

Gaston County Schools
Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting
Monday, October 6, 2025

MINUTES

The Curriculum and Instruction Committee met on Monday, October 6, 2025, at 11:30 a.m. in the Central Office Board Room, 943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC. Those members in attendance were: Robbie Lovelace who served as Chair, Janna Smith, and A.M. Stephens III. Chairman Jeff Ramsey was absent.

Additional attendees included: BOE Chairman Josh Crisp, Vice Chairman Dot Cherry, Tod Kinlaw, Superintendent Dr. Morgen A. Houchard, Attorney Sonya McGraw, Associate Superintendent Tonya Kales, Assistant Superintendents Rebekka Powers and Bessie Harvey, Executive Directors Bryan Denton, Kevin Doran, Anarah Henderson, and Tyler West, Chief Technology Officer Kelly Cunningham, Chief of Staff Tom Nencetti, and Board Clerk Cindy Beck.

Mrs. Robbie Lovelace called the Curriculum & Instruction Committee to order at 11:30 a.m. and welcomed everyone.

Invocation

An Invocation was given by Mr. Tod Kinlaw.

Approval/Correction of Minutes

Motion to adopt minutes of October 8, 2025, as presented was made by Mr. A.M. Stephens III, seconded by Mrs. Janna Smith, motion carried unanimously. (3-0)

Associate Superintendent Tonya Kales and Chief Accountability Officer Kelly Cunningham presented information on the 2025-2026 Academic Services Path Forward - Leading, Teaching and Learning in ACTION Strategic Plan Goals and School Improvement Plans.

State School Improvement Plans

Phase II: Enhanced Monthly School Visit Support Tool – Side by Side

Phase II: Consistent Walkthrough Tool/Platform (Observation, Impact, and Next Steps) Feedback Process

Phase II: Instructional Principal and Assistant Principal Meetings

Leading in GCS Alignment to Strategic Plan Goals

Goals by 2030 for Gaston County Schools:

- A1-Increase Grade Level Proficiency(GLP) from 48.4 to 60%
- A2-Increase the percentage of schools meeting or exceeding growth from 71% to 75%
- A3-Reduce the number of low-performing schools from 15 to 5 or fewer
- A4-Increase the NCDPI 4-year cohort graduation rate from 88.8% to 91%

- A5-Increase the percentage of students meeting the EL progress indicator from 33% to 48%
- A6-Increase ACT/Workkeys composite percentile from 47% to 62%

Motion

The Motion was made by Mrs. Janna Smith and seconded by Mr. A.M. Stephens III that the Board:

Approve the School Improvement Plan to be placed on the Consent Agenda for the November 17, 2025, Board Meeting.

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

Executive Directors in Action

Ms. Kales shared information about Executive Leaders in Action on how Principal Support Tool Feedback is captured for School Administrators using the methods of Observation, Impact, and Next Steps. Executive Directors have focused on consistent feedback across the levels while visiting classrooms.

Ms. Kales also shared that Teachers also receive consistent feedback through the AIC Feedback method:

A-Affirmation (a positive that was noticed during the classroom visit)

I-Impact of that work on your students and their learning

C-What you can consider next

Ms. Kales emphasized the importance of identifying the specific teacher behaviors that contribute to improved student outcomes.

(View Presentation)

Teaching-Pacing Guides/Unit Plans

Executive Director Tyler West reported that the newly designed Curriculum Pacing Guides provide a cohesive framework for grades K-12, ensuring clarity, alignment, and comprehensive support—from a school year timeline down to daily instructional pacing—in alignment with the North Carolina Standards.

(View Presentation)

Professional Development Offerings

Executive Director Anarah Henderson provided information on Professional Development Training Offerings for support.

Mrs. Henderson reported that teachers receive ongoing, real-time coaching and support through the coordinated efforts of Principals, Advanced Teaching Roles personnel, International Teacher Support staff, and New Teacher Support Facilitators.

(View Presentation)

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in Action

Ms. Kales presented the importance of the PLC Cycle:

- Unit Planning
- Delivery of Instruction
- Formative Assessments
- Interim Assessment
- Data Analysis
- Re-Teach
- Summative Assessment

(View Presentation)

WorkKeys

Executive Director Kevin Doran presented a plan to increase the percentage of 12th-grade students meeting the ACT WorkKeys benchmarks, which serve as indicators of career readiness and help ensure students are prepared with career options following graduation.

Mr. Doran highlighted the following that will be placed in each High School for ACT WorkKeys:

1. Systems and Processes

- a. CDCs were deployed into all high schools
- b. Creation of an implementation team
- c. CDCs and counselors coordinate for strategic scheduling
- d. Goal of increasing CTE Concentrators

2. Test Preparation

- a. Test prep software training and rollout
- b. Embed test prep into curriculum

3. Benefits of Certification

- a. Educate students and parents about local employers and WorkKeys certification

No Nonsense Nurturing Update and Classroom Moment

Executive Director Kevin Doran shared that the framework of No Nonsense Nurturing for classroom management is designed to foster a strong and positive school culture. It utilizes a four-part model that emphasizes achieving 100% student engagement.

