

Gaston County Schools
Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting
Monday, March 2, 2026

MINUTES

The Curriculum and Instruction Committee met on Monday, March 2, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. in the Central Office Board Room, 943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC. Those members in attendance were: Chairman Jeff Ramsey, Robbie Lovelace (absent), Janna Smith (absent), and A.M. Stephens III.

Additional attendees included: BOE Chairman Josh Crisp, Vice Chairman Dot Cherry, Superintendent Dr. Morgen A. Houchard, Attorney Sonya McGraw, Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services Rebekka Powers, Director of K-12 Curriculum Dr. Shannon Hullett, Executive Directors Bryan Denton, Kevin Doran, Anarah Henderson, and Tyler West, Chief Communications Officer Todd Hagans, Chief Accountability Officer Kelly Cunningham, Chief of Staff Tom Nencetti, Director of Athletics Chad Duncan, and Board Clerk Cindy Beck.

Curriculum & Instruction Committee Chairman Ramsey called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Approval/Correction of Minutes

Motion to adopt minutes of December 1, 2025, as presented was made by Mr. A.M. Stephens III, seconded by Mr. Jeff Ramsey, motion carried unanimously. (2-0)

2026-2027 Academic Resources - Action

Dr. Shannon Hullett presented a comprehensive plan for the 2026–2027 Academic Resources, highlighting the district's Instructional Resource Goals. Contract renewals for the Elementary, Middle, and High School levels were also reviewed and discussed.

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. A.M. Stephens III; seconded by Mr. Jeff Ramsey, that the Board
Approve the 2026-2027 Academic Resources Item to be placed on the Consent Agenda for the March 16th Board Meeting.

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (2-0)

(View Presentation)

Read to Achieve Summer Camp - Information

Mrs. Tyler West covered the 2026 Read to Achieve Summer Camp, including Teacher Selection, Teacher Training, Student Eligibility, locations, dates, and times.

High School Exam Schedule- Action

Dr. Denton and Mr. Doran presented the High School Spring Schedule.

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. A.M. Stephens III; seconded by Mr. Jeff Ramsey, that the Board

Approve the High School Exam Schedule to be placed on the Consent Agenda for the March 16th Board Meeting.

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (2-0)

(View Presentation)

Driver's Education - Information

Dr. Powers introduced Mr. Chad Duncan, who presented information on the upcoming bid process for the Driver's Education contract and the timeline.

Choice Programs - Information

Dr. Powers provided an analysis of the Choice Program data, including current interest levels, the total number of applications, and the overall cost of the Choice and Magnet Programs. The next steps will involve gathering stakeholder input and reporting findings and recommendations back to the Board.

(View Presentation)

Legal/Policy – Information

There were no updates or new information to present at this time.

Other Business and Discussions

Superintendent comments:

Superintendent Houchard recommended that the next Curriculum and Instruction Committee meeting be rescheduled to Monday, March 30, as the first Monday in April falls during Spring Break. The committee members agreed to the proposed change.

The Spring Law Conference is available for Board Members, will be held on March 19th and 20th, and broadcast at the Central Office.

The Gaston County Board of Commissioners approved a \$3.2 million transfer of funds from the School Capital Allocation Balance to the General Fund. This transfer will assist in covering expenditures that are not capital in nature and will help address current operational obligations.

Superintendent outlined a spending freeze that will remain in effect for the remainder of the school year.

On Thursday, an Allocation Meeting will be held with our administrators to discuss the LEA State Allotment and review funding allocations for the upcoming school year.

Superintendent Houchard recommended that a study be facilitated for the feasibility of looking at consolidating the following of W.B. Beam Elementary. The study would explore the options of sending the 4th graders to Cherryville Elementary and the 5th graders to Chavis Middle School.

The Consolidation Study would also consider housing the K-5 students of Gaston Virtual Academy, who would be served by the support staff of McAdenville Elementary. The study would also examine the possibility of combining Gaston Virtual Middle and High School students with Stuart W. Crammer High School for support services.

An update was provided regarding the interview process for the Chief Financial Officer position, noting that the search is ongoing.

