

GASTON COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR SESSION



Shaping Our Future

943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC 28054
March 17, 2025
5:30 p.m.

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Agenda Adoption

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

Consideration of Formal Agenda for Monday, March 17, 2025.

Roberts Rules of Order (Revised) adoption of Agenda for meeting sequence and structure.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

Adoption of Agenda

Policy Implications:

None

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 1. Every student will graduate prepared for post-secondary opportunities.

Submitted by: Dr. Morgen A. Houchard

Department: Superintendent

GASTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Josh Crisp – Chairman

Dot Cherry – Vice Chairman

Lee Dedmon, Gastonia Township
Tod Kinlaw, South Point Township
Robbie Lovelace, Cherryville Township
Brent Moore, Crowders Mountain Township



Jeff K. Ramsey, At Large
Janna Smith, Gastonia Township
A.M. Stephens, III, Riverbend Township

Dr. Morgen A. Houchard, Superintendent
943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC 28054

Monday, March 17, 2025

5:30 p.m.

Agenda

Regular Meeting

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Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Good News

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

Each month, the Communications/Public Information Department compiles "Good News" about our schools, students, employees, and community partners. See attachment.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

None

Policy Implications:

None

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 1. Every student will graduate prepared for post-secondary opportunities.

Submitted by: Todd Hagans, Chief Communications Officer

Department: Communications/Public Information (Superintendent's Office)

BOARD AGENDA INFORMATIONAL ITEM

DEPARTMENT: Communications/Public
Information Department

TOPIC: GOOD NEWS

FOR THE MONTH OF: March 2025

1. **New Hope Elementary School** and **Cramerton Middle School** were the overall winners at the annual RoboGASTON competition. Other school winners were **Belmont Central Elementary** and **Tryon Elementary** earned first and second place, respectively, in the Team Work category for elementary schools. In the middle school division, **Cramerton Middle School** took first place, followed by **Stanley Middle School** in second. For Project Presentation, **New Hope Elementary School** claimed first place with **McAdenville Elementary School** finishing second. **Mount Holly Middle School** secured first place in the middle school category while **W.C. Friday Middle School** placed second. In Robot Performance, **Rankin Elementary School** earned first place, and **Sadler Elementary School** took second. **Grier Middle School** captured first place in the middle school category with **Belmont Middle School** finishing second. Additional awards included the Coach's Award presented to **Matthew Woods** of **Belmont Middle School**; the Spirit Award given to **Lowell Elementary**; the Innovative Team Name award earned by the **W.A. Bess Elementary** Sea Dogs; and the Gracious Professionalism award, which went to **Pinewood Elementary**.
2. Gaston College, in collaboration with the Gaston County Art Guild, hosted the Senior Art Show at the Jeanne Rauch Art Gallery. Merit awards were presented to **Janaiya Glenn** of **Bessemer City High School**, **Ellory Lamp** of **Stuart W. Cramer High School**, and **Amaiya Endsley** of **Bessemer City High School**. Honorable mentions were awarded to **Jasany Johnson** and **Carolina Lara-Terrones**, both from **East Gaston High School**. **Carolina Lara-Terrones** was recognized twice for her outstanding work. **John Gonzalez-Ochoa** of **Hunter Huss High School** received the prestigious Gaston County Art Guild Award.
3. The **Gaston County Schools** Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Department hosted the middle school Battle of the Books and Math Elite competitions. In the Battle of the Books competition, **Belmont Middle School** placed first followed by **W.C. Friday Middle School** in second and **Cramerton Middle School** in third. In the Math Elite competition, **Cramerton Middle School** took first place followed by **Belmont Middle School** in second and **Southwest Middle School** in third.
4. The **Gaston County Schools** Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Department hosted the high school Battle of the Books competition on February 28. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** took first place followed by **Gaston Early College High School** in second.

5. The following students have advanced to the North Carolina Science and Engineering Fair, with virtual judging on March 25 and in-person judging on March 29 based on their performance at the UNC-Charlotte Region VI Science and Engineering Fair. In the Elementary Engineering and Technology category at the regional competition, **Braxton Allen, Belmont Central Elementary**, first place, while **Henry Markwith** from **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy** earned third place. **Sawyer Ford** from **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy** took first place in Elementary Physics and Mathematics at the regionals. In Junior Biological Sciences A, **Connor Abernathy, Marshall Deal, and Walter Thompson** from **Stanley Middle School** placed second, and **Emma McGinnis** of **Belmont Middle School** placed second in the Chemistry category. Senior Biological Sciences B saw **Olive Campbell, Charlotte Hearne, and Laurel Campbell** from **Gaston Early College High School** also earning second place. **Anderson Hammon, Karson McDonald, and Schafer Nunn** from **McAdenville Elementary** placed third in Elementary Biological Sciences while **Luisanna Suarez** from **Pinewood Elementary** earned third place in Elementary Chemistry. **Evelyn Daly** from **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy** took third place in Elementary Earth and Environmental Sciences. In Junior Earth and Environmental Sciences, **Chance Barron, Chandler Jordan, and Christian Rivera-Lopez** from **Stanley Middle School** placed fourth. **Michael Borum Gray** from **East Gaston High School** earned fourth place in Senior Biological Sciences A, and **Jayden Sullivan** and **Caiden Buckner** from **Gaston Early College High School** placed fourth in Senior Engineering at the regional competition.
6. The following students received recognition at the UNC-Charlotte Region VI Science and Engineering Fair: **Avery Anderson, Annsley Schultheis and Becca Anderson** of **Stanley Middle School** along with **Sofia Jimenez, Inari Joseph, and Hayden Trinh** of **Gaston Early College High School** received the American Chemical Society Award. **Chance Barron, Chandler Jordan, and Christina Rivera-Lopez** from **Stanley Middle School** received the Environmental Protection Agency Award while **Reese Sexton** from **East Gaston High School** was honored with the Society for In Vitro Biology Award. Both awards were presented by the ISEF Regional Award Organization. Additionally, **Aidan Wood** of **Belmont Middle School** earned the Thermo Fisher Scientific Junior Innovators Challenge Award.
7. The following students received honorable mention at the UNC-Charlotte Region VI Science and Engineering Fair: **River Adams** and **Will McClean** of **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy** in Elementary Biological Sciences; **Marissa Lynn** of **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy** in Elementary Chemistry; **Blythe Sipe** of **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy** in Elementary Earth and Environmental Sciences; **Jericho Martin** of **Pleasant Ridge Elementary** in Elementary Physics and Mathematics; and **McKinley Ward** and **Mason Back** of **John Chavis Middle School** in Junior Physics.
8. The following schools participated in the Gaston County Special Olympics “polar plunge” and raised the following amounts: **Mount Holly Middle**, \$3,127.46; **Gardner Park Elementary**, \$1,805; **H.H. Beam Elementary**, \$330; **Sherwood Elementary**, \$250; **Robinson Elementary**, \$150; and **Ashbrook High School**, \$90.

9. **Gaston County Schools** held the annual Middle School Cheer Showcase at **North Gaston High School** on February 28. The following schools received recognition: **Holbrook Middle**, first place; **Stanley Middle**, second place; and a tie for third place between **Belmont Middle School** and **Cramerton Middle School**.
10. Students, teachers, and staff in **Gaston County Schools** observed “Read Across America Day” the week of March 3 with a variety of special activities. The event coincided with Dr. Seuss’ birthday.
11. The **Ashbrook High School** JROTC program has had a busy and successful season with several new initiatives and community engagements. The inaugural drone team has launched with 10 drones requiring coding and designed for racing. The newly-formed Raider team recently competed in their first event at Fort Mill High School. More than 20 cadets volunteered at RoboGASTON, assisting with parking and cleanup. The cadets have also collected more than 1,000 bottles of Gatorade and cans of soup for the ongoing Cancer Services drive. Flight Bravo cadets are receiving ground school instruction from a Certified Flight Instructor (CFI), and the program is currently fundraising to purchase an FAA-approved flight simulator to log flight and instrument hours. In addition to community service, the cadets presented a flag to a local veteran and Ashbrook alumnus and proudly marched in the Veterans Day Parade.
12. Eight fourth- and fifth-grade students from **H.H. Beam Elementary** showcased their classroom research during the Rotary Club of Gastonia’s midday meeting. Their presentation titled “The Magic of H.H. Beam” highlighted projects they have been working on throughout the school year.
13. **H.H. Beam Elementary** recently launched its “Bulldog Pantry,” a service that provides food items to support school families in need.
14. **Belmont Central Elementary** fourth-grader **Adalyn Kolbash** organized a sock donation drive for the Salvation Army and worked with school counselor **Francina Newby** to promote the drive by creating flyers and a poster.
15. The **Belmont Middle School**’s seventh and eighth grade band earned a superior rating at the Music Performance Adjudication (MPA). In addition, the eighth grade band and chorus will perform at the Disney Imagination Workshop.
16. **Bessemer City Central Elementary** highlighted the creative talents of its students with a breakfast-themed art show. With help from art teacher **Hillary Koon**, fifth graders made ceramic cereal bowls filled with handmade cereal and clay pancake platters. Fourth graders created clay donuts while third graders made three-dimensional coffee mugs. The event also featured a pancake dinner and an iced coffee bar for everyone to enjoy.
17. **Cherryville High School** student **Lillie Colson** and **Lila St. Romain** from **Gaston Early College High School** were chosen to perform in the North Carolina Western Regional Orchestra at Appalachian State University.

18. The **Cramerton Middle School** eighth grade band received a superior rating at the Music Performance Adjudication (MPA).
19. **Logan Watkins**, a senior at **Stuart W. Cramer High School**, was awarded the prestigious Elizabeth McRae Scholarship to attend Lees-McRae University. The highly-competitive and generous scholarship covers full tuition for four years of undergraduate study.
20. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** junior **Bentley Sly** won his third consecutive individual wrestling 3A state championship in the 144-pound weight class.
21. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** sophomore **Jakalri Galvin** earned third place in the boys' long jump competition at the N.C. High School Athletic Association 3A Indoor Track and Field Championship.
22. **East Gaston High School** junior **Brayden Smith** placed third in the 2A individual state wrestling championship in the 157-pound weight class.
23. The **W.C. Friday Middle School** band received a superior rating at the Music Performance Adjudication (MPA).
24. **Alex Cornwell**, a student at **Highland School of Technology**, earned first chair in the all-state band for snare drum and general percussion.
25. The **Hunter Huss High School** boys basketball team advanced to the 3A Western Regionals, but fell short against Ben L. Smith High School. **Jaleel Smith** led the Huskies with 19 points and 15 rebounds while **Antonio Worthy** and **Ziayir Phillips** contributed 14 and 10 points, respectively.
26. **New Hope Elementary** raised a record-breaking \$21,240.62 for the American Heart Association as part of the Kids Heart Challenge. Students who raised more than \$250 were able to participate in a dodgeball game with teachers.
27. **North Gaston High School** students **Aaliyah Love** and **Amara Howard** were chosen as delegates to the N.C. Youth Legislative Assembly, which is a mock legislative session where high school students voice their opinions and vote on issues concerning local, state, and national government.
28. **North Gaston High School** junior **Barrett Stroud** enlisted in the National Guard and will serve while attending North Gaston's Leadership Academy as a senior next year.
29. Three **North Gaston High School** seniors earned top-five finishes at the 3A individual state wrestling championship. **James Weaver** placed fifth in the 150-pound weight class, **Dewayne Davis** finished fourth in the 215-pound division, and **Tripp Norwood** secured fifth place in the 165-pound class.
30. **Robinson Elementary** principal **William Winston** agreed to camp out on the school's roof after the students and staff raised \$10,000 during the PTO fun run.

