

**GASTON COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Session**



943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC 28054

October 19, 2026

5:30 p.m.

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Agenda Adoption

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

Consideration of Formal Agenda for Monday, September 21, 2026

Roberts Rules of Order (Revised) adoption of Agenda for meeting sequence and structure.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

Adoption of Agenda

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 2350 Board Meeting Agenda.

Strategic Plan District Priorities:

Effective Communication and Partnerships

Submitted by: Dr. Morgen A. Houchard

Department: Superintendent

GASTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Josh Crisp, Chairman, Dallas Township
Lee Dedmon, Gastonia Township
Robbie Lovelace, Cherryville Township
Jeff K. Ramsey, At Large
A.M. Stephens, III, Riverbend Township



Dot Cherry, Vice Chairman At Large
Tod Kinlaw, South Point Township
Brent Moore, Crowders Mountain Township
Janna Smith, Gastonia Township

Dr. Morgen A. Houchard, Superintendent
943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC 28054

Monday, October 19, 2026

5:30 p.m.

Agenda

Regular Meeting

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Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Good News

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

Each month, the Communications/Public Information Department compiles “Good News” about our schools, students, employees, and community partners. See attachment.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

None

Policy Implications:

None

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Effective Communication and Partnerships

Submitted by: Todd Hagans
Chief Communications Officer

Department: Communications
(Superintendent’s Office)

BOARD AGENDA INFORMATIONAL ITEM

DEPARTMENT: Communications/Public
Information Department

TOPIC: GOOD NEWS

FOR THE MONTH OF: October 2026

1. The fall semester **Gaston County Schools** Parent Advisory Council meeting was held on October 6 at the Gaston Early College High School. Approximately 60 parents attended, and Kintegra Health sponsored a pizza meal for the participants. **Superintendent Morgen Houchard** began the meeting with a presentation that highlighted good news, the strategic plan, and the 2025-2026 test results/academic progress. The parents also participated in a time of small-group discussion where they were able to share feedback.
2. **Gaston County Schools** had 50 high school students involved in the Teacher Cadets program at **Forestview, Hunter Huss, and South Point** and their teacher-advisers attended the Aspiring Educators Summit at UNC-Charlotte. The Summit was an all-day conference designed to inspire students to choose teaching as their future career. Gaston County Teacher of the Year **Erica Baird of Forestview High School** and Gaston County New Teacher of the Year **Connor Settlemyre of South Point High School** served as program panelists, and **Forestview** junior **Caroline Pritchett** served as an Ignite Session presenter.
3. Queen City News features reporter John Le put together a story about alumni returning to **East Gaston High School** to play with the marching band for homecoming. The story was part of the "Faces of the Carolinas" feature, and it captured the excitement surrounding marching band and Friday night football.
4. Gaston County Teacher of the Year **Erica Baird of Forestview High School** was the featured guest on the "Gaston's Great" podcast that is produced by Steven Long and GSM Services.
5. **Gaston County Schools** will conduct its annual fundraising campaign for the Gaston County United Way during a two-week period, October 26 - November 6. Schools and central level departments are being encouraged to participate by conducting fundraising activities and making contributions. The theme is "Do It for Dolly!" with an emphasis on contributions being designated for the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to help make books available for children ages 0-5 years in Gaston County.
6. The **Gaston County Schools** School Nutrition and Communications Departments worked with WTVI PBS Charlotte on a feature for the "Carolina Impact" program about the farm/garden at School Nutrition and the school system's partnership with Deep Roots, which helps manage the farm-to-school program.

7. NCEdTribune wrote an article about lower rates of absenteeism for **Gaston County Schools**. The “Attendance Matters!” promotional campaign, the work of student support personnel, and the renewed focus on academic achievement were highlighted as reasons for lower absenteeism over the past few years since the pandemic.
8. **South Point High School** (Big South 5A/6A) and **Stuart W. Cramer High School** (Southern Piedmont 2A/3A/4A) were recognized for winning the Wells Fargo Cup based on regular-season performances in conference play.
9. **H.H. Beam Elementary** teacher **Ashley Polson** was named The Gaston Gazette’s Key Homes Amazing Teacher of the Month and was selected as a national winner. She received \$5,000 for her classroom and school.
10. **Gaston County Schools** Associate Superintendent for Academic Services **Tonya Kales** attended a two-day Innovation Leadership Council workshop in Wilmington to begin shaping a statewide approach to identify and expand promising practices as outlined in N.C. Department of Public Instruction’s strategic plan.
11. **Gaston County Schools** athletic director **Chad Duncan** was recognized at the N.C. High School Athletic Association’s state meeting as the Region VI recipient of the Charlie Adams Distinguished Service Award. The honor recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding dedication, excellence, and an unwavering love for high school athletics in the state.
12. The following students won awards in the Mount Holly plein air art contest: From **Cramerton Middle School**, **Karina Fernandez** won first place, **McKenzie Burdecki** earned second place, **Daniela Osorio Carballo** placed third, and **Adele St. Romain** received honorable mention. **Jude Fann** of Belmont Middle School also earned an honorable mention award. At the high school level, **Ava Hoerst** of **Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences** placed second, **Lila St. Romain** of **Gaston Early College High School** came in third place, and **Kylie Youngblood** of **Highland School of Technology** received honorable mention.
13. Students from **H.H. Beam Elementary**, **North Belmont Elementary**, and **South Point High School** put their creativity to work and designed scarecrows that are on display as part of the Daniel Stowe Conservancy’s Scarecrow Hollow exhibit.
14. The following **Belmont Middle School** students were selected for the N.C. Honors Chorus: **Aubrey Sanchez**, **Lillian Fieler**, **Arden Petteway**, **Dylan Wilson**, **Collin Martin**, **Pyper Whitworth**, and **Emma Lougee**.
15. **Belmont Middle School** won the middle school football championship for the second consecutive year.
16. The **Bessemer City High School** marching band competed at the Roundtable Tournament of Bands at North Lincoln High School and placed first in percussion, second in music, and third overall. In addition, the band placed second at BandBEAT, a marching band competition sponsored by Carolina Crown in South Carolina.

