

26/27 Simpson ES School Council Minutes

Friday, September 25, 2026 7:30am

In attendance: Dr. Taffeta Connery, Tiffany Ellner, Muzna Mirza, Indira Hodge, Susan Love, and Chadd Stern.

Welcome

Dr. Connery welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:39am.

The attendees introduced themselves to the group.

The GCPS theme this year is Focus Forward.

School Council Training PPT, Membership Voting

The School Council Training PPT was shared with everyone. The bylaws were also provided.

Mrs. Indira Hodge is the current school council chair. Dr. Muzna Mirza is the vice-chair. Those are two-year terms, and they will both continue in this role for the current school year.

Safety & Security

Centegix Badges are very helpful tools. The badges may be used to initiate a lock down, but they are more routinely used to summon administrators. Each classroom also has two call buttons to page the front office. Simpson is working diligently to reinforce safe and practical existing measures for safety and security.

Simpson now has an SSO (Safety and Security Officer) who is stationed at Simpson. In addition, Simpson still has support of GCPS SROs (School Resource Officers) who are based at surrounding schools.

The vestibule and camera features help prevent unauthorized visitors. Simpson has over 35 cameras all over the school grounds that are monitored. In addition, front office staff are able to issue a silent alarm to administrators if needed.

Simpson Student Enrollment

Total enrollment for general education and special education is 845. Specific grade level breakdown totals were shared. Simpson's numbers are down around 20 students in kindergarten because of the new Georgia red-shirt legislation for incoming kindergarten students.

Simpson TOTY Announcement

Susan Love is the Simpson TOTY for the 25/26 SY. Chadd Stern is the Simpson TOTY for the 26/27 school year. They are two of the staff member representatives on the School Council. Taylor Bowman and Becca Leeds were the other two finalists for 26/27 TOTY.

PBIS Kick-Off Pep Rally

To launch the PBIS program, Simpson hosted a Pep Rally to share the PBIS details with students. NHS football players and cheerleaders helped encourage the students to make good choices; many of them are former Simpson superstars!

Simpson students earn starbucks for displaying the Simpson norms. They can use their starbucks to purchase items at the PBIS store. PBIS is having a great and positive impact on student behavior. Referrals are down.

GCPS Calendars

Calendars are available on the GCPS website. A full week for fall break is coming up soon during the week of October 12-16, 2026.

Q & A

Dr. Mirza asked about screen time concerns. How are writing and essay writing being encouraged? What are systems in New York and LA doing to handle this, and how can we do that?

Dr. Connery shared that during the pandemic, the system was driven to individual devices. Students do a plethora of writing. They will read passages from books with their partners or with a teacher in small groups. Students are asked to use context to determine the meaning of vocabulary and to make inferences about characters and their development. Students are

presented with age-appropriate fiction and non-fiction texts. As they get older, they are asked to analyze and synthesize more and more. Students will begin writing on paper. Near the beginning of the second semester, students will begin to draft on computers. The district (and the state of Georgia) have limited digital distractions in the classroom.

Mrs. Hodge commented on the essay workshops that teachers have for their students. She has seen her third grade student work on essays that are growing longer and require more development.

Dr. Connery shared that GCPS has a new superintendent who is conducting a listen and learn tour. GCPS is investigating and collaborating with large school districts around the nation about screen time issues.

Dr. Connery adjourned the meeting at 8:25am.

Upcoming School Council dates

All meetings will be in the Simpson PLL at 7:30am:

Friday, November 20, 2026

Friday, January 29, 2027

Friday, March 26, 2207