31. The Farm Bureau in Dallas awarded a \$4,740 grant to **Will Washington**, a junior at **Forestview High School**, for his Eagle Scout project, which includes building four 12x8 greenhouses and several raised beds at **Robinson Elementary**. Elementary science curriculum facilitator **Dr. Laura Clawson** outlined the K-5 science and social studies standards and explained how gardening supports the curriculum.
32. **South Point High School** senior **Rachel Tolbert** placed third place in the girls' 500-meter event at the N.C. High School Athletic Association 3A Indoor Track and Field Championship.
33. **South Point High School** freshman **Ammon Scott** placed fifth in the 3A individual state wrestling championship in the 144-pound weight class.
34. **Woodhill Elementary**, in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina and Atrium Health, provided groceries, including dry goods, chicken drumsticks, fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, bread, and juices, to families in need. More than 230 vehicles went through the drive-thru food pickup, which was held for a second time this school year.

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Classroom Moment

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

Information will be shared about the Teacher Cadet program at Hunter Huss High School. Teacher Cadet is a course of study offered in high schools that exposes students to the teaching profession as a potential career. Students participate in traditional classroom activities and also receive the opportunity to gain hands-on experience by working alongside teachers in GCS elementary schools. Many current GCS teachers completed the Teacher Cadet program while they were high school students.

Fiscal Implications:

N/A

Recommendation:

N/A

Policy Implications:

N/A

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 1. Every student will graduate prepared for post-secondary opportunities.

Submitted by: Dr. Bryan Denton, Executive Director **Department:** Academic Services

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Public Expression

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

The Board of Education agenda has been made available to the public for review. Citizens wishing to speak before the Board about an agenda item or other topic may do so during Public Expression.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

The Board of Education will establish time (30 minutes) during the regular monthly meeting for Public Expression. Any citizen not heard during this time may be heard at the end of the business session.

Policy Implications:

None

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 1. Every student will graduate prepared for post-secondary opportunities.

Submitted by: Todd Hagans, Chief Communications Officer

Department: Communications/Public Information (Superintendent's Office)

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Approval/Correction of Minutes

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

Approval of Minutes from:

February 17, 2025 (Regular Meeting)

February 28, 2025 (Legislative Meeting)

Efficient consideration of matters pertinent to the successful operation of the school system.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

The Board will approve the minutes presented.

Policy Implications:

Validation of Board Proceedings.

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 1. Every student will graduate prepared for post-secondary opportunities.

Submitted by: Dr. Morgen A. Houchard

Department: Superintendent

Gaston County Schools
Board of Education
Monday, February 17, 2025
Meeting 5:30 p.m.
Regular Meeting

MINUTES

The Gaston County Board of Education met in a regular session on Monday, February 17, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room, 943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC. 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 Josh Crisp, Vice Chairman Dot Cherry, Lee Dedmon, Tod Kinlaw, Robbie Lovelace, Brent Moore, Jeff Ramsey, Janna Smith and A.M. Stephens III.

Additional attendees include: Superintendent Dr. Morgen A. Houchard, Attorney Sonya McGraw, Associate Superintendents Gary Hoskins and Tonya Kales, Chief Communications Officer Todd Hagans, Chief Technology Officer Curtis Poplin and Board Clerk Dana Luoto.

Chairman Crisp called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Invocation

Deacon Bill Melton of St. Michael Catholic Church led the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Jasmine Greene, Mount Holly Middle School, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Character Trait

Addyson Powers, Catawba Heights Elementary School, reported on the Character Trait of Good Judgment.

Agenda Adoption - Action

The Board considered Agenda Adoption – Action

Motion to adopt the Agenda as presented was made by Mr. Brent Moore; seconded by Mrs. Janna Smith; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

Good News – Information

Mr. Todd Hagans recognized the spelling bee winner and the runner-up. Our spelling bee champion, Paul Sayegh of Belmont Middle School emerged from a field of 38 students to win the district champion. Nixon Sipe from Cramerton Middle School was the runner-up in the district-wide spelling bee. The top four finishers in the regional competition will receive an invitation to advance to the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Mrs. Janna Smith presented a Certificate of Recognition to Paul and Nixon.

Todd Hagans recognized the overall elementary, middle and high school students who were the overall winners at the Gaston Regional Science and Engineering Fair which was held in December at the Schiele Museum.

- Jax Jenkins and Connor Pursley of North Belmont Elementary School took overall honors with their project titled “Galactic Sugar Crystals”.
- Matthew Wilcox of Kiser Elementary School earned overall honors with his project titled “Blade Angle”.
- Kelvin Aguilar Gonzalez and Sabastian Caro from Grier Middle School who were the overall winners in the middle school division with their project titled “The Impact of Air Pollution on Plant Health and Photosynthesis”
- Sofia Jimenez Beltran, Inari Joseph and Hayden Trinh from Gaston Early College High School were the overall high school winners with their project titled “Testing Impurities in Feminine Products”.

Mrs. Janna Smith presented a Certificate of Recognition to all students.

Todd Hagans recognized back-to-back state champions from Forestview High School – William Peyton, Andrew Taylor, Graham Kines and Beckett Tabor. These students capped off their senior season by winning their second consecutive state swimming championship in the 200-yard medley relay. In addition, Beckett placed third in the men’s 100-yard freestyle at the 3A state championship.

Mr. Tod Kinlaw presented a Certificate of Recognition to all students.

Todd Hagans recognized the South Point High School 200-yard freestyle relay team – Miles Ferguson, Daniel Lane, Noah Legnosky and Grant Hinnicutt claimed their first-ever state championship.

Mr. Tod Kinlaw presented a Certificate of Recognition to all students.

Todd Hagans recognized state swimming medalists in individual events.

- Ila Turner of South Point High School, earned second place in both the women’s 50-yard freestyle and 100-yard freestyle events at the 3A state championship
- Carter Johnson of East Gaston High School placed second in the men’s 200-yard freestyle and third in the men’s 100-yard breaststroke at the 1A/2A state championship
- Steven Wyatt of Cherryville High School earned second place in the men’s 500-yard freestyle at the 1A/2A state championship
- Wyatt Smith of East Gaston High School placed fourth in the 1A/2A state diving championship
- Austin Major of Stuart W. Cramer High School placed fourth in the men’s 50-yard freestyle at the 3A state championship.

Mr. Tod Kinlaw presented a Certificate of Recognition to all students.

February is Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month and Todd Hagans recognized Dr. Rusty Parker, Beth Williams, Chastity Stamey and Diane Gibson CTE Department. CTE helps students learn important academic, technical and job skills to prepare them for their future careers. Students in our CTE programs take part in real-world, hands-on experiences that make learning more meaningful and exciting.

Chairman Josh Crisp presented a Recognition Plaque to the CTE staff.

To recognize National School Counseling Week Todd Hagans recognized our led counselors:
 Tim Hardin, Sadler Elementary
 Mark Reep, W.B. Beam Intermediate

Lindsay Weathers, Belmont Middle School
Jordan Johnson, East Gaston High School
Jennifer MacDonald, Stuart W. Cramer High School
Mathieu Chapman, Highland School of Technology
Shenice Bailey, Director of Counseling

Mr. A.M. Stephens III presented a Recognition Plaque to the counselors.

Todd Hagans recognized the ten schools that led the way in our 2024-2025 fundraising campaign for the United Way of Gaston County. This year we reached an all-time high with a total contribution to our local United Way of \$131,861.92. We want to express our appreciation to everyone who gave a contribution and participated in our fundraising efforts. Below are the top ten fundraising schools:

Southwest Middle School

Principal Melissa Knick and Judith Ayala (Principal Fellow) contributed \$10,002.48.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a Recognition Plaque to Southwest Middle School.

North Gaston High School

Principal Page Willis and Assistant Principal Waheeba McCray contributed \$6,015.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a Recognition Plaque to North Gaston High School.

Holbrook Middle School

Principal Torben Ross and coordinators Tamika Houston and Teara Nixon contributed \$5,913.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a Recognition Plaque to Holbrook Middle School.

Cramerton Middle School

Assistant Principal Michael Hewitt contributed \$5,900.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a Recognition Plaque to Cramerton Middle School.

Belmont Middle School

Principal Dr. Josh Bromley and coordinator Samantha Wallace contributed \$4,891.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a Recognition Plaque to Belmont Middle School.

Woodhill Elementary School

Principal Andrea Meyer contributed \$4,050.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a Recognition Plaque to Woodhill Elementary School.

Carr Elementary School

Principal Rebekka Duncan contributed \$3,816.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a Recognition Plaque to Carr Elementary School.

Mount Holly Middle School

Principal Curtis Mitcham and Assistant Principal Deon Kennedy contributed 3,340.15.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a Recognition Plaque to Mount Holly Middle School

Highland School of Technology

Principal Susan Redmond and Assistant Principal Jenny Carper contributed \$3,302.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a Recognition Plaque to Highland School of Technology

Rankin Elementary School

Principal Donna Kelly and Assistant Principal Emily Morton contributed \$3,063.40

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a Recognition Plaque to Highland School of Technology

Mr. Hagans expressed appreciation to the central office level departments for their contributions and thanked Valerie Yatko, who served again as our districtwide coordinator.

Andrea Stephens, President of United Way of Gaston County, briefly shared how the contributions from Gaston County Schools impact the United Way.

School Board Recognition Month – Information

Mr. Todd Hagans expressed appreciation to School Board Members in recognition of School Board Recognition Month. Each year, we take pride in recognizing and honoring the citizens who serve on the Gaston County Board of Education. This year to help us recognize and pay tribute to our Board of Education Members and Superintendent Houchard, we chose an elementary school for each Board Member and our Superintendent and had a class at the school “adopt” each Board Member. Representatives from the schools are here to present a framed picture of the class to each Board Member and our Superintendent along with a special “thank-you” card.