17. The **John Chavis Middle School** softball team won its second consecutive county championship with a win over **W.C. Friday Middle School**.
18. The following **Cramerton Middle School** students were selected for the N.C. Music Educators Association's middle school honors chorus: **Pyper Whitworth, Dylan Wilson, and Collin Martin**.
19. The **Cramerton Middle School** golf team won the county championship on September 29 at Cherryville Golf and Country Club. It is the school's fifth consecutive championship and 19th overall in golf. **Riley Blackedge** tied for first with **Caden Coffey** of **Belmont Middle School** – both golfers shot a 42.
20. **Katie Smith, Lilly Wall, and Michael Warren** of **East Gaston High School** were selected for the N.C. High School Honors Chorus.
21. The **East Gaston High School** marching band competed at the Hickory Ridge Festival of Bands and placed first overall in the 5A classification, first in percussion, first in overall effect, first in music performance, second in visual effect, and second in colorguard.
22. The **East Gaston High School** marching band invited eighth grade students at **Stanley Middle School** to perform with the high school band at a recent football game. In addition, the band and cheerleaders performed and welcomed students at **Pinewood Elementary School** as they arrived at school.
23. **Aria Sheelor-Cranke** of **Forestview High School** was selected to participate in the N.C. Honors Chorus.
24. **Forestview High School** was recognized at the N.C. High School Athletic Association's state meeting for being ejection-free during the 2025-2026 school year, thus demonstrating a commitment to good sportsmanship.
25. The **Forestview High School** marching band competed at the 2026 Roundtable Tournament of Bands at North Lincoln High School and placed third in colorguard, second in percussion, third in drum major, second in visual performance, and second in music performance.
26. The **Hunter Huss High School** Trailblazers Adopt-A-Street team collected 96 pounds of trash during a roadside cleanup near the school campus.
27. As part of their September Community Service Project titled "Paws for a Cause," students and staff at **Lingerfeldt Elementary** collected 450 cans of pet food and treats.
28. **Page Primary School** raised more than \$55,000 during the school's dance-a-thon.
29. **Pleasant Ridge Elementary** students **Julian Morales** and **Charley Ray Shelton** were selected for the N.C. Elementary Honors Chorus. They will perform on November 8 at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem. **Cathy Baker** is the music teacher.

30. **North Gaston High School** teacher **Kenneth Walters** and student **Levi Walters** passed the Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certification training through the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service.
31. The **North Gaston High School** marching band competed at the 2026 Roundtable Tournament of Bands at North Lincoln High School and placed second in colorguard, visual performance, and general effect, as well as second overall in the 1A classification.
32. **Emma Lougee** of **Stanley Middle School** was selected for the N.C. Middle School Honors Chorus.
33. The **South Point High School** marching band competed at the Hickory Ridge Festival of Bands and placed second in colorguard, third in percussion, and fourth overall.
34. **Southwest Middle School** collected 430 canned goods and non-perishable food items for the “One Can Make A Difference” food pantry at **Webb Street School**.
35. **Gregory Blair** of **South Point High School** was selected to participate in the North Carolina East-West all-stars football game, which is scheduled for December 19 at Jamieson Stadium in Greensboro.
36. The **South Point High School** environmental club volunteered with Keep Belmont Beautiful to pick up litter and debris during a Saturday morning cleanup.
37. **South Point High School** health sciences teacher **Emily Kincaid** was recognized at a CaroMont Health ceremony as one of the Top 100 Nurses in North Carolina for 2026.
38. **Woodhill Elementary** dean of students **Cherie Feemster** was featured in an NEA Today online newsletter article about how the district’s telehealth program with Kintegra Health has helped increase attendance at the school.

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: National Principals Month Proclamation

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points: October is National Principals Month. The annual observance is a collaboration of the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the American Federation of School Administrators in partnership with other education organizations.

National Principals Month is celebrated by school districts across the country to acknowledge and show appreciation for the work, leadership, and vision of principals, assistant principals, and school administrators.

See the attached proclamation from Gaston County Schools for consideration and approval.

Fiscal Implications: None

Recommendation: The recommendation is to approve the proclamation as an expression of recognition and appreciation for the principals, assistant principals, and school administrators in Gaston County Schools.

Policy Implications: None

Strategic Plan District Priority:
Talent and Workforce Development

Submitted by: Todd Hagans, Chief Communications Officer
Department: Communications/Public Information (Superintendent's Office)

PRIDE



PROCLAMATION

National Principals Month

WHEREAS, October is designated as “National Principals Month,” a time to recognize and honor school principals as well as assistant principals and other administrators for their outstanding leadership and commitment to K-12 public education; and

WHEREAS, a school principal shoulders the responsibility of establishing a productive and meaningful learning environment, setting high standards for academic achievement, and providing a school experience that contributes to the success of all students; and

WHEREAS, in addition to possessing the competence, knowledge, and skills needed to oversee a comprehensive school program, school administrators must possess passion, understanding, and a servant’s heart in order to create a dynamic school culture where teachers can teach and students can learn to their full potential; and

WHEREAS, we are very proud of the administrators in Gaston County Schools, and we appreciate their ongoing commitment to inspiring success and a lifetime of learning in our schools.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Education is pleased to join other Boards of Education across the United States in proclaiming October 2026 as

National Principals Month

and encourages the citizens of Gaston County to recognize, thank, and express appreciation to all school administrators for managing the day-to-day operation of school while navigating complex challenges and making critical decisions to ensure that every student has a promising future and that public education remains a pillar in our community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this proclamation be made a part of the minutes of the Board of Education, adopted this the nineteenth day of October, 2026.

Joshua D. Crisp, Chairman
Gaston County Board of Education

Morgen A. Houchard, Superintendent
Gaston County Schools

Gaston
COUNTY SCHOOLS

shaping our future

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Classroom Moment

Type of Item: ☐ **Consent** ☐ **Action** ☒ **Information**

Main Points: This Classroom Moment will highlight the district's Professional Development Days, with a focus on the most recent session held on September 16, which centered on Do Nows and Exit Tickets. These targeted professional learning opportunities are designed to strengthen instructional practices and support high-quality teaching and learning across the district, directly advancing the strategic goal of Academics That Build Pathways to Success.

Fiscal Implications: N/A

Recommendation: N/A

Policy Implications: N/A

District Priorities:

Academics that Build Pathways to Student Success

Submitted by: Shannon Hullett, Director

Department: Academic Services

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Public Expression

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

The Board of Education agenda has been made available to the public for review. Citizens wishing to speak before the Board about an agenda item or other topic may do so during Public Expression.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

The Board of Education will establish time (30 minutes) during the regular monthly meeting for Public Expression. Any citizen not heard during this time may be heard at the end of the business session.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 2310 Public Participation at Board Meetings.

Strategic Plan District Priorities:

Effective Communication and Partnerships

Submitted by: Todd Hagans
Chief Communications Officer

Department: Communications
(Superintendent's Office)

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Approval/Correction of Minutes

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

Approval of Minutes from:
September 21, 2026 (Regular Meeting)

Efficient consideration of matters pertinent to the successful operation of the school system.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Recommendation:

The Board will approve accurate minutes consistent with the Open Meetings Law.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 2320 Compliance with the Open Meetings Law.

Strategic Plan District Priorities:

Effective Communication and Partnerships

Submitted by: Dr. Morgen A. Houchard

Department: Superintendent

Gaston County Schools
Board of Education
September 21, 2026
Regular Meeting

MINUTES

The Gaston County Board of Education met in a regular session on Monday, September 21, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Central Office Boardroom at 943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC 28054. Those Board Members in attendance were: Chairman Josh Crisp, Vice Chairman Dot Cherry, Lee Dedmon (excused at 7:09), Tod Kinlaw, Robbie Lovelace, Jeff Ramsey, Janna Smith, and A.M. Stephens III. Brent Moore was absent and excused.

