023	3399	21829	14	14	3	63	6	16523	91
7	10,194	254	1109	11	35	<1	47	7	628	6
8	102,950	1733	12461	14	14	1	63	7	8815	69
9	N/A[3]	330	1727	21	8	1	64	6	1024	7
10	181,005	4228	25043	12	44	1	35	6	12700	83
11	38,236	1000	5361	26	3	<1	66	4	4284	6

[1]North Carolina reports ethnicity as a separate category within race.
[2]Races with <1% for all districts listed include Native American and Pacific Islander.
[3]Sites 5 and 9 are city districts and, therefore, county population cannot be estimated.

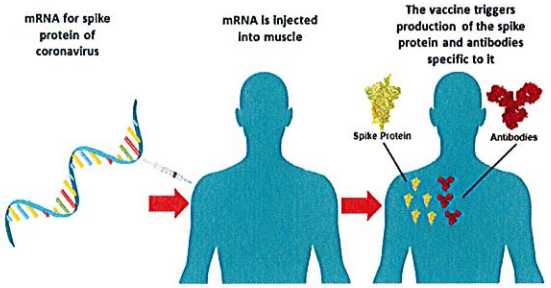
- 11 school districts; >90,000 students and staff attended school in-person; first 9 weeks of instruction
- 773 community-acquired SARS-CoV-2 infections were documented by molecular testing
- Through contact tracing, additional 32 infections were acquired within schools
- No instances of child-to-adult transmission of SARS-CoV-2 were reported within schools

Interim Analysis* of Winter Surge Data
10/26/2020 – 2/28/2021

Unique Number	Size	*Community Cases 1/26	Community Infections	Within School Transmission	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	Sports Related
009	Small	451	50	4	1	0	3	
005	Small	435	111	0	0	0	0	0
080	Small	292	116	6	3	1	2	2
107	Med	513	229	1	0	0	1	1
094	Med	441	315	11	3	2	6	
057	Med	468	131	37	9	4	24	24
089	Med	439	293	11	5	3	3	0
062	Med	499	497	12	0	0	12	10
112	Med	460	405	27	17	4	6	
060	Large	624	427	53	32	6	11	
017	Large	442	306	26	12	2	12	9
029	Large	542	953	2	0	0	0	0
Totals			**3,833**	**190**	**82**	**22**	**80**	**46**

*data in as of 3/12/2021, this analysis is preliminary; sports data not finalized

How do mRNA Vaccines work?



Facts about COVID-19 mRNA Vaccines

They cannot give someone COVID-19.

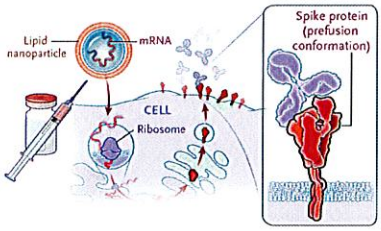
- mRNA vaccines do not use the live virus that causes COVID-19.

They do not affect or interact with our DNA in any way.

- mRNA never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA (genetic material) is kept.
- The cell breaks down and gets rid of the mRNA soon after it is finished using the instructions.

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines
Nature 2020;580:576-577

Ingredients in the COVID-19 vaccines



- mRNA
- Lipids (cholesterol)
  - *Linked with polyethylene glycol*
- Salts
- Sugar
- Buffers

- *No preservatives*
- *No embryonic cells*
- *No additives*

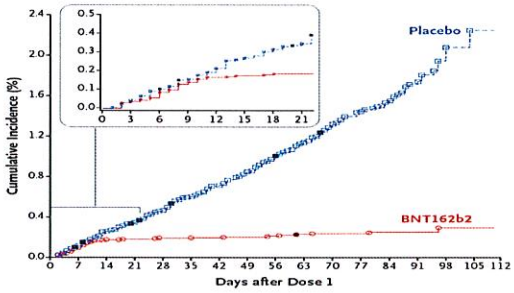
Baden LR, et al. N Engl J Med. 2020. PMID: 33378609
Polack FP, et al. N Engl J Med. 2020. PMID: 33301246

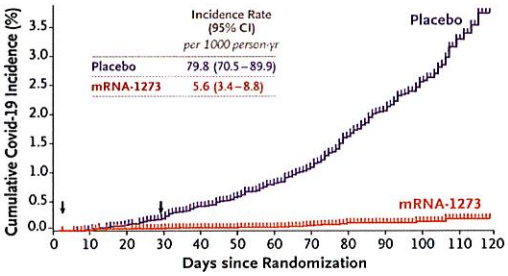
2 Authorized mRNA vaccines

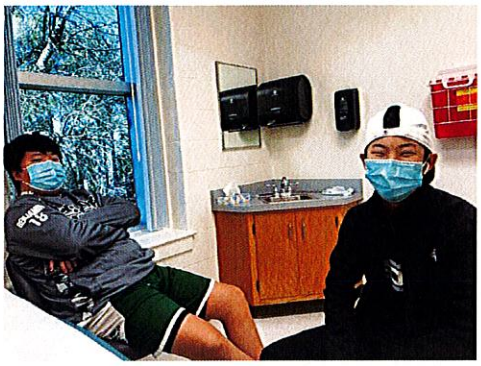
2 Randomized Trials and Effectiveness studies

mRNS spike protein	Pfizer	Moderna
Study participants	~45,000	~30,000
Age	>16 years	>18 years
Effectiveness	~95%	~95%

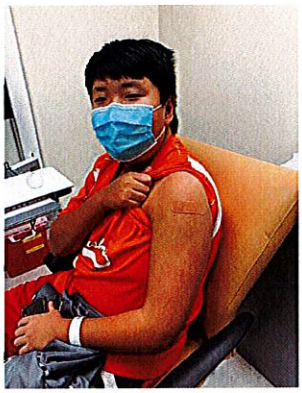
- Vaccine effectiveness study: 1.2 million people
- Effectiveness after first dose
  - Prevent any infection—46%
  - Prevent symptomatic COVID—57%
  - Prevent death—72%
- Effectiveness after second dose
  - Prevent any infection—92%
  - Prevent symptomatic Covid—94%
  - Prevent death—100%







Vaccines for students



Pfizer: 16-18yo (summer 2021); 13-15yo (fall) <12 enroll (winter 21-22)
Moderna, J&J: think 3-6 months later
AZ, Novavax: timeline unknown (need EUA) think late 2021

Sports and mandatory vs encouraged
Staff and mandatory vs encouraged

Other thoughts

- Cleaning
  - Only 3 cases of fomite transmission reported in the worldwide literature; none in schools (culture)
- J&J vaccine
  - Higher rates of symptomatic COVID-19 in the trials
  - 100% effective in preventing death hospitalization in the randomized trials
- Variants
  - Evolution & probability
  - We will likely deal with COVID for years
  - Get vaccinated, continue prevention-mitigation until everyone vaccinated
  - Get mitigation strategies into place and know that we'll likely need to use them at least periodically
  - Boosters are likely in our future

References

HYBRID IS SAFE

- https://www.unicef.org/media/89045/file/In-person-schooling-and-covid-19-transmission-review-of-evidence-2020.pdf UNICEF/WHO
- www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/COVID-19-schools-transmission-August%202020.pdf European CDC: risk of transmission in EU/UK is low.
- https://hcrc.org.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/NCIRS%20NSW%20Schools%20COVID_Summary_FINAL%20public_26%20April%202020.pdf Australia show limited spread
- (https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.07.29.20155018v1.full.pdf) Finland show child to adult transmission risk of transmission in schools is low
- (https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32277750) France--similar to Finland & Australia, risk of transmission in schools is low
- (https://www.eurosurveillance.org/content/10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2020.25.21.2000903) Ireland—similar to Finland, France, & Australia risk of transmission is low
- (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7337529) Singapore—similar to Europe and Australia, risk of transmission is low
- https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2775875 2021 CDC

HYBRID IS SAFE AND FULL TIME INSTRUCTION (PLAN A) IS SAFE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6950e3.htm Hobbs, et al., 2020; this is **a high incidence setting** in Mississippi. Schools very low risk of transmission
- doi:10.15585/mmwr.mm7004e3 Falk, et al. in the MMWR. **High community incidence setting**; very low risk of within-school transmission in Wisconsin
- doi:10.1542/peds.2020-048090 Work by the ABCs, as per CDC, **(we have received data from 5 districts on Plan A from Q2)**
- Data not yet published from Missouri, Illinois, California, Utah, and Massachusetts and will be published this spring (I have reviewed the data for journals) so much so that the primary critique from other journal reviewers has started to become "it has been established that schools are safe"

NEED FOR MITIGATION

- (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7384285) Stein-Zamir, et al., 2020; Outbreak in Israel if you don't enforce masking
- https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7008e4.htm Cobb County Georgia
- https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2775875 2021 CDC

