



GLOUCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DIVISION LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING

June 29, 2021 – 1:00 p.m.
TCWEC Café

SUPERINTENDENT/DIVISION UPDATES. Dr. Walter Clemons welcomed everyone to the first in-person Division Leadership Team meeting in fifteen months. Dr. Clemons encouraged everyone to take some time off this summer to get away. Summer school began this week on Monday, June 28. At this time, Dr. Clemons is uncertain what the 2021-2022 school year will look like, in regards to the pandemic.

Dr. Clemons introduced new staff members, Jim Reiflin, Director of Technology; Kelly Gray, Achilles Principal, and Alexis Foster (not present), Assistant Principal at GHS. Darryl Oakley will be moving from a teaching position to become the Assistant Principal at Page. In addition, recently announced changes include Patti McMahon as the Academic Support Coordinator for Special Education; Katina Keener, Student Services Coordinator; Katie Litton, Instructional Support (Virtual, Science, & History) Coordinator; Sharon Hendrix, Principal at Page; Stefan Mygas, Principal at GHS; Craig Reed, Principal at Peasley; Cathy Balderson, Assistant Principal at Peasley; Shantell Brinkley, Assistant Principal at GHS; Shannon Auch, Assistant Principal to include the Regional Alternative Education program housed at GHS; Tiffany Bush, Assistant Principal at Bethel and Rita Garcia, Assistant Principal at Petsworth. All members introduced themselves to new staff. Dr. Clemons thanked the Botetourt staff for the 0time his son spent there (6 full years/K-5) and also thanked Mrs. Blankenship and Mrs. Dehoux for all that was done for the retirement celebration held on June 17.

The School Board will hold its next monthly meeting on July 13, with the open meeting beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the TCWEC Auditorium and a Town Hall meeting to follow at 7:00 p.m. The framework of the Town Hall is being developed, but one item citizens have questioned is Critical Race Theory (CRT), which GCPS does not teach.

George Bains, Deputy County Administrator, informed members of a new Uber style program through Bay Transit that will provide transportation for \$2 each way around the county. Mr. Bains shared with members that issues with the new software caused a delay in tax bills being sent out. Due to the delay, the Board of Supervisors approved extending the penalty and interest date to August 2. The county and schools are also receiving new budgeting software. Mr. Bains informed members the solar ordinance is being rewritten to allow smaller facilities. Strada is building the first battery storage solar facility behind the old Page school site that will provide power to the county for a day or more in the event of an outage. Mr. Bains also informed members a new company, Escribe, has replaced Granicus for county and school meeting agendas and videos. ARPA is a rescue fund for needed infrastructure and Gloucester has been approved to receive 7.2 million. Infrastructure being considered includes broadband, water/sewer, and other areas. Mr. Bains also presented Dr. Clemons with a Gloucester County pin.

Gloria Williams, Community Engagement and Public Information Manager, also mentioned the pilot program that allows Bay Transit to provide transportation, primarily in the Courthouse area. Citizens may use the Bay Transit Express App to sign up to go between Riverbend Apartments, Ware Academy, and the MPNN Counseling Center. Gloucester is one of two locations selected for this pilot program. The first ten

one way or five round trips are free. Community Engagement is soon hiring a coordinator at Abingdon and is also working on expanding the full service school program at GHS.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATES

Dr. Chuck Wagner, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, indicated most instructional items will be shared during the principals meeting, but thanked Tanya, Steve, Dave & teams for help preparing for summer programs. New teachers will begin on August 16 and returning teachers on August 19. Dr. Wagner mentioned there is some public discourse regarding Critical Race theory (CRT) and several FOIA requests have been received. Updates are being made to the curriculum. Dr. Wagner added that elective courses have owned curriculum that may not be available through VDOE. There will be a two day instructional retreat on July 21 & 22 and possibly a DLT/Principals meeting on July 14.

Dr. Clemons added that at this time, we do not know the status of students wearing masks in the fall, but will do what is in compliance. There are no capacity requirements impacting transportation, but masks at this time, are still required. Dr. Clemons expects masks may still be required in the fall, due to the fact most students are not vaccinated. Virtual classes will only be offered to secondary students through Virtual Virginia next year. Forty-three students have submitted applications.

Dr. Wagner also mentioned a FOIA request for paper use (cases purchased over the past two years). Principals and directors outside of the central office will need to provide that information for their buildings. Dr. Clemons added that teachers could be asked for lesson plans to see how they went along with the curriculum. Principals need to ensure that all teachers have those in place. In addition, emails can be requested through FOIA. Dr. Clemons reminded staff to be careful regarding information that is put in emails, social media, etc.

Heather Lucas, Chief Financial Officer, is working to close out the school year. FY'22 purchase orders cannot be issued until July 1. Many of these are for contracts that expired June 30. GCPS is switching healthcare providers to Anthem and benefit consultants to Mark 3. Mark 3 will be going to each location during open enrollment.

Dr. Clemons added, any staff member who receives a FOIA request should submit it to Mrs. Dehoux, who serves as the FOIA officer for the division. The Supreme Court has denied looking at the Petition for Writ of Certiorari in the Grimm vs. GCPS case. GCPS currently has no comment.

Bryan Hartley, Executive Director of Operations, indicated a lot of changes occurring in Student Services and expects great things with the new staff. The Achilles front parking lot is about to be redone and the baseball field at Page about to begin. Many other CIP projects are also moving forward, including the HVAC at Bethel and in the rear section of TCWEC. Paving projects are planned at various schools; playground numbers are in for installs at Botetourt & Bethel and plans for the transportation facility are being finalized. Mr. Hartley indicated it is unlikely much will be done over the summer. Playgrounds will not be an overnight project. In addition, Mr. Hartley indicated all divisions are doing what we are doing, which is causing some issues with product and contractor availability. Mrs. Eileen Kersmarki indicated there is broken equipment that is dangerous at Bethel. Mr. Hartley said any safety concern will be taken care of.

Rachel Blankenship, Executive Director of Human Resources & Compliance, is recruiting and scheduling interviews for DLT members as well as working to fill support positions. Some substitutes have become paraprofessionals, prompting the need to fill additional substitute positions. There have been a significant

number of new hires and the Human Resources department is planning for the August 16/17 new staff event.

Lisa Jones, Director of Nursing, – Only 140 of 5,000 students have tested positive over the past year for COVID-19, and none were positive from a contact in the building. There were cases on the school bus setting. Thanks to all of you. Stay vigilant. If you have staff members who are not vaccinated, they need to wear masks or be separated. Also, when students are in school, masks are required at this time. Mrs. Jones will work with the health department over the summer to do another push for vaccines for students and staff.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Dave Miller, Facilities Manager, indicated summer work is underway and he is working to price out capital projects. Lighting replacements should occur during nights and weekends. Please let him know of any needs that have not been currently (if any) submitted.

Tanya Deckard, Director of Transportation, was excited for the start of summer school and thanked the staff at Abingdon, Botetourt, Page, and GHS for helping. The website gives parents times for bus stops and no names are listed on the site. Mrs. Deckard indicated some dual ridership issues occurred yesterday (June 28), and some middle school students showed up who weren't scheduled for this session. However, those students were returned home. Mrs. Deckard thanked everyone for their patience and indicated the lookup tool should be fully implemented over the summer and will update daily.

Jim Reiflin, Director of Technology, has learned that GCPS uses many of the systems he was using and that our emails go back to 2009 in archives. Mr. Reiflin is implementing a 1/1 initiative. In addition, he will be checking emails prior to his official start date on August 2.

ADJOURNMENT – 2:56 p.m.