Additional attendees included: Superintendent Dr. Morgen A. Houchard, Attorney Sonya McGraw, Associate Superintendent Tonya Kales, Assistant Superintendents Bessie Harvey and Rebekka Powers, Chief Communications Officer Todd Hagans, Interim Chief Financial Officer Bryan Denton, 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 5:31 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Invocation

Pastor Joe Bell of Eastside Church of the Nazarene, Gastonia, led the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Students Armani Brown-Wheeler, an 8th grader, Giovanni Clark, an 8th grader, and Jeremy Perdomo Morales, a 7th grader from York Chester Middle School, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Character Trait

Students Jezyah Burris, a 2nd grader, Jayden Magee, a 4th grader, Skyla Hasell, a 5th grader, and Charity Hallman, a 5th grader, all from Woodhill Elementary School, reported on the Character Trait of Respect.

Agenda Adoption - Action

The Board considered Agenda Adoption – Action

Motion to adopt the Agenda as presented was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mrs. Janna Smith, motion carried unanimously. (8-0)

Good News – Information

Mr. Todd Hagans presented the Good News for September:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Local Endorsement (G.A.L.E.)

In compliance with the North Carolina Academically and Intellectually Gifted state standards, 20 of our classroom teachers recently completed a year-long coursework titled "Gaston County Schools AIG Local Endorsement" or "G.A.L.E." to obtain credentials to work with our gifted students.

The G.A.L.E. coursework is designed to highlight and promote best instructional practices and provide training for educators. In addition to the coursework, the teachers had to complete 12 modules on gifted topics and conduct a case study.

Mr. Tod Kinlaw presented each of the teachers with a plaque of recognition.

Warlick Academy

Recognized as part of the “What’s the Story?” initiative, Social Studies educator Bobby Harley and students Janyla Givens and Shakii Marable produced a documentary highlighting Gastonia’s school integration and the 1974 state championship football team. Beyond honing their skills in storytelling, research, and interviewing, Mr. Harley and his students preserved vital local history and presented Gastonia’s story to a national audience.

Mr. A.M. Stephens III presented a certificate of recognition.

City Church donation to H.H. Beam Elementary

Doug Beam, whose father, Hershel H. Beam, serves as the namesake for Gastonia’s H.H. Beam Elementary School, recently issued a challenge to City Church to match his planned \$10,000 contribution to the school.

Over the course of a single weekend, the congregation contributed more than \$30,000 alongside Beam’s gift, yielding nearly \$46,000 to fund facility enhancements and essential resources for educators and students.

Present to acknowledge the recognition of the donation were Pastor Dickie Spargo and school representatives: Principal Beth Crosby, students Denise Leon Castillo, Khloe McNabb-Towery, and Noah Tamayo.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a recognition plaque.

Presentation of 2025-2026 State Test Results - Information

Associate Superintendent Tonya Kales and Kelly Cunningham co-presented the Presentation of the 2025-2026 State Results.

District leadership and staff were commended by Board Members for their hard work, dedication, and the successful growth demonstrated across the district.

(View Presentation)

September Classroom Moment: Innovation Schools Highlight - High-quality PLCs - Information

In the Classroom Moment presentation, Executive Director Tyler West detailed how Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) enhance instruction and learning throughout Gaston County Schools. She highlighted the collaborative efforts of educators—including teachers, principals, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders—who work together to examine standards, analyze student work, and evaluate assessment data to refine teaching strategies.

(View Presentation)

Public Expression – Information

Deana Murphy of Gaston Literacy Council
116 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way
Gastonia, NC 28052

Re: Appreciation for the Board's partnership with the Gaston Literacy Council to offer Reading Soul Mates in many elementary schools.

Dionna Graham
201 E. Franklin Blvd
Gastonia, NC
Re: School (County) Report Card

Sean Bates
201 E. Franklin Blvd
Gastonia, NC
Re: Bus usage concerns

Barbie Stokes
Belmont, NC 28012
Re: Constitution Week

Dot Guthrie
526 Shadow View Drive
Gastonia, NC
Re: To make remarks and congratulate schools, faculty, staff, and parents, and most importantly, the students for showing academic growth.

Chairman Crisp called for a short recess at 7:09 P.M. The meeting reconvened and was called back to order by the Chair at 7:16 PM. Mr. Lee Dedmon left the meeting.

Approval/Correction of Minutes – Action

Motion to adopt minutes as presented for the August 17, 2026, Regular meeting.

Motion made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. A.M. Stephens III; motion carried unanimously. (7-0)

Operations and Curriculum & Instruction Joint Committee Report – Information

The Operations Committee and Curriculum & Instruction Committee met on Monday, September 14, 2026, in a Joint Committee meeting. Ms. Dot Cherry provided a summary report of topics considered and discussed at that meeting.

(View report)

Policy Committee Report - Information

The Policy Committee met on Monday, September 14, 2026. Mrs. Janna Smith provided a summary report of topics considered and discussed at that meeting.

(View report)

2026-2027 Budget Resolution -Action

Budget information was presented by Chief Financial Officer Bryan Denton on the 2026-2027 Annual Budget, noting the Guiding Principles, Revenue Sources, Expenses by Purpose, State, Local, Federal, and Factors that could impact the Budget.

Motion to approve the 2026-2027 Budget Resolution as presented was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. A.M. Stephens III; motion carried unanimously. (7-0)

(View Presentation)

Consent Agenda – Action

The Board considered the Consent Agenda:

Consent Agenda – Action

Consent Agenda Item (s) will be adopted with a single motion, second and 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. Board Policy Updates

E. 2026-2027 Local Testing Plan

F. Contracts

- CTE Contract - Xello
- Belmont Central Boiler Plant Replacement
- Amendment to Zone 2 Lawn Care Contract
- Amendment to Zone 3 Lawn Care Contract
- Amendment Lingerfeldt ES Lighting Contract
- Amendment to South Point HS and Bessemer City HS Baseball Stadium Press Box & Concessions Building Design
- Hawks Nest RTU Replacements
- WB Beam Multistage RTU Replacement

Motion

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented was made by Mrs. Janna Smith; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry. Motion carried unanimously. (7-0)

Superintendent's Comments

The Superintendent reminded all employees that Open Enrollment for the 2027 State Health Plan will take place from October 12-30th, 2026. More information will be forthcoming from our Human Resources Department.

Our fall semester Parent Advisory Council meeting is Tuesday, October 6, at 6:00 p.m. at the Gaston Early College High School. This involves the parent representatives selected by each school, and the representatives coming together to hear from me as Superintendent and also provide feedback on various topics.

All-County Chorus Concert

The all-county high school chorus concert will be held Monday, October 12, at 7:00 p.m. at Stuart W. Cramer High School. The public is invited.