Next Committee Meeting Date/Time

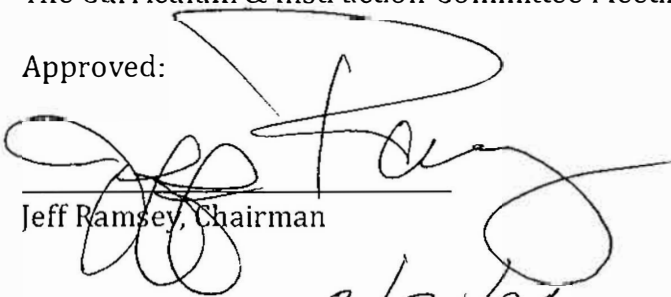
The next C&I Committee Meeting is scheduled for March 30th, in the Central Office Board Room beginning at 3:00 p.m.

Adjournment

All business being conducted, Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. A.M. Stephens III; seconded by Mr. Jeff Ramsey motion carried unanimously. (2-0)

The Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

Approved:



Jeff Ramsey, Chairman

Date Approved:

3/30/26

Curriculum and Instruction Board Committee Meeting

March 2, 2026

Gaston County Schools
Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting
Monday, December 1, 2025

MINUTES

The Curriculum and Instruction Committee met on Monday, December 1, 2025, at 11:30 a.m. in the Central Office Board Room, 943 Oceola Street, Gastonia, NC. Those members in attendance were: Chairman Jeff Ramsey, Robbie Lovelace, Janna Smith, and A.M. Stephens III, who joined by conference call.

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

Call to Order
Mr. Jeff Ramsey called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m.

Approval/Correction of Minutes
Motion to adopt minutes of November 3, 2025, as presented was made by Mrs. Robbie Lovelace, seconded by Mrs. Janna Smith, motion carried unanimously. (4-0)

Right Reader Grant - Information
Ms. Tonya Kales advised the Committee Members that First Presbyterian Church of Gastonia provided a Reading Grant for Sherwood Elementary. Through this grant, third-grade students will receive a curated selection of books from Right Reader tailored to each student's interests and reading level.

EC Contracts - Action
Mr. Chris Mills recommended to the Committee members that, as needs for exceptional children continue to grow and the level of support required by our students is expected to rise throughout the year, the Department for Exceptional Children is requesting approval of an adjustment for the 2025-2026 school year, increasing the allowable expenditure amount from \$7 million to \$10 million for Contract Services Increase as allowed within the current budget.

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

Approve the Agency Contract Services Increase to be placed on the Consent Agenda for the December 15, 2025, Board Meeting.

A vote was taken, and a motion to approve the increase as presented carried unanimously.

December 2025

Curriculum and Instruction Committee Minutes

Recommendation

Approval of December
Curriculum and Instruction Committee
Minutes

Academic Services: Strategic Plan Goals

Goals	By 2030, Gaston County Schools will:
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 less
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%

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2026-2027 Academic Resources

Instructional Resource Goals

- Reduce spending by eliminating duplicate resources
- Limit resources that require additional training for instructional staff

Elementary Resources

Diagnostic	Core	Supplemental
Additions: • None	Additions: • None	Additions: • None
Deletions: • Assessing Math Concepts-K only	Deletions: • Science A-Z	Deletions: • None

Elementary Contract Renewals

Contract Renewals

- **Curriculum Associates**- math diagnostic and curriculum
- **LETRS** - required literacy training
- **Learning A-Z** - standards-based digital literacy library that also supports social studies and science
- **SchoolNet** - standards-based interim assessment builder
- **Schoology**-learning management system

Middle School Resources

Diagnostic	Core	Supplemental
Additions: • None	Additions: • None	Additions: • None
Deletions: • IXL	Deletions: • Discovery Education	Deletions: • IXL

Middle School Contract Renewals

Contract Renewals

- **Curriculum Associates**- math curriculum
- **SchoolNet** - standards-based interim assessment builder
- **Canvas**-learning management system
- **Edpuzzle**- standards-based digital resource library that supports social studies and science
- **Imagine Learning/Edgenuity** - online platform for GVA

High School Resources

Diagnostic	Core	Supplemental
Additions: • None	Additions: • None	Additions: • None
Deletions: • HMH Growth Measure • IXL	Deletions: • Envisions	Deletions: • IXL

High School Contract Renewals

Contract Renewals

- **SchoolNet** - standards-based interim assessment builder
- **Canvas**-learning management system
- **Edpuzzle**- standards-based digital resource library that supports social studies and science
- **Imagine Learning/Edgenuity** - online platform for GVA
- **ACT WorkKeys Test Prep**

