

Gaston County Schools
Board of Education
Friday, January 23, 2026
Meeting 9:00 a.m.
Regular Meeting

MINUTES

The Gaston County Board of Education met in a regular session on Friday, January 23, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in The Linda Rader Staff Development Center, Cramerton, NC. Those Board Members in attendance were: Chairman Josh Crisp, Vice Chairman Dot Cherry, Lee Dedmon, Tod Kinlaw, Brent Moore, Jeff Ramsey, Janna Smith, and A.M. Stephens III. Robbie Lovelace was excused.

Additional attendees include: Superintendent Dr. Morgen A. Houchard, Attorney Sonya McGraw, Associate Superintendents Gary Hoskins and Tonya Kales, Assistant Superintendents Bessie Harvey and Rebekka Powers, Chief Communications Officer Todd Hagans, Chief Technology Officer Curtis Poplin, Executive Director of Human Resources Beth Suber, and Board Clerk Cindy Beck.

Chairman Crisp called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone.

Invocation

Mr. A.M. Stephens III led the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Superintendent Houchard led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Adoption - Action

The Board considered Agenda Adoption – Action

Motion to adopt the Agenda as presented was made by Mr. A.M. Stephens III; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry, motion carried unanimously. (8-0)

Good News – Information

Mr. Todd Hagans presented the Good News and announcements for January.
School Board Recognition Month

First, school districts across the country observe School Board Recognition Month in January. It is a time to recognize the work, leadership, and dedication of Board of Education members, who have the responsibility of providing vision and guidance for school district operations.

We plan to acknowledge School Board Recognition Month during the regular meeting on February 16.

Classrooms will be “adopting” Board members, and representatives from the schools and classes will be present for the meeting to help bring attention to the special occasion and say “thank you” to the Board of Education for all that you do to serve our students, families, and employees.

United Way recognition

Also coming up at the February regular meeting, we will be ready to announce our grand total for fundraising for the United Way of Gaston County. We will invite the top 10 fundraising schools to be with us, and it is going to be a special time of recognition for the schools that stepped up to support our fundraising campaign.

All-District Honors Band

Last weekend, we had middle school and high school students auditioning for the South Central All-District Band Clinic, and we have students who were chosen to represent us in the all-district honors band, which features students from across the Charlotte region.

The clinic is next weekend, hosted again here in Gaston County Schools, with the concert for the public on Saturday, January 31, at 2:00 p.m. at Stuart W. Cramer High School.

Resolution: Coretta Scott King Book Awards Literature Week - Action

Chairman Crisp recognized Mr. Todd Hagans, who read the Coretta Scott King Resolution.

WHEREAS, reading is a foundation for success and an essential tool in the learning process, and students are encouraged to imagine, discover, learn, and grow through the exploration of literature; and

WHEREAS, the Coretta Scott King Book Awards are presented each year by the American Library Association to recognize excellent books for children and young adults that are written and illustrated by African Americans and reflect the African American experience; and

WHEREAS, the United States observes the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day holiday in January and Black History Month in February, the Coretta Scott King Book Awards Literature Week (January 19-23, 2026) coincides with the two national observances and also is part of the America 250 celebration to highlight the many accomplishments and contributions of African American authors, illustrators, poets, essayists, novelists, and others who have had a significant influence on literature in the United States and around the world; and

WHEREAS, educators are encouraged to bring attention to the books that have won the Coretta Scott King Award, as these literary works are ideal for classroom teaching and learning and student engagement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Education is proud to support enriching activities that promote reading, raise awareness of history, and celebrate culture and also commends the efforts of the African American Museum of History and Culture at Loray Mill to highlight the significance of African American history, culture, and literature in Gaston County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be made a part of the minutes of the Board of Education, adopted this the twenty-third day of January, 2026.

Motion

Motion was made by Ms. Dot Cherry, seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon, that the Board

Approve Resolution: Coretta Scott King Book Awards Literature Week

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (8-0)

(View Resolution)

Public Expression – Information

None

Approval/Correction of Minutes – Action

Motion to adopt minutes of December 15, 2025, as presented was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mrs. Janna Smith, motion carried unanimously. (8-0)

Consent Agenda – Action

The Board considered the Consent Agenda:

- A. Recommended Personnel
- B. Budget Amendments & Budget Transfers
- C. Construction/Repair Change Orders
- D. Resolution to Declare Certain Real Property Surplus Property (TRC)
- E. Sanitary Sewer Easement - Forest Heights/Learning Place (Phase 2)
- F. Contracts
 - Replacement of the Intercom System at Woodhill Elementary
 - Contract Amendment for Security Vestibule Design for Cherryville Elementary

Motion

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented was made by Ms. Dot Cherry ; seconded by Mr. A.M. Stephens III. Motion carried unanimously. (8-0)

Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Houchard asked to reserve his comments for the Board Retreat.

Closing Remarks

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

Motion to go into Closed Session was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. Brent Moore; motion carried unanimously. (8-0)

The Board went into Closed Session at 9:08 am.

The Board returned to Open Session at 9:21 a.m.

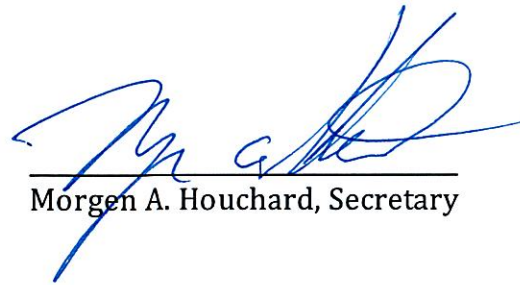
Adjournment

All business having been conducted, a Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. A.M. Stephens III, seconded by Mrs. Janna Smith, and the motion carried unanimously. (8-0)

The Board Meeting adjourned at 9:22 a.m.