PRELIMIARY DATA ON FULL TIME INSTRUCTION MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL

- COVID-19 transmission in educational institutions August to December 2020. Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany: a study of index cases and close contact cohorts | medRxiv Data from Germany, 4.5 feet
- https://www.cnn.com/2021/02/25/us/education-ohio-high-school-open-wellness/index.html Ohio districts open in plan A
- https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7008e4.htm Georgia school district clusters with <90% masking in full time instruction;
- https://academic.oup.com/cid/advance-article/doi/10.1093/cid/ciab230/6167856 Massachusetts, no difference 3' vs 6'
- Upcoming publications: data from Utah (secondary attack rate <1%), and Missouri

Summary of Data, Spring 2021

- Elementary Schools Should be in Plan A
- High School and Middle Schools Should be in Plan A (or at least offered the option of Plan A), provided that
  - Oversight and transparency of infection data
  - Plans submitted to NC DHHS and agree to follow NC DHHS tool kit
- Best predictors of success in Plan A
  - Strong mitigation, especially mask adherence
  - Plans to ensure mitigation
  - Success in Plan B
  - Plan A should be safe for Gaston

Program leadership team

Practicing Clinicians

- Infectious Disease
- Internal Medicine
- Pediatric Infectious Disease
- Adult Infectious Disease
- Critical Care
- General Pediatrics
- Epidemiology
- Infection Control

COVID-related research experience, sponsored by NIH, and led by the team
For each project, a team member is the National Principal Investigator (PI)

1. National Study of Neonates exposed to COVID
2. Dosing of medicines used for COVID-19 treatment
3. Dosing and safety of medicines used to treat children with COVID
4. Data Safety Monitoring Board Chair for 2 randomized trials for COVID in adults
5. Multi-national study in COVID-19 treatment
6. MIS-C in children, a multi-center study

Ibukun Akinboyo, MD
Assistant Professor,
Infection Control
No school-aged children

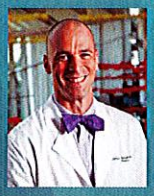
Micky Cohen-Wolkowiez, MD, PhD
Distinguished Professor,
Infectious Disease
2 children, Durham

Danny Benjamin, MD, PhD
Co-chair
Distinguished Professor,
Epidemiology Therapeutics
4 children, CHCCS/college

Kanecia Zimmerman, MD
Co-chair
Associate Professor,
Critical Care
2 children, Durham

Gabriela Maradiaga Panayotti, MD
Assistant Professor
Primary Care, Latinx advocacy
2 children, Durham

David Weber, MD, MPH
Assistant Chief Medical Officer
UNC Health Care



THE ABC SCIENCE COLLABORATIVE

Danny Benjamin, MD PHD

Professor of Pediatrics, Duke University
Co-Chair, ABC Science Collaborative

Kanecia Zimmerman, MD

Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Duke University
Co-Chair, ABC Science Collaborative

- Pair scientist and physicians with school leaders to provide current information on COVID-19 to guide decision making.

Re-Entry Action Taken to Date

Gaston County Schools

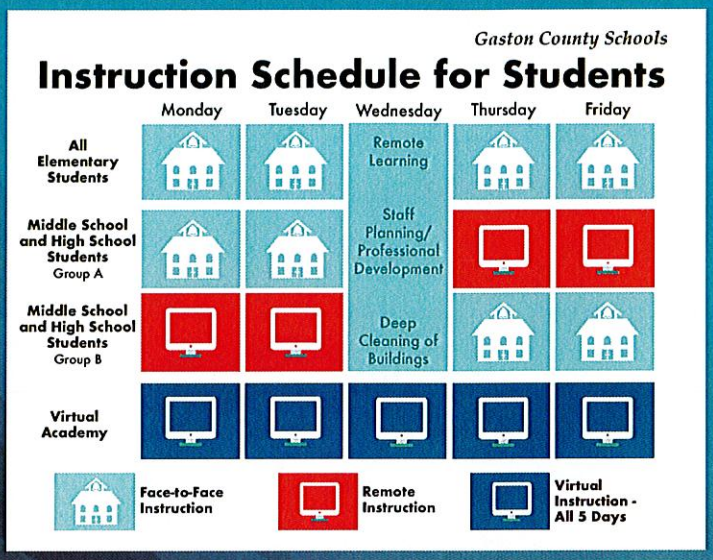
Re-Entry Action Taken to Date

The Board of Education approved transition of elementary schools to Plan A, March 1, 2021.

Four days of in-person instruction for elementary school students.

Wednesday remote learning day.

Gaston County Schools



Gaston County Schools

Grades 6-12 Plan A Implementation

Gaston County Schools

Overview

The N.C. Department of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education, the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, and the Governor's Office have provided information and guidance for school districts as they plan to reopen our public schools.

- Lighting Our Way Forward: North Carolina's Guidance in Reopening K-12 Public Schools
- Strong Schools NC Public Health Toolkit (K-12)

#StayStrongNC

StrongSchoolsNC
Public Health Toolkit (K-12)

INTERIM GUIDANCE
Published June 30, 2020 • Updated March 4, 2021

Health and safety protocols

The following practices have been in place since August:

- **Daily temperature checks and health questionnaire**
- **Requiring masks by students and staff**
- **Social distancing in classrooms and on buses**
- **"Deep cleaning" practices**
- **Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) – face coverings, gloves, etc.**
- **Raising awareness about COVID-19**

North Carolina Senate Bill 220

Approved March 11, 2021

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

SESSION LAW 2021-4
SENATE BILL 220

AN ACT TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO IN-PERSON LEARNING FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELVE.

- **Continue to comply with the StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit.**
- **Requires in-person instruction in Plan A (with minimal social distancing) for grades K-5.**
- **Grades 6-12, districts can provide in-person instruction under Plan A (minimal social distancing), Plan B (moderate social distancing), or both.**

North Carolina Senate Bill 220

Approved March 11, 2021

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

SESSION LAW 2021-4
SENATE BILL 220

AN ACT TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO IN-PERSON LEARNING FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELVE.

- **Must offer a full-remote learning option for students/families.**
- **A local board of education may revise the current 2020-2021 school calendar to amend teacher workday(s) to prepare for transition to Plan A.**
- **A local board of education may transition classrooms or individual schools to remote learning on an as-needed basis due to COVID-19 exposures.**

Gaston County Schools

North Carolina Senate Bill 220

Approved March 11, 2021

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

SESSION LAW 2021-4
SENATE BILL 220

AN ACT TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO IN-PERSON LEARNING FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELVE.

- **N.C. Department of Public Instruction will partner with Duke University for the ABC Science Collaborative to provide data collection, analysis, and information on COVID-19 related metrics.**
- **Governor maintains authority to close a local education unit during the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year for safety and health related concerns due to COVID-19.**

Grades 6-12 Plan A: Information

- DAILY OPERATION OF SCHOOLS
- HEALTH and SAFETY PROCEDURES
- BUS TRANSPORTATION
- SCHOOL NUTRITION
- DATA COLLECTION

Plan A: Transportation

#StayStrongNC

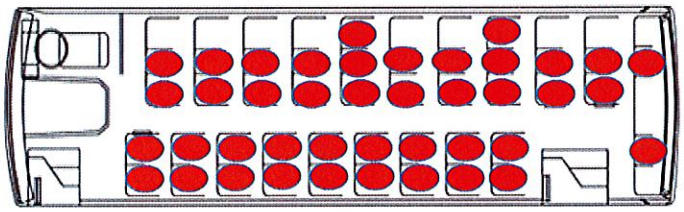
StrongSchoolsNC
Public Health Toolkit (K-12)

INTERIM GUIDANCE
Published June 30, 2020 • Updated March 4, 2021

- Plan A transportation requirements will be followed as outlined in the Strong SchoolsNC Toolkit (page 19).
- Bus monitors will continue.
- Face coverings required for students and staff.
- Social distancing will be encouraged as space allows.
- Drivers are allotted time, after each load, to wipe down touch points and use an electrostatic sprayer.

Transportation

Social distance on BUS



2 Students per seat

PLAN VIEW

It is recommended that all schools in Plan A and Plan B and Local Education Agencies:

- Identify at least one adult to accompany the driver to assist with screening and/or supervision of students during screening of on-boarding passengers, and to monitor children during transport.
- Allow for 6 feet of social distancing between students, and between students and the driver, while seated on vehicles if feasible (eg., by utilizing larger vehicles with more seats, by increasing frequency of routes to reduce occupancy, one rider per seat in every other row).

