

Division Leadership Team Meeting

September 30, 2020 – 8:30 a.m.

Dr. Clemons welcomed everyone, and asked for updates from elementary principals regarding the return of Pre-K and Kindergarten students. Principals indicated the first two days had been great, any glitches were minor and being remedied. Everyone is ready for students to be back in the buildings. Dr. Clemons expressed his gratitude to all of them as well as their staff.

VDH Pandemic Metrics Dashboard – The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) released the Pandemic Metrics Dashboard on Monday, September 28. The dashboard will provide guidance pertaining to reopening of schools and in-person instruction. Dr. Clemons emphasized that the VDH provides recommendations and guidance, but does not mandate when a division should be open or closed. GCPS will transition students back in a safe manner.

Joint School Board/Board of Supervisors Meeting – Dr. Clemons reminded staff of the scheduled joint meeting with the School Board and Board of Supervisors. Due to the need for social distancing, the location is still being determined. **(Location will now be at TCW Auditorium)**

Sales Tax Referendum – Dr. Clemons asked Gloria Williams, Community Engagement & Public Information Manager, to speak about the sales tax referendum. “Know before You Vote” provides information regarding the sales tax referendum and may be accessed on the GCPS homepage. Mrs. Williams provided information and stressed the importance of informing the public about the benefits this tax would provide Gloucester. GHS has been on the CIP since 2008 for much needed renovations. This and other infrastructure needs could be funded by the sales tax instead of an increase in real estate taxes. Funding could not exceed 1%, and would need to be approved by the Board of Supervisors if passed on the Nov. 3 ballot. In addition, this tax would not apply to vehicles, prescriptions, or groceries. There will be a “Vote Yes for Gloucester” Virtual Town Hall meeting on October 8 at 7 p.m. to help inform the public.

Mrs. Williams shared with members that a new community engagement coordinator has been hired for Botetourt and informed everyone the 2020 Census is now ending on Oct. 5.

ELT Updates

Instruction – Dr. Chuck Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services, will be discussing details of a survey going out to families of first through twelfth grade students regarding return options. Scott Mecca, Director of Technology, indicated one Smart Bus was ready and Tanya Deckard, Director of Transportation, has created a schedule for bus locations which will be posted after the bus is tested for reception in those areas. Mr. Mecca expects to start having the bus available on Thursday, Oct. 1. In addition, the GHS Internet Café will begin on September 30.

Budget & Finance – Heather Lucas, Chief Financial Officer, had no updates at this time.

Human Resources – Rachel Blankenship, Executive Director of Human Resources & Compliance, noted an increase in vacancies, with at least six custodial positions needing to be filled.

Operations – Bryan Hartley, Executive Director of Operations, said students are currently being transported, meals are being delivered, and the internet cafés are starting. Please inform him of any needs you may have for his department.

Department Updates

Facilities – Dave Miller, Facilities Manager, indicated his department is catching up on work orders. Members should submit work orders if maintenance is needed.

Grounds – Jimmy Viars, Grounds Manager, has installed the “Free Little Libraries” at all elementary schools and is staying busy maintaining grounds. Please inform him of any concerns.

Safety – Del Dautrich, Safety Manager, informed members of a product by the name of Oxivir TB, that disinfects surfaces in one minute, and due to limited quantities, will be issued to custodians as available.

On October 15, at 10:15 a.m., schools are to hold earthquake drills, regardless of the number of students in the building. Doors being propped open was discussed. Fire doors may never be propped open, but Mr. Dautrich approved of certain doors being open when no students are in the room, to reduce how often door knobs are touched.

Food Services – Steve Patton, Director of Food Services, is concerned about meal deliveries when students return to the buildings and indicated “grab and go” may be needed at some point. Mrs. Hudgins, Botetourt Elementary principal, inquired about practicing with kindergarten students in the lunch line. Mr. Patton thanked Mrs. Deckard for delivering up to 3,000 meals daily.

Transportation – Tanya Deckard, Director of Transportation, offered cones to Achilles E.S. to block off the old entrance while parents adjust to the new traffic pattern. Today is the first day students will be transported to the internet café being overseen by Stephen Mygas, GHS Assistant Principal. Mrs. Deckard asked principals to inform her of any concerns regarding transportation.

GCPS Technology – Scott Mecca, Director of Technology, indicated android devices would be fully provisioned in a day, with cases arriving at the end of the week. Chromebooks have been completely delivered and MiFi’s are expected in 7-10 days. Mr. Mecca also indicated that technology would need to be considered with students returning to the buildings, and may need students to bring their own devices. Chromebooks and tablets ordered do not have carts.

County Technology – George Baines, Chief Information Technology Officer, discussed Cares Act Funding, and indicated an effort is being made to obtain “G.C. Free” internet access points throughout the county, to include Gloucester Point Beach and Beaverdam Park. Verizon is also trying to bring in two towers that would help the Bethel/Peasley areas as well as Rt. 198. Mr. Baines indicated 100-150 citizens are voting daily, which requires extra vigilance on the technology department. Mr. Baines is aware of a ransom ware attack in one area recently.

Nursing – Lisa Jones, Division Nurse Coordinator, is monitoring daily changes in COVID-19 statistics and guidelines. Medication training is occurring. Flu Shots should be available to staff the second week in October.

Dr. Clemons indicated GCPS is moving in the right direction and will open safely and responsibly.

Adjourned – 10:02 a.m.