To recognize Chairman **Josh Crisp**, who represents the Dallas Township, is Jeremiah Freeman who is a student in Kelly O'Reilly's fourth grade class at Carr Elementary School. With them is their principal Rebekka Duncan and teacher Kelly O'Reilly.

To recognize Vice Chairman **Dot Cherry**, who is an At-Large Member of the Board of Education, is Bentley Harris and Dominic Coffey who are students in Brooke Bolin's first grade class at New Hope Elementary School. With them is their principal Kelli Glisan and teacher Brooke Bolin.

To recognize **Lee Dedmon**, who represents the Gastonia Township, is Estella Silva who is a student in Sherena Boone's second grade class at Lingerfeldt Elementary School. With them is their assistant principal Angie Molla, content teacher Katrina Ashleman, and teacher Sherena Boone.

To recognize **Tod Kinlaw**, who represents the South Point Township, is Jax Jenkins and Connor Pursley who are students in Sonya Helton's fifth grade class at North Belmont Elementary School. With them is their principal Justin Beam, principal intern Ana Cease and teacher Sonya Helton.

To recognize **Robbie Lovelace**, who represents the Cherryville Township, is principal Caroline Black and teacher Anna Kiser from Cherryville Elementary.

To recognize **Brent Moore**, who represents Crowders Mountain Township, is Colt Clampett who is a student in Shannon William's first grade class at Bessemer City Primary School. With them is principal Todd Goff, teacher Shannon Williams and content teacher Sarah Crisp.

To recognize Chairman **Jeff Ramsey**, who is an At-Large Member of the Board of Education, is CJ Lowry who is a student in Hanna Sider's kindergarten class at McAdenville Elementary School. With them is their principal Dawn Lavinder.

To recognize **Janna Smith**, who represents the Gastonia Township, are her twin boys, Knox and E.Z. Smith who are students in Lisa Grubbs' fifth grade class at W.A. Bess Elementary School. With them is their principal Laura Clark and teacher Lisa Grubbs.

To recognize **A.M. Stephens III**, who represents the Riverbend Township, is Skyler Alley and Brentley Miller who are students in Melissa McGinnis' first grade class at Catawba Heights Elementary School. With them is their principal Staci Bradley and teacher Melissa McGinnis.

To recognize **Superintendent Houchard**, is Hayden and Mason Robinson who are students in Matthew Jennings' kindergarten class at Lowell Elementary School. With them is their principal Dr. April Conley and teacher Matthew Jennings.

Classroom Moment – Information

Chairman Crisp recognized Tammy Mims, Principal Forestview High School, and Genevieve Comer, Academy Coordinator who highlighted the Collegiate Preparatory Academy.

(View PowerPoint below)

Public Expression – Information

No one signed up for Public Expression.

Approval/Correction of Minutes – Action

Motion to adopt minutes of January 30, 2025 (Regular Meeting) and January 30, 2025 (Board Retreat) as presented was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. A.M. Stephens III; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

Operations Committee Report – Information

Brent Moore is chair of the committee and members are Dot Cherry, Lee Dedmon and Tod Kinlaw. Chairman Crisp recognized Ms. Dot Cherry who provided a summary of topics considered and discussed at the most recent meeting.

(View Report Below)

Curriculum & Instruction Committee Report – Information

Jeff Ramsey is chair of the committee and members are Robbie Lovelace, Janna Smith and A.M. Stephens III. Chairman Crisp recognized Mrs. Janna Smith who provided a summary of topics considered and discussed at the most recent meeting.

(View Report Below)

Consent Agenda – Action

The Board considered the Consent Agenda:

- A. Recommended Personnel
- B. Budget Amendments & Budget Transfers
- C. Construction/Repair Change Orders
- D. Reduction in Force (RIF) – Strategic Planning
- E. Contracts
 - None

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented was made by Mr. Jeff Ramsey; seconded by Mr. A.M. Stephens III motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Houchard thanked the Gaston County Education Foundation for sponsoring “Are You Smarter Than a Gaston County Fifth Grader?” competition on February 6. Hawks Nest STEAM Academy and its business partner, Carolina Chiropractic Plus were the winners in the competition proving they are the smartest in Gaston County. Proceeds from the “Are You Smarter” competition are used by the Education Foundation to support the Ron L. Ensley grants for teachers.

Superintendent Houchard announced the deadline to submit an application for our magnet schools and academies is Friday, March 21 at 5:00 p.m.

Superintendent Houchard reminded everyone that our annual “RoboGASTON” robotics competition will be held on Saturday, March 8 at Forestview High School beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Superintendent Houchard reminded everyone that Thursday, March 13 is Parent Teacher-Conference Day and early dismissal. Friday, March 14 is an Optional Teacher Workday and no school for students.

Chairman Crisp wished Janna Smith a “Happy Birthday”.

Closed Session

Chairman Crisp asked the Board to consider going into Closed Session under, N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) Consultation with Attorney, N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(5) Real Property and N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel.

Motion to go into Closed Session was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Ms. Janna Smith; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

The Board went into Closed Session at 7:04 p.m.

The Board returned to Open Session at 7:49 p.m.

Adjournment

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

The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Approved:

Josh Crisp, Chairman
[Corporate Seal]

Morgen A. Houchard, Secretary

Date Approved: _____

Gaston County Legislative Meeting
Friday, February 28, 2025
Meeting 8:30 a.m.

Minutes

The Gaston County Board of Education met in a Legislative Meeting on Friday, February 28, 2025. Those Board Members in attendance were: Chairman Josh Crisp, Vice Chairman Dot Cherry, Lee Dedmon, A.M. Stephens III, Tod Kinlaw, Brent Moore (absent), Robbie Lovelace (absent), Janna Smith and Jeff Ramsey.

Additional attendees from Gaston County Board of Education included: Superintendent, Morgen A. Houchard, Attorney Sonya McGraw, Associate Superintendents Gary Hoskins and Tonya Kales, Assistant Superintendents Bessie Harvey and Rebekka Powers, Director Tom Nencetti, Chief Communications Officer Todd Hagans and Board Clerk Dana Luoto.

Attendees from the Legislative Delegation included: Senator Ted Alexander, Representative Donnie Loftis, Senator Brad Overcash and Representative John Torbett.

Chairman Crisp welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chairman Crisp recognized Superintendent Morgen Houchard who presented a PowerPoint on an Overview of Gaston County Schools.

(View PowerPoint Below)

Chairman Crisp opened the floor to the Legislators and Board Members to make introductions, state the committees they are on and other remarks concerning education.

Items discussed included: High Quality Teaching and Learning, College and Career Ready, Safe Schools, Career & Technical Education (CTE), Teacher Retention and Advanced Teaching Roles.

Chairman Crisp thanked everyone for coming and commented that we are fortunate to have good working relationships with our local delegation.

The Gaston County Legislative Delegation Meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

Approved:

Josh Crisp, Chairman
[Corporate Seal]

Morgen A. Houchard, Secretary

Date Approved: _____

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Operations Committee Report

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

The Gaston County Board of Education's Operations Committee meets regularly to discuss operations-related projects and issues. Brent Moore is chair of the committee and members are Dot Cherry, Lee Dedmon and Tod Kinlaw. A report of the Operations Committee's actions and discussions will be made at the Board meeting by a member of the Committee.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

None

Policy Implications:

The Board will be informed of Operations Committee discussions and information.

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Other: Policy or Gen Statute. See above.

Submitted by: Gary F. Hoskins, CFO and
Associate Superintendent

Department: Finance

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Curriculum & Instruction Committee Report

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

The Gaston County Board of Education's Curriculum & Instruction Committee meets regularly to discuss curriculum and instruction-related topics and issues. Jeff Ramsey is chair of the committee and members are Robbie Lovelace, Janna Smith and A.M. Stephens III. A report of the Curriculum & Instruction Committee's actions and discussions will be made at the Board meeting by a member of the Committee.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

None

Policy Implications:

The Board will be informed of Curriculum and Instruction Committee discussions and information.

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 1. Every student will graduate prepared for post-secondary opportunities.

Submitted by: Curriculum and Instruction Committee

Department: Curriculum and Instruction

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: High School Exam Schedules
Spring Semester 2024-2025
Traditional High Schools and Gaston Early Colleges

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

High Schools are required by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to administer final exams for all courses. The NCDPI Accountability Department requires that exams be taken during the last five days of the semester. The exam schedule covers the administration of state End of Course tests, Career and Technical Education exams, and teacher-made exams. The spring semester for the Early College high schools ends on May 16, 2025. The spring semester for the traditional high schools ends on May 21, 2025.

Early College High School exam schedule: May 12-16, 2025

Traditional High School exam schedule: May 15-21, 2025

Fiscal Implications:

N/A

Recommendation:

Approve the final exam schedule as presented.

Policy Implications:

N/A

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 2. Every member of our diverse population has the opportunity for individualized instruction.

Submitted by: Dr. Bryan Denton & Kevin Doran **Department:** Academic Services
Executive Directors, Secondary Instruction

Spring 2024-2025 Exam Schedule

Traditional High Schools

Time	Thursday May 15, 2025	Friday May 16, 2025	Monday May 19, 2025	Tuesday May 20, 2025	Wednesday May 21, 2025
8:30 – 12:00	1 st period EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams	2 nd period EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams	3 rd period EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams	4 th period EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams	Make-up EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams
12:00 – 1:00	Continuation of <i>Ample time EOC sessions</i> Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of <i>Ample time EOC sessions</i> Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of <i>Ample time EOC sessions</i> Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of <i>Ample time EOC sessions</i> Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Bag Lunch & Dismiss Make-up EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams
1:00 – Regular Dismissal Time *All times are approximations	Make-up EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams	Make-up EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams	Make-up EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams	Make-up EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make-up EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams Teachers finalize grades, close out semester

Spring 2024-2025 Exam Schedule

Early Colleges

Time	Monday, May 12, 2025	Tuesday May 13, 2025	Wednesday May 14, 2025	Thursday May 15, 2025	Friday May 16, 2025
9:00 – 12:00	1 st period* EOC and teacher made exams	2 nd period* EOC and teacher made exams	3 rd period* EOC and teacher made exams	4 th period* EOC and teacher made exams	Make-up EOC and teacher-made exams
12:00 – 1:00	Continuation of <i>Ample time EOC sessions</i> Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of <i>Ample time EOC sessions</i> Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of <i>Ample time EOC sessions</i> Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Continuation of <i>Ample time EOC sessions</i> Bag Lunch & Dismiss	Make-up EOC and teacher-made exams
1:00 – Regular Dismissal Time *All times are approximations	Make-up EOC and teacher-made exams	Make-up EOC and teacher-made exams	Make-up EOC and teacher-made exams	Make-up EOC and teacher-made exams	Make-up EOC and teacher-made exams

*Subject to change based on Early College and Gaston College exam schedule

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Superintendent's Budget Request 2025-2026

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

The school district is required by G.S. §115C-425 to operate under an annual balanced budget resolution. The 2025-2026 budget process began with a budget survey to GCS stakeholders in December 2024. Data obtained from the budget surveys was presented to the Board at the Board Retreat in January 2025. Also, Fund Managers prepared a local budget request for their area of supervision in February and March 2025. The Superintendent's Budget Request is based on information received from our stakeholders and Fund Managers. The final budget request will be presented to the Board for approval at their regular April meeting and will be submitted to the County by May 15, 2025, as required by State law.