Expenses not a contract

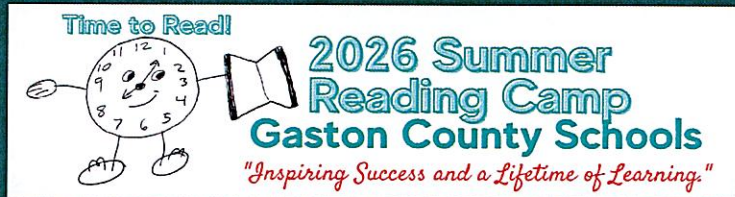
- **CCP Courses**-course fees and textbook reimbursements
- **GO Courses**-based on demand, cost is to pay teachers

2026-2027 Academic Resources

Recommendation

Approval and Consent

Read to Achieve Summer Reading Camp



Reading Camp Requirements

As defined by the Excellent Public Schools Act of 2021, "Reading camp" means an additional educational program outside of the instructional calendar provided by the local school administrative unit as a literacy intervention that shall be offered to

- (i) any third grade student who does not demonstrate reading proficiency and
- (ii) any second grade student who demonstrates difficulty with reading development. Local school administrative units may offer a reading camp as a literacy intervention to any first grade student who demonstrates difficulty with reading development.

Reading camps shall meet the following requirements:

- (1) Offer at least 72 hours of reading instruction to yield positive reading outcomes for participants.
- (2) Be taught by compensated, licensed teachers selected based on demonstrated student outcomes in reading proficiency or in improvement of difficulties with reading development.
- (3) Allow volunteer mentors to read with students at times other than during the 72 hours of reading instruction.
- (4) Be provided as outlined in the local school administrative unit's literacy intervention plan.

Locations

Site	Feeder Schools
Gardner Park	New Hope, WA Bess, Robinson, Brookside
HH Beam	Pleasant Ridge, Lingerfeldt, Woodhill
North Belmont	Lowell, Catawba Heights, Belmont Central, McAdenville
Sadler	BC Primary, BC Central, Chapel Grove, Sherwood
Pinewood	Kiser, Ida Rankin, Springfield
Tryon	Cherryville, Costner, WB Beam, Carr

Dates and Times

- ▶ **Teacher Training:** Week of June 1st
- ▶ **Camp:** June 8-25
 - ▶ Monday - Thursday
 - ▶ 8:00 - 2:30 student day
 - ▶ 7:30 - 3:30 staff day

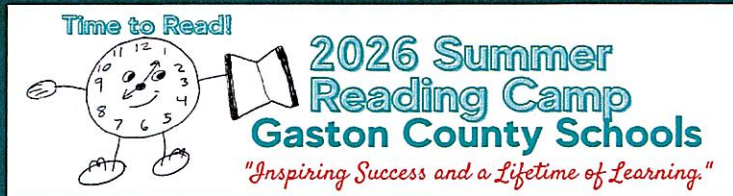
Teacher Selection

- ▶ Application Window: February 9 - March 11
- ▶ Site coordinators (APs) are responsible for hiring
- ▶ State-funded bonuses for performance

Student Eligibility

- ▶ Students will be invited to camp based on their middle of the year mCLASS results.
- ▶ Invitations will be distributed on conference day.

Thank you!



Spring 2026 High School Exam Schedules

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 administer teacher-made final exams.
- Last semester, the Board approved a final exam schedule that moved teacher-made final exams to the period before state testing began to allow more time for EOC re-testing.
- The change was very positively received by high school principals and helped contribute to high levels of student participation in EOC re-testing.
- We would recommend that a similar final exam schedule be adopted for the Spring 2026 semester.

Traditional High Schools

Teacher-made final exams will take place during May 11-13, 2026. Specific exam dates will be determined based on school needs. School will dismiss at the regular time during those days.

Time	Thursday May 14, 2026	Friday May 15, 2026	Monday May 18, 2026	Tuesday May 19, 2026	Wednesday May 20, 2026
8:30 – 12:00	EOC and CTE Exams	EOC and CTE Exams Make-up Testing	EOC and CTE Exams Make-up Testing EOC Re-testing	EOC Re-testing	EOC Re-testing
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, CTE and teacher-made exams Bag Lunch & Dismiss
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	Make-up EOC, CTE and teacher-made exams Teachers finalize grades, close out semester

Early College High Schools

Teacher-made final exams will take place during May 11-12, 2026. Specific exam dates will be determined based on school needs. School will dismiss at the regular time during those days.

