



GLOUCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Teacher Advisory/GEA Zoom Meeting
(Due to Covid-19)

April 3, 2020
1:00 p.m.

Dr. Clemons, Superintendent, thanked everyone for all they are doing in the current situation. The purpose of this Zoom meeting was to give updates and answer questions. Dr. Clemons added that this is a fluid situation that changes daily.

FY '21 Budget –The School Board approved a budget at the March 12 School Board Work Session that includes a 3.7 million increase in local funding, with an average compensation increase of over 4% for teachers and 2% for support staff. Increases for health insurance, VRS rates, and regional tuition are expected. The current pandemic may cause changes and Dr. Clemons feels we may be fortunate to receive level funding in FY'21 as we try to get through FY'20, with the desire to keep staff paid, working, and accessible. This time is not a vacation, whether staff is working in the buildings or from home, learning needs to continue. The division still has needs, but now is not the time to be aggressive, with the entire country experiencing a state of emergency. Dr. Clemons added that the General Assembly is expected to convene on April 22. At that time, we should know if changes will be proposed for K12 education.

Heather Lucas, Chief Financial Officer, informed members that at this point, we are doing all that is possible to ensure contracted employees are paid for the remainder of the school year.

Dr. Clemons noted that it is imperative that we are articulating the same message to staff and families.

Brian Hartley, Executive Director of Operations, noted his department has been busy, with custodians on flexed schedules, doing daily disinfecting. Ceiling tiles are being replaced where needed and the gym floor at Achilles refinished. Grounds work continues and facility projects are occurring. Capital projects are still planned, to include GHS renovations, transportation facility, new Page baseball field and moving forward with the Achilles bus loop. In addition, cafeteria staff is currently serving approximately 400 meals each day during the closure at GHS, Petsworth, Abingdon, and Achilles. On April 3, 1260 meals were distributed to provide breakfast to students over spring break.

Air Quality Testing – Mr. Hartley informed members that random tests done by Marine Chemist, looked great in seven of the nine buildings, with TCWEC having some rooms in the Head Start area that needed to be addressed and the Agricultural Lab at GHS. Interventions and maintenance have occurred and those areas have since been retested with good results. Members were asked to please articulate this message accurately.

Chuck Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services, thanked members for all they are doing in this new reality. The division is currently working on a path forward following spring break and is waiting for guidance from VDOE and the State Superintendent who is holding bi-weekly webinars with division superintendents. VDOE currently has a task force in place to address continuity of learning and is providing general guidance and recommendations, with a lot of variance

among divisions. The task force report is expected on Monday, April 6. Dr. Wagner plans to hold a meeting with principals and assistant principals to determine a path forward beginning April 20, which will now be the beginning of the fourth quarter. Dr. Wagner stressed the need to continue to provide opportunities for students, but hold them harmless and plans to meet with the Instructional Team on Wednesday, April 8, to determine what to convey to parents and students. Third quarter report cards will be mailed in late April.

Dr. Clemons mentioned graduation. At this time, he is uncertain what will occur, but will ensure our seniors are properly honored.

Discussion was held regarding grades or pass/fail, the safety of picking up work and how it would be returned.

VDOE guidance indicates students who were on track to graduate or be promoted should be provided what is needed to continue on that path as well as students who need help in working toward that goal.

SOL Testing –SOL testing has been eliminated this year. Some testing could be provided this summer for those who need it and other opportunities were discussed for the fall in regards to grades 4-8. CTE credential exams will not occur and many of those requirements will be waived. Dual Enrollment classes will continue online through the colleges, with those students given an option between a letter grade or completion. Dr. Wagner is uncertain at this time if Advanced Placement testing will occur.

The fourth quarter will consist of three two week modules for students to complete.

In regards to the 2020-21 school year, Dr. Clemons indicated it may be necessary to revisit starting school before Labor Day next year due to the current situation.

VDOE has been advising divisions on moving forward with Special Education and will be providing additional guidance soon.

Internet access was discussed. The division is trying to provide devices for students who do not have them and hot spots in our parking lots, but realizes this won't be an answer for everyone.

Members would like all call messages to also be sent as emails to ensure they are not missed.

Discussion was held regarding school board meetings becoming electronic meetings.

Building administrators should be notified if a student has not been contacted by their teachers.

Compensation for staff unable to work from home was discussed. Dr. Clemons noted that his goal is to hold everyone harmless and keep them safe. Schedules may need to be developed for teachers to enter the building to access items in their classrooms. When asked about spring stipends, Dr. Clemons indicated those have not been discussed. Currently, we are trying to continue to pay regular salaries.

Concerns regarding refunds for events such as prom or graduation will be addressed either at the building or division level and communicated accordingly.

GCPS is waiting for guidance from the VDOE task force before sending out plans for the fourth quarter. Dr. Clemons stressed the need for information going out from the buildings to be consistent.

Brian Teucke asked about funding for K12 and the fact that schools have not recovered from the recession in 2008. Dr. Clemons noted that the Governor indicated he would do all possible to hold K12 harmless.

The sales tax bill was discussed and may be passed soon if it hasn't already.

Staff leave was discussed as it pertains to the current situation. Dr. Clemons noted that staff will have some flexibility, but if they are not available on a given day, leave will need to be taken for that day. Dr. Clemons said we are not out of work, just displaced and expectations will be shared.

Mr. Teucke asked about staff evaluations. Principals will be providing guidance soon.

Fourth quarter grading will be communicated to students and parents in the upcoming Continuity for Learning Framework.

Adjournment - 2:45 p.m.