



GLOUCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DIVISION LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING
January 9, 2020

WELCOME/SUPERINTENDENT'S REMARKS

The meeting began at 11:10 a.m., with Dr. Chuck Wagner welcoming everyone back from winter break. New member, Gloria Williams, Community Engagement and Public Information Manager, will be representing the Community Engagement department at the meetings and was welcomed by members. Eileen Kersmarki, Bethel E.S. Principal, recognized Daniel Driver, who made "Buddy Benches" for the elementary schools as his senior class project. Dr. Clemons, Brent Fedors, County Administrator, and Phillip Bazzani, Board of Supervisors 2020 Chairperson, are meeting with Senator Normont and Delegate Hodges this morning in Richmond, regarding sales tax legislation.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATES

Heather Lucas, Chief Financial Officer, shared information from the VASS/VASBO Conference, noting a 3% SOQ positions compensation increase in the 2nd year of the biennium, as long as the locality gives at least a 3% raise over the two-year period. Dr. Clemons spoke up at that conference, expressing his appreciation, but also pointing out that Virginia is well below the national average and more is needed on a continual basis to make a difference. Mrs. Lucas needs the three-year budget priority list from principals and directors by Monday, 1/13. Dr. Clemons will review that information as we go into the budget season.

Bryan Hartley, Executive Director of Operations, welcomed everyone back and indicated he has received a lot of positive feedback regarding our winter break. On January 13th, Mr. Hartley will be attending the regional calendar meeting for the upcoming years. Members should provide Mr. Hartley with any input they have prior to this meeting. The 2020-21 school year will begin after Labor Day. Mr. Hartley also indicated he has been handling multiple discipline issues that occurred before the break. In addition, Mr. Hartley and others will be attending a VDOE Code of Conduct meeting in Fredericksburg on Friday, January 10. A lot of changes are occurring regarding guidance for consequences (SBAR Codes – Student Behavior and Administrative Response). VDOE has been pushing for these changes for some time and implementation is planned by fall of 2020.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Scott Shorland, Construction Manager, received construction bids for the Achilles Bus Loop. A contract should be awarded soon and the bus loop completed before school begins in the fall. Members also commented regarding how fortunate we have been that Union Baptist Church has allowed the buses at Achilles to use their parking lot for many years. In addition, the design process for GHS is underway with final determinations of what will be done decided as funding is confirmed. GCPS will also be awarding a contract for the transportation facility in the near future. Mr. Shorland shared information from an article in the *Daily Press* regarding government contract figures and feels the economy is booming right now. Locally, a new business park is planned off of Short Lane and a pharmacy at Rt. 17 and Burleigh Road. Mrs. Lucas heard similar comments made regarding the

economy while attending the VASS/VASBO Conference, and George Baines, Chief Information Technology Officer for Gloucester County, said a lot of money is being spent in this area for technology. In addition, Mr. Bains said a lot of tax dollars are spent in Gloucester, adding that the Gloucester Aldi is first in the southeast region of Virginia and the Gloucester Walmart, third.

Steve Patton, Director of Food Services, said free/reduced applications are now available online.

Jimmy Viars, Grounds Manager, noted ongoing maintenance occurring and reminded members to submit work orders for any issues.

Craig Smith, Human Resource Coordinator, informed members that the United Way and Educational Foundation campaigns have ended with about \$600 more raised this year than last year, for a total of \$5,557. He also thanked those who contributed to Toys for Tots. Dr. Wagner thanked the Human Resources staff for working hard to maintain services in their department, for the second time this year that they have been without an Executive Director of Human Resources.

David Miller, Facilities Manager, reminded members to submit work orders for any maintenance needs. The facilities staff addressed some issues at GHS over winter break. Mr. Miller hopes for a successful GHS renovation project.

Tanya Deckard, Director of Transportation, indicated issues are occurring with the new bus system integrating in PowerSchool, which could cause the information to be unavailable at times. The Transportation Department is working to resolve the issue, however testing the parent app will be delayed until the integration issues are fixed. There have been an increased number of driver absences since the return from winter break, which Mrs. Deckard hopes hasn't caused any disruption in service. Four to seven new drivers are starting at the end of the month. An issue with TripSpark and the approval of trips is being addressed by the Technology Department. (See Information Below.)

Transportation Software Solutions

- Data integration between the new Transportation Software Suite, PowerSchool, and our map net system has run into some technical issues
- A test of the parent application, set to begin in late January, will be postponed by 1 – 2 weeks while we rectify software glitches
- As we resolve this problem, transportation information will periodically be unavailable in PowerSchool

Fleet Concerns

- Colder weather has caused an increase of battery and breakdown issues in older buses
- Transportation has experienced increasing absences due to cold and flu season
- Transportation will begin the process of training approximately 4 new drivers in late January

Del Dautrich, Safety Manager, provided a reminder to conduct a lockdown drill during the month of January. In addition, the Safety Advisory Council will meet on January 15th, and the School Resource Officers on January 23rd. Mr. Hartley added that he will be talking to Capt. Schick regarding how involved we want our SRO's in discipline, and said it is a school issue unless it involves something illegal that needs to be referred. SRO's don't step in until contacted, but if they have information, they are obligated to act on it.

Riverside Health System is doing a presentation at GHS tonight (Jan.9/7:00 p.m.) on the dangers of vaping.

Scott Mecca, Director of Technology, said the technology department is focusing on maintenance and 2nd semester, will focus on cyber security. In addition, a new firewall is in place on a test basis, which he hopes to purchase. Schools and government agencies are vulnerable to ransomware attacks, with three states in the country having declared a state of emergency regarding ransomware. Mr. Mecca plans to continue to educate staff on proper procedures to help avoid an attack. Mr. Mecca reminded staff to send an updated list to Mr. Dautrich to provide technology regarding who should be notified when lockdown drills occur. Mr. Mecca is also exploring avenues for cost savings and believes that will be coming in the future.

George Bains, Chief Information Technology Officer for Gloucester County, informed members that the purchasing agent (Bill Lindsey) for Gloucester County has retired, which could slow down the purchasing process until a new purchasing agent is hired. The Community Engagement staff have moved to their new location in the old library, which is now the Stewart Building. Mr. Bains office will be relocating to Building One. Mr. Bains indicated a software upgrade should help with issues that have been occurring in the finance system. Mr. Bains also shared information regarding additional areas of vulnerability with cyber security that have heightened in the past week in the government and the need for everyone to be more aware.

Gloria Williams, Community Engagement and Public Information Manager for Gloucester County, indicated the public would soon be notified of the Stewart Building name change and that she is grateful for the opportunity to serve the community in this position. Mrs. Williams' contact information is (804) 693-5730/gwilliams@gloucesterva.info.

Dr. Clemons returned from Richmond and informed members of legislation the county and school division are trying to have considered that could assist with school construction through sales tax, and could reduce the potential increase on the real estate tax rate. Senator Norment has agreed to move the legislation forward and Delegate Bloxom on the Eastern Shore is also attempting to have similar legislation moved forward. Delegate Hodges is also in support of said legislation. Dr. Clemons and Mr. Fedors plan to go back to Richmond to try to make our case when this issue goes before the legislators (Senate & House) and is hopeful we will have good news in the spring.

Dr. Clemons is working with the Human Resources Department to cover the responsibilities of the Executive Director of Human Resources & Compliance until a new executive director is hired. He hopes to make a recommendation to the School Board next week (Jan. 14), with that person beginning in mid-February. Please contact Dr. Clemons for guidance or for support on any issues in which you may need support in the interim.

ADJOURNMENT – 12:20 p.m.