Time	Wednesday May 13, 2026	Thursday May 14, 2026	Friday May 15, 2026	Monday May 18, 2026	Tuesday May 19, 2026
8:30 – 12:00	EOC Exams	EOC Exams Make-up Testing	EOC Exams Make-up Testing EOC Re-testing	EOC Re-testing	EOC Re-testing
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 Bag Lunch & Dismiss
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 Teachers finalize grades, close out semester

Spring 2026 High School Exam Schedules

Recommendation

Approval and Consent

2026-2027 Driver's Education

Bid Process

- **April 13th:** Bid process opens; advertisement posted publicly
- **April 13th-24th:** Vendors prepare proposals
- **April 24th:** Bid submission deadline
- **April 24:** Proposals publicly opened and recorded; evaluation and award process follows per Board policy.

INVITATION TO BID

Gaston County Schools will receive sealed bids for Driver Education Services at 3:00 PM Friday, April 24, 2026, in the Board Room at the Gaston County Schools Administrative Offices, 943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC 28053 at which time all bids will then be publicly opened and all bid prices read aloud.

Please visit our website at www.gaston.k12.nc.us/currentifb to retrieve the full invitation to Bid. GCS reserves the right to reject any bids for failure to comply with all requirements of this notice or of any of the contract documents; however, it may waive any minor defects or informalities at its discretion. GCS further reserves the right to reject all bids or award a contract which, in its judgment, is in the best interest of the County.

Driver's Education

Recommendation

Approval and Consent

Choice Programs

Student Support Services: Strategic Plan Goals

Goals	By 2030, Gaston County Schools will:
S1	Increase daily average attendance to 95% or higher.
S2	Increase to 100% of schools meeting Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) implementation thresholds.
S3	Expand access to student support services.

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2025-2026 GCS CHOICE DATA SUMMARY

2024-2025 Lottery for 2025-2026 SY								
School	Total Applications	Denied - Did not Qualify	Parent Accepted Seat	Number that appear to live in district already	Seat Expired Without Decision	Seat Rejected By Guardian	Seat Removed By Staff	Seat Waitlisted By Staff
Ashbrook High	96	30	21	14	6	23	2	
Costner Elementary	107	31	15		12	21	5	23
Cramerton Middle	98	52						46
East Gaston High	117	6	53	28	5	24	1	
Forestview High	92	16	20	15	3	38		
Gaston Early College High	219	56	54		15	33	9	52
Gaston Early College Medical	85	13	44		3	24	1	
Gaston Virtual Academy	334	39	76		52	18	25	124
Grier Middle	56	4	18	7	6	5	1	15
Hawks Nest STEAM	512	49	106		3	13	83	258
Hunter Huss High	30		5	2	6	16	1	
Highland Sch of Technology	479	166	144		10	48	27	83
North Gaston High	43	8	10	4	5	14	2	
Pinewood Elementary	126	25	14	1	12	20	2	52
Pleasant Ridge Elementary	181	90	23	4	1	14	1	48
Stanley Middle	66	7	41	1	4	13		
W.C. Friday Middle	26	2	11	3		9	1	

Current Interest: Total Applications

School	February 2026	February 2025
Costner Elem	64	76
Hawks Nest	458	410
Pinewood Elem	59	92
Pleasant Ridge Elem	104	140
Cramerton Middle	79	80
WC Friday Middle	27	18
Grier Middle	49	37
Stanley Middle	44	49
Ashbrook	37	65
East Gaston	79	75
Forestview	67	57
Gaston Early College	139	143
Gaston Early College Medical Sc	82	68
Highland	421	420
Hunter Huss	24	22
North Gaston	24	33
Gaston Virtual Academy	174	239
Total	1931	2024

- Surprises?
- Thoughts/ Wonderings?

Cost of Choice & Magnet Programs

Let's Take a Look...

- What do you notice?
- What are you wondering?

03:00

Choice Program

Recommendation: Next Steps

Gather Stakeholder Feedback



Legal/Policy Updates

Sonya McGraw



Other Business and Discussion



Thank you

Next Meeting: TBD , 2026 @ 3:00 pm
in the Boardroom