

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2015



# **GCS, Yes!**

From Classroom to  
College and Career



# GCS, YES!

## FROM CLASSROOM TO COLLEGE AND CAREER

Guilford County Schools prepares students for success in the classroom and all the way through to college and career.

The 2015 Annual Report, GCS, Yes! From Classroom to College and Career, represents just a snapshot of our progress as well as our challenges and future plans.

We hope the remarkable stories of some of our 71,908 students and 10,105 employees will inform, engage and excite you to join us on this journey, as we shape better futures for our students and our community.

**MISSION**  
GUILFORD  
COUNTY STUDENTS  
WILL GRADUATE AS  
RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS  
PREPARED TO SUCCEED IN  
HIGHER EDUCATION, OR IN THE  
CAREER OF THEIR CHOICE.\*

## CORE VALUES

**DIVERSITY** - We are committed to creating an educational organization where a variety of persons and perspectives are welcome. We are committed to providing an environment where students and staff from all cultures and backgrounds may succeed.

**EMPATHY** - We are committed to developing a culture where our employees identify with and understand the feelings of our students and parents as well as their colleagues.

**EQUALITY** - We are committed to creating a school system where everyone is appreciated for who they are and evaluated solely on their contributions and performance. Through the work of this institution, we will create awareness of – and develop strategies to understand and eradicate – prejudice, discrimination and racism on the individual and organizational levels.

**INNOVATION** - We are committed to fostering a work environment where the goal is not to manage innovations, but to become innovative. Problems are identified, adults in the district assume ownership of the problems, and everyone works together as agents of the solution until the problems are solved. We will not stop until obstacles are removed, solutions are found, and clear and compelling goals are established.

**INTEGRITY** - We are committed to creating a school district that acts with honesty and forthrightness, holding ourselves to high academic and ethical standards and treating everyone with respect.



Dear Friends,

Every child has an answer to the question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” The answers can range from teacher or doctor to truck driver or super scientist, and the answers will change as that child grows and learns more about what makes him or her unique.

No matter what the answer is, Guilford County Schools is dedicated to helping each and every one of our students follow those dreams from the classroom to college and that dream career. The following pages highlight some of our successes and challenges. I encourage you to review them with an eye toward how we move the district forward.

I trust our leadership to guide this district to greater success. I trust this community to continue its support of our students and to keep saying, “GCS, Yes!”

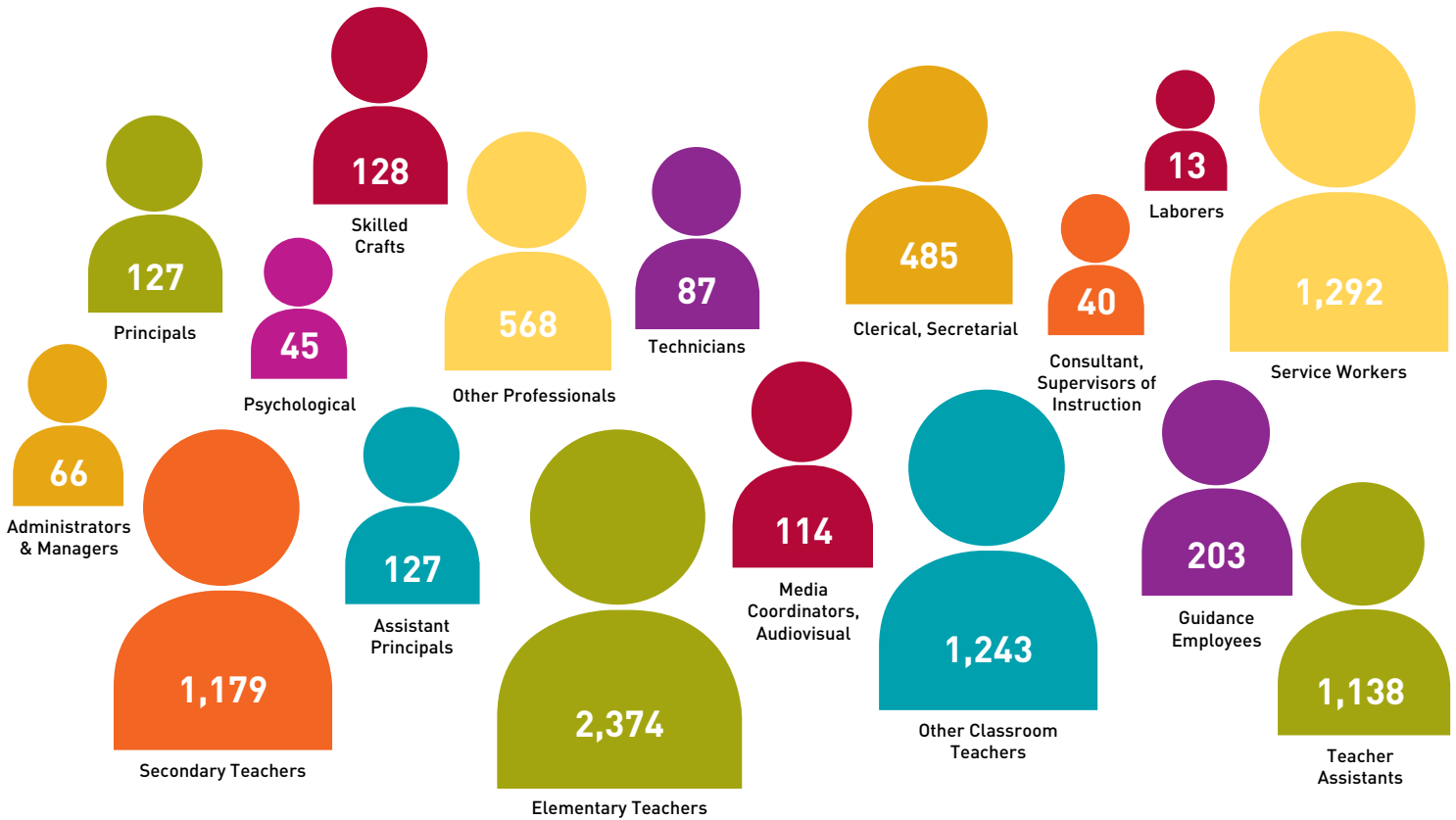
I am honored to have led this district for the last seven years. I am so grateful to you all.