1. Precise Descriptions
2. Positive Narration
3. Implementing Accountability Systems
4. Building Relationships where the Teacher is the leader of the classroom

Mr. Doran shared that Grier Middle implemented the No-Nonsense Nurturing Program last December with success.

Nine schools (listed below) were trained for the No-Nonsense Nurturing Program as part of a grant from the Gaston County Education Foundation. Guidance Counselors, Teacher Assistants, Teachers, and Administrators from each of the nine schools above received their initial training over the summer. Coaching sessions at the school levels are in process.

Elementary Schools:

Bessemer City Central

HH Beam

Lingerfeldt

Sherwood

Woodhill

Middle Schools:

Bessemer City Middle

Holbrook

WC Friday

York Chester

Assistant Superintendent Rebekka Powers presented that Southwest Middle, Pleasant Ridge, and Robinson will begin training in January. Schools will receive initial training and two rounds of implementation coaching to ensure program success.

Dr. Powers shared that a Classroom Moment presentation will be shared at the next Board of Education Meeting to give an inside look of how No-Nonsense Nurturing is taking place in our classrooms.

Data Driven Instruction

Ms. Kales presented information on the Data-Driven Instruction in Action Calendars. The yearlong calendar serves as a tool for teachers to administer assessments consistently by grade level and date, while also integrating designated periods for re-teaching and re-assessment.

Ms. Cunningham presented information on the implementation of Interim Assessments as instructional tools that assist teachers in identifying gaps in student learning and determining areas for re-teaching. She noted that SchoolNet is the platform used to administer the Interim Assessments, offering the advantage of immediate access to data without delay.

Ms. Kales presented a typical schedule of a professional development day with teachers with the focus on data analysis of interim assessments in the morning and a focus on

planning the reteach in the afternoon. Ms. Kales noted there is a true partnership between the Data team and the Curriculum team.
(View Presentation)

High School Exam Schedules

Executive Director Bryan Denton presented the Department of Public Instruction changes in High School Exams Requirements:

- State-required testing for high schools must take place during the last five days of the semester.
- Most courses that do not have a state test have traditionally been administered teacher-made final exams during this same window of time.
- There has been a recent change at the state level that allows re-testing to be offered for state End of Course (EOC) tests this semester.
- This would be a change from previous practice, where all re-testing took place at the end of the school year and/or after school ended
- These changes require a change to our typical final exam schedule for Fall 2025.

Dr. Denton presented the proposed Fall Semester High School Exam Schedule.

Motion

The Motion was made by Mrs. Janna Smith and seconded by Mr. A.M. Stephens III that the Board:

Approve the High School Exam Schedule Proposal to be placed on the Consent Agenda for the October 20, 2025, Board Meeting.

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

(View Presentation)

Legal Updates

Attorney Sonya McGraw advised that the newly formed Policy Committee of the Board is prepared to convene to review and discuss the latest policy revisions to bring before the Board. Mrs. McGraw shared the current policies that are up for revision. The date for the initial meeting will be set and announced at a later time.

(View Presentation)

Kintegra Updates

Assistant Superintendent Rebekka Powers provided an update on the district's partnership with **Kintegra Health**, which offers a range of medical and wellness services to support students and staff across Gaston County Schools.

Kintegra Services Include:

- **Telehealth Clinics**
- **School-Based Therapy**
- **Optometry Bus**
- **Dental Bus**

Dr. Powers reported that all 56 schools are now participating in the **Kintegra Telehealth Clinics**, which provide videoconference access for students and staff to consult with a physician for medical needs.

She noted that **School-Based Therapy** services are also available in all 56 schools. Kintegra collaborates with school counselors, social workers, and principals to identify students in need of services. Referrals are made with parental consent and appropriate documentation, allowing students to meet with licensed therapists while on campus.

Dr. Powers also highlighted the **Optometry Bus**, which visits schools with 10 or more parent requests for service. The mobile clinic provides on-site eye examinations and eyeglass fittings for students.

In addition, she shared that the **Dental Bus** visits the district's **Title I schools**, offering dental screenings, preventive care, and cleanings for students with parental consent.

(View Presentation)

Next Committee Meeting Date/Time

The next C&I Committee Meeting is scheduled for November 3, 2025, in the Central Office Board Room, beginning at 11:30 a.m.

Adjournment

All business being conducted, a Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. A.M. Stephens III, seconded by Mrs. Janna Smith. Motion carried unanimously. (3-0)

The Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Approved:



Jeff Ramsey, Chairman

Date Approved: 11-3-25