



GLOUCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
**Teacher Advisory/GEA Zoom Meeting**  
**January 26, 2021 – 4:30 p.m.**

Dr. Clemons welcomed everyone, wishing them a happy new year. Members also briefly shared news with the group, including Tricia Dowdy (GHS) stating GCPS has a 98% adoption rate with Canvas and appreciation to the Board of Supervisors for the CARES funding to purchase teacher technology, bipolar ionization units, and buses. Dr. Wagner added that VDOE will continue to pay for Canvas for all divisions next year and informed members an email would be sent out ON 01/26/2021 regarding the diversity day next week.

Update on COVID 19 Vaccinations – Dr. Clemons indicated GCPS is doing everything possible to obtain vaccinations for staff and will continue to work with the Three Rivers Health District as well as other avenues in this process. Most likely, employees will receive vaccinations in phases, as available. VDOE has requested weekly updates from each division regarding vaccinations. Some divisions who are totally virtual have received vaccinations, while some others, such as Gloucester, who are in-person, are still waiting. Lisa Jones, GCPS Division Nurse Coordinator, added that efforts to obtain vaccinations are being made with every possible avenue.

FY'22 Budget – The School Board held a Budget Work Session on January 21 to begin discussion on the FY'22 budget. Dr. Clemons hopes to propose a step increase for next year and cover the one not received this year, but also recognizes the pandemic is still causing many to be unemployed. In addition, insurance is an unknown at this point. Dr. Clemons believes the elimination of one health insurance plan this past year, should cause a smaller increase than in previous years. GCPS is also going out to bid this year regarding health insurance. Members were asked to email Dr. Clemons with any budget recommendations for the superintendent's proposed budget to the School Board, which will be presented on February 18 at 5:30 p.m. in the Thomas Calhoun Walker Education Center Auditorium.

GCPS Comprehensive Plan 2018-24 – Dr. Clemons indicated an update of the Comprehensive Plan will occur in the near future and asked members to review it and be prepared to provide input.

ELT Updates

Chuck Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services, shared information regarding a program to raise funding for the Woodville Rosenwald School in Gloucester (<http://woodvillerosenwaldschool.org>). Proceeds would allow for renovations to be completed and the building to be used as a resource for schools and the county. A webinar moderated by Dr. Clemons will be available to view on 01/28/2021.

Dr. Wagner added that in addition to the Equity Day scheduled for Wednesday, February 3, discussion will be held with building administrators regarding plans for summer learning and professional development.

Heather Lucas, Chief Financial Officer, said information would be available soon regarding Cigna Wellness webinars being held in mid-February. RFP's for health insurance will be reviewed and shared during the budget process.

Bryan Hartley, Executive Director of Operations, expressed his gratitude to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) for the funding to purchase the bipolar ionization units, which have been installed, as well as twelve new school buses. Improved atomizers have also been purchased to help custodians sanitize areas quicker. The Achilles bus loop has been completed, with some remaining rework at the front of

the building still to be completed, and the GHS renovation project is being reviewed. The design for the Page M.S. baseball field is moving forward. GCPS building and renovation projects could be bundled in the FY'22 budget if the BOS approve the County Administrator's proposal. In addition, a request to accelerate funding for the school bus radios was unanimously approved by the BOS. This request was needed to allow for the required match funding for the security grant received. The security grant will cover \$240,000 of the \$300,000 needed, with the locality covering the remaining \$60,000. An additional \$10,000 from the grant will be utilized to upgrade other safety equipment.

Rachel Blankenship, Executive Director of Human Resources & Compliance, reminded everyone that intent surveys and transfer requests are due back by no later than January 29, 2021.

Lisa Jones, GCPS Division Nurse Coordinator, encouraged members to continue with the mitigation strategies adding that the GCPS Dashboard is a testament to how the division is doing. When available, Mrs. Jones hopes to schedule vaccinations prior to a weekend or holiday, if that flexibility is an option. Regarding a potential outbreak, Mrs. Jones indicated the Three Rivers Health District looks at those situations on a case by case basis to determine the impact to schools.

### TAC Items

Megan Harris (Peasley) asked if N95 masks could be provided to employees. Mrs. Jones explained that N95 masks require fit testing as well as lung capacity testing and are currently not supported by the CDC or VDH for school divisions.

Mrs. Harris asked if inclement weather days would be used for virtual learning. VDOE guidance states that if a division is able to ensure every student has access to learning, it can be counted as a school day. Another question from Peasley M.S. staff was if Gloucester is considering year round school. Dr. Wagner explained that doing so would require considerable planning, as well as funding and is doubtful it would happen this summer. COVID leave was also a concern from Peasley M.S., which Mrs. Lucas confirmed expired on Dec. 31, 2020. However, there is a proposal to extend it through September 2021 and the Executive Leadership Team also plans to discuss this topic in the very near future. If the extension passes, employees who have taken leave for COVID will have that time returned. Employees, who work remotely, are not required to use sick leave, even teachers who have a substitute in the classroom, but are working remotely. Peasley M.S. staff is also concerned about teachers asked to take on other teacher's students or using other staff to cover. Mrs. Blankenship indicated that while some situations have not been ideal, substitutes are being added on a daily basis and are being assigned to a specific building.

Melanie Glenn (Botetourt) noted staff at her school expressed frustration regarding the letter sent out about vaccines not being available yet to GCPS employees. Dr. Wagner encouraged members not to let negativity over circumstances out of our control surface, but to celebrate the positives. Ms. Glenn asked if districts were communicating about vaccines, if available and not signed up to be administered, so others could take advantage of them. Dr. Wagner indicated that would be up to the health district. Mrs. Jones has not been made aware of any, but can inquire.

Ann Marchant-Jones (GHS) indicated many students are not attending Zoom classes and consider Wednesdays a day off. Dr. Wagner asked if students are required to log in by a certain time and referenced the attendance policy as well as the need to continue to look at ways to improve participation.

Carla Williams (Petersworth) inquired about employees who have been quarantined and taken leave, but worked from home during the time. If that has occurred, contact Lydia Gilbert in the Finance Office.

Brian Teucke (Page) inquired about the number of people employed with GCPS, which is 744, not including substitutes.

Dr. Wagner thanked members and indicated emails could be sent to members of the Executive Leadership Team at any time if they have a concern.

Adjournment - 6:15 p.m.