Thank you and be blessed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Maurice O. Green'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Maurice O. Green  
GCS Superintendent

# GCS, YES! BY THE NUMBERS

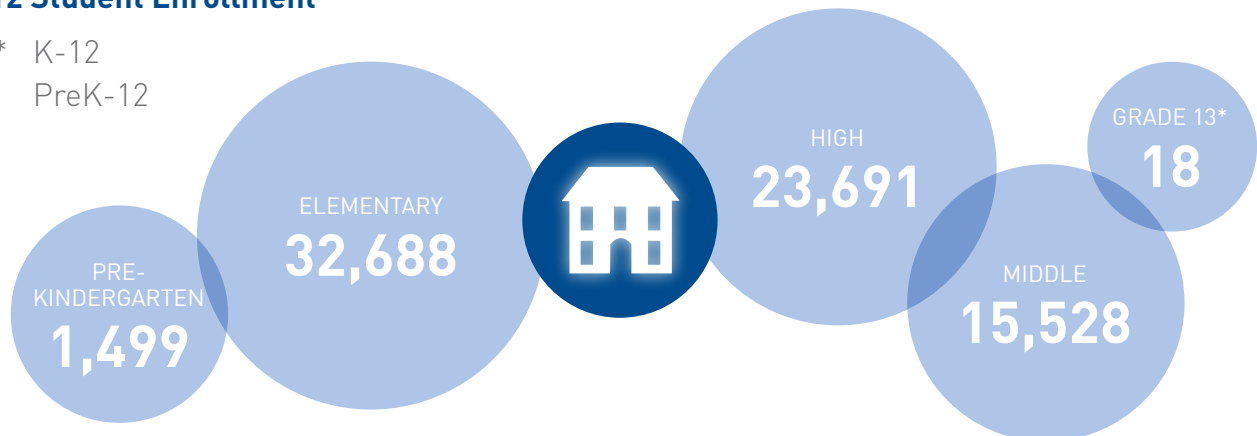


Total full-time employees: **9,228** // Total part-time employees: **877**  
 Total full-time and part-time employees: **10,105**