The concert features outstanding student vocalists from our high schools, and the concert will include two performances: one featuring ninth- and 10th-grade students and another featuring our juniors and seniors.

Countdown to College Month

We want to remind everyone that October is "Countdown to College Month," when high school counselors encourage students to complete the necessary steps to get their college applications, financial aid, and other information completed.

We want our high school students and their parents to know that this is the time to start thinking about college and taking the necessary steps to make sure applications and other items are completed.

Students and parents who have questions about the college process should contact their high school counselor, as we know that our counselors are happy to help.

Parent Conferences

Looking ahead on the calendar, Thursday, October 15, is our Parent-Teacher Conference Day. Students will be dismissed at lunchtime, and parent conferences will be held in the afternoon. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's school to schedule a conference.

Then on Friday, October 16, we have an optional teacher workday, so there will be no school for students. And report cards for the first nine weeks will be made available on Thursday, October 22.

Professional Development Day - October 28

Last Wednesday, we had our first of our Mandated Teacher Workdays for Professional Development, and we had teachers across all schools involved in training related to the Do Now and Exit Tickets strategy. The strategy is a tool that teachers can use to collect data and insight into students' understanding before and after a lesson.

Our second one is coming up on Wednesday, October 28, so please mark your calendar.

The spring semester Teacher Workdays for Professional Development on Wednesday are February 10 and April 14.

Closing Remarks

Chairman Crisp echoed the remarks of Superintendent Houchard, expressing pride in the dedication and academic progress demonstrated by district staff and students. He extended appreciation to parents for their continued support of these efforts.

Acknowledging that further work remains, Chairman Crisp noted that the district is advancing in the right direction and emphasized the commitment to maintaining momentum moving forward.

The next scheduled Board of Education Meeting will be held on October 19, 2026.

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. A.M. Stephens III; motion carried unanimously. (7-0)

The Board went into Closed Session at 7:49 p.m.

The Board returned to Open Session at 8:22 p.m.

Adjournment

All business having been conducted, a Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Janna Smith, seconded by Mr. A.M. Stephens III, and the motion carried unanimously. (7-0)

The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Approved:

Josh Crisp, Chairman
[Corporate Seal]

Morgen A. Houchard, Secretary

Date Approved: _____

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Operations Committee Report

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

The Gaston County Board of Education's Operations Committee meets regularly to discuss operations-related projects and issues. Brent Moore is Chair of the committee, and members are Dot Cherry, Lee Dedmon and Tod Kinlaw. A report of the Operations Committee's actions and discussions will be made at the Board meeting by a member of the Committee.

Fiscal Implications:

As indicated in the report.

Recommendation:

Committee recommendations are reflected in the report.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 2230 Board Committees

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Effective Communication and Partnerships

Submitted by: Bessie Harvey,
Assistant Superintendent of Operations

Department: Operations

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Curriculum & Instruction Committee Report

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

The Gaston County Board of Education's Curriculum & Instruction Committee meets regularly to discuss curriculum and instruction-related topics and issues. Jeff Ramsey is chair of the committee and members are Robbie Lovelace, Janna Smith and A.M. Stephens III. A report of the Curriculum & Instruction Committee's actions and discussions will be made at the Board meeting by a member of the Committee.

Fiscal Implications:

As indicated in the report.

Recommendation:

Committee recommendations are reflected in the report.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 2230 Board Committees

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Effective Communication and Partnerships

Submitted by: Tonya Kales, **Department:** Academic Services
Associate Superintendent of Academic Services

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Policy Committee Report

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

The Gaston County Board of Education's Policy Committee meets regularly to discuss policy updates and revisions. Dot Cherry is chair of the committee, and members are Janna Smith and A.M. Stephens III. A report of the Policy Committee's actions and discussions will be made at the Board meeting by a member of the Committee.

Fiscal Implications:

As indicated in the report.

Recommendation:

Committee recommendations are reflected in the report.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 2230 Board Committees

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Effective Communication and Partnerships

Submitted by: Policy Committee

Department: Legal

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: 2026-2027 Academic Services Path Forward

Type of Item: ☐ **Consent** ☐ **Action** ☒ **Information**

Main Points:

Recommendation: NA

Fiscal Implications: NA

Policy Implications:

Section 3000 - Educational Program

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Academics that Build Pathways to Student Success

Submitted by: Tonya Kales, **Department:** Academic Services Department
Associate Superintendent of Academic Services

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: State Budget Employee Bonus

Type of Item: ☐ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

The state budget that became law on July 7, 2026, contained various employee bonuses for school system employees who are in state-funded positions. The state budget also included funding for custodial and school nutrition employees, regardless of their funding source. The state budget did not include any funding to provide equivalent bonuses to school district employees who are not in state-funded positions. Historically, the Board has provided similar bonuses to all employees, regardless of their funding source.

Recommendation:

Approve the payment of the employee bonuses to all qualified employees, regardless of their funding source.

Fiscal Implications:

Bonuses for employees not covered with state-funded bonuses would be paid from local funds.

Policy Implications:

Section 8000 - Fiscal Management

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Talent and Workforce Development

Submitted by: Bryan Denton,
Chief Financial Officer

Department: Finance

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Classified Employee Bonus

Type of Item: ☐ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

In recognition of the important work of our classified (hourly) employees, the Board of Education has historically paid an annual bonus to eligible classified employees in November. These workers include bus drivers, teacher assistants, clerical support, school nutrition workers and other hourly employees. If approved, the bonus will be paid to eligible classified employees on or about November 20.

To qualify for the bonus, a classified employee must meet all of the following conditions: 1) be employed by June 1, 2026, 2) work at least 50% or more on a regular basis, and 3) be an existing permanent employee. The bonus is subject to federal and state income taxes at the supplemental rate, FICA, and retirement. If the employee qualifies for the bonus, but works less than full-time, the amount of the bonus will be prorated to reflect the percentage of time worked by the employee.

Recommendation:

Approve the payment of the classified employee bonus

Fiscal Implications:

The annual bonus is expected to cost approximately \$1.1 million, which includes employer paid taxes and retirement. This will be paid from local funds which are included in the current operating budget.

Policy Implications:

Section 8000 - Fiscal Management

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Talent and Workforce Development

Submitted by: Bryan Denton,
Chief Financial Officer

Department: Finance

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Consent Agenda

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

Approval of the Consent Agenda by the Board for the following items:

- A. Recommended Personnel
- B. Budget Amendments & Budget Transfers
- C. Construction/Repair Change Orders
- D. Board Policy Updates
- E. Class Size Waivers
- F. High School Exam Schedule
- G. School Improvement Plans for Low-Performing Schools
- H. Contracts
 - Security Vestibules Design
 - Cisco SMARTNet Renewal
 - McAdenville Chiller Replacement

Fiscal Implications:

As stated in each Agenda item.

