

Gaston County Schools  
Operations Committee  
Monday, January 6, 2025

MINUTES

The Operations Committee met in a regular session on Monday, January 6, 2025 at 8:30 a.m. at the Central Office Board Room, 943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC. Those Board Members in attendance were: Chairman Brent Moore (absent), Dot Cherry, Lee Dedmon, and Tod Kinlaw. Ms. Dot Cherry presided over the meeting.

Additional attendees included: Board Member Jeff Ramsey, Superintendent Dr. Morgen A. Houchard, Attorney Sonya McGraw, Associate Superintendents Gary Hoskins and Tonya Kales, Assistant Director of Finance James Beckford, Executive Director Kevin Doran and Beth Suber, Assistant Superintendents, Bessie Harvey and Rebekka Powers, Chief Communications Officer Todd Hagans, Chief Technology Officer Curtis Poplin, and Board Clerk Dana Luoto.

Ms. Dot Cherry called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and welcomed everyone.

**Approval/Correction of Minutes**

Motion to adopt minutes of November 4, 2024 as presented was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mr. Tod Kinlaw; motion carried unanimously. (3-0)

**Policy Code: 4200 School Safety – Policy Update**

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Rebekka Powers provided an update on revisions to Policy Code 4200 School Safety. The draft version of this policy will be posted on our website for review.

**Motion**

The Motion was made by Mr. Tod Kinlaw; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon that the Board  
**Approve Revisions to Policy Code: 4200 School Safety**

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously.  
(3-0)

**Early Colleges Calendar 2025-2026**

Executive Director Kevin Doran reviewed the draft 2025-2026 Early Colleges Calendar. The first day of school is August 11, 2025 and graduation will be held on May 19, 2026.

**Motion**

The Motion was made by Mr. Tod Kinlaw; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon that the Board  
**Approve the Early Colleges Calendar for 2025-2026**

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously.  
(3-0)

(View Draft Calendar Below)

### **Budget Survey Results Update**

Associate Superintendent Gary Hoskins provided an update on the Budget Survey Results.

(View PowerPoint Below)

### **Independent Audit Update**

Mr. Gary Hoskins provided an update on the Independent Audit.

### **Annual Renewal – Data Processing (CherryRoad Technologies)**

Mr. Gary Hoskins reviewed the Data Processing Contract.

### **Motion**

The Motion was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mr. Tod Kinlaw that the Board  
**Approve the Annual Renewal Data Processing Contract**

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously.  
(3-0)

### **Discuss Potential Property Purchase - Information**

Superintendent Houchard reported on a potential property purchase in Gaston County.

### **School Radio Project Update and Sole Source Authorization**

Assistant Superintendent Bessie Harvey provided an update on the School Radio Project. To enhance emergency communications between our schools and Gaston County Emergency Management systems, we need to update the emergency communication capabilities in each of our schools. We propose using Mobile Communications America (MCA), known as Motorola, to upgrade our emergency communication capabilities to ensure compatibility with the County emergency communications system.

### **Motion**

The Motion was made by Mr. Tod Kinlaw; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon that the Board  
**Approve the School Radio Project and Sole Source Authorization**

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously.  
(3-0)

### **Contract Review – Information**

The following contracts were reviewed and recommended for approval:

- Freezer/Cooler Replacements: Catawba Heights Elementary School, Sherwood Elementary School, Mount Holly Middle School, W.C. Friday Middle School and Hunter Huss High School
- Wide Area Network (WAN)

### **Wide Area Network (WAN)**

Chief Technology Officer Curtis Poplin provided an update on Wide Area Network (WAN). WAN connects all Gaston County Schools sites together and allows Internet access to all sites through our main data centers. The current contract for WAN expires on June 30, 2025. The new contract will begin on July 1, 2025 and continue until

June 30, 2028, with five, one-year optional rewards. Bids were received from AT&T and Spectrum and based on our evaluation, we recommend the contract be awarded to AT&T. The contracted annual rate of \$288,000 for WAN services will be an expenditure that is included in the TSS operational budget.

### **Motion**

The Motion was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mr. Tod Kinlaw that the Board  
**Approve the Wide Area Network (WAN) Contract**

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously.  
(3-0)

### **Meeting Schedule**

The next Operations Committee Meeting is scheduled for February 3, 2025 at the Central Office Board Room beginning at 8:30 a.m.

### **Other Business and Discussion**

Superintendent Houchard reviewed current specialized programs that are proposed for closure, while potential new programs are being recommended for implementation across various schools.

### **Adjournment**

All business being conducted, Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Tod Kinlaw; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon motion carried unanimously. (3-0)

The Operations Committee Meeting adjourned at 9:32 a.m.