## PreK-12 Student Enrollment

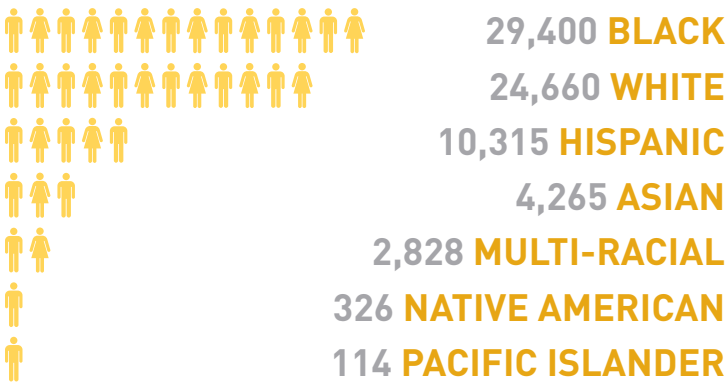
71,908\* K-12  
 73,407 PreK-12



\* Does not include pre-K or grade 13 (Special education students remain until age 23; approximately 18 students are dually enrolled in high school and college, and will graduate after a fifth year of high school with both a high school and an associate's degree.).



### Student Demographics\*



\* Does not include pre-K or grade 13 (Special education students remain until age 23; approximately 18 students are dually enrolled in high school and college, and will graduate after a fifth year of high school with both a high school and an associate's degree).

**13,792 ADVANCED LEARNERS**

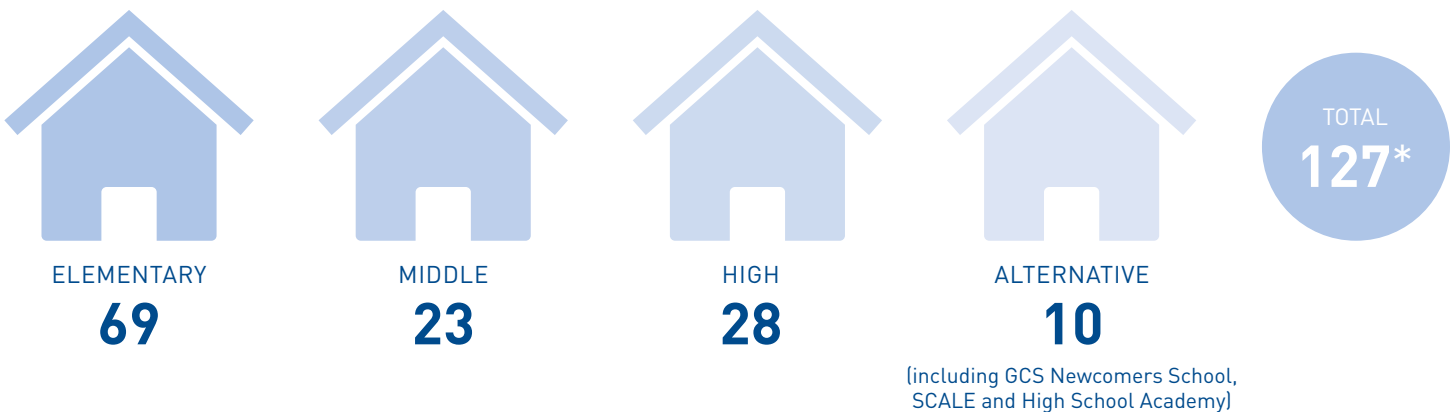
**10,733 SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
(INCLUDES PRE-K)

**67% STUDENT POVERTY RATE\***

**104 WORLD LANGUAGES/  
DIALECTS SPOKEN**

\*Based on Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) data.

### Number of Schools



\* Some campuses, such as Penn-Griffin School for the Arts, house both a middle and a high school.  
Sources: Guilford County Schools, U.S. Census Bureau, State and County QuickFacts and Guilford County's NCGenWeb

## GUILFORD COUNTY

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**512,119** residents

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**\$45,431** median household income

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**18.1%** - persons below poverty level

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**12.5%** - language other than English spoken at home

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**33.2%** - Bachelor's degree or higher

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**645.70** - land in square miles

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**11** cities and towns  
Browns Summit, Gibsonville, Greensboro, High Point, Jamestown, Oak Ridge, Pleasant Garden, Sedalia, Stokesdale, Summerfield and Whitsett

Parts of the towns of Archdale, Burlington, and Kernersville are located in Guilford County; Guilford also has the census-designated places of McLeansville and Forest Oaks.

# GCS, YES!

## POINTS OF PRIDE

### DISTRICT HONORS 2015

GCS graduation rate reached an all-time high of 89.3%, surpassing the state's graduation rate of 85.4 % and besting the graduation rates of the state's other top five largest and most diverse school districts.