Fiscal Implications:

The 2024-2025 local operating budget for GCS is \$56.4 million and the respective capital outlay for GCS is \$2.2 million. The Superintendent's Budget Request for 2025-2026 is \$61.6 million for operating funds and \$4.0 million for capital outlay.

Recommendation:

N/A

Policy Implications:

Board Policy 8100 – Budget Planning and Adoption

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Other: Policy or Gen Statute. See above.

Submitted by: Gary F. Hoskins, CFO and
Associate Superintendent

Department: Finance

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Consent Agenda

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

Approval of the Consent Agenda by the Board for the following items:

- A. Recommended Personnel
- B. Budget Amendments & Budget Transfers
- C. Construction/Repair Change Orders
- D. AIG Plan 2025-2028
- E. Summer Program Plan 2025
- F. Innovation Schools Strategy
- G. Board Policy Updates
 - Policy 4170 – School Assignment
- H. Contracts
 - District Chromebook Refresh
 - Classroom/Instructional Technology – New Grier Middle
 - Google Workspace
 - Chiller Replacement – W.A. Bess Elementary School
 - Chiller Replacement – Bessemer City Middle School
 - UVA PLE (Partnership for Leaders in Education)

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

Consent items will be adopted with a single motion, second and vote, unless a request for removal from the Consent Agenda is heard from a Board member.

Policy Implications:

None

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 1. Every student will graduate prepared for post-secondary opportunities.

Submitted by: Dr. Morgen A. Houchard

Department: Superintendent

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Recommended Personnel

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

In accordance with the provisions of G.S. 115C-276(j), "It shall be the duty of the Superintendent to recommend and the Board of Education to elect all principals, teachers and other school personnel in the administrative unit." It is also within the powers of the Board to hear requests for approved leave, retirement and resignations or terminations in accordance with employment and dismissal regulations.

Fiscal Implications:

N/A

Recommendation:

Approve personnel as recommended.

Policy Implications:

Necessary and appropriate personnel will be provided to assure successful administration of schools.

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Other: Policy or Gen Statute. See above.

Submitted by: Dr. Morgen A. Houchard

Department: Human Resources

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Budget Amendments and Budget Transfers

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

Budget amendments are needed to adjust the approved budget to reflect actual changes in revenue and budget transfers are needed to transfer money to proper expenditure codes as requested by fund managers.

Fiscal Implications:

Makes adjustments to the 2024-2025 budget.

Recommendation:

Approval of the attached listing of recommended budget amendments and transfers.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 8300 Fiscal Management Standards

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Other: Policy or Gen Statute. See above.

Submitted by: Gary F. Hoskins, CFO and
Associate Superintendent

Department: Finance

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2024-2025 Budget Resolution - February
Transfers Between Functions

State Public School Fund

Function	Description	Expense Increase	Expense Decrease
51000	Regular Instructional Services	817	
52000	Special Population Services	753	
53000	Alternative Programs and Services	42,926	
58000	School-Based Support Services		43,926
61000	Support and Development Services		1,570
65000	Operational Support Services	1,000	
		<u>45,496</u>	<u>45,496</u>

Explanation: These transfers adjust budgeted amounts per requests from fund managers/principals.

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2024-2025 Budget Resolution - February
Transfers Between Functions

Local Current Expense Fund

Function	Description	Expense Increase	Expense Decrease
51000	Regular Instructional Services		80,335
53000	Alternative Programs and Services	107	
54000	School Leadership Services		5,658
55000	Co-Curricular Services	22,041	
58000	School-Based Support Services		44,500
61000	Support and Development Services	1,000	
64000	Technology Support Services		7,000
65000	Operational Support Services	111,856	
66000	Financial and Human Resource Services		1,000
69000	Policy, Leadership and Communication/Public Information Services	3,490	
		<u>138,493</u>	<u>138,493</u>

Explanation: These transfers adjust budgeted amounts per requests from fund managers/principals.

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2024-2025 Budget Resolution - February
Transfers Between Functions

Federal Grants Fund

Function	Description	Expense Increase	Expense Decrease
51000	Regular Instructional Services		499
52000	Special Population Services		40,869
53000	Alternative Programs and Services		35,459
58000	School-Based Support Services		13,235
61000	Support and Development Services		19,197
62000	Special Population Support and Development Services	50,235	
63000	Alternative Programs and Services - Support and Development Services	1,757	
66000	Financial and Human Resource Services	19,197	
67000	Accountability Services	24,809	
68000	System-Wide Pupil Support Services		78
81000	Payments to Other Governmental Units	13,339	
		<u>109,338</u>	<u>109,338</u>

Explanation: These transfers adjust budgeted amounts per requests from fund managers/principals.

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2024-2025 Budget Resolution - February
Transfers Between Functions

Restricted Grants Fund

Function	Description	Expense Increase	Expense Decrease
51000	Regular Instructional Services		19,380
52000	Special Population Services		114,000
53000	Alternative Programs and Services		10,180
58000	School-Based Support Services	2,996	
62000	Special Population Support and Development Services	39,000	
63000	Alternative Programs and Services - Support and Development Services		13,507
65000	Operational Support Services	20,691	
69000	Policy, Leadership and Communication/Public Information Services	19,380	
81000	Payments to Other Governmental Units	75,000	
		<u>157,067</u>	<u>157,067</u>

Explanation: These transfers adjust budgeted amounts per requests from fund managers/principals.

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2024-2025 Budget Resolution - February
Proposed Expenditures and Sources of Revenue

State Public School Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
1	31000	Revenue - State Public School Fund		7,349,621
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	4,099,621	
	53000	Alternative Programs and Services	250,000	
	58000	School-Based Support Services	3,000,000	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Dollars for Certified Personnel allotment - ABC Transfer - Allotment Revision #75 - FY25 (PRC0010)		
2	31000	Revenue - State Public School Fund		63,822
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	63,822	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Advanced Teaching Roles allotment - Allotment Revision #71- FY25 (PRC0022)		
3	31000	Revenue - State Public School Fund		(1,217,946)
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	(1,217,946)	
		This amendment adjusts funds for the Disadvantaged Students Supplemental allotment - ABC Transfer - Allotment Revision #75 - FY25 (PRC0024)		
4	31000	Revenue - State Public School Fund		(900,000)
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	(900,000)	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Classroom Materials/ Instructional allotment - ABC Transfer - Allotment Revision #75 - FY25 (PRC0061)		
5	31000	Revenue - State Public School Fund		(5,231,675)
	53000	Alternative Programs and Services	(5,231,675)	
		This amendment adjusts funds for the At Risk Student Services/Alternative Schools allotments - ABC Transfer - Allotment Revision #75 - FY25 (PRC0069)		
6	31000	Revenue - State Public School Fund		37,176
	53000	Alternative Programs and Services	37,176	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Literacy Intervention - Twice Retained - Allotment Revision #73 - FY25 (PRC0085)		
7	31000	Revenue - State Public School Fund		18,000
	65000	Operational Support Services	18,000	
		This amendment budgets funds for the LEA Direct Purchase of Replacement School - Stop Arm Cameras - Allotments - Allotment Revision #71 - FY25 (PRC0087)		
Total State Public School Fund Amendments			118,998	118,998

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2024-2025 Budget Resolution - February
Proposed Expenditures and Sources of Revenue

Federal Current Expense Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
1	36000	Federal Revenue		(68,014)
	52000	Special Population Services	(65,542)	
	81000	Payments to Other Governmental Units	(2,471)	
	This amendment adjusts funds for the IDEA - Section 619 Preschool Grant - FY25 (PRC0049)			
2	36000	Federal Revenue		53,187
	53300	Alternative Programs and Services	53,187	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Title I, Part A Allotment - FY25 (PRC0050)			
3	36000	Federal Revenue		51,514
	52000	Special Population Services	51,514	
	This amendment budgets funds for the IDEA, DEC 611 Grant - FY25 (PRC0060)			
4	36000	Federal Revenue		2,000
	52000	Special Population Services	2,000	
	This amendment budgets funds for the IDEA - Special Educations State Improvement Allotment - FY25 (PRC0082)			
5	36000	Federal Revenue		8,047
	61000	Support and Development Services	8,047	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Title II, Part A - Support Allotment - FY25 (PRC0103)			
6	36000	Federal Revenue		123,181
	53000	Alternative Programs and Services	123,181	
	This amendment adjusts funds for the Title IV, Part B - 21st Century (ASPIRE) Allotment - FY25 (PRC0110)			
7	36000	Federal Revenue		152,417
	65000	Operational Support Services	152,417	
	This amendment budgets funds for the ESEA Title I - School Improvement Allotment - FY25 (PRC0115)			
Total State Public School Fund Amendments			<u>322,333</u>	<u>322,333</u>

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2024-2025 Budget Resolution - February
Proposed Expenditures and Sources of Revenue

Restricted Grants Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
1	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		194,237
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	194,237	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the ROTC allotment - FY25 (PRC0001)		
2	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		100,000
	66000	Financial and Human Resource Services	100,000	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Non-Contributory Employee Benefits allotment - FY25 (PRC0009)		
3	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		34,020
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	34,020	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Drivers' Education Fund - FY25 (PRC0012)		
4	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		2,162
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	2,162	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Career Technical Education - Program Support Grant - FY25 (PRC0014)		
5	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		10,013
	52000	Special Population Services	10,013	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Children with Disabilities (DEC) Grant - FY25 (PRC0032)		
6	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		3,276
	72000	Nutrition Services	3,276	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Child Nutrition Fund - FY25 (PRC0035)		
7	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		38,278
	54000	School Leadership Services	38,278	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Assistant Principal Interns - MSA Students Fund - FY25 (PRC0067)		
8	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		287,106
	64000	Technology Support Services	287,106	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Business System Modernization allotment - FY25 (PRC0153)		