Recommendation:

Consent items will be adopted with a single motion, second, and vote, unless a request for removal from the Consent Agenda is heard from a Board member.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 1010 Board Authority and Duties.

Strategic Plan District Priorities:

Efficient and Responsive Operations and Technology
& Academics that Build Pathways to Student Success

Submitted by: Dr. Morgen A. Houchard

Department: Superintendent

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Recommended Personnel

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

In accordance with the provisions of G.S. 115C-276(j), "It shall be the duty of the Superintendent to recommend and the Board of Education to elect all principals, teachers, and other school personnel in the administrative unit." It is also within the powers of the Board to hear requests for approved leave, retirement and resignations or terminations in accordance with employment and dismissal regulations.

Fiscal Implications:

N/A

Recommendation:

Approve personnel as recommended.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 7100 Recruitment and Selection of Personnel.

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Talent and Workforce Development

Submitted by: Dr. Morgen A. Houchard

Department: Human Resources

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Budget Amendments and Budget Transfers

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

Budget amendments are needed to adjust the approved budget to reflect actual changes in revenue and budget transfers are needed to transfer money to proper expenditure codes as requested by fund managers.

Fiscal Implications:

Makes adjustments to the 2026-2027 budget.

Recommendation:

Approval of the attached listing of recommended budget amendments and transfers.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 8300 Fiscal Management Standards

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Other: Policy or Gen Statute. See above.

Submitted by: Susan Brooks,
Director of Finance

Department: Finance

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - August
Transfers Between Functions

State Public School Fund

Function	Description	Expense Increase	Expense Decrease
51XXX	Regular Instructional Services		1,368
52XXX	Special Population Services	52,484	
53XXX	Alternative Programs and Services	798,893	
54XXX	School Leadership Services	322,830	
58XXX	School-Based Support Services	950,835	
61XXX	Support and Development Services	609,331	
63XXX	Alternative Programs and Services - Support and Development Services	134,545	
65XXX	Operational Support Services		2,818,629
66XXX	Financial and Human Resource Services		165,227
67XXX	Accountability Services	3,857	
68XXX	System-Wide Pupil Support Services		133,997
69XXX	Policy, Leadership and Communication/Public Information Services	245,696	
72XXX	Nutrition Services	749	
		<u>3,119,220</u>	<u>3,119,220</u>

Explanation: These transfers adjust budgeted amounts per requests from fund managers/principals.

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - August
Transfers Between Functions

Local Current Expense Fund

Function	Description	Expense Increase	Expense Decrease
51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	4,616,983	
54XXX	School Leadership Services		4,408,890
55XXX	Co-Curricular Services	62,174	
58XXX	School-Based Support Services		1,276,176
61XXX	Support and Development Services		581,277
62XXX	Special Population Support and Development Services	141,259	
63XXX	Alternative Programs and Services - Support and Development Services		149,885
64XXX	Technology Support Services		1,049
65XXX	Operational Support Services	75,893	
66XXX	Financial and Human Resource Services	636,713	
67XXX	Accountability Services		111,992
68XXX	System-Wide Pupil Support Services	217,593	
69XXX	Policy, Leadership and Communication/Public Information Services	238,656	
81XXX	Payments to Other Governmental Units	540,000	
		<u>6,529,270</u>	<u>6,529,270</u>

Explanation: These transfers adjust budgeted amounts per requests from fund managers/principals.

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - August
Transfers Between Functions

Federal Grants Fund

Function	Description	Expense Increase	Expense Decrease
53XXX	Alternative Programs and Services		11,712
58XXX	School-Based Support Services	11,712	
61XXX	Support and Development Services		2,437
66XXX	Financial and Human Resource Services	2,437	
		<u>14,149</u>	<u>14,149</u>

Explanation: These transfers adjust budgeted amounts per requests from fund managers/principals.

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - August
Proposed Expenditures and Sources of Revenue

State Public School Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
1	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		98,955
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	29,619	
	52XXX	Special Population Services	1,153	
	54XXX	School Leadership Services	13,159	
	58XXX	School-Based Support Services	11,212	
	61XXX	Support and Development Services	2,452	
	62XXX	Special Population Support and Development Services	8,621	
	63XXX	Alternative Programs and Services - Support and Development Se	9,672	
	66XXX	Financial and Human Resource Services	7,982	
	69XXX	Policy, Leadership and Communication/Public Information Servic	15,086	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Non-Contributory Emp Benefits Allotment - FY27 (PRC0009)			
2	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		284,000
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	112,728	
	61XXX	Support and Development Services	171,272	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Advanced Teaching Roles allotment - FY27 (PRC0022)			
3	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		5,366
	54XXX	School Leadership Services	5,366	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Staff Development allotment - DPI Allotment - FY27 (PRC0028)			
4	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		184,469
	54XXX	School Leadership Services	184,469	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Assistant Principal Interns - MSA Students allotment - FY27 (PRC0067)			
5	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		116,119
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	116,119	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Career Technical Education - Credential allotment - FY27 (PRC0083)			
Total State Public School Fund Amendments			688,910	688,910

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - August
Proposed Expenditures and Sources of Revenue

Local Current Expense Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
1	41XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		(3,455,277)
	44XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		(748,600)
	51XXX	Alternative Programs and Services	(4,203,877)	
This amendment adjusts funds for the Non-Contributory Emp Benefits Allotment - FY27 (PRC0009)				

Total Local Current Expense Fund Account

<u>(4,203,877)</u>	<u>(4,203,877)</u>
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Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - August
Proposed Expenditures and Sources of Revenue

Federal Current Expense Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
1	36XXX	Federal Revenue		179,824
	53XXX	Alternative Programs and Services	146,649	
	58XXX	School-Based Support Services	1,000	
	65XXX	Operational Support Services	26,972	
	81XXX	Payments to Other Governmental Units	5,203	
	This amendment adjusts funds for the McKenney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Grant Allotment - FY27 (PRC0026)			
2	36XXX	Federal Revenue		1,036,088
	53XXX	Alternative Programs and Services	1,018,635	
	81XXX	Payments to Other Governmental Units	17,454	
	This amendment adjusts funds for the ESEA Title I, Part A Grant Allotment - FY27 (PRC0050)			

Total State Public School Fund Amendments

<u>1,215,912</u>	<u>1,215,912</u>
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Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - August
Proposed Expenditures and Sources of Revenue

Restricted Grants Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
1	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		3,458
	66XXX	Financial and Human Resource Services	1,458	
	72XXX	Nutrition Services	2,000	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Central Office Administration allotment - FY27 (PRC0002)			
2	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		2,675
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	2,675	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Career and Technical Education allotment - FY27 (PRC0017)			
3	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		355
	52XXX	Special Population Services	355	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Children with Disabilities allotment - FY27 (PRC0032)			
4	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		10,695
	68XXX	System-Wide Pupil Support Services	10,695	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Local Records Request Fees allotment - FY27 (PRC0700)			
5	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		7,011
	71XXX	Community Services	7,011	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Community Use allotment - FY27 (PRC0704)			
6	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		43,076
	65XXX	Operational Support Services	43,076	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Activity Bus allotment - FY27 (PRC0706)			
7	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		9,258
	65XXX	Operational Support Services	9,258	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Insurance allotment - FY27 (PRC0840)			
8	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		15,144
	65XXX	Operational Support Services	15,144	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Facilities Fixed Asset Sales fund - FY27 (PRC0881)			