GCS also had the highest number of schools – nine – with perfect graduation rates, a feat honored by the North Carolina State Superintendent and Board of Education.

Guilford County became the first "Say Yes to Education" community in North Carolina, first outside of the Northeast and only the third in the U.S.

GCS Board of Education and Administration won the prestigious Profiles in Courage Award from the Council of the Great City Schools

GCS employees and students earned the United Way Spirit of North Carolina Award for the third year in a row for leading one of the state's most successful campaigns, raising more than \$384,000.

GCS was one of only 11 school districts selected to partner with 100Kin10, a national initiative to place 100,000 superior STEM teachers, including 150 in GCS, in public schools by 2020.

### STANDOUT SCHOOLS

The Early College at Guilford College was ranked as the top public high school in North Carolina by Niche, a research company, and 34th best in the U.S.

Nine high schools achieved 100% graduation rates. An additional 10 schools, including seven traditional high schools, had graduation rates above 90%

15 high schools on the 2015 Washington Post's America's Most Challenging High Schools list - GCS schools also took 3 of the top 10 spots in the state

Three high schools among the top 10 in the state on the U.S. News and World Report 2015 Best High Schools list and 10 schools recognized overall.

### ENRICHING EXPERIENCES: SUCCESS BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

#### GCS students are:

Receiving free college tuition to attend two- and four-year colleges across the state and around the nation through scholarships funded locally by Say Yes to Education

Performing at Carnegie Hall, Disney World and the Vatican

Presenting at the 2015 National Service Learning Conference in Washington, D.C.

Winning state championships for real-world design and engineering

Reading more than 10 million minutes every month, and collecting books to help other students do the same

Building energy-efficient electric cars and competing in the Shell Eco-Marathon

Having their artwork displayed in the halls of Congress

Qualifying to compete for the International Science Olympiad

Taking virtual classes in middle school to accelerate their math skills

# GCS, YES! ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

In Guilford County Schools, we strive for excellence each and every day, in a variety of ways. From the biology teacher who takes students through a muddy creek to investigate water quality and marine animals habitats to the custodian who makes sure every nook and cranny at a school gleams to the students who tackle college-level classes while giving back to their communities as Eagle Scouts and volunteers, GCS pursues excellence with a passion.

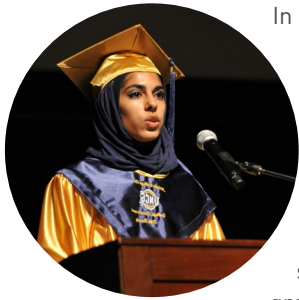


"I WOULD DEFINITELY SAY WHAT HELPED ME WAS THE AP CLASSES. THE WORK LOAD IN COLLEGE IS KIND OF SIMILAR, SO IT HELPED ME GET READY FOR THAT."

Christina Harris, Western Guilford, Class of 2015  
Winston-Salem State University Freshman

# GCS, YES! RECORD GRADUATION RATE

2015 was a record-breaking year for Guilford County Schools, especially for the Class of 2015. The district’s graduation rate reached a new high of 89.3 percent, surpassing the state average of 85.4 percent.



In addition, nine high schools achieved 100 percent graduation rates, and another 10 schools, including seven traditional high schools, had graduation rates










above 90 percent. Seventy percent of GCS high schools had a better than 90 percent graduation rate.

State Superintendent June Atkinson and the North Carolina State Board of Education recognized the nine schools

with 100 percent graduation rates, as well as Northwest High, which was recognized as one of the top two schools in the state with the highest graduation rate for its size (400-499 graduates).

One of the schools posting a 100 percent graduation rate was The Middle College at UNCG, which graduated its first class in 2015. Among the graduates of this medical-focused school was Christian Prescott, who enrolled in Harvard University to study nursing, and Sarah Atta, who received a full scholarship and early admission into medical school at the University of Pittsburgh.

## Schools With 100 Percent Graduation Rates

-  Greensboro College Middle College
-  The Middle College at GTCC – Greensboro
-  The Middle College at NC A&T
-  Penn-Griffin School for the Arts
-  The Academy at Central
-  The Academy at Smith
-  The Early College at Guilford
-  The Middle College at UNCG
-  Weaver Academy

## Schools with 90 percent or higher graduation rates

-  The Middle College at Bennett
-  The Middle College at GTCC – High Point
-  The Middle College at GTCC – Jamestown
-  Northeast High
-  Northern High
-  Northwest High
-  Page High
-  Ragsdale High
-  Southeast High
-  Southwest High

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# CLOSING THE NATIONAL GRADUATION GAP

GCS has made great strides in closing the achievement gap in high school graduation rates among racial and ethnic groups.