Restricted Grants Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
9	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		1,235,894
	52000	Special Population Services	1,235,894	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Medicaid Outreach Grant - FY25 (PRC0305)		
10	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		579,502
	53000	Alternative Programs and Services	579,502	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the NC PreK - FY25 (PRC0413)		
11	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		5,760
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	5,760	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Lingerfeldt Elementary School Fund - FY25 (PRC0438)		
12	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		1,389
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	1,389	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the South Point High School Fund - FY25 (PRC0494)		
13	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		521
	66000	Financial and Human Resource Services	521	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Human Resources-Id Badges Fund - FY25 (PRC0528)		
14	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		40
	58000	School-Based Support Services	40	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Business Partnership Brochure Fund - FY25 (PRC0539)		
15	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		5,260
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	5,260	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Duke Energy-Middle School Books Grant - FY25 (PRC0592)		
16	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		15,355
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	15,355	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Teacher/Admin of The Year Fund - FY25 (PRC0608)		
17	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		1,168
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	1,168	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Caromont-East Gaston Fund - FY25 (PRC0619)		

Restricted Grants Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
18	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		20,000
	51000	Regular Instructional Services	20,000	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Duke Energy Steam Grant - FY25 (PRC0650)		
19	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		48,484
	68000	System-Wide Pupil Support Services	48,484	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Local Records Requests Fees Fund - FY25 (PRC0700)		
20	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		30,839
	65000	Operational Support Services	30,839	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Activity Bus Fund - FY25 (PRC0706)		
21	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		10,469
	65000	Operational Support Services	10,469	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Fixed Asset Sales Fund - FY25 (PRC0881)		
22	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		11,939
	65000	Operational Support Services	11,939	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Sale Of Scrap Metal Fund - FY25 (PRC0883)		
23	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		17,404
	66000	Financial and Human Resource Services	17,404	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Insurance Fund - FY25 (PRC0840)		
24	48000	Local Sources - Restricted		3,070
	69000	Policy, Leadership and Communication/Public Information Services	3,070	
		This amendment budgets funds received for the Print Shop Fund - FY25 (PRC0900)		
Total Restricted Grants Fund Amendments			2,656,186	2,656,186

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Construction/Repair Change Orders

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

Attached is a listing of construction and repair change orders that were submitted since the last Board meeting. Any change orders that were less than \$100,000 were approved by the Superintendent or his designee in accordance with Board Policy 9030 – Facility Construction. Change orders greater than \$100,000 must be approved by the Board.

Fiscal Implications:

All change orders were prefunded prior to recommendation for approval.

Recommendation:

Approval of the attached listing of construction/repair change orders.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 9030 Facility Construction

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Other: Policy or Gen Statute. See above.

Submitted by: Bessie Harvey, Assistant
Superintendent of Operations

Department: Facilities

GCS CHANGE ORDER NOTIFICATION

In accordance with GCS Board Policy 9030 - Facility Construction, all construction and repair change orders approved by the Superintendent, or his designee, shall be reported to the Board. In addition, any change orders that involve amounts over \$100,000 must be approved by the Board. This GCS Change Order Notification provides the required information for change orders \$100,000 or less that have already been approved by the Superintendent, or his designee, and change orders over \$100,000 that need Board approval.

Presented to BOE	Contractor's Name	Project name	Description of Change	Contract Amount	Change Order Amount
3-17-25	None				

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: AIG Plan 2025-2028

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

Article 9B (NCGS.115C150.5) is North Carolina's governing legislation for gifted education. As required by law every three years, Gaston County Schools has developed our local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards. These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide Public School Units (PSUs) to develop, implement, and monitor thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs. The NC AIG Program Standards encompass six principle standards with accompanying practices. These standards articulate the expectations for quality, comprehensive, and effective local AIG programs aligned to NC's AIG legislation, Article 9B.

The AIG department in Gaston County Schools has worked with several stakeholder groups to improve and update our gifted plan to include the following:

- K-2 Talent Development (TD) Program to replace cost prohibitive testing and identification in K-1. TD programs at this age are best practice, supported by research, recommended by DPI, and most often seen in districts across NC at this age.
- Revision of screening to decrease testing and make better use of existing data
- Clarification of gifted services for students in grades 6-12 (including Honors, AP, and Dual Enrollment opportunities)
- Explicit connections between AIG programs and district initiatives articulated to allow for integration of AIG Dept. vision with GCS district priorities
- Overall, the plan has been revised to be read more like a narrative with examples rather than lists. This is recommended by DPI and allows our stakeholders to better understand the gifted services we provide.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

Approve AIG Plan 2025-2028.

Policy Implications:

None

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 3. Every employee is capable and committed to the education of the whole child.

Submitted by: Kathleen Koch

Department: Academic Services

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Summer Program Plan 2025

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

Students who do not achieve proficiency on End of Grade (EOG) and End of Course (EOC) assessments in Reading and Math will be provided the opportunity to attend summer programming. The purpose is to provide students with remediation in content standards and domains for tested areas in which they were not proficient. At the conclusion of the remediation period, students may take their End-of-Grade or End-of-Course test(s).

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

Approve the summer programming plan.

Policy Implications:

None

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 2. Every member of our diverse population has the opportunity for individualized instruction.

Submitted by: Kelly Cunningham, Chief Accountability Officer

Department: Accountability

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Innovation Schools Strategy

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

The Innovation Schools Strategy will launch for the upcoming school year, 2025-2026, to address the needs of the leaders, teachers and students within ten of our low performing schools, most of them are Restart Schools. The Innovation Schools Strategy will include: the use of state salary supplement to pay high performing principals, the implementation of the Advanced Teacher Roles grant and the leadership development offered by UVA PLE. The three key components are linked to research for student outcomes and will serve as a model for the district for transformation that can be applied to other GCS schools in the future.

Fiscal Implications:

At risk student state funding and federal Title I and II funding will be used to support the selection and retention of high performing leaders, the ATR grant and the UVA PLE partnership.

Recommendation:

To approve the implementation of the GCS Innovation School Strategy.

Policy Implications:

N/A

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 1. Every student will graduate prepared for post-secondary opportunities.

Submitted by: Tonya Kales, Associate Superintendent

Department: Academic Services

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Board Policy Updates
Policy 4170 – School Assignment

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

Audit of current policies leads to revisions/adoptions of Gaston County Board of Education Policies. Appropriate staff have reviewed proposed changes and approved them for adoption/revision by the Board of Education.

See attached for complete list of policies to be adopted/revised.

Fiscal Implications:

N/A

Recommendation:

Board of Education approval of proposed policy updates.

Policy Implications:

Board of Education Policies will be updated to required standards.

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Other: Policy or Gen Statute. See above.

Submitted by: Rebekka H. Powers

Department: Student Support Services

I. Assignment Areas

The Superintendent will recommend to the Board of Education assignment areas for the schools in the district.

The assignment areas will be developed in accordance with state requirements; the need to serve all school-age children who live in the school district; and the effective use of each school; special consideration shall be given to community/neighborhood schools. Assignments will be made in a non-discriminating manner. In addition, certain students may be assigned according to their qualifications for special needs programs, ESL programs, certain magnet programs or alternative placement. The Board of Education shall set geographical boundaries for assignment districts from time to time as may be appropriate and will publish these in the Office of Student Assignment.

II. Residence Requirements

- A. Student(s) shall be assigned to schools by The Gaston County Board of Education on the basis of residence; unless the student is enrolled in a special program as defined in paragraph C below. The residence of a student is defined as the domicile of the parent(s). In the event the student has no parent domiciled in the school district, or parental rights have been terminated, then the student will be assigned in the attendance area where such student's legal guardian, custodian or person standing in loco parentis, in that order, is domiciled. A student who is 18 years of age or a student emancipated by marriage or court decree may establish his/her own domicile for the purposes of this policy. For the purposes of this policy, domicile shall be defined as the place a person intends to make his home for the present time. A person has domicile at a place for school assignment purposes if: (1) he/she has abandoned his/her prior home, (2) he/she has a present intention to make the present place his/her home, and (3) he/she has no present intention to leave the place he/she calls home. Appeals of assignment must be made to the Office of Student Assignment within ten days of notification.
- B. Notice of assignment will be made prior to the effective date of the assignment for students already enrolled in the Gaston County Schools; assignment may be given by noting the same on the report card of the student or any other means that will adequately insure the delivery of written notice to the parent(s). In the case of students enrolling in a Gaston County School for the first time, assignment will be made at the time of their application for enrollment.

- C. In the event students are evaluated for the Exceptional Children's Program, ESL, Alternative Placement (Warlick Academy) or **choice options** ~~other~~ (magnet programs, **schools and academies**) their assignment will be made in accordance with guidelines of each particular program.

III. Gaston County Board of Education Requirements

The Gaston County Board of Education requires that all students meet the eligibility requirements of the State of North Carolina, and the Gaston County School system, including age, immunization and residence regulations. Falsification, deception, or the willful failure to submit or maintain accurate and up-to-date information pertaining to student enrollment or transfer will nullify any parental request for transfer during that school year.

IV. Age Requirement

All resident students who have passed the fifth anniversary of their birth on or before August 31 of the year in which they enroll and who have not attained the age of 21 years are eligible to enroll in the Gaston County Schools. A certified birth certificate or other satisfactory evidence of date of birth is required within thirty (30) days for admission for the first time in kindergarten or first grade at any school.

V. Immunization Requirements

- A. Within thirty (30) days of their first enrollment date, all students must show evidence of immunization against tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough, red measles (rubeola), German measles (rubella), and poliomyelitis. Such evidence must be shown in the form of a certificate furnished by a licensed physician or by the health department.
- B. School principals are required to refuse admittance to any child whose parent/guardian does not present a certified birth certificate or other satisfactory evidence of birth and a medical certification of proper immunizations within the allotted time. Exception to the immunization requirement is made only for religious reasons or for medical reasons approved by a physician.

VI. Domicile Requirements**A. Students Domiciled in Gaston County**

A student who is domiciled in Gaston County and who otherwise qualifies for admission to its schools is entitled to be admitted without payment of tuition.

B. Domicile of Student Generally

The domicile of a student under 18 years of age is presumed to be the domicile of his/her parents, legal guardian or legal custodian as defined by the General Statutes of North Carolina and the law of North Carolina. If the student's parent(s) is domiciled in Gaston County, no change of legal custodian will cause the student to be reassigned to the domicile of the legal custodian. In order to change schools, a transfer must be requested and approved under the hardship provision hereinafter.

C. Domicile of Emancipated Students

If the student is at least 18 years of age or married or abandoned by his/her parents, or if the Court declares a student to be emancipated, the student may establish a domicile independent from that of his/her parents, legal guardian or legal custodian. A student who establishes domicile as a result of being emancipated shall be considered to be domiciled in Gaston County and shall be entitled to the same rights and privileges of other students domiciled in Gaston County. Prior to a change of school assignment, a written acknowledgment and agreement will be generated from the parents concerning a change of domicile and explaining the circumstances of emancipation.