Approved:

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Dot Cherry, Committee Member

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

# Gaston Early College High School

## 2025-2026 **DRAFT** School Calendar

July 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						15

September 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				
						20

20 employee days

22 employee days

October 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
					20.5	

November 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						16

December 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
						15

23 employee days

20 employee days

23 employee days

January 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
						18

February 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
						19

March 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				19.5

22 employee days

20 employee days

22 employee days

April 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		18

May 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
						13

June 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

22 employee days

21 employee days



School Closed / Holiday



Mandated Teacher Workday



Annual Leave



First and Last Day of School



Optional Teacher Workday



## Budget Survey Options FY 2025-2026

Please check the box next to the initiatives listed below that you believe best supports the educational goals of the District. Please only select your **top five** choices (all are important):

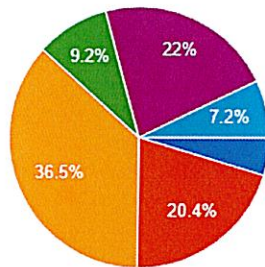
- |                                                            |                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Teacher Supplement       | <input type="checkbox"/> More Teacher Assistants          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Incr. Principal/AP Supplement     | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Student Support         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Classified Salaries      | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Instructional Support   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expand CTE Program Offerings      | <input type="checkbox"/> More School Office Support Staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offer More Instructional Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide More Technology          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expand AIG Program                | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Number of Library Books |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase the Number of AP Classes | <input type="checkbox"/> Expand Classroom Libraries       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offer More ESL Classes            | <input type="checkbox"/> Upgrade School Safety Systems    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Funding for the Arts     | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Training for Teachers   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide More Choice Options       | <input type="checkbox"/> Improve Exterior Appearance      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Funding for EC Students  | <input type="checkbox"/> Upgrade Interior of Schools      |

## Budget Survey Update FY 2025-2026

Which best describes you?

895 responses

[Copy chart](#)



- GCS Student
- GCS Parent
- GCS Teacher
- GCS School Leadership
- Other GCS Employee
- Gaston County Community Member



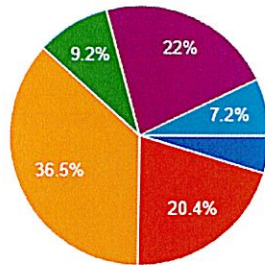
# Budget Survey Update

## FY 2025-2026

Which best describes you?

[Copy chart](#)

895 responses



GCS Student	42	5%
GCS Parent	183	20%
GCS Teacher	327	37%
GCS School Leadership	82	9%
Other GCS Employee	197	22%
Gaston County Community Member	64	7%
TOTAL	895	100%

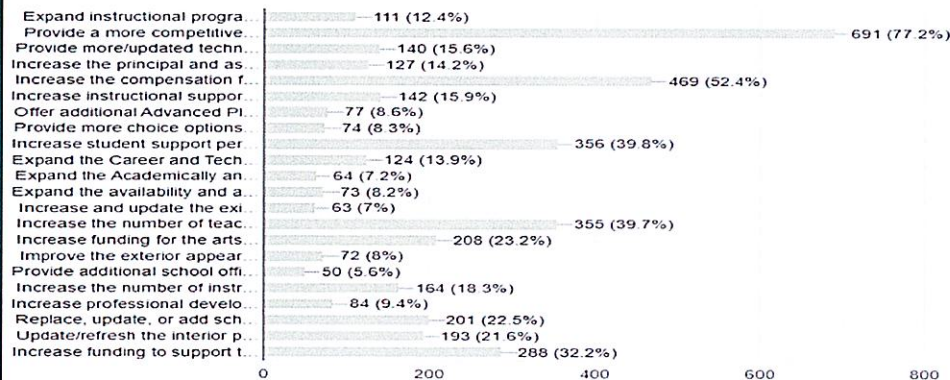
# Budget Survey Update

## FY 2025-2026

Please check the box next to the initiatives listed below that you believe best support the educational goals of the district. Please only select your **top five choices** (all are important).

[Copy chart](#)

895 responses





## Budget Survey Update

### FY 2025-2026

#### Top 8 Choices

1. 77% - Increase teacher salary supplement
2. 52% - Increase non-certified compensation
3. 40% - Increase student support
4. 40% - Increase number of Teacher Assistants
5. 32% - Increase funding to support EC students
6. 23% - Increase funding for the arts
7. 23% - Upgrade school safety systems
8. 22% - Update interior portions of school buildings

## Budget Survey Historical

### FY 2024-2025

#### Top 8 Choices

1. 85% - Increase teacher salary supplement
2. 60% - Increase non-certified compensation
3. 40% - Increase number of Teacher Assistants
4. 33% - Increase student support
5. 28% - Upgrade school safety systems
6. 25% - Increase funding for EC students
7. 24% - Increase Principal/AP supplements
8. 21% - Expand CTE programs