Approved:


Josh Crisp, Chairman
[Corporate Seal]


Morgen A. Houchard, Secretary

Date Approved: 2-16-20

Board of Education Meeting

Friday, January 23, 2026



GASTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Josh Crisp – Chairman
Dot Cherry – Vice Chairman

Lee Dedmon, Gastonia Township
Ted Kiriav, South Point Township
Robbie Lovelace, Cherryville Township
Brent Moore, Crowders Mountain Township



Jeff K. Ramsey, At Large
Jarena Smith, Gastonia Township
A.N. Stephens, III, Riverbend Township

Dr. Morgan A. Houchard, Superintendent
Rader Staff Development Center
240 Eighth Avenue, Cramerton, NC 28032
Friday, January 23, 2026
9:00 a.m.
Agenda
Regular Meeting

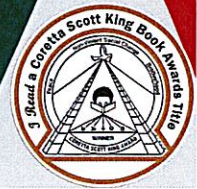
- I. Call to Order
- II. Invocation
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. Agenda Adoption – Action
- V. Good News – Information
- VI. Resolution: Coretta Scott King Book Awards Literature Week – Action
- VII. Public Expression – Information
- VIII. Approval/Correction of Minutes – Action
December 15, 2025 (Regular Meeting)
- IX. Consent Agenda – Action
Consent Agenda Item (s) will be adopted with a single motion, second, vote, unless a request for removal from the Consent Agenda is heard from a Board Member.
 - A. Recommended Personnel
 - B. Budget Amendments & Budget Transfers
 - C. Construction/Repair Change Orders
 - D. Resolution to Declare Certain Real Property Surplus Property (TRC)
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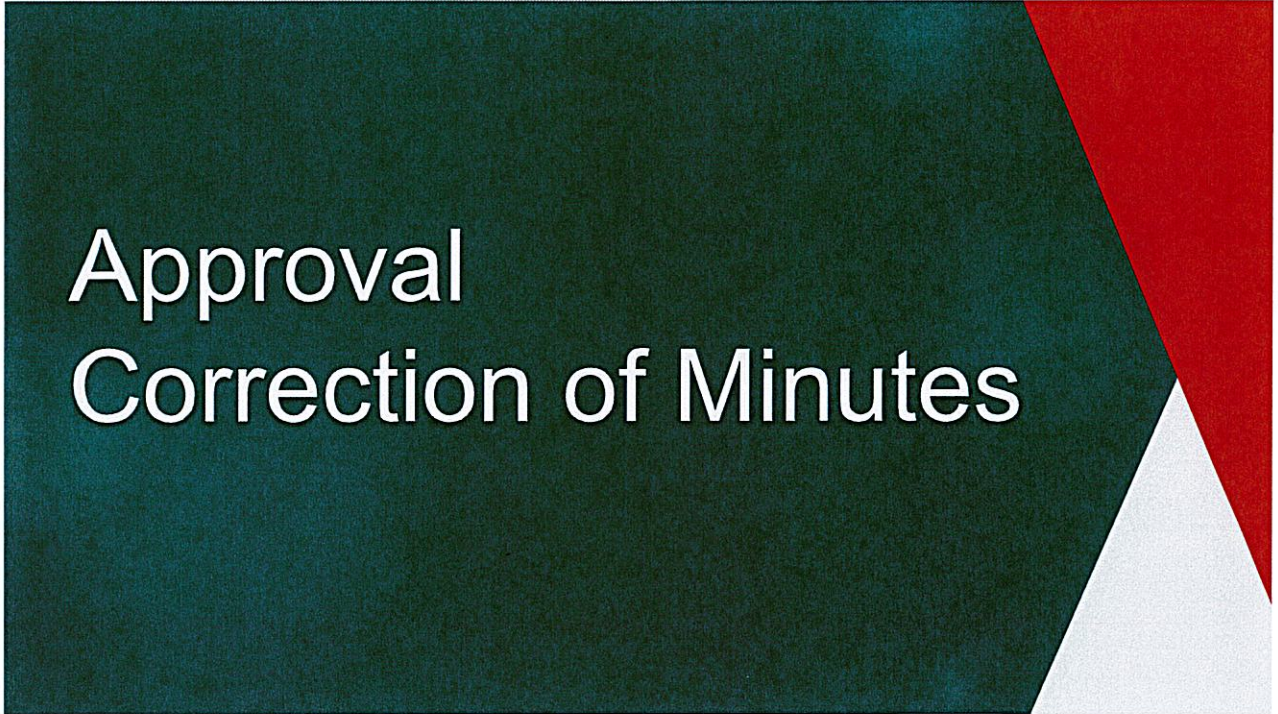
- X. Superintendent's Comments
- XI. Closed Session – Information
 - N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) Consultation with Attorney
 - N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(e)(6) Personnel
- XII. Adjournment

Good News

Resolution:
Coretta Scott King Book
Awards Literature Week



Public
Expression



Approval
Correction of Minutes



Consent Agenda



Superintendent's Comments

Dr. Morgen A. Houchard, Superintendent

Gaston County Schools

Board of Education Retreat

January 23, 2026

Dr. Morgen Houchard, Superintendent