In 2015, 88 percent of African-American students graduated within four years, up from 72 percent in 2008 and surpassing the national rate of 69 percent. The Hispanic population saw a similar jump, from 68.8 percent in 2008 to 84.6 percent in 2015.

This achievement in addressing one of the nation’s toughest issues in public education is just one reason GCS received

the Profiles in Courage Award from The Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), which represents the nation’s largest 50 urban school districts.

According to Michael Casserly, executive director of CGCS, GCS’ graduation rate for African-American and Hispanic students ranks among the highest in the country for major metropolitan areas.

“GCS’ progress has narrowed the racially identifiable achievement gap in a way that most other urban school systems would love to see for themselves,” Casserly says.

**GCS had five schools on Newsweek magazine’s Beating the Odds list of the nation’s top high schools. The list identifies schools that do an excellent job of preparing students for college while also serving a high percentage of students who live in poverty. Across the U.S., socioeconomic status is closely correlated with academic achievement. The Middle College at Bennett was ranked 86th in the entire country, followed by The Academy at High Point Central, The Middle College at GTCC-High Point, The Middle College at GTCC-Greensboro and Grimsley High.**

## GCS, YES! COLLEGE READY

The Class of 2015, helped by the counseling staff at their respective schools, earned a record-breaking **\$156 million in scholarship offers.**

Of course, more than one-third of them had already earned some college level experience while in high school, through early and middle college programs, dual enrollment in community colleges, Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams.

In fact, 37 percent of the Class of 2015 passed at least one AP/IB exam or equivalent college-level course while in high school. And 189 graduates passed at least 10 AP or IB exams and/or qualifying college courses.

Members of the Class of 2015 took 4,490 AP and IB exams and 865 college courses during their high school careers.

Studies have shown that students who succeed in this type of rigorous coursework are better prepared and more likely to earn their college degrees on time.

Even if students don't pass the AP or IB exam, the exposure to more difficult content and higher expectations is worth the effort.

Studies show such students do significantly better in college than high school students who take easier classes.



### PROFILE OF A COLLEGE-READY STUDENT

Michael Wood graduated high school more prepared than most for the challenges of college thanks to the Advanced Placement courses he took at Andrews High.

He was one of 659 students who qualified to participate in GCS' annual Cool to Be Smart event by passing at least five AP/IB classes and exams, or other qualifying college courses.

Michael is now studying engineering at N.C. State, and took home a new Scion tC to help him on his way, thanks to generous support from the Guilford Education Alliance and Rice Toyota.

Other top GCS scholars at Cool to Be Smart were rewarded with high-tech prizes such as iPads, iPods and Nanos.

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## GCS, YES! CAREER READY



Gabe Thompson turned an internship opportunity into the first step toward a new career, thanks to the skills he learned in the metals manufacturing classes offered through the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program at Weaver Academy.

Gabe, a 2015 Northwest High graduate, did so well in his classes that he was recommended for an internship at WMS Products, which manufactures parts for the kart-racing industry.

After several weeks, Lee Tucker, president of WMS, hired Gabe as a part-time employee.

"Gabe has proven to be very knowledgeable," said Tucker. Today, Gabe is still working at WMS Products and attending Forsyth Technical Community College where he hopes to earn an associate's degree in integrated machining.

"I GUESS HIGH SCHOOL FOR ME HAS KIND OF BEEN A JOURNEY FROM MOVING FROM THE CLASSROOM AND SEEING HOW THINGS WORK THERE, TO GETTING MORE REAL-WORLD EDUCATION KNOWING HOW THINGS WORK AND HOW THEY DIRECTLY AFFECT YOU."

Gabe Thompson, Class of 2015  
Northwest High School



# GCS, YES! VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS



GCS also prides itself on engaging and developing young people through the visual and performing arts, and our talented and creative students are getting noticed on a national level.

Kendall Holbrook, a junior at Northwest High, was selected for a Scholastic Art & Writing Awards National Medal for his photo titled, "Book." The medal is only given to 300 students around the country, out of a pool of 300,000.

