



GLOUCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Teacher Advisory/GEA Committee

February 25, 2019

FY'20 Budget Update – Dr. Clemons discussed information contained in the FY'20 superintendent's recommended budget (available on the GCPS website). This is the budget that Dr. Clemons has presented to the School Board for their consideration. The total proposed amount is \$80,704,147, which includes operating costs, central food (federally funded) and CIP (includes GHS renovations and debt service). This figure reflects a local requested increase of \$3,556,058 more than was received this past year. Dr. Clemons has competitive compensation for all support staff as the top priority, noting that a market analysis of every support staff employee has been done by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to address compensation for support staff. This would come at a cost of roughly \$1.5 million. In addition, Dr. Clemons is also requesting \$1 million to continue to correct teacher salary scales and feels after that is done, GCPS will be in a good place to remain competitive with annual cost of living increases. Health insurance is also expected to increase over \$1 million dollars for the upcoming year. Dr. Clemons hopes to cover teacher compensation increases with state funding and have local funds go toward support staff compensation and health insurance. Dr. Clemons would also like to add a guidance counselor at each of the two larger elementary schools. Teacher salary scales were shown indicating how we ranked at five year increments compared to other divisions in the state last year and how we currently rank with the raises teachers received this year. Dr. Clemons is hopeful that teacher salaries for Gloucester will be in the top third in Virginia for all steps beginning next year. If the general assembly passes a 5% raise for teachers, it would not occur in a single year, but over the two year biennium.

In looking at the potential tax impact for renovations at GHS, a \$30 Million HVAC maintenance would require a 7.5 cent tax rate increase, a \$50 million renovation, a 10.5 cent increase and a full renovation at \$95 million, a 14.5 cent increase. Dr. Clemons added that this is an election year for the majority (4) of members of the Board of Supervisors (BOS), which could impact (diminish) the possibility of a tax rate increase. A presentation given at the February 5th BOS meeting talks about policy conformance and debt affordability for the county. Dr. Clemons suggested that citizens should be shown how much a tax rate increase actually costs annually on homes in \$100,000 increments to give a better idea of what to expect, adding that if the county and BOS only fund the HVAC replacement at GHS, it would probably be all that is done there for a long time to come. Due to the size of GHS, that fix also costs more than the new Page MS when it was built. When asked if a tax rate increase was the only way to get the funding needed, Dr. Clemons said natural revenue growth is also a factor.

The School Board and BOS will have a joint meeting on February 26th where the superintendent's proposed budget will be presented. On March 4th, the county administrator will present his recommendations to the BOS. At that point, Dr. Clemons will determine how to proceed and on March 18th, the School Board will approve the final budget request to be presented to the Board of Supervisors.

Update on Personal/Sick Leave – Dr. Clemons plans to take a regulation to the School Board for consideration in April that would allow an employee to switch a day of sick leave to a day of personal leave.

Update on Evaluation System – Dr. Wagner & Ms. Ciemniecki are still working on an updated evaluation system, but Dr. Clemons expects there will be some adjustments for teachers of students with disabilities and wants to be sure that what is stated is the practice that is utilized.

Items from Teacher Advisory/GEA Members

Lottery Money – Melanie Glenn (Botetourt) asked if there is ever a time when lottery money is used for buildings. Dr. Clemons explained that increased lottery money comes with a reduction to basic aid, so it has not really provided the boost in funded as originally hoped for.

Classroom Doors – Jen Worrell (Petersworth) questioned the need to lock classroom doors at all times and if this can be reconsidered. Students need to be let back in the room every time they go to the restroom, etc. and teachers are finding it challenging. Magnets had been used to hold the doors open, but are no longer allowed. Dr. Clemons will ask Del Dautrich, Safety Manager, to attend a future meeting to explain state code requirements.

State Survey – Steve Sikes-Nova (Petersworth) inquired about the turnaround time for the survey sent by the state regarding working conditions. Dr. Clemons believes it depends on when the information was submitted and expects it would be available soon.

Academic Calendar – Amber Wilburn (Bethel) asked who creates the academic calendar, noting concerns teachers have regarding major holidays that GCPS doesn't observe and that some students don't come to school on those days. Dr. Clemons will ask Mr. Hutchinson to consider teacher input when planning the calendar. Other calendar considerations include New Horizons and CBGS because GCPS has students who attend those programs. Since being at GCPS, Dr. Clemons has been impressed with the types of activities GCPS provide on many of those holidays.

School Start Date Option – Dr. Clemons informed members of a bill that passed through the general assembly and if signed by the governor, would allow schools to begin up to fourteen calendar days prior to Labor Day. School divisions would be required to close the Friday before and Monday of Labor Day. If passed, GCPS would most likely begin school prior to Labor Day beginning with the 2020-21 school year. Melanie Glenn (Botetourt) felt that it would take away from teachers having time to prepare for the school year unless professional development was removed during that time. Alex Moulumbelt (Page) shared similar concerns based on her experience in another division.

Leave Bank – Amber Wilburn (Bethel) shared concerns of a co-worker who asked why GCPS doesn't allow days to be donated by a team member who is willing to help, instead of using short term disability and not receiving full pay. Dr. Clemons said there will be certain circumstances that arise in which the policy does not address can't always be changed (policy) to meet them. Ms. Wilburn will send him the specific information. In addition, questions were asked about expanding personal leave. This is something that could be looked at in the future, but currently, Dr. Clemons is planning to ask the board to consider substituting a sick day.

Smart Boards – Megan Harris (Peasley) advised Dr. Clemons that outdated Smart Boards need to be updated.

Early Dismissal Days – Melanie Glenn (Botetourt) asked if early dismissal days could become teacher work days. Dr. Clemons said if the calendar days are increased and include additional early dismissal days, those could possibly give elementary teachers more planning time.

Make-Up Days – A bill being considered by the general assembly would not require schools to make-up "up to five days" if the Governor calls for a state of emergency.

Support Staff Salary Scales – Amber Wilburn asked when support staff salary scales would be available. Dr. Clemons said it would probably be when the final budget goes out.

Important Upcoming Dates

- Joint School Board/BOS Meeting - February 26, 2019
- BOS Meeting (County Administrator's Budget presented) – March 4, 2019
- Budget Process Q & A – March 7, 2019
- SB Budget Work Session (Approval of SB Rec Budget to BOS) – March 18, 2019
- Joint School Board/BOS Meeting – March 19, 2019

Adjournment - 6:20