Plan A: Classrooms

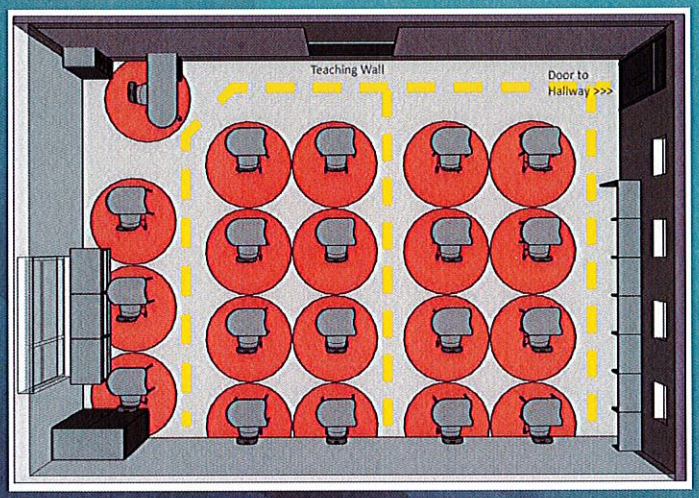
#StayStrongNC

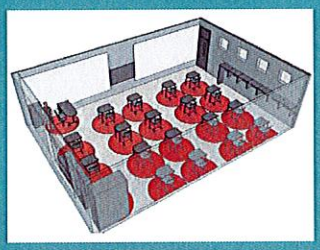
StrongSchoolsNC
Public Health Toolkit (K-12)

INTERIM GUIDANCE
Published June 30, 2020 • Updated March 4, 2021

- Plan A requirements will be followed as outlined in the Strong SchoolsNC Toolkit.
- Which includes:
- Face coverings required for students and staff.
- Social distancing will be encouraged as space allows.
- Upon arriving at school and successfully completing the health screening, students will go directly to class.

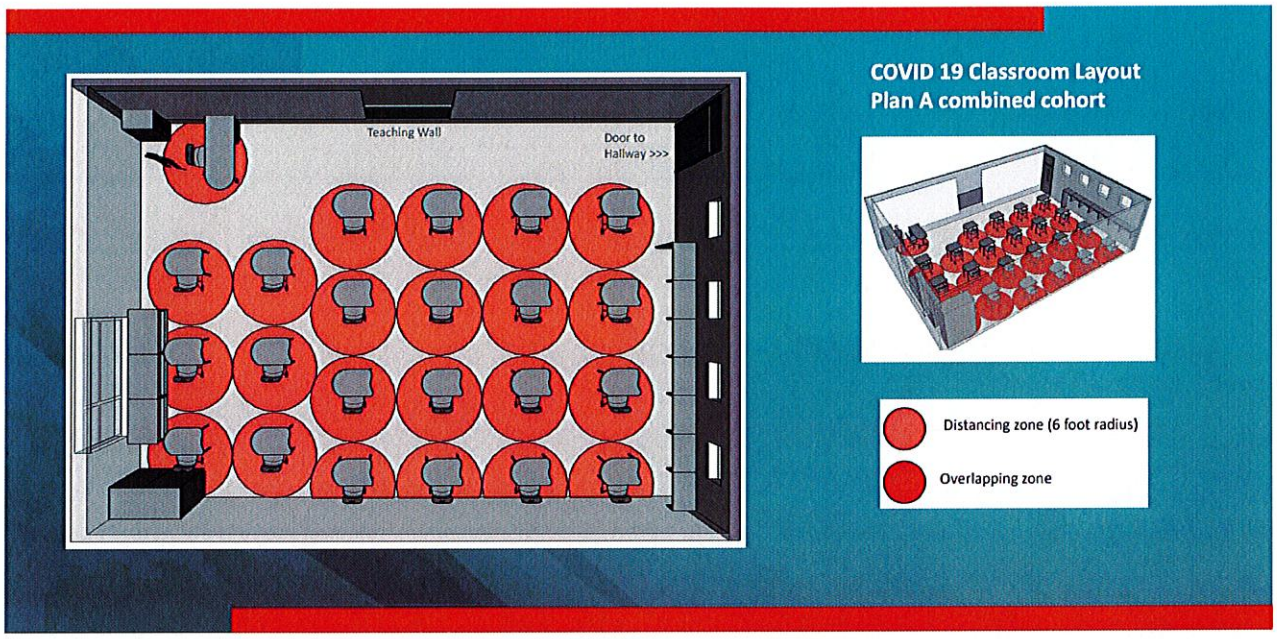
COVID 19 Classroom Layout





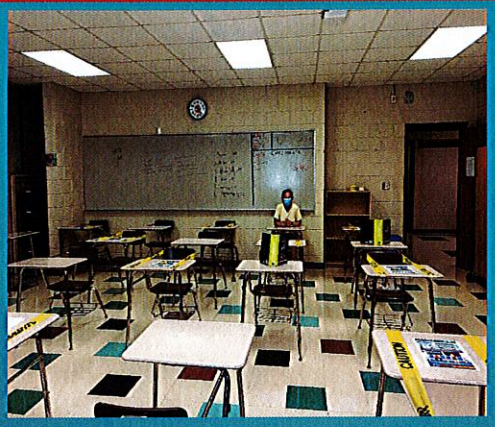
Distancing zone (6 foot radius)

Overlapping zone



Gaston County Schools

Gaston County Schools



Forestview High School Classroom Setup

Gaston County Schools

SCHOOL NUTRITION

Gaston County Schools

School Nutrition

To provide breakfast and lunch meals for students,

- **StrongSchoolsNC Toolkit requirements will be followed.**
- **School Nutrition staff will consider a variety of logistics.**
- **Meals may need to be served in classrooms or other spaces to ensure social distancing.**

School Nutrition

To provide breakfast and lunch meals for students,

- **Meals will need to be prepackaged.**
- **Flexibility with school meal distribution.**
- **Mass gathering limitations will be maintained.**

Building Considerations

Traffic Flow Parking Lots

- Student Drop Off / Pick Up
- Traffic Cones will be provided

Building Entrances

- Student Drop Off
- Bus Drop Off

Security at Entrances

Movement of Students

- Hallways
- Bathrooms

Health and safety protocols

The following practices have been in place since August:

- Daily temperature checks and health questionnaire
- Requiring masks by students and staff
- Minimal social distancing in classrooms and on buses ***
- "Deep cleaning" practices
- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) – face coverings, gloves, etc.
- Raising awareness about COVID-19

DATA COLLECTION

Gaston County Schools

Data Collection

Gaston County Schools will participate in all data collection opportunities with the ABC Collaborative as defined in Senate Bill 220,

- **Holds a Memorandum of Understanding with the ABC Collaborative.**
- **Partners with the ABC Collaborative to share COVID data available to the public on the Gaston County Schools website.**

Gaston County Schools

Looking ahead

To transition from 6-12 operating in Plan B to operating in Plan A:

- **Facilities would continue to be closed to the public.**
- **Deep cleaning of facilities on Wednesday is beneficial.**

Gaston County Schools

Looking ahead

To transition from 6-12 operating in Plan B to operating in Plan A:

- **We, under current legislation and state directives, are allowed to operate in Plan A for grades K-5 and 6–12.**
- **We have been operating in Plan B since school started on August 17 for all students.**
- **Schools and community would benefit from a notification of transition to allow for schedule adjustments, operational shifts, and communication with families.**

Gaston County Schools

Gaston County Schools

COVID-19 UPDATE

Presentation to the Board of Education **March 15, 2021**

March 15, 2021
Board of Education Meeting
Operations Committee Report

The Operations Committee met on Monday, March 1, 2020 at 4:00pm here in the Central Office Board Room. Our committee consists of Chairman – Lee Dedmon, Kevin Collier, Dot Cherry, and Brent Moore.

Our agenda and discussions included the following:

1. Chris Hall and Dr. Leigh Smith gave an update on the School Business Systems Modernization (SBSM) project. The SBSM project is state funded by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Cherry Road Technologies is the state selected vendor to assist districts that are moving to Oracle Cloud as their new business management system. Oracle will be replacing our district's primary Human Resources, Finance, and Payroll systems. Gaston County Schools is scheduled to go live with Phase 1 of this project on July 1, 2021.

2. Joey Clinton shared with us additional dates, times, and locations that the Covid-19 vaccinations were available to GCS employees that wanted to receive the vaccine before March 10. Gaston County Schools was part of an early group 3. Mr. Clinton also informed us that jobs are posted online for internal employees to apply for positions at the new Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences and at the Gaston Virtual Academy. Interviews will start this month for Principal and Assistant Principals.

3. Our Chief Technology Officer, Aaron Slutsky, and other TSS personnel, informed us of the new process they have implemented to help the district reroute the network in case of a WAN or LAN internet outage. The process will help to backup and restore data quickly as well as maintaining internet in our schools and offices.

4. Dr. Morgen Houchard, Executive Director of Auxiliary Services, reported on the following items which relate to the Auxiliary Services Department:

    - The first full day for Cohort A and Cohort B on the elementary level was a success thanks in part to the hard work and dedication of our school leadership, school employees, and students.
    - Renovations to the C Wing at Highland School of Technology will be listed on the Consent Agenda for Board approval.
    - AT&T has proposed to place a cell phone tower at McAdenville Elementary. More information will be gathered and then brought back to the Operations Committee.
    - A local realtor is requesting access to a development off of One Learning Place at Forest Heights. At this time, the Operations Committee has agreed to leave it as is, which keeps ownership and access as is.
    - An update to the Rocky Branch Carolina Thread Trail, near Sturt Cramer High School, was given.
    - We now have the Temporary Certificate of Occupancy for the new Belmont Middle School. At this time, 98% of the punch list items has been completed. Furniture is being moved and

the traffic light at the intersection of Wildcat Way and South Point Road is currently working.