Kendall says the idea, like most of his artwork, came to him spontaneously.

"I thought it'd be cool to emphasize the similarity and the difference of fire and water by bringing them up close to each other," says Kendall "They both have their own ways of moving smoothly, though their colors contrast each other."

Kendall says he wasn't even planning to enter the photo until teacher Beth Herrick suggested it. "I'm very thankful that she did. I think it's always good to get someone else's opinion on your artwork," he says.

As a national winner, Kendall's photo was displayed at Carnegie Hall last summer.

## SUMMER ARTS INSTITUTE – EXPANDING STUDENT HORIZONS

While other schools and districts across the country have cut back on the arts, GCS has expanded and strengthened its program.

One example is its Summer Arts Institute. Now in its sixth year, talented GCS students in music, drama and art have developed their skills during intensive summer camp experiences across Guilford County.

This past year, more than 1,200 students participated. Then they combined experiences by putting on several musicals, including "The Little Mermaid" in partnership with the Community Theatre of Greensboro.

### Career and Technical Education (CTE) 2014-2015

**5,410**

Industry Certifications Earned (Second in state)

**37,465**

CTE Enrollment (grades 6-12)

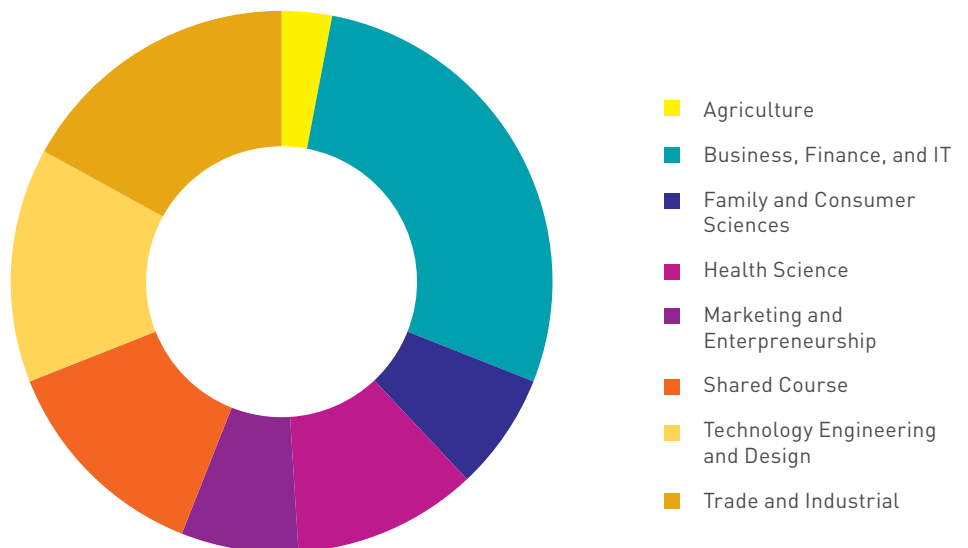
**1,454**

Work-Based Learning Participants

**21**

National Skills USA winners

### CTE Enrollment by Program Area





# GCS, YES! STANDOUT STAFF AND SCHOOLS

Caring teachers who are skilled at their craft and instructional leaders who know how to get the best out of every individual benefit GCS students.

GCS' award-winning and highly regarded employees include Fanisha Fuller, a teacher who isn't afraid to get "real" with her students, and Alan Parker, a gifted musician and teacher turned principal who inspires students and staff to excel.

No wonder they were named the district's 2015 Teacher of the Year and Principal of the Year at the Celebration of Excellence for GCS employees, sponsored annually by our local business community.



"I like that the Spanish Immersion program teaches another language and someday might lead to better jobs. My older brother and sisters, who have also gone through Spanish Immersion, have been very helpful to me, especially with homework assignments. I want to complete the Spanish Immersion program at Grimsley High School, and I then hope to double major in Spanish and Science and Engineering at UNC Chapel Hill. I have enjoyed this program a lot and would definitely recommend it to others."

Serenity Morgan  
8th Grade, Spanish Immersion program  
Aycock Middle

## KNOWING STUDENTS WELL SPARKS GREATER INTEREST IN SCIENCE

**Fanisha Fuller**, a fifth-grade science teacher at Oak Hill Elementary, was recognized for her interactive science investigations and the high expectations she sets for all of her students.