9	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		35,205
	65XXX	Operational Support Services	35,205	
This amendment budgets funds for the Facilities Scrap Metal Sales fund - FY27 (PRC0883)				

10	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		350
	65XXX	Operational Support Services	350	
This amendment budgets funds for the Facilities Workshop fund - FY27 (PRC0885)				

Total Restricted Grants Fund Amendments

<u>127,228</u>	<u>127,228</u>
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Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - September
Transfers Between Functions

State Public School Fund

Function	Description	Expense Increase	Expense Decrease
51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	49,500	
52XXX	Special Population Services		244,012
53XXX	Alternative Programs and Services		738,778
54XXX	School Leadership Services	500	
55XXX	Co-Curricular Services		18,670
58XXX	School-Based Support Services	738,778	
62XXX	Special Population Support and Development Services	244,012	
65XXX	Operational Support Services		31,330
		<u>1,032,790</u>	<u>1,032,790</u>

Explanation: These transfers adjust budgeted amounts per requests from fund managers/principals.

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - September
Transfers Between Functions

Local Current Expense Fund

Function	Description	Expense Increase	Expense Decrease
51XXX	Regular Instructional Services		14,830
61XXX	Support and Development Services	13,230	
66XXX	Financial and Human Resource Services	2,000	
69XXX	Policy, Leadership and Communication/Public Information Services		400
		<u>15,230</u>	<u>15,230</u>

Explanation: These transfers adjust budgeted amounts per requests from fund managers/principals.

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - September
Transfers Between Functions

Federal Grants Fund

Function	Description	Expense Increase	Expense Decrease
52XXX	Special Population Services	60,320	
53XXX	Alternative Programs and Services		26,929
58XXX	School-Based Support Services		132,701
61XXX	Support and Development Services		3,142
62XXX	Special Population Support and Development Services	82,689	
63XXX	Alternative Programs and Services - Support and Development Services	9,968	
65XXX	Operational Support Services		472
81XXX	Payments to Other Governmental Units	10,266	
		<u>163,244</u>	<u>163,244</u>

Explanation: These transfers adjust budgeted amounts per requests from fund managers/principals.

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - September
Transfers Between Functions

Restricted Grants Fund

Function	Description	Expense Increase	Expense Decrease
52XXX	Special Population Services		200,000
58XXX	School-Based Support Services	150,000	
65XXX	Operational Support Services	50,000	
		200,000	200,000

Explanation: These transfers adjust budgeted amounts per requests from fund managers/principals.

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - September
Proposed Expenditures and Sources of Revenue

State Public School Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
1	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		104,900
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	45,274	
	54XXX	School Leadership Services	20,000	
	62XXX	Special Population Support and Development Services	39,626	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Non-Contributory Emp Benefits Allotment - FY27 (PRC0009)			
2	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		14,167
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	14,167	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Advanced Teaching Roles allotment - FY27 (PRC0022)			
3	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		267,500
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	267,500	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Advanced Teaching Roles Salary Supplements allotment - DPI Allotment - FY27 (PRC0025)			
4	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		(400)
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	(400)	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Cooperative Innovative High Schools allotment - FY27 (PRC0055)			
5	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		952,242
	52XXX	Special Population Services	952,242	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Children with Disabilities - Special Fund allotment - FY27 (PRC0063)			
6	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		211,260
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	211,260	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Career Technical Education - Credential allotment - FY27 (PRC0083)			
7	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		3,600
	53XXX	Alternative Programs and Services	3,600	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Literacy Intervention allotment - FY27 (PRC0085)			
8	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		104,237
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	104,237	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Just Right Reader Program LEA allotment - FY27 (PRC0086)			

9	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		17,091
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	17,091	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Special Position (State Teacher of the Year additional months) allotment - FY27 (PRC0096)			
10	31XXX	Revenue - State Public School Fund		484,282
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	484,282	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Hurricane Relief and Recovery allotment - FY27 (PRC0230)			
Total State Public School Fund Amendments			<u>2,158,879</u>	<u>2,158,879</u>

Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - September
Proposed Expenditures and Sources of Revenue

Federal Current Expense Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
1	36XXX	Federal Revenue		23,209
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	22,495	
	81XXX	Payments to Other Governmental Units	714	
	This amendment adjusts funds for the Career and Technical Education Grant Allotment - FY27 (PRC0017)			
2	36XXX	Federal Revenue		64,373
	52XXX	Special Population Services	62,645	
	81XXX	Payments to Other Governmental Units	1,728	
	This amendment adjusts funds for the IDEA-Section 619 Children with Disabilities Preschool Grant Allotment - FY27 (PRC0049)			
3	36XXX	Federal Revenue		1,782,978
	52XXX	Special Population Services	1,742,624	
	81XXX	Payments to Other Governmental Units	40,363	
	This amendment adjusts funds for the IDEA-Section 611 Children with Disabilities Grant Allotment - FY27 (PRC0060)			
4	36XXX	Federal Revenue		102,058
	61XXX	Support and Development Services	102,058	
	This amendment adjusts funds for the ESEA Title II, Part A - Supporting Effective Instruction Grant Allotment - FY27 (PRC0103)			
5	36XXX	Federal Revenue		55,217
	52XXX	Special Population Services	55,217	
	This amendment adjusts funds for the ESEA Title III, Part A - English Language Acquisition Grant Allotment - FY27 (PRC0104)			
6	36XXX	Federal Revenue		749,933
	53XXX	Alternative Programs and Services	733,774	
	81XXX	Payments to Other Governmental Units	16,159	
	This amendment adjusts funds for the ESEA Title I, Part A - School Improvement Grant Allotment - FY27 (PRC0105)			
7	36XXX	Federal Revenue		122,858
	53XXX	Alternative Programs and Services	122,858	
	This amendment adjusts funds for the ESEA Title IV, Part A - Student Support & Academic Enrichment Grant Allotment - FY27 (PRC0108)			
8	36XXX	Federal Revenue		3,932
	53XXX	Alternative Programs and Services	3,932	

This amendment adjusts funds for the ESEA Title III, Part A - English Language Acquisition Grant Allotment - FY27 (PRC0111)

Total State Public School Fund Amendments

<u>2,904,566</u>	<u>2,904,557</u>
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Gaston County Schools
Changes in Appropriations
2026-2027 Budget Resolution - September
Proposed Expenditures and Sources of Revenue