5. Associate Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer, Gary Hoskins, presented information pertaining to School Bonds and how the funds have been disbursed. Funding for Capital Projects will appear on the agenda as an Action item. The Board will receive the Superintendent's Budget Request, which is based on information received from our stakeholders and Fund Managers, at the March Board meeting. The budget will be presented to the Board for approval on April 19, 2021 and then submitted to the County by May 15, 2021 as required by State law.

6. Gary Hoskins also presented the committee with a list of construction and repair change orders which are recommended for approval by the Board. These items appear on the Consent Agenda.

Our next committee meeting is scheduled for May 3, 2021 at 4:00pm in the Central Office Board Room.

Gaston County Schools
BOE Curriculum & Instruction Committee
Summary of Minutes for Regular Meeting on March 1, 2021

Members Present:
Dot Guthrie, Robbie Lovelace, Steve Hall, Justin Davis, Jeff Ramsey, Dot Cherry

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM.
Minutes were approved unanimously with no corrections for the meeting on February 1, 2021.

The finance department presented information on the 2021-2022 budget. This will be an information item on the Board of Education agenda on March 15, 2021.

Staff provided an update on athletics. Practice for spring sports in middle school will begin March 1, 2021 for softball and boys' soccer. Girls' soccer, baseball, and boys' and girls' track will start practice on April 12, 2021. March 1st is also the first day of practice for spring sports in high school. Due to realignment by the NC High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA), GCS will be in two conferences and not three, effective 2021 through 2025.

The department of elementary instruction shared information regarding the mathematics curriculum adoption process. GCS will begin the review and selection process for a core mathematics curriculum resource to be implemented starting in the 2021-2022 school year. All K-5 teachers and a district committee will participate in the final vote.

Updated information was presented on the Social Studies curriculum framework. New K-12 standards were adopted February 2021 and implementation will occur fall 2021. The new framework will be more engaging and interactive.

The meeting adjourned at 1:55 PM.
The next committee meeting is scheduled for April 12, 2021 at the Central Office at 12 noon.

School Calendar Survey Data

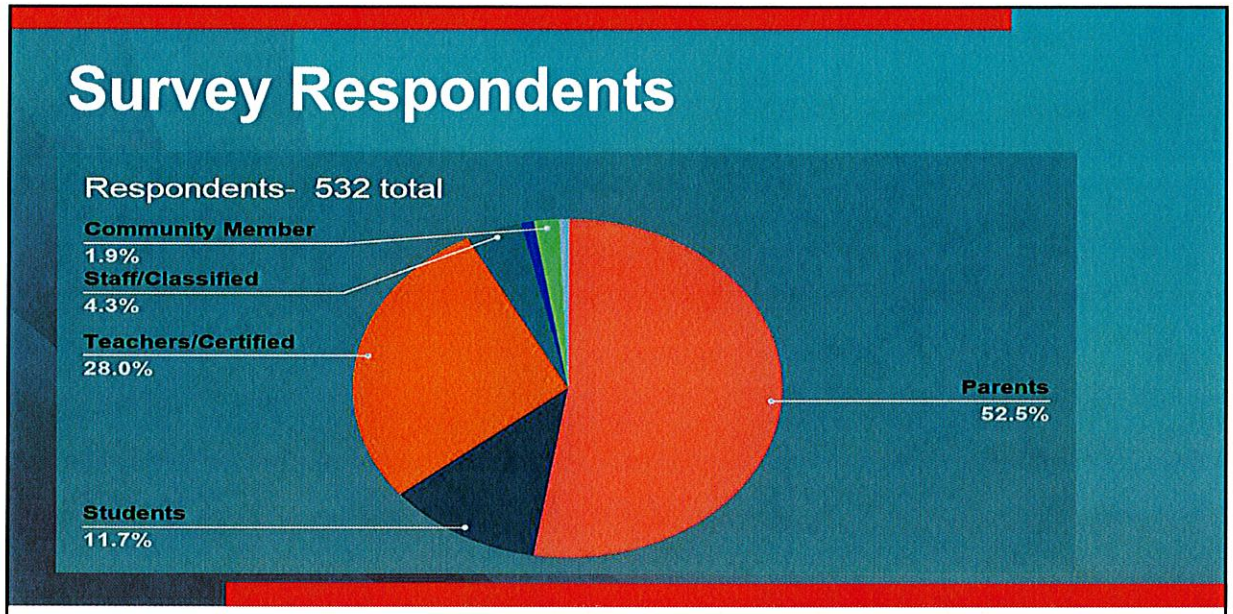
Human Resources
March 15, 2021

Gaston County Schools

School Survey Information

- Survey published on GCS Homepage from February 15, 2021 until March 6, 2021.
- Seven questions, two asked for specific feedback from the public.

Gaston County Schools



Gaston County Schools

Gaston County Schools

Survey Responses

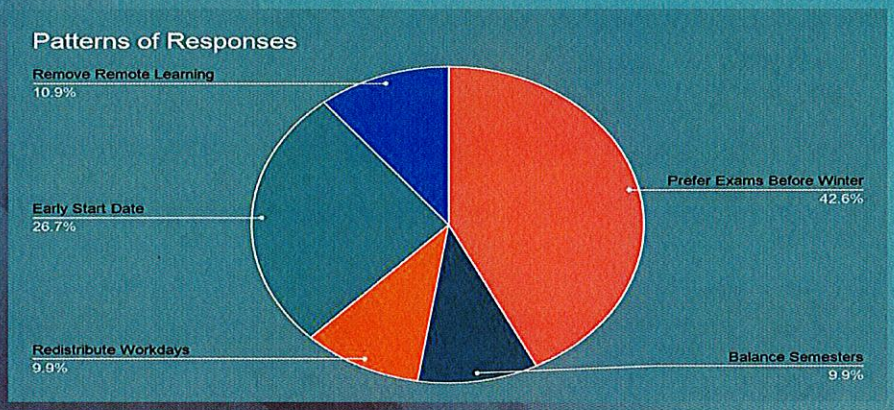
Q: "I like the REVISED 2021-2022 calendar as it is."

80% Yes
20% No

Gaston County Schools

Survey Responses

Q: Recommendations for Changes:



Gaston County Schools

Gaston County Schools

Survey Responses

Q: "I like the 2021-2022 calendar as it is."

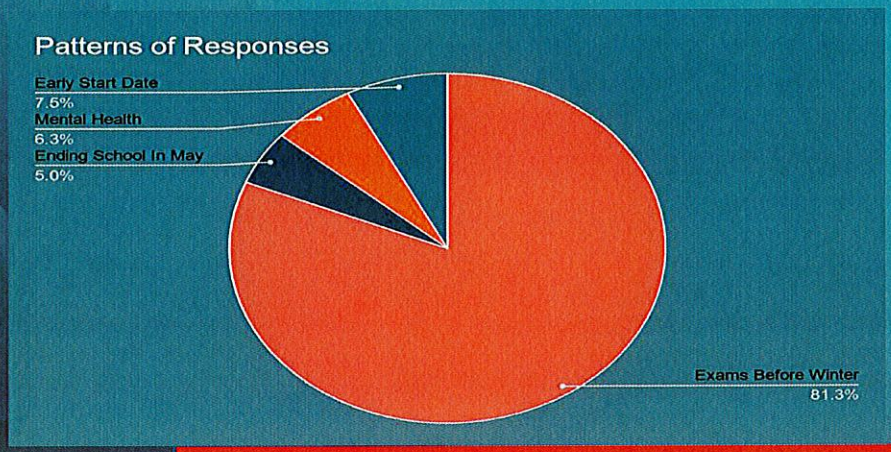
84% No

16% Yes

Gaston County Schools

Survey Responses

Q: If you answered no, please tell us why:



Gaston County Schools

Calendar Law: Considered

- Permanent changes to the General Statute 115C-84.2 have not been made to allow for repeated flexibility of start/end times of school year.
- To date LEAs must adopt a calendar based upon these criteria.

Gaston County Schools

Calendar Law: GS 115C-84.2

- Teachers/ TA-215 days to work per year
- Start Date- Monday closest to August 26
- End Date-Friday closest to June 11
- Minimum of 185 days **OR** 1025 instructional hours
- Minimum of 10 annual vacation leave days
- Must have inclement weather plan

Questions?