D. Domicile of Students with Divorced or Separated Parents

In the event that the parents are divorced or separated and legal custody has been given to only one parent, a student's domicile follows that of the parent who has been granted legal custody. In the event that the parents are divorced or separated and legal custody (1) has not been determined, (2) has been granted jointly to both parents, or (3) the custodial parent wishes the student to attend school in the non-custodial parent's district of residence, then and in and of these events, the parents must jointly agree on which of their two residences will be used to determine the child's domicile for the purpose of school attendance.

The parents shall submit the selected residence in writing to the Superintendent at the beginning of each school year. In the event the parents cannot agree on which residence shall be used to determine the child's domicile for school attendance purposes, the residence of the parent with physical custody of the child will be used for assignment purposes. The student assignment will be for the term of the entire school year in cases where assignment is made by agreement.

When a parent does not have proof of address in their name, the Office of Student Assignment will make the assignment.

E. Homeless Students/Assignment: See Policy Code 4175

F. Transfer of Students in Foster Care

Students who are assigned to foster care between academic years or during an academic year will remain in their school of origin unless remaining in the school of origin is not in the best interest of the student. The best interest of the student will be decided based on all relevant factors, including consideration of the appropriateness of the educational setting and proximity to the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care.

G. Students Domiciled Outside Gaston County (Out-of-District Transfers)

An out-of-district student is defined as a student who does not meet the definition of homeless, and is domiciled outside of the school administrative unit (including a student who resides in the school administrative unit with someone other than a parent, legal guardian or legal custodian but whose parent, legal guardian or legal custodian is domiciled outside of the school administrative unit).

VII. Student Assignment and Transfers/In-District

A. The Gaston County Board of Education will adopt attendance zones for the schools within the district. School attendance zones shall be recommended by the Superintendent and adopted by the Board of Education.

B. These zones shall be consistent with state requirements and court rulings and shall consider the need to serve all school-age children who live in the district, the efficient and effective use of the school, and the geographic location of the school in relationship to the surrounding student population.

1. Student Assignment

- (a) It is the intent of the Board that all students who qualify for admission to its schools shall be assigned to the schools in the attendance area of their domicile. **For the purposes of this policy, domicile shall be defined as the place a person intends to make their home for the present time. The residence of a student is defined as the domicile of the parent(s).**
- (b) Students whose parents, legal guardian, or legal custodian change their domicile and establish a new domicile either within or outside Gaston County during a school year, may be permitted to complete the remainder of the school year in their present school location provided they meet the requirements stated in the guidelines for out-of-district enrollments. This provision does not apply if space availability, student behavior, or poor attendance issues are in question, except during the last grading period as provided below:
- (1) Grades K-8: Students may be permitted to complete the remainder of the school year as determined by the Office of Student Assignment.
 - (2) Grades 9-12: Students may be permitted to complete the remainder of the semester in which the move occurred as determined by the Office of Student Assignment.

(c) Exceptional Children's Program

The guidelines and procedures for placement into the Exceptional Child Program are published in "Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities" which is distributed by the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Exceptional Services Department, and hereby incorporated herein by reference.

When students are assigned under this provision, the student will be assigned to the appropriate school in the student's attendance area, wherever possible.

d) English as a Second Language (ESL) Placement

In the event a student's first language is not English and the student is evaluated on the Language Proficiency Test as needing English instruction, and the school to which he is originally assigned does not have an appropriate ESL program, the student will be assigned to the appropriate school in the student's attendance area, wherever possible. If no space is available or the needed program is not available in the attendance area, the student will be assigned to the nearest appropriate school which meets the student's needs.

(e) Alternative Placement

The Warlick Academy is a program designed to meet the educational needs of children in Gaston County who have not adapted behaviorally or who are not benefiting from regular school programs. The philosophy of the school is based on the inherent worth and potential of every person. It is predicated on the assumption that all children can learn if the proper conditions are set for them and the premise that every student has the right to an appropriate and high-quality education.

Students may be assigned to the Warlick Academy by the Superintendent or his designee in accordance with the guidelines and procedures set forth in the document entitled "The Alternate School," and hereby incorporated herein by reference.

C. Transfers within the School System

Transfers to a school will be considered only where it has been determined that space is available. The fact of whether space is available will be determined by the Superintendent or designee who will consider current and expected enrollment within the class and grade. Transfers will not be granted if the addition of that student causes the school to exceed any classroom limitations.

Transfers will only be considered when it has been determined that students meet the following eligibility criteria: (1) are able to provide their own transportation, (2) attendance that aligns with district's attendance policy, (3) exhibit exemplary conduct that aligns with expectations of the Gaston County Schools' Code of Conduct and (4) academic performance necessary for promoting to the next grade level. These criteria will be considered using data for the student from the most recent school year.

The district is under no obligation to furnish school transportation for students living outside the district or assigned by transfer. Parents requesting transfer within Gaston County would receive first priority based on space available at the requested school.

Any reason having to do with personal preference, convenience, program offerings or athletics is not a valid or sufficient need for enrollment or transfer in-district or out-of-district.

1. Medical/Health Related

A student who has a serious physical or mental illness, handicap, or disability may be reassigned to a school which better meets his needs. The student's physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist shall complete a form provided by the Student Assignment Officer describing the nature of the student's medical difficulty. The Medical Review Officer for the Gaston County Schools will determine, after necessary consultation with the student's physician, the necessity of the transfer. The Office of Student Assignment will be notified of the Medical Review Officer.

- (a) When the students are assigned under this provision, the student will be assigned to the appropriate school in the student's attendance area, wherever possible. If no space is available or the needed program is not available in the attendance area, the student
- (b) will be assigned to the nearest appropriate school which meets the student's needs.

The student's parent(s) will be notified of the decision by the Office of Student Assignment.

A Medical Review Officer will be appointed annually by the Superintendent who will report the same to the Transfer Committee of the Board.

2. Special or Unique Circumstances

The Transfer Committee may elect in special or unique circumstances to transfer a student. In making such a determination, the Transfer Committee shall consider the best interest of the child, the orderly and efficient administration of the public schools, the proper administration of the school to which reassignment is requested and the instruction, health, and safety of the pupils there enrolled, and shall assign said child in accordance with such factors. Additionally, the Transfer Committee shall determine that such a transfer will not contravene the intent of this policy.

The need for a transfer must be established by an affidavit by the parent(s) outlining the special or unique circumstances for consideration of the request by the Transfer Committee.

In the event, a parent is building a house for occupancy before the end of the first (1st) semester; the student may be issued a temporary transfer. A signed contract by a reputable builder confirming that the house will be ready for occupancy no later than December 31 of the current school year must be filed with the Office of Student Assignment.

3. Elementary and Middle School Transfers Due to Day Care Necessity

A student in grades K-8 whose parent(s) are employed outside the home and who by necessity is kept before and/or after school by others (relatives, nurseries, day care center, etc.) located outside the attendance zone, in which the student is kept, may request a transfer. The need for a transfer must be established by an affidavit by the parent(s) and keeper of such student. Verification of employment may be required. The Transfer Committee shall determine if the transfer is necessary in order to avoid hardship or burden on the family.

4. Transfer Request for a Child of a Gaston County Schools Employee

Children of employees who have worked full-time in the Gaston County Schools may request a transfer. These transfers shall be renewed reviewed each school year. Students receiving a transfer must remain in good standing.

Once a transfer has been granted under this provision, and is renewed because all required conditions are met, the student may continue to request transfer to the school that is in closest geographic proximity within the feeder system. The student will be assigned to the school in which the parent works, or if the parent(s) does not work in a school or a school with the grade span needed for the student, then the student will be transferred to the school in the closest geographic proximity to the place/school where the parent(s) works.

If parent ceases to be employed by the Gaston County Schools, the student's transfer will be revoked at the end of the school year in which employment was terminated, provided, however, if a parent's employment has terminated due to retirement or disability, the student may continue to request a transfer within the feeder system.

5. Other Transfers

~~The superintendent shall consider student requests for transfer to another school during the school year based upon space availability, the needs of the child, the effect on the school to which transfer is requested, principal recommendations, and other criteria established by the superintendent.~~

- D. A Transfer Committee appointed by the Board Chairman consisting of staff and/or Board members shall have the authority to approve or deny a transfer request. The student shall have the right to appeal the decision of this committee to the Board or a committee of the Board appointed for that purpose. At the appeal hearing, the Board (or committee thereof) shall consider the best interest of the child, the orderly and efficient administration of the public schools, and the proper administration of the school to which reassignment is requested and the instruction, health, and safety of the pupils there enrolled, and shall assign said child in accordance with such factors. Additionally, the Board (or committee thereof) shall determine that such a transfer will not contravene the intent of this policy.

Transfer request forms will be available in the Office of Student Assignment.

E. Administrative Transfer **Placement of Students**

The Superintendent may elect in very severe and exigent circumstances to ~~transfer~~ **place** any student when he determines such action to be in the best interest of the student and the school(s) affected and when he further determines that such action would not contravene the intent of this policy. An administrative ~~transfer~~ **placement** will be reported to the Transfer Committee of the Board at its next regular meeting.

VIII. Student Transfers/Out-of-District

- A. The Transfer Committee shall have the responsibility to approve or deny requests for admission to Gaston County Schools by out-of-district students. Enrollment requests from parents of students who reside outside of Gaston County will not be considered until all transfers for in-county students have been made with exception of category B.3 below.
- B. The enrollment of an out-of-district student shall be considered under the same criteria and procedures set forth for transfers of in-county students.
 - 1. Medical/Health Related
 - 2. Special Circumstances
 - 3. Elementary and Middle School Transfers Due to Day Care Necessity
 - 4. Transfer Request for a Child of a Gaston County Schools Employee
- C. An out-of-district student who has been accepted for admission shall be assigned to a school within a reasonable proximity to the student's domicile that meets the best interest of the student and the orderly and efficient administration of the public schools. Once an out-of-district transfer is granted, the student will be permitted to complete the remainder of the school year in their present school location, provided they continue to meet all other requirements of this section.
- D. In the event an out-of-district transfer/enrollment is approved under the criteria set forth in this policy, then the following conditions must be met in order to validate the transfer:
 - 1. The student demonstrates that he/she was in good standing in the previous school attended by that student, in terms of academics, discipline, and other measures of progress in the last school attended.
 - 2. The student furnishes a transcript and other student record data, including evidence of compliance with the North Carolina immunization requirements.
 - 3. The student submits a release approved by the Board of Education of the other school administrative unit from which the transfer is being made if the student is transferring from another school administrative unit in North Carolina.

- E. Students living outside Gaston County will pay the tuition then being charged by the school administrative unit, unless exempted or waived because the student meets one of the following criteria:
1. A student is placed in or assigned to a group home, foster home, or other similar facility or institution within the school administrative unit.
 2. A student demonstrates extraordinary financial hardship.
 3. A student's parent is a ~~certified~~ full-time employee of Gaston County Schools.
 4. A non-immigrant student is participating in any approved Foreign Exchange Program sanctioned by Gaston County Schools.