Restricted Grants Fund

#	Function	Description	Expense Increase (Decrease)	Revenue Increase (Decrease)
1	37XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		31,486
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	31,486	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Classroom Teacher allotment - FY27 (PRC0001)		
2	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		268,664
	66XXX	Financial and Human Resource Services	268,664	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Central Office Administration allotment - FY27 (PRC0002)		
3	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		2,732
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	1,372	
	58XXX	School-Based Support Services	1,361	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Non-Contributory Emp Benefits Allotment - FY27 (PRC0009)		
4	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		8,924
	61XXX	Support and Development Services	8,924	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Drivers' Education allotment - FY27 (PRC0012)		
5	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		19,250
	52XXX	Special Population Services	19,250	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Children with Disabilities allotment - FY27 (PRC0032)		
6	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		1,800
	52XXX	Special Population Services	1,800	
		This amendment budgets funds for the Academically or Intellectually Gifted allotment - FY27 (PRC0034)		
7	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		9,167
	58XXX	School-Based Support Services	9,167	
		This amendment budgets funds for the School Safety Equipment Grant allotment - FY27 (PRC0040)		
8	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		17,067
	53XXX	Alternative Programs and Services	17,067	
		This amendment budgets funds for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (ASPIRE) allotment - FY27 (PRC0110)		

9	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		344,976
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	344,976	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Instructional Support Services allotment - FY27 (PRC0216)			
10	37XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		671,686
	52XXX	Special Population Services	671,686	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Medicaid Outreach allotment - FY27 (PRC0305)			
11	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		40,689
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	40,689	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Administrative Training Partnership Program allotment - FY27 (PRC0360)			
12	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		700,000
	58XXX	School-Based Support Services	700,000	
	This amendment budgets funds for the School Safety Grant allotment - FY27 (PRC0438)			
13	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		(1,537,173)
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	(1,537,173)	
	This amendment budgets funds for the E-Rate Technology allotment - FY27 (PRC0519)			
14	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		30,133
	58XXX	School-Based Support Services	30,133	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Buisness Partnership allotment - FY27 (PRC0539)			
15	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		3,944
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	3,433	
	55XXX	Co-Curricular Services	511	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Payroll paid from Schools Funds - FY27 (PRC00540)			
16	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		28,161
	55XXX	Co-Curricular Services	28,161	
	This amendment budgets funds for the NCHSSA-Caoches' Certifications fund - FY27 (PRC0580)			
17	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		4,579
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	4,579	
	This amendment budgets funds for the Commisstioners' School fund - FY27 (PRC0607)			
18	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		1,486
	51XXX	Regular Instructional Services	1,486	

This amendment budgets funds for the Teacher/Admin. Of the Year allotment - FY27 (PRC0608)

19	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		100,000
	58XXX	School-Based Support Services	100,000	

This amendment budgets funds for the School Nurse (SNFI) Grant fund - FY27 (PRC0615)

20	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		130,000
	58XXX	School-Based Support Services	130,000	

This amendment budgets funds for the School Nurse (DHHS) Grant fund - FY27 (PRC0617)

21	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		75,000
	58XXX	School-Based Support Services	75,000	

This amendment budgets funds for the School Nurse (Caromont) Grant fund - FY27 (PRC0618)

22	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		188,155
	68XXX	System-Wide Pupil Support Services	188,155	

This amendment budgets funds for the Local Records Request Fee allotment - FY27 (PRC0700)

23	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		35,866
	65XXX	Operational Support Services	35,866	

This amendment budgets funds for the Activity Bus Transportation fund - FY27 (PRC0706)

24	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		7,799
	65XXX	Operational Support Services	7,694	
	66XXX	Financial and Human Resource Services	105	

This amendment budgets funds for the Insurance allotment - FY27 (PRC0840)

25	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		64
	65XXX	Operational Support Services	64	

This amendment budgets funds for the Facilities Fixed Asset Sales fund - FY27 (PRC0881)

26	48XXX	Local Sources - Restricted		1,830
	65XXX	Operational Support Services	1,830	

This amendment budgets funds for the Facilities Scrap Metal Sales fund - FY27 (PRC0883)

Total Restricted Grants Fund Amendments

1,186,285	1,186,285
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Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Construction/Repair Change Orders

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

Any change orders that were less than \$100,000 were approved by the Superintendent or his designee in accordance with Board Policy 9030 – Facility Construction. Change orders greater than \$100,000 must be approved by the Board.

Fiscal Implications:

All change orders were prefunded prior to recommendation for approval.

Recommendation:

Approval of the attached listing of construction/repair change orders.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 9030 Facility Construction

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Other: Policy or Gen Statute. See above.

Submitted by: Bessie Harvey, Assistant
Superintendent of Operations

Department: Facilities

GCS CHANGE ORDER NOTIFICATION

In accordance with GCS Board Policy 9030 - Facility Construction, all construction and repair change orders approved by the Superintendent, or his designee, shall be reported to the Board. In addition, any change orders that involve amounts over \$100,000 must be approved by the Board. This GCS Change Order Notification provides the required information for change orders \$100,000 or less that have already been approved by the Superintendent, or his designee, and change orders over \$100,000 that need Board approval.

Presented to BOE	Contractor's Name	Project name	Description of Change	Contract Amount	Change Order Amount
10-5-2026	None to Report				

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Board Policy Updates

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points: The Policy Committee reviewed several policies at its October 5, 2026 meeting and recommends that revisions be approved by the full Board. The policies are:

Policy 9110 - Bidding for Construction Work

These policies have been posted on the GCS website for review:

[Proposed Policies](#)

Fiscal Implications: N/A

Recommendation: Board of Education approval of proposed policy revisions.

Policy Implications: Board of Education Policies will be revised.

Strategic Plan District Priorities:

Efficient and Responsive Operations and Technology

Submitted by: Sonya McGraw, Attorney

Department: Legal

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: 2026 Class Size Waivers

Type of Item:

☒ **Consent**

☒ **Action**

☐ **Information**

Main Points: The North Carolina General Statutes have established specific class size guidelines for K-3 education, requiring schools to obtain waivers from the Department of Public Instruction when these limits are exceeded. The maximum class sizes are:

- Kindergarten: 21 students
- First Grade: 19 students
- Second Grade: 20 students
- Third Grade: 20 students

Gaston County Schools (GCS) may request class size exceptions under G.S. 115C-301(g). Waivers will be submitted for 9 elementary schools with class overages. In most cases, the overages are by 1-2 students.

Recommendation: Approve for submission to NCDPI as required by legislation.