Gaston Early College High School

2021-2022 DRAFT School Calendar

July 2021

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August 2021

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

21 employee days

September 2021

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

22 employee days

October 2021

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

21 employee days

November 2021

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

22 employee days

December 2021

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

23 employee days

January 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

21 employee days

February 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

20 employee days

March 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

23 employee days

April 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

21 employee days

May 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

21 employee days

June 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

- School Closed / Holiday
- Mandated Teacher Workday
- Annual Leave
- First and Last Day of School
- Optional Teacher Workday
- # Optional Teacher Workday & Remote Learning Day

Calendar Template © www.calendarlabs.com

Calendar Notes:

July 5 - Independence Day (Holiday)
August 3 - Optional Teacher Workday
August 4, 5, 6, 9 - Mandated Teacher Workdays
August 10 - Students' First Day of High School
August 23 - Students' First Day of Fall Semester College Classes
September 6 - Labor Day (Holiday)
September 24 - Optional Teacher Workday (& possible Remote Learning Day #1)
October 11 - First 9-Week Grading Period Ends
October 14 - Parent-Teacher Conferences
October 18 - Optional Teacher Workday (& possible Remote Learning Day #2)
October 19 - 9-Week Report Cards Distributed
November 12 - Veterans' Day Observed (Holiday)

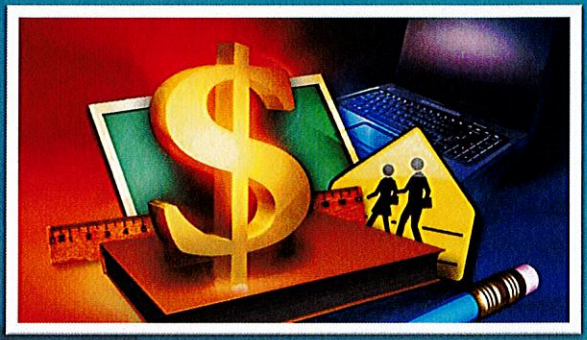
Gaston College doesn't observe Veterans' Day on Nov 11, so in order for GEC's GCS staff to receive this paid holiday, this holiday will be observed on Nov 12.

November 24 - Teacher Annual Leave
November 25, 26 - Thanksgiving (Holidays)
December 17 - Students' Last Day of Fall Semester College Classes
December 17 - Second 9-Week Grading Period Ends
December 20, 21 - Teacher Annual Leave
December 22, 23, 24 - Christmas (Holidays)
December 27, 28, 29, 30 - Teacher Annual Leave
December 31 - New Year's Day (Holiday)
January 3, 4 - Mandated Teacher Workdays
January 5 - Students' First Day of Spring Semester
January 6 - 9-Week Report Cards Distributed
January 10 - Students' First Day of Spring Semester College Classes
January 17 - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Holiday)
February 11 - Optional Teacher Workday (& possible Remote Learning Day #3)
February 24 - Parent-Teacher Conferences
March 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 - Optional Teacher Workdays (& possible Remote Learning Day #4 *on March 7*)
March 15 - Third 9-Week Grading Period Ends
March 23 - 9-Week Report Cards Distributed
April 13 - Optional Teacher Workday (& possible Remote Learning Day #5)
April 14 - Teacher Annual Leave
April 15 - Easter Observed (Holiday)
April 18, 19 - Teacher Annual Leave
May 12 - Students' Last Day of Spring Semester College Classes
May 13 - Gaston College Graduation (Bojangles Arena)
May 19 - Early College High School Graduation
May 20 - Students' Last Day of School / Fourth 9-Week Grading Period Ends
May 23, 24 - Mandated Teacher Workdays
May 25, 26, 27 - Optional Teacher Workdays
May 30 - Memorial Day (Holiday)

Inclement Weather Make-Up Days: December 20, January 4, March 7, March 8, April 13

Calendar Template © www.calendarlabs.com

Board of Education Meeting



Superintendent's Budget Request

March 15, 2021

Budget Overview

- Budget Update
- Operating Request
- Capital Request
- Discussion

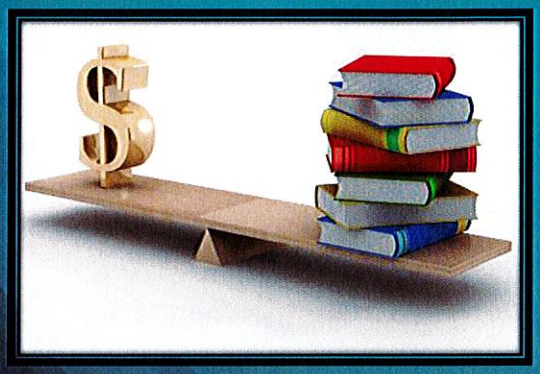
Budget Calendar

- January 15 – Board Retreat
- February – Directors and Department Supervisors Prepare Their Budget Request
- March – Present Superintendent's Budget Request to BOE
- April – Adoption of GCS Budget Request

Budget Calendar

- May – Deliver GCS Budget Request to County
- May or June – County approves local budget
- June – BOE approves balanced interim budget
- June to August – General Assembly and Governor approves NC State budget
- July to October – BOE approves final budget resolution

Operating Request



Gaston County Schools

Local Funding

Three Year History

FY 2017-18 Actual		**$47,751,704**
Teacher supplements	$500,000	
Choice programs	$100,000	
Total Change in Funding		$600,000
FY 2018-19 Actual		**$48,351,704**
Teacher supplements	$500,000	
Choice programs	$850,000	
Technology	$610,000	
Total Change in Funding		$1,960,000
FY 2019-20 Actual		**$50,311,704**
Operating budget cut	($500,000)	
Total Change in Funding		($500,000)
FY 2020-21 Actual		**$49,811,704**

Gaston County Schools

Local Funding

FY 2020-21 Local Allotment - $49,811,704

- Teachers and Support Staff
- Classroom Technology
- School Administrators
- School Magnet and Choice Programs
- School Maintenance
- School Safety and Security
- Instructional Supplies and Equipment
- Utilities and Insurance

Gaston County Schools

Local Funding

The following amounts are hereby appropriated for the operation of the school administrative unit in the **Local General Fund** for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021:

INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES		
Regular Instructional Services	$	13,807,603
Special Population Services		1,638,313
Alternative Programs and Services		276,050
School Leadership Services		6,869,424
Co-Curricular Services		1,711,098
School-Based Support Services		1,952,226
SYSTEM-WIDE SUPPORT SERVICES		
Support and Development Services		633,343
Special Population Support and Development Services		179,492
Alternative Programs and Services Support		31,166
Technology Support Services		2,663,344
Operational Support Services		12,638,592
Financial and Human Resource Services		1,738,109
Accountability Services		522,091
System-Wide Pupil Support Services		482,883
Policy, Leadership and Public Relation Services		1,417,826
ANCILLIARY SERVICES		
Community Services		144
NON-PROGRAMMED CHARGES		
Payments to Other Governmental Units - Charter Schools		4,000,000
TOTAL LOCAL GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATION	$	50,561,704

The following revenues are estimated to be available to the **Local General Fund** for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021:

County Appropriation	$	49,811,704
Fines, Forfeitures and Interest		750,000
TOTAL LOCAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE	$	50,561,704

Operating Request

Ongoing Expenditures

Expenses related to the ongoing operations that are impacted by changes in the law, inflation, end of life for technology, etc.

New Initiatives

Expenses related to new programs, projects, initiatives, etc. that are supportive of the GCS mission and vision or are required by law.

Budget Survey Results

	% in Top Five Priorities					Change	
Top Funding Priorities	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017-21	
Increase Teacher Supplement	68%	67%	63%	67%	75%	7%	
Increase Classified Salaries	37%	34%	36%	47%	51%	14%	
Increase Student Support	14%	21%	49%	51%	51%	37%	
Increase Computing Devices	36%	33%	34%	23%	35%	-1%	
More Teacher Assistants	35%	33%	35%	34%	25%	-10%	
Upgrade School Safety Systems	0%	33%	41%	26%	24%	-9%	*
Improve School Interior	0%	0%	0%	19%	21%	2%	*

* Change is from the date that data began being collected

Budget Survey Results

Top Funding Priorities	2021-22	Funding Source
Increase Teacher Supplement	75%	County Expansion Request
Increase Classified Salaries	51%	County Expansion Request
Increase Student Support	51%	COVID Funds
Increase Computing Devices	35%	COVID Funds
More Teacher Assistants	25%	State Funded
Upgrade School Safety Systems	24%	School Bond Funds / Capital Outlay
Improve School Interior	21%	School Bond Funds / Capital Outlay

Expansion Request

Ongoing Expenditures - $740,000

Ongoing Expenditures	
State Mandated Increase in Employer Paid Benefits	$ 528,000
Replace End-of-Life Mobile Devices	COVID Funds
Inflation - Operating Expenses	212,000
Total	**$ 740,000**

Ongoing Expenditures

State Mandated Increase in Employer Benefits:

- Next year employer provided benefits is projected to increase by $528,000 as follows:
  - Health insurance is projected to increase by 6.0% from $6,326 to $6,700;
  - Employer retirement contribution is projected to increase by 7.0% from 21.7% to 23.2%.

Ongoing Expenditures

Replace End-of-Life Student Chromebooks:

- New Chromebooks will be issued to all 6,900 2nd, 6th and 9th grade students each year.
- Students will keep these same devices each year.
- Cost to replace these 6,900 devices amounts to about $1.3 million per year.
- This cost will be covered by COVID funds for the next two years.

Ongoing Expenditures

Expected Inflationary Impact:

- The expected inflation rate for next year is 2.3% for purchases of goods and services.
- The estimated impact of inflationary costs on our $9.2 million of purchases of goods and services is $212,000.