Note: Tuition for out-of-district students is declared annually by the Board of Education. The tuition fee shall be based upon the local per-pupil funding. Fees must be paid at the Office of Student Assignment, 1 Learning Place, Gastonia, N.C. 28052 prior to enrollment at the assigned school.

- F. A Transfer Committee appointed by the Board Chairman consisting of staff and/or Board members shall have the authority to approve or deny a transfer request. The student shall have the right to appeal the decision of this committee to the Board or a committee of the Board appointed for that purpose. At the appeal hearing, the Board (or committee thereof) shall consider the best interest of the child, the orderly and efficient administration of the public schools, and the proper administration of the school to which reassignment is requested and the instruction, health, and safety of the pupils there enrolled, and shall assign said child in accordance with such factors. Additionally, the Board (or committee thereof) shall determine that such a transfer will not contravene the intent of this policy.

IX. Releases to Other School Districts

- A. The Release Committee shall have the responsibility to approve or deny requests for release from Gaston County Schools by in-district students.
- B. A release of a student from Gaston County Schools shall be for the following reasons only:
1. Medical/Health Related
A student who has a serious physical or mental illness, handicap or disability may be released to a school which better meets his needs. The

student's physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist shall complete a form provided by the Student Assignment Officer describing the nature of the student's medical difficulty. The Medical Review Officer for the Gaston County Schools will determine, after necessary consultation with the student's physician, the necessity of the release. The student's parent(s) will be notified of the decision of the Medical Review Officer in writing by the Office of Student Assignment.

A Medical Review Officer will be appointed annually by the Superintendent.

2. Special or Unique Circumstances

In special or unique circumstances, a student may request a release. In making such a determination, consideration shall be given to the best interest of the child, the orderly and efficient administration of the public schools, the proper administration of the school to which reassignment is requested and the instruction, health and safety of the pupils there enrolled, and shall release said child in accordance with such factors. The release will not contravene the intent of this policy.

- C. Students whose parents, legal guardian, or legal custodian establish their domicile within the school district during a school year may be granted a release to complete the remainder of the school year in their present school location provided they pay any fees required by that school, and furnish their own transportation.
- D. Students whose parents, legal guardian, or legal custodian establish their domicile within the school district during a school year may be granted a release to compete the remainder of the school year in their present school location provided they pay any fees required by that school, and furnish their own transportation.
- E. Students released to other school systems must meet financial obligations required by their new school systems and provide their own transportation.

- F. A Release Committee appointed by the Board Chairman consisting of staff and/or Board members shall have the authority to approve or deny a release request. The student shall have the right to appeal the decision of this committee to the Board or a committee of the Board appointed for that purpose. At the appeal hearing, the Board (or committee thereof) shall consider the best interest of the child and the orderly and efficient administration of the Gaston County Schools and shall release said child in accordance with such factors. Additionally, the Board (or committee thereof) shall determine that such a release will not contravene the intent of this policy.
- G. Release forms will be available in the Office of Student Assignment.

X. General Provisions**A. Expectations of Students on Transfer**

Students whose applications for transfer are approved must (1) provide their own transportation, (2) comply with the district's attendance policy, (3) exhibit exemplary conduct **that aligns with expectations of the Gaston County School's Code of Conduct** and (4) maintain academic performance necessary for promoting to the next grade level. Should the transfer student fail to comply with the above standards, the school principal may recommend that the transfer be revoked.

B. Cancellation of Student Transfer

1. ~~Each school principal will develop procedures that will inform students~~ **At the beginning of each school year or at the time a transfer is granted, parents and students will be informed** of the conditions necessary to maintain transfer status. **These conditions will be outlined in a contract that must be signed and returned to the school's principal.**
2. Principals will use the following procedures to request the cancellation of transfer:
 - a. The student and his/her parent will be informed, during the ~~enrollment~~ **transfer approval** process, of the expectations or conditions necessary for an approved transfer. **Parents must agree to these conditions by signing and returning the transfer contract to the school's principal.**

- b. The parent is responsible for transportation (except for homeless student transfers and transfers of students in foster care based on the student's best interest, for which the system will provide transportation in a manner consistent with legal requirements and policy 4125).
 - c. A student and his/her parent will be given **written** notice of any warning(s) that might place their transfer status in jeopardy. (See Expectations of Students on Transfer above.)
 - a. **Except for any action of the student that is a violation of the Gaston County Schools' Code of Conduct and is considered especially grievous or a safety concern may result in an automatic revocation of transfer.**
 - d. **Following a notice of warning,** a transfer student's **continued** failure to satisfy the conditions for transfer will be withdrawn from enrollment at the school. Prior to the withdrawal of a transfer student, the Office of Student Assignment and the parent will be contacted.
3. There will be no cancellation of existing transfers during the last grading period of each school year neither in grades K-8 nor in the last grading period of each semester in grades 9-12.
4. Any transfer request that is approved based upon false or misleading information will be declared void, and the transfer will be rescinded.
- C. Procedure for Requesting a Transfer ~~or Release~~
- 1. Requests for transfer/release should be made in writing to the Office of Student Assignment by the parent, legal guardian, or legal custodian between April 1st, and ~~May 1st~~ **July 15th**, for each school year.

a. Requests will only be considered outside this time frame for hardships or situation with extenuating circumstances.

2. The Office of Student Assignment shall notify the parents, legal guardian, or legal custodian of the decision in writing. ~~If the request for transfer/release is disapproved, the notice shall be mailed to the applicant by the Office of Student Assignment.~~
3. The transfer or reassignment is valid for no more than one ~~will be evaluated for continue eligibility prior to the end of each~~ school year (except for (a) unsafe school choice transfers, for which the length of reassignment will be consistent with legal requirements and policy 4152; (b) homeless student transfers for which the length of reassignment will be consistent with legal requirements and policy 4175); and (c) transfers or reassignment of students in foster care, for which the length of reassignment will be consistent with legal requirements.

~~Applicants for a transfer/release must reapply each year.~~ **Students assigned based on approved transfer will have their transfer status evaluated for continued eligibility prior to the end of the current school year. Students who meet eligibility criteria will be given the option to renew their transfer for the following school year. Students who fail to satisfy the conditions for transfer will be reassigned to their zoned school of attendance for the following school year.**

D. Appeal to the Board

If an application for transfer/release is denied, the applicant may, within ten (10) days after receiving notice of the denial, apply in writing to the Student Assignment Officer for a hearing, and shall be entitled to a prompt and fair hearing on the question of the reassignment or transfer/release of the child to a different school.

E. Forms

The Office of Student Assignment will develop appropriate forms for the implementation of these Rules which will be available in the schools and in the Office of Student Assignment.

Legal References: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 11431 *et seq.*; Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 6301 *et seq.*; *Non-Regulatory Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care*, U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (June 2016) and *Non-Regulatory Guidance Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program*, U.S. Department of Education (July 2016), both available at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/index.html>; *Unsafe School Choice Option Non-Regulatory Guidance*, U.S. Department of Education (May 2004), available at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/edpicks.jhtml?src=ln>; G.S. 15C-8; 115C-36, -366, -367, -369; State Board of Education Policy SSCH-006

Adopted: 07/16/2001

Revised 06/04/2007, 05/15/2017

DRAFT

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Contracts and Expenditures >\$100,000

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

The attached listing of contracts and expenditures more than \$100,000 was reviewed by staff and recommended for approval by the Board, or are contracts less than \$100,000 but recommended to the Board for approval.

Fiscal Implications:

All contracts and expenditures will be paid using bond funding, capital proceeds or operational savings.

Recommendation:

Approval

Policy Implications:

Board Policy 8640

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Other: Policy or Gen Statute. See above.

Submitted by: Gary F. Hoskins, CFO and
Associate Superintendent

Department: Finance

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: District Chromebook Refresh

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

Each year new Chromebooks must be purchased for Kindergarten and 1st grade students to maintain our sustainability plan. Our plan calls for refreshing approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the K-1 Chromebook fleet each year. We estimate needing 1,300 touchscreen Chromebooks for a total cost of \$323,700 plus 7% sales tax. These Chromebooks will be distributed to schools based on enrollment for Kindergarten and 1st grade students for the 2025-2026 school year.

Also, each year new Chromebooks must be purchased for rising 2nd, 6th, and 9th grade students to maintain our sustainability plan. We estimate needing 7,400 Chromebooks for a total cost of \$1,665,000 plus 7% sales tax. These Chromebooks will be distributed to schools based on the enrollment of rising 2nd, 6th, and 9th grade students for the 2025-2026 school year.

Fiscal Implications:

The total cost of \$2,127,909 will be paid from local funds provided for capital outlay.

Recommendation:

The Operations Committee recommends approval of the purchase of student Chromebooks.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 3220 Technology in the Educational Program

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 3: Every employee uses innovative practices to serve all students, parents, and other stakeholders.

Submitted by: Curtis Poplin, Chief Technology Officer

Department: TSS

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Classroom/Instructional Technology —
New Grier Middle School

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

Purchase and installation of 64 LED Displays for the new Grier Middle School. The LEDs would be located in every classroom, which is the district standard, to provide innovative educational opportunities for all students.

Fiscal Implications:

\$105,146.23 — Quote is provided by Camcor - a named vendor for the NC Dept of Administration State Contract 880A — Audio Visual and Photographic Equipment and Accessories. Devices would be funded with capital funds, as they are for a new build.

Recommendation:

Approve the purchase of classroom technology for new Grier Middle School.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 3220 Technology in the Educational Program

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 3: Every employee uses innovative practices to serve all students, parents, and other stakeholders.

Submitted by: Curtis Poplin, Chief Technology Officer

Department: TSS

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Google Workspace

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

Gaston County Schools provides all staff and students with a Google Workspace account. In addition to Gmail, Google Docs, Meet, Forms, etc., this cost includes:

1. Advanced security center with additional security, controls, logs, and analytics;
2. Premium Google Meet, Google Slides, and Google Docs features; and
3. Priority response from Google specialists.

Fiscal Implications:

The cost of \$147,985 will be paid from the current TSS operational budget.

Recommendation:

The Operations Committee recommends approval of the purchase of the Google Workspace Education Plus.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 3220 Technology in the Educational Program

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 3: Every employee uses innovative practices to serve all students, parents, and other stakeholders.

Submitted by: Curtis Poplin, Chief Technology Officer

Department: TSS

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Chiller Replacement — W.A. Bess Elementary School

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

The chiller at W.A. Bess Elementary School is 15+ years old. The chiller has a busted evaporator coil in circuit 2 and water in the refrigerant. It will cost more to repair the chiller than to replace it. This chiller services the entire school.