Fiscal Implications: N/A

Policy Implications:

Section 3000 - Educational Program

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Academics that Build Pathways to Student Success

Submitted by: Tyler West and Anarah Henderson, Executive Directors

Department: Academic Services

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Fall HS Exam Schedule for Traditional and Early College High Schools

Agenda Item Title/Topic:

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☒ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points: Gaston County Schools' first-semester final exam schedule for traditional and early college high schools begins with teacher-made exams December 9–11, 2026, with regular dismissal on those days. End-of-Course (EOC) and Career and Technical Education (CTE) exams are scheduled for December 14–16, with EOC retesting December 16–18 and opportunities for make-up exams throughout the week. Schools will adjust testing times to their bell schedules while meeting required testing durations, provide lunch before dismissal, and coordinate transportation for students completing make-up testing. All courses must administer a final exam unless an approved exception or teacher-made exam exemption applies.

Fiscal Implications: None

Recommendation: Approval of Fall Exam Schedule

Policy Implications:

None

District Priority Alignment:

Academics that Build Pathways to Student Success

Submitted by: Kevin Doran,
Executive Director

Department: Academics

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: School improvement Plans

Type of Item: ☒ **Consent** ☐ **Action** ☐ **Information**

Main Points:

The Gaston County Schools Focus Areas, Vision, Mission, Goals, and Beliefs have been communicated to GCS stakeholders through a variety of channels. School administrators and School Improvement Teams (SITs) have received professional learning to support the development of individualized School Improvement Plans (SIPs). Implementation of these plans will be monitored and supported by the Superintendent and members of the Academic Services Team.

While all schools develop improvement plans, schools identified with the state's low-performing designation must meet additional requirements. The State Board of Education requires the Superintendent to present to the local Board of Education each school's improvement plan, including the strategies for improvement and the central office supports that will be provided. All school plans including those for the low-performing schools will be submitted through the NCStar system, made available for public review, and open to written comment.

Following local Board approval of all plans, the district will submit the final plan for each school identified as low-performing to the State Board of Education through NCStar within five days. The State Board will review the plans and may provide recommendations for revisions, as appropriate.

The district has 9 Low Performing Schools: Bessemer City Central Elementary, Bessemer City Middle School, Brookside Elementary, Chapel Grove Elementary, H.H. Beam Elementary, Hunter Huss High, Tryon Elementary, W.C. Friday Middle School, and York Chester Middle.

Fiscal Implications:

None

Policy Implications:

None

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Academics that Build Pathways to Student Success

Approval of School Improvement Plans for All Schools including those with the Low-Performing State Designation directly aligns with Priority 1: Academics that Build Pathways to Student Success. These plans support the district's academic goals of increasing grade level proficiency and reducing the number of low-performing schools through targeted, data-informed strategies to improve student achievement, academic growth, and outcomes for all students.

Submitted by: Tonya Kales, Associate Superintendent of Academic Services and Kelly Cunningham, Chief Accountability Officer

Department: Academic Services

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Contracts and Expenditures >\$100,000

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

The attached listing of contracts and expenditures more than \$100,000 was reviewed by staff and recommended for approval by the Board, or are contracts less than \$100,000 but recommended to the Board for approval.

Fiscal Implications:

All contracts and expenditures will be paid using bond funding, capital proceeds or operational savings.

Recommendation:

Approval of Contracts with the Board.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 8640 Contracts with the Board.

Strategic Plan District Priorities:

Sustainable Financial Stewardship

Submitted by:

Finance and Business Services

Department: Finance

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Multiple Security Vestibules 2026-2027

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

This project continues the district's goal to improve the main school entries including a vestibule for improved security, general circulation, and student and visitor experience. The architectural firm of McMillan Pazdan Smith has been selected to design and oversee the construction of this project.

Fiscal Implications:

The cost of designing the security vestibules for Bessemer City High School, Brookside Elementary School, Cramerton Middle School, Forestview High School, Ida Rankin Elementary School, and John Chavis Middle School is \$399,750.00. School bond funding will be utilized for this project.

Recommendation:

Approve the contract amendment with McMillan Pazdan Smith for professional architectural and engineering services for the identified 2026-2027 security vestibule projects.

Policy Implications:

Section 9000 – Facilities

Strategic Goal Alignment:

Efficient and Responsive Operations and Technology

Submitted by: Bessie Harvey,
Assistant Superintendent of Operations **Department:** Operations

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Cisco SMARTNet Renewal

Type of Item: ☒ Consent ☒ Action ☐ Information

Main Points:

The Cisco SMARTNet renewal covers the district's licenses for the wired and wireless network infrastructure, the firewalls, and the VPN, as well as malware protection, intrusion detection, and intrusion prevention. It also includes other services such as software system updates and hardware failure replacement. Technical support for issues and upgrades is also included. It is included in the NC Department of Information Technology ITS-400277, NC Statewide IT Contract 204X.

Fiscal Implications:

The renewal cost of \$352,600 is included in the current TSS state budget.

Recommendation:

Recommend the renewal of the Cisco SMARTNet licenses and services described above.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 3231/7371 Network Security

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Efficient and Responsive Operations and Technology

Submitted by: Curtis Poplin, Chief Technology Officer

Department: TSS

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: Oct 19, 2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: McAdenville Chiller Replacement

Type of Item: Consent Action Information

Main Points: Replacement of original 60-ton chiller due to its age and history of mechanical issues.

Fiscal Implications: Pre-bid meeting was held on Sep 16, 2026 with 7 vendors signed in. Bids were submitted on October 1 by two vendors: Daikin Applied at \$219,800 and Carolina Air Solutions at \$228,183.01.

Recommendation: Authorization to move forward with Daikin Applied and the replacement of the HVAC chiller at McAdenville Elementary

Policy Implications:
Section 9000 - Facilities

District Priorities:
Efficient and Responsive Operations and Technology

Submitted by: Bessie Harvey,
Assistant Superintendent of Operations

Department: Operations

Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/19/2026

Agenda Item Title/Topic: Closed Session

Type of Item: ☐ Consent ☐ Action ☒ Information

Main Points:

Closed sessions shall be held when required to permit a public body to act in the public interest as permitted by law.

– N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel

– N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) Consultation with Attorney

In order to consult with the Board's attorney and protect the attorney client privilege, and to receive advice with respect to the lawsuits captioned:

—19-CVS-3893 McKinney et al. vs. Goins and The Gaston County Board of Education

—21-CVS-5018 Brittain vs. Beason and The Gaston County Board of Education

—3:23-CV-643-RJC-DCK Perkins vs. The Gaston County Board of Education

—3:26-CV-564 Ackerman vs. Gaston County Schools et al.

—4:26-CV-08736 (MDL No. 3047) Gaston County Board of Education vs. Meta Platforms, Inc., et al.

—26-CV-007704-350 Hawkins vs. The Gaston County Board of Education

—Any other legal matters.

Fiscal Implications:

TBD

Recommendation:

Board to consider information provided in Closed Session in accordance with G.S. §143-318.11.

Policy Implications:

Policy Code: 2610 Board Attorney

Strategic Plan District Priority:

Other: Policy or Gen Statute. See above.

Submitted by: Sonya McGraw, Attorney **Department:** Legal/Superintendent's Office