Expansion Request

New Initiatives - $950,000

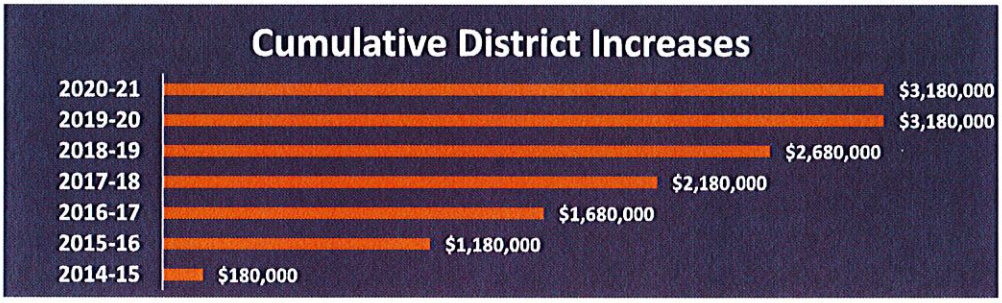
New Initiatives	
Certified Employee Salary Supplement Adjustment	500,000
Employee Compensation Adjustment - Classified	261,000
Employee Compensation Adjustment - Certified	189,000
Student Support Personnel	COVID Funds
Custodial Allotment Increase	COVID Funds
Total	**$ 950,000**

New Initiatives

Teacher Salary Supplements

- Over the past seven years, the County has increased teacher supplements by $3.18 million.
- There was no increase in teacher supplements for 2020-2021 due to the impact of the pandemic on local sales tax revenues.
- A $500,000 increase in teacher supplements would improve net average annual supplements by about $180 per teacher.

Teacher Salary Supplements



Teacher Salary Supplements

Teacher Salary

Neighboring Districts (ADM)	Average Supplement
Charlotte-Mecklenburg (140,073)	$ 8,818
State Average	4,942
Union (39,934)	4,459
Lincoln (11,077)	4,258
Cabarrus (32,729)	4,240
Catawba (15,370)	3,728
Gaston (29,490)	3,246
Iredell-Statesville (20,038)	3,055
Rowan-Salisbury (18,004)	3,007
Cleveland (13,865)	2,116

Source: DPI FY 2020-21 Table 20 for average supplement

DPI FY 2020-21 Table 10 for ADM

New Initiatives

Classified Employee Compensation:

- Salary increases for our non-certified employees (custodians, bus drivers, etc.) have lagged the increases of other similar government employees.
- A requested 3.0% compensation increase for locally paid non-certified employees would cost $261,000.

New Initiatives

Certified Employee Compensation:

- Our certified employees (teachers, guidance counselors, etc.) have not received any increased compensation for the past two fiscal years due to the State budget impasse.
- A requested 4.0% compensation increase for locally paid certified employees would cost $189,000.

New Initiatives

Additional Nursing Positions in Schools:

- Add 30 nursing positions so Gaston County Schools would have one nurse for each of our 55 schools. This would provide immediate and acute medical care to students on all campuses.
- The projected cost would be $1.9 million which would be covered using COVID funds for two years.

New Initiatives

Custodial Allotment Increase:

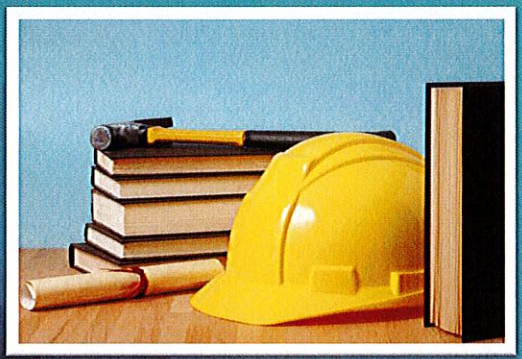
- Add ten school custodial FTEs to reduce the average area cleaned per custodian.
- Add four district custodians to provide support to schools when absences and vacancies occur.
- The projected cost would be $565,000 which would be covered using COVID funds for two years.

Operating Request Summary

County Request	Amount	
	2020-21	2021-22
Prior Year County Appropriation	$50,311,704	$49,811,704
Ongoing Expenditures	$1,315,000	$740,000
New Initiatives	$1,625,000	$950,000
Total County Request	$53,251,704	$51,501,704

The County request for 2021-22 is $1.8 million less than last year's request

Capital Outlay



Capital Request

School Bonds:

- New construction
- Classroom additions
- Capital replacements

Capital Outlay:

- Preventative maintenance
- Minor repairs
- Contracted facility services

Capital Outlay

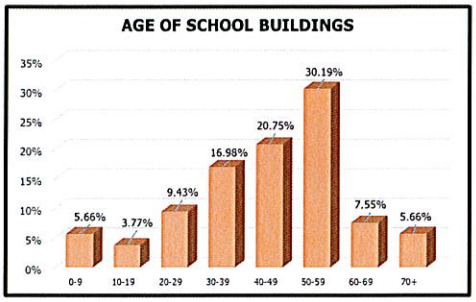
Capital Outlay is used for the following purposes:

- Roofing
- HVAC
- Vehicles
- Plumbing
- Site Improvements
- Electrical
- Technology
- Furniture
- Life Safety
- Other Maintenance

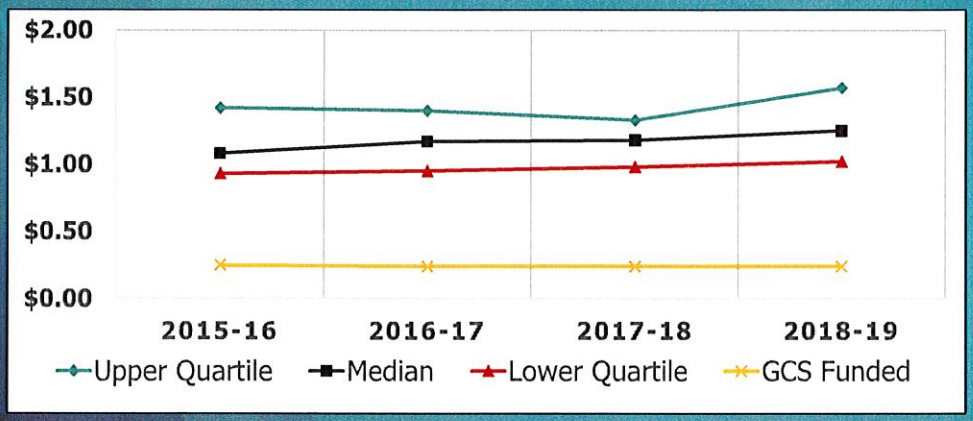
Capital Outlay

Maintenance Costs Are Affected By:

- Age of the Buildings
- Quality and Experience of Custodial Staff
- Training of Custodial Staff
- Deferred Maintenance Backlog



Maintenance Cost per Square Foot



	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Upper Quartile	$ 1.42	$ 1.40	$ 1.33	$ 1.57
Median	1.08	1.17	1.18	1.25
Lower Quartile	0.93	0.95	0.98	1.02
GCS Funded	0.25	0.24	0.24	0.24

Source: Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools – 2020 (results from fiscal year 2018-2019)

Capital Request

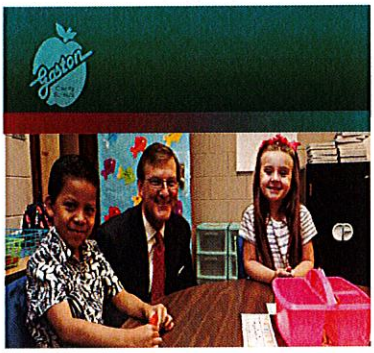
- We have 60 school and administrative buildings measuring about 5.2 million square feet
- This year we received $1.2 million in capital outlay, or about $0.24 per square foot
- We are requesting $6.5 million in capital outlay for 2021-22. This request amounted to $1.25 per square foot which is the median maintenance cost per square foot.

Capital Request

Expenditures		Adopted Budget					Proposed
		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Technology		$ 84,020	$ 100,000	$ 100,000	$ 100,000	$ 50,000	$ 150,000
Vehicles		150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	100,000	150,000
General Renovations		882,980	882,000	882,000	1,882,000	1,027,000	6,050,000
Furniture		110,000	95,000	95,000	95,000	50,000	150,000
TOTAL	COUNTY CAPITAL	$ 1,227,000	$ 1,227,000	$ 1,227,000	$ 2,227,000	$ 1,227,000	$ 6,500,000
	STATE FUNDS	-	-	-	-	-	-
	GRAND TOTAL	$ 1,227,000	$ 1,227,000	$ 1,227,000	$ 2,227,000	$ 1,227,000	$ 6,500,000

Conclusion

The Superintendent's Budget Request supports the Gaston County Schools' Vision to **"inspire success and a lifetime of learning"** for all of our students.