Fiscal Implications:

Five (5) vendors attended the Pre-bid meeting on December 5, 2024. Four (4) vendors submitted a bid. Daikin Applied submitted the lowest bid at a cost of \$185,000.

Recommendation:

For the approval for Daikin Applied to replace the chiller at W.A. Bess Elementary School.

Policy Implications:

N/A

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 5. Every student has the opportunity to learn in a safe school environment.

Submitted by: Bessie Harvey **Department:** Assistant Superintendent of Operations

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Chiller Replacement — Bessemer City Middle School

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

The chiller at Bessemer City Middle School is 25+ years old, has coolant leaks, water leaks, bad coils and failing pumps. It will cost more to repair the chiller than to replace. This chiller services the eighth-grade wing. Without the chiller working there will be no air conditioning.

Fiscal Implications:

Five (5) vendors attended the Pre-bid meeting on December 5, 2024. Four (4) vendors submitted a bid. Daikin Applied submitted the lowest bid at a cost of \$133,500.

Recommendation:

For the approval for Daikin Applied to replace the chiller at Bessemer City Middle School.

Policy Implications:

N/A

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 5. Every student has the opportunity to learn in a safe school environment.

Submitted by: Bessie Harvey **Department:** Assistant Superintendent of Operations

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: UVA PLE (Partnership for Leaders in Education)

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

The district will engage in leadership development with UVA PLE to focus on the transformation work needed in our Innovation Schools. The school leaders and teachers will also receive on-going leadership development to drive the changes needed at the ten Innovation Schools to deliver on a high-quality learning experience for all students that attend the identified schools, approximately 7,520 students. The partnership is a two-year program, but we are committing to one year at this time and will evaluate the impact on teaching and learning next spring for a decision for year two.

Fiscal Implications:

State funds allocated specifically for students/schools at risk will be used to pay the contract with UVA PLE. The funding source was created from unused funds provided to schools that were redirected to the district at the close of the school fiscal year. All Innovation Schools are eligible for the funding source to be leveraged to support the initiative. A total of \$367,500 is being requested for approval.

Recommendation:

Approval for the investment of state funding allocated to students/schools at risk to pay the first year of the partnership with UVA PLE for our District Team and ten Innovation Schools.

Policy Implications:

None

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Goal 1. Every student will graduate prepared for post-secondary opportunities.

Submitted by: Tonya Kales, Associate Superintendent

Department: Academic Services

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 3/17/2025

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Closed Session

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

Closed sessions shall be held when required to permit a public body to act in the public interest as permitted by law.

– N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel

– N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) Consultation with Attorney

In order to consult with the Board's attorney and protect the attorney client privilege, and to receive advice with respect to the lawsuits captioned:

—19-CVS-3893 McKinney et al. vs. Goins and The Gaston County Board of Education

—21-CVS-5016 Bostic vs. Phroneberger and The Gaston County Board of Education

—21-CVS-5017 Lukinoff vs. Barber and The Gaston County Board of Education

—21-CVS-5018 Brittain vs. Beason and The Gaston County Board of Education

—21-CVS-5019 Long vs. The Gaston County Board of Education

—3:23-CV-643-RJC-DCK Roger Perkins vs. The Gaston County Board of Education

—Any other legal matters.

Fiscal Implications:

N/A

Recommendation:

Board to consider information provided in Closed Session in accordance with G.S. §143-318.11.

Policy Implications:

N/A

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Other: Policy or Gen Statute. See above.

Submitted by: Sonya McGraw, Attorney **Department:** Legal/Superintendent's Office

Last Name	First Name	Category	School
Aguero	Ana	Hire	School Nutrition
Aguilar	Maria	Hire	School Nutrition
Alarcon Gallardo	Bernardita	Resignation	Ida Rankin Elementary School
Alexander	Kathleen	Resignation	Bessemer City High School
Arrington-Boone	Lakeitha	Resignation	Woodhill Elementary School
Bano Rivera	Wendy	Hire	School Nutrition
Banuelos Lamas	Adela	Hire	Stanley Middle School
Bell	Dahlia	Resignation	Grier Middle School
Boyd	Larekia	Resignation	South Point High School
Bridges	Melody	Promotion	School Nutrition
Bryant	Penny	Transfer	School Nutrition
Burris	Angelique	Resignation	Bessemer City High School
Burris	Denetta	Involuntary Termination	Southwest Middle School
Byrd	Lisa	Transfer	Edward D. Sadler, Jr. Elementary School
Campbell	Amber	Hire	School Nutrition
Carpenter	Jordan	Transfer	Facilities
Cash	Graclynn	Hire	John Chavis Middle School
Cochran	Zachary	Resignation	Hunter Huss High School
Collis	Sandra	Hire	School Nutrition
Conner	Carmen	Transfer	Warlick Academy
Cook	Deborah	Transfer	School Nutrition
Cope	Kendra	Hire	North Gaston High School
Creed	Kyle	Transfer	Bessemer City High School
Daves	Nicole	Hire	Student Support Services
Dunlap	Teresa	Promotion	School Nutrition
Durham	Jade	Resignation	Holbrook Middle School
Edwards	Stephen	Resignation	Pleasant Ridge Elementary School
Escobar Garces	Oscar	Hire	School Nutrition
Etheridge	Juandetta	Hire	School Nutrition
Fernandez	Jordan	Resignation	Student Support Services
Filchuk	Antoinette	Hire	W.C. Friday Middle School
Flowers	Kimberly	Resignation	Technology Support Services
Franks	Amy	Rehire an Employee	School Nutrition
Fuller	Shereena	Promotion	Warlick Academy
Gidney	Raven	Resignation	North Gaston High School
Gillispie	William	Transfer	Hunter Huss High School
Gilmore	Adrienne	Hire	W. Blaine Beam Intermediate School
Glenn	Marvin	Retirement	Holbrook Middle School
Gore	Phyllis	Transfer	School Nutrition
Gosnell	Donna	Hire, Promotion	North Gaston High School
Grigg	Jasmine	Hire	School Nutrition
Hager	Bethany	Hire	School Nutrition
Hannah	Vanessa	Hire	Warlick Academy
Harris	Zuri	Hire	Southwest Middle School
Henry	Laura	Hire	Student Support Services
Holloman	Stephanie	Transfer	York Chester Middle School

Last Name	First Name	Category	School
Hope	Shona	Hire	School Nutrition
Hovis	Patrick	Resignation	Forestview High School
Huffstetler	Wanda	Retirement	Bessemer City High School
Hughes	Ashley	Resignation	School Nutrition
Humphries	Amanda	Rehire an Employee	Carr Elementary School
Humphries	Maysie	Transfer	School Nutrition
Humphries	Shirley	Resignation	School Nutrition
Hunnicut	Heather	Resignation	Brookside Elementary School
Hush	Paula	Transfer	School Nutrition
Isley	Erin	Hire	Gardner Park Elementary School
Jorge	Santa	Resignation	School Nutrition
Jumawan	Jiypee	Hire	Bessemer City High School
Kapus	Ana Marie	Hire	School Nutrition
Kennedy	Brittany	Resignation	Carr Elementary School
Kirk	Mollie	Resignation	W.A. Bess Elementary School
Kirkpatrick	Jacqueline	Resignation	Hunter Huss High School
Lara	Esther	Promotion	School Nutrition
Lark	Gregory	Hire	Ashbrook High School
Ledbetter	William	Hire	Facilities
Lee	Anica	Resignation	Ashbrook High School
Lewis	Jason	Hire	Stuart W. Cramer High School
Lindsay	Darius	Promotion	Ashbrook High School
Lindsay	Dekwalon	Promotion	Grier Middle School
Lovejoy	Rachel	Transfer	Belmont Central Elementary School
Lowery	Glendon	Rehire an Employee	Carr Elementary School
McDade	Michael	Hire	Facilities
McGill	Bianca	Rehire an Employee	Elementary Instruction
McGuire	Samantha	Hire	Elementary Instruction
McIntyre	Hannah	Hire	Warlick Academy
Medel Mendez	Gabriel	Hire	Edward D. Sadler, Jr. Elementary School
Medlock	Amy	Rehire an Employee	Kiser Elementary School
Miller	Dorothy	Resignation	School Nutrition
Miller	Matthew	Hire	Edward D. Sadler, Jr. Elementary School
Miller	Michelle	Hire	School Nutrition
Mills	Christopher	Promotion	Department for Exceptional Children
Moon	Ori	Hire	Springfield Elementary School
Moore	Colleen	Hire	Bessemer City Middle School
Morrow	Larry	Hire	Facilities
Moxley	Christie	Resignation	School Nutrition
Munoz Vazquez	Brizeida	Hire	School Nutrition
Niati	Generose	Hire	School Nutrition
Nixon	Christian	Hire	Bessemer City High School
Norris	Ragan	Hire	Elementary Instruction
Ochoa	Tamar	Demotion	School Nutrition
Page	Christopher	Demotion	Hunter Huss High School
Parker	Jeffery	Resignation	Forestview High School

Last Name	First Name	Category	School
Perez	Hector	Resignation	Facilities
Perez Valle	Eblin	Hire	School Nutrition
Raines	Katrina	Hire	Warlick Academy
Ramsey	Brooke	Transfer	Gaston Virtual Academy
Ray	Eric	Resignation	Costner Elementary School
Robb	Collin	Resignation	Stanley Middle School
Robinson	Cheryl	Promotion	School Nutrition
Russell	Daniel	Hire	East Gaston High School
Russell - Gonzales	Shannon	Rehire an Employee	School Nutrition
Sanders	Taylor	Transfer	School Nutrition
Savage	Jan	Transfer	Springfield Elementary School
Selph	Kristen	Transfer	School Nutrition
Short	Edward	Resignation	Bessemer City High School
Smith	Donald	Hire	Mount Holly Middle School
Smith	Greta	Hire	School Nutrition
Smith	Katie	Resignation	School Nutrition
Smith	Marty	Resignation	East Gaston High School
Sowersby	Susan	Rehire an Employee	Lingerfeldt Elementary School
Steppe	Sarah	Resignation	Cherryville Elementary School
Stover	Rebekah	Resignation	Springfield Elementary School
Stroupe	Caroline	Hire	McAdenville Elementary School
Thompson	Rachael	Resignation	Gaston Virtual Academy
Toledo	Rain	Resignation	Grier Middle School
Trakas	Kristin	Promotion	School Nutrition
Tscheiller	Michael	Hire	School Nutrition
Velez Pulgarin	Karol	Hire	School Nutrition
Villar Cabana	Maria	Hire	School Nutrition
Whiteley	Colin	Hire	Mount Holly Middle School
Williams	Sharron	Promotion	Webb Street School
Woodson	DeMire	Hire	Hunter Huss High School