She relates what students are learning in class to their everyday lives so they can better understand the material.

"Because I have cultivated a relationship with my students, we have real conversations that are sometimes tough, but they know these conversations are ultimately for their journey to success," says Fanisha.

## PIANIST TURNED PRINCIPAL INSPIRES STUDENTS & STAFF

**Principal Alan Parker's** success is just one more reason for Southwest High to celebrate this year.

The class of 2015 achieved a graduation rate of 96 percent, one of the highest in the district for traditional schools, and the sixth year in a row the school had a rate above 90 percent.

The school was also named a Signature School by the Piedmont-Triad Educational Consortium and High Point Community in Schools' Community Partner of the Year.

Alan attributes the schools success to communication and teamwork between staff, students and parents.

"It is my responsibility to provide the environment and structure for open dialogue to address identified priority areas of reducing the achievement gap and all other issues around race, disparities, and poverty," says Alan.

## STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM TALENTED TEACHERS, STAFF

GCS believes that all students deserve highly educated, credentialed and experienced teachers, which is why the district has invested nearly a decade in its Mission Possible program to recruit top talent for the students and schools who need them most.

Thanks to generous donations from The Phillips Foundation, GCS is also partnering with Teach For America to bring some of the nation's best educators to serve in our classrooms.

GCS is proud to note that 100 percent of its teachers are fully licensed by the state and in place by day one of each school year, and that 37.34 percent have advanced degrees.

## TECH SERVICES EMPLOYEE PROVIDES TOP NOTCH SERVICE

**Jake Gray** works in Technology Services as the first line of defense when users have a technical issue. With more than 10,000 employees, it happens quite often, but Jake is always helpful and calm, usually solving problems in less than 24 hours.

Jake was joined by custodians, teachers, media specialists and office support personnel recognized as Employees of the Month in 2015.

## GCS EDUCATOR EARNS NATIONAL HONOR

**Karyn Dickerson** added one more honor to her resume in 2015. The former North Carolina Teacher of the Year was one of 39 educators selected as state affiliates for this year's NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence.

The award recognizes, rewards and promotes excellence in teaching and support for the teaching profession. Nominees were judged on professional practice, advocacy for the profession, community engagement, professional development and attention to diversity.

Karyn was an English teacher at Grimsley High before she was named North Carolina Teacher of the Year in 2013-14. She returned to GCS as an academic coach for the Northern Region and now serves as the International Baccalaureate coordinator at Grimsley High.

## COUNSELOR CONNECTS STUDENTS TO CARING COMMUNITY

Regardless of their role, all GCS employees contribute to student success by engaging students, developing their talents and building up confidence – employees like **Corina Campbell**.

As the only counselor at Doris Henderson Newcomers School, which serves about 300 recent immigrants, she cares for students who face a unique set of challenges most of us never see.

Her students, ranging from grades 3 through 12, are not only learning to grow up, they're learning to live in a new culture with a new language.

Her dedication to helping young people and their families navigate their new world successfully earned her the title of GCS Employee of the Month for January 2015.

In addition to all she does at her school, Corina also joined the ranks of the district's National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT), a designation that demonstrates a commitment to excellence in the education field.

By adding 18 newly board-certified teachers, Guilford County ranked ninth in the nation with 782 educators who've earned the prestigious title.

GCS also has the third highest number of NBCTs in the state. North Carolina is the top state in the nation for this designation, with 20,677 board-certified teachers.

## 2015 EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

<p>JANUARY <b>Corina Campbell</b></p>	<p>FEBRUARY <b>Matt Wells</b></p>	<p>MARCH <b>Elizabeth Sherrill</b></p>	<p>APRIL <b>Jacqueline Pender-Jones</b></p>
<p>MAY <b>Jonathan Cassell</b></p>	<p>JUNE <b>Patricia Makar</b></p>	<p>JULY <b>Page Motley Mims</b></p>	<p>AUGUST <b>Elizabeth Edmonds</b></p>
<p>SEPTEMBER <b>Jake Gray</b></p>	<p>OCTOBER <b>Gary Jones</b></p>	<p>NOVEMBER <b>Christopher Swinson</b></p>	<p>DECEMBER <b>Vicki Simmons</b></p>

Special thanks to Sam's Club, which has generously sponsored the Employee of the Month program since 2005.