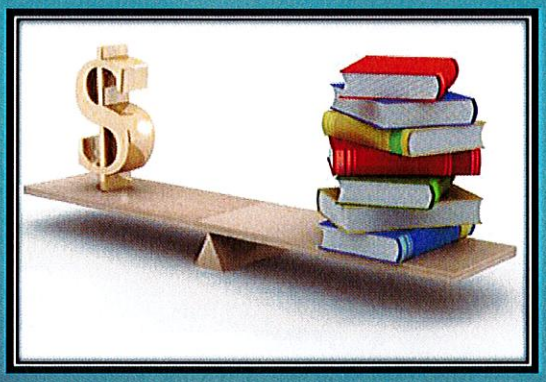
Discussion

Academic Services-Update

Board of Education Meeting
March 15, 2021

Gaston County Schools

Finance



Gaston County Schools

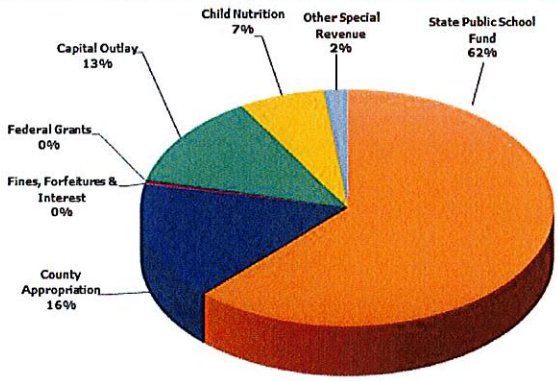
How do we Pay for These Programs?

i-Ready
The Leader in Me
schoology
Actively Learn
Edgenuity where learning clicks
Gizmos
CERTICA
TE21
canvas
Achieve3000 Math
Learning A-Z

Budgeted Revenues

SOURCES OF REVENUE

State Public School Fund	$	192,224,705
County Appropriation		49,811,704
Fines, Forfeitures & Interest		750,000
Federal Grants		937,792
Capital Outlay		39,261,780
Child Nutrition		20,877,500
Other Special Revenue		5,647,661
TOTAL	**$**	**309,511,142**



COVID Funding

i-Ready

schoology

Actively Learn

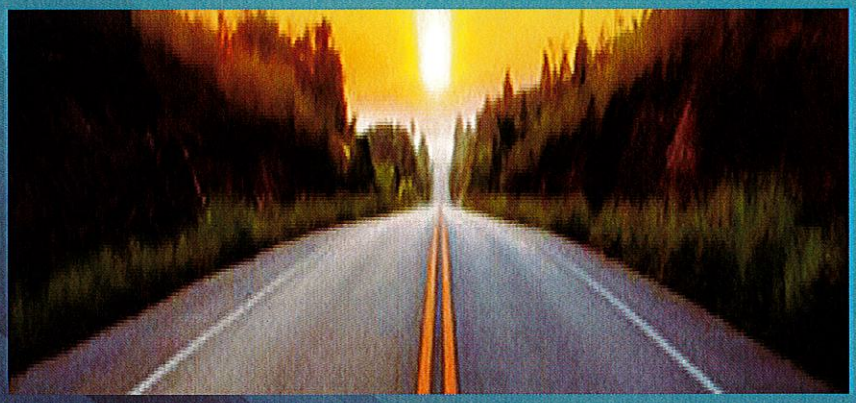
80% + From COVID Funds
2-3 Years

Achieve3000 Math

Learning A-Z

Gaston County Schools

Elementary Schools



"Going the Extra Mile"

Gaston County Schools

Curriculum Associates-iReady

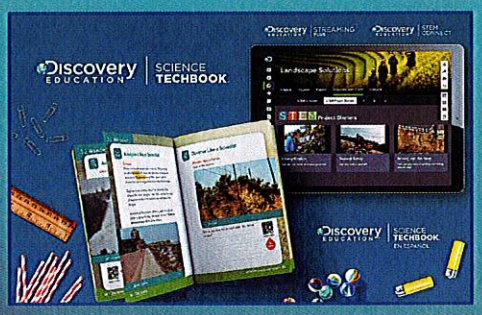
- K-8 diagnostic assessment used to create additional personalized online instruction in reading and math for academic interventions
- Yearly Contract

i-Ready™

Discovery Education

- A K-8 curriculum resource to support the NC Science and Social Studies Essential Standards

- ✓ 87,000 video segments
- ✓ 27,500 reading passages, learning guides, and encyclopedia articles
- ✓ 24,000 images
- ✓ 11,400 math explanations and overviews
- ✓ 3,000 podcasts and audio files
- ✓ 2,600 commemorative and historic events, with curated digital content
- ✓ 2,300 writing prompts and quizzes
- ✓ 400 skill builders and games
- ✓ On-demand virtual field trips
- ✓ Virtual reality videos



Assessing Math Concepts (AMC)

- A K-2 Formative Web-Based Assessment Tool used to create additional personalized instruction in mathematics
- Aligned to the North Carolina Math Standard Course of Study
- 9 assessments lead to resources that provide appropriate instruction for each child: Developing Number Concepts

Learning A-Z

- Provide meaningful online reading practice on computers and mobile devices with hundreds of leveled books and corresponding quizzes offered at 29 levels of reading difficulty.
- Encourage close reading skills and the reading and writing connection with interactive tools and constructed response quiz questions.

Learning A–Z

Schoology

- Schoology is a k-5 learning management system (LMS) that has all the tools needed to create engaging content, design lessons, and assess student understanding.
- Schoology helps teachers manage collaborative groups, differentiate instruction, and develop blended instruction.

schoology

The Leader in Me

- Year two of implementation
- Teachers and administrators participate in researched based professional development with other educators at Leader In Me Schools from around the world.
- Prepares students for college, global citizenship and life as citizens in our community.
- Based on Stephen Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People
- World renowned leadership program

The Leader in Me

Prepares students for college, to be leaders in the community and for global citizenship.

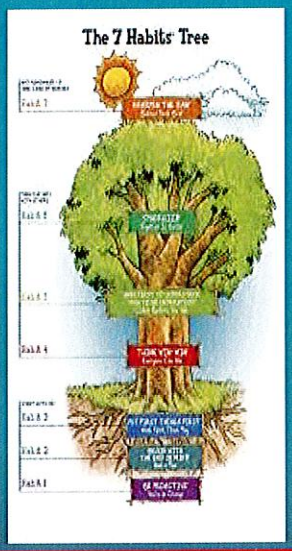
<u>Schools Participating</u>

Carr Elementary

Costner Elementary

W.C. Friday Middle

North Gaston High



Gaston County Schools

Middle Schools

Gaston County Schools

Curriculum Associates-Ready

- Encourages students to develop a deeper understanding of mathematics concepts through the embedded Standards for Mathematical Practices
- Builds on students' prior knowledge with lessons that make connections within and across grade levels and directly addresses the major focus of the grade

Ready®

Actively Learn/Achieve Math

- Actively Learn provides comprehensive, rigorous content support for grades 6-12 social studies and 9-12 reading and science.
- Achieve Math provides support and practice for grades 9-12 math.
- Diverse catalog with high-interest articles, authentic fiction, textbook sections, videos, science simulations, and more

Actively Learn™ | Achieve3000 Math™

Gizmos (ExploreLearning)

- Online interactive math and science simulations that allow educators to expose students to high level inquiry based experiences in the classroom.
- Science teachers 6-12 began using this in the 2018-19 school year. Teacher AND student usage rates show great success in a variety of classrooms.

High Schools

SHIFT THE NORM

Edgenuity

- Online Platform to provide courseware for students.
- Used in the Gaston Virtual Academy
- Used in the High School Credit Recovery Initiative

Certica CASE Assessments

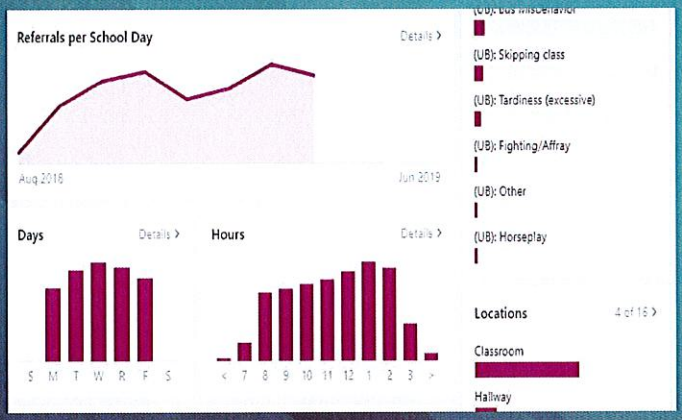
- Benchmark assessments for EOC areas: Biology, English 10, Math I and Math III
- Data reports for teachers

Canvas

- Canvas is a 6-12 learning management system (LMS) that has all the tools needed to create engaging content, design lessons, and assess student understanding.
- Canvas helps teachers manage collaborative groups, differentiate instruction, and develop blended instruction.
- Canvas makes it easier to identify student needs and guide them down the learning paths that are right for them.

canvas

Educators Handbook



educators handbook

K-12 Resources

IXL Learning

IXL LEARNING™

- A personalized and adaptive digital interface for math instruction, with real-time results and feedback to help meet students' individual needs
- K-12 math support.

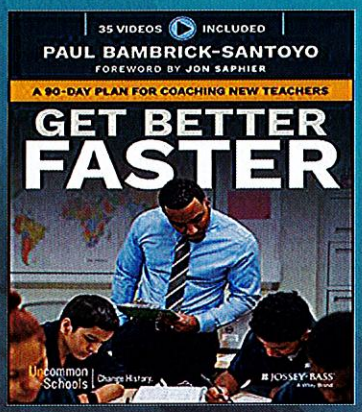
Edpuzzle

- K-12
- Allows teachers to easily create interactive video lessons for students
- Integrates into Schoology and Canvas

Modern Teacher

Our focus in Academic Services is Transforming Instruction which means "coaching for a culture of growth with an emphasis on subgroups through the institutionalization of established practices and district initiatives."

Instructional Coaching



- Coaching training for K-12 instructional facilitators
- Coaching training for K-12 principals and assistant principals
- Targeted support for identified school administrative teams

Schoolnet

Schoolnet enhances the facilitation experience with tools such as:

- Lesson Planner, Student Workspace, Demographic and Academic Data Comparison, Assessment Customization, and Analytic Data Reporting

HOME BASE

School Nurses

Gaston County Schools

School Nurses

- Request for Proposal process
- 30 registered nurses (RNs)
- Full-time nurse assigned to all schools
- Work regular school hours

Gaston County Schools

School Nurses

Selected Agencies

- BrightStar Care
- Maxim
- The Stepping Stones Group

$2,200,000.00

- Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER 1)

School Nurses

Agency	Requested Position	Rate per hour
The Stepping Stones Group	RN	$45.00 hourly
Maxim	RN	$48.00 hourly
BrightStar Care	RN	$48.00 hourly

Exceptional Children

Gaston County Schools

PCG | Education

Public Focus. Proven Results.™

Special Funds Management

- Medicaid Reimbursement, Fee for Service and Cost Reporting allow us to receive funds for related services such as speech and occupational therapy
- Risk Pool Funds and Special State Reserves allow us to receive funds through special application for some of our most needy students

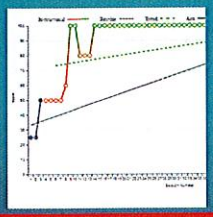
Gaston County Schools

PCG | Education

Public Focus. Proven Results.™

Case Management

- Used for students with Individualized Education Plans or 504 plans
- Allows ease in generating needed reports for the state and to share with parents



Gaston County Schools

PCG | Education

Public Focus. Proven Results.™

Multi Tiered System of Support Early Warning System

- Allows for planning for Core Instruction
- Allows for the creation of Tier Plans
- Allows for intervention logging

Gaston County Schools

Developmental Day Funds

- Available through the State Board of Education to assist in providing services to children with disabilities who are placed in licensed developmental day centers
- Funds are used to provide services to students at Webb Street School

Community Residential Funds

- A partnership with the Department for Public Instruction
- Assist in providing services to children with disabilities who are placed in an approved residential center
- Gaston County Schools partners with Holy Angels to provide services using these funds

EQUAL EYES
VISION SERVICES

- Provide "orientation and mobility" services to visually impaired children including travel skills for safety and independence, how to use canes and how to use electronic travel aids
- Evaluate students for services
- Consult with school staff and parents

SUPPORT
INCORPORATED

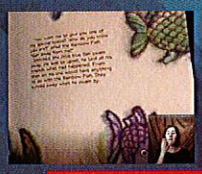
- Provide individualized adult support services for students with behavioral needs
- Provide individualized adult support services for students with life skill needs

NCDHHS

- Provide services to students aged 14 - adulthood
- Participate in IEP meetings to develop transition plans
- Provide Pre-Employment Transition Services
- Complete educational, psychological, vocational evaluations
- Connect students to job coaching agencies for job placement
- Connect students to agencies for supported employment
- Collaborate with Gaston County Schools to hold community resource events
- Provide financial support for eligible clients for work-based needs

LanguageLine Solutions®

- Provide face-to-face interpretation in American Sign Language and spoken languages
- Available on short notice to serve students directly in schools or to facilitate interpretation at IEP meetings to provide for full parental participation



BrightStar Care
HOME CARE | MEDICAL STAFFING
A Higher Standard

BAYADA

thrive
Skilled Pediatric Care

Continuum
PEDIATRIC NURSING

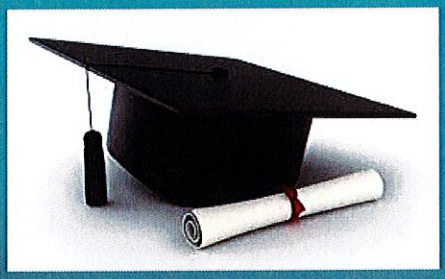
Gaston County Schools

Graduation Plan
May 2021

Gaston County Schools March 15, 2021

Graduation May 2021

- May 29, 2021
- Local and state mandates limiting indoor and outdoor venues
- 6 feet social distancing
- Masks



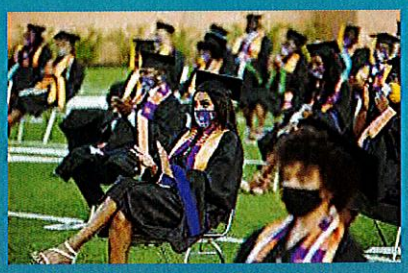
Graduation May 28, 2021

Ashbrook
Bessemer City
Cherryville
East Gaston
Forestview
Highland
Hunter Huss
North Gaston
South Point
Stuart W. Cramer

- Gaston Early College (May 20)
- Gaston Virtual Academy (May 26)
- Warlick (May 26)
- Webb (May 26)

Graduation May 2021

- Friday, May 28, 2021
- 5:30 pm and 8:00 pm
- Cohort A family - 5:30 pm
- Cohort B family - 8:00 pm



Gaston County Schools

Graduates

Graduating seniors will stay for both ceremonies.

Gaston County Schools

Graduation May 2021

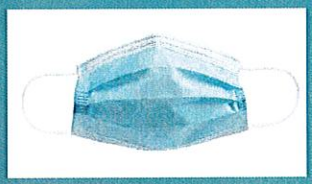
- Rain Date - Saturday, May 29 - 8:00 am and 10:00 am

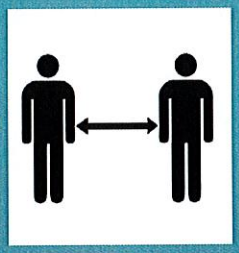
Tickets

Video Tribute

Gaston County Schools

Safety Protocols





Gaston County Schools

Academic Services-Update

Board of Education Meeting
March 15, 2021

Gaston County Schools

Exam Schedule

Spring 2021

Gaston County Schools

Gaston County Schools - Spring Semester – 2020-2021
Final Exam Schedule

Time	Thursday May 20, 2021	Friday May 21, 2021	Monday May 24, 2021	Tuesday May 25, 2021	Wednesday May 26, 2021
8:00 – 11:30	1st period EOC and CTE exams	2nd period EOC and CTE exams	3rd period EOC and CTE exams	4th period EOC and CTE exams	Make-up EOC and CTE exams
11:30 – 1:30	Continuation of *Ample time EOC sessions* Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of *Ample time EOC sessions* Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of *Ample time EOC sessions* Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of *Ample time EOC sessions* Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Bag Lunch & Dismiss Make-up EOC and CTE exams
1:30 – Regular Dismissal Time *All times are approximations	Make-up EOC and CTE exams	Make-up EOC and CTE exams	Make-up EOC and CTE exams	Make-up EOC and CTE exams	• Make-up EOC and CTE exams • Teachers finalize grades, close out semester
Remote Exams (Taken at Home)	1st Period Teacher Made Exams	2nd Period Teacher Made Exams	3rd Period Teacher Made Exams	4th Period Teacher Made Exams	Make-up Teacher Made Exams

Gaston County Schools - Spring Semester – 2020-2021
Final Exam Schedule

Gaston Early College High School

Time	Monday May 17, 2021	Tuesday May 18, 2021	Wednesday May 19, 2021	Thursday May 20, 2021	Friday May 21, 2021
8:00 – 11:30	3rd period EOC and CTE exams	4th period EOC and CTE exams	2nd period EOC and CTE exams	1st period EOC and CTE exams	Make-up EOC and CTE exams
11:30 – 1:30	Continuation of *Ample time EOC sessions* Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of *Ample time EOC sessions* Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of *Ample time EOC sessions* Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of *Ample time EOC sessions* Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Bag Lunch & Dismiss Make-up EOC and CTE exams
1:30 – Regular Dismissal Time *All times are approximations	Make-up EOC and CTE exams	Make-up EOC and CTE exams	Make-up EOC and CTE exams	Make-up EOC and CTE exams	• Make-up EOC and CTE exams • Teachers finalize grades, close out semester
Remote Exams (Taken at Home)	1st Period Teacher Made Exams	2nd Period Teacher Made Exams	3rd Period Teacher Made Exams	4th Period Teacher Made Exams	Make-up Teacher Made Exams

Exam Schedule

Spring 2021

Gaston County Schools