# TOP ACADEMICS, CHOICE AND DIVERSITY

Each year, GCS high schools make some of the nation’s most prestigious public school rankings by offering top-notch academics tied to national and international standards such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes and diplomas.

A state and national leader with nine early and middle colleges – an unprecedented achievement for a public school district – GCS also earns kudos from educational groups and foundations for pace-setting strategies to achieve excellence and equity.

These include the district’s robust slate of high schools (28 different choices), 30 different AP/IB courses, unique online offerings, visual and performing arts, rich array of co-curricular activities and industry-certified career and technical education programs.

## WASHINGTON POST – AMERICA’S MOST CHALLENGING HIGH SCHOOLS

15 GCS schools made the list (in state ranking order):

- Page High (5)
- Grimsley High (7)
- Weaver Academy (8)
- Northwest High (12)
- Northern High (14)
- Penn-Griffin School for the Arts (15)
- High Point Central High (19)
- Southwest High (23)
- Ragsdale High (26)
- Western High (32)
- Smith High (36)
- Academy at Smith (39)
- Southeast High (42)
- Southern High (45)
- Dudley High (47)
- The Early College at Guilford made the list as a “Public Elite School” (magnet or charter with selective criteria)

## NEWSWEEK’S 2015 TOP HIGH SCHOOLS

- Northwest High (418th in the country), received additional recognition for economically disadvantaged students performing at or above the state average
- Recognized for Beating the Odds: The Middle College at Bennett (86th in the country), The Academy at High Point Central, The Middle College at GTCC-High Point, The Middle College at GTCC-Greensboro and Grimsley High

## NICHE

- The Early College at Guilford -- No. 1 in North Carolina, 34th in the country

## AWARD-WINNING SCHOOLS

### U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT – 2015 BEST HIGH SCHOOL RANKINGS

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#### Early College at Guilford

2nd in the state, 40th in the nation,  
7th in the nation for STEM education

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#### Weaver Academy

4th in the state, 100th in the nation

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#### Penn-Griffin School for the Arts

8th in the state, 240th in the nation,  
46th best magnet in the nation

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### ALSO MAKING THE LIST:

Middle College at Bennett, Middle College at GTCC-Greensboro, Middle College at GTCC-High Point, Middle College at GTCC-Jamestown, Middle College at UNCG, The Academy at High Point Central and The Academy at Smith

# GCS, YES! STEM EDUCATION



## STEM STUDENTS EARN STATE, NATIONAL AWARDS

Students at the STEM Early College at North Carolina A&T State University are making their mark on the world of engineering, even before graduation.

The students of Team AeroHead won top honors in the state and took third place in the national Real World Design Challenge, an engineering contest that pitted them against students from 19 states.

The competition challenged teams to identify a strategy and design an associated unmanned aircraft system to target application of pesticides, ensuring the health of the crops while reducing the negative effects of broad-based application.

That kind of real-world experience is just what the STEM Early College is designed to provide.

The GCS magnet school allows students to complete high school courses in just two years, freeing juniors and seniors to take college courses and focus on one of three STEM pathways: biomedical sciences, renewable energy and engineering.

The first class of students will graduate in 2016 with a high school diploma and two years of college credit from N.C. A&T.

## 100K IN 10 – SUPERIOR TEACHERS FOR SUPERIOR STUDENTS

Preparing students for college and career requires preparing them for a rapidly changing future.

GCS is enhancing education in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields, which predict a growing need for workers and leaders with advanced skills.

To make sure teachers have what it takes to give GCS students an edge in this globally competitive environment, the district has become only one of 11 in the country to partner with 100Kin10. The goal is to provide 100,000 excellent teachers in STEM classes by 2021.

GCS is honored to join this highly selective, multi-sector network. Our shared passion is fueling the next generation of innovators and problem-solvers.

Making sure GCS students have access to inspiring and highly skilled educators is the first step. As a part of 100Kin10, GCS plans to prepare and license 150 STEM teachers by 2020 through the GCS-Alternative Certification Track (ACT) program.

## GETTING MORE TEACHERS IN THE ACT

ACT, the first and only in-house licensure program in North Carolina, prepares people working in STEM, business and other professions to transfer their expertise into classrooms.

“The program has been very successful in preparing and licensing STEM teachers,” says Amy Holcombe, executive director of talent development. “We are excited to share our expertise and curriculum

with other partners and add value to the overall effort to recruit, prepare and license STEM teachers.”

As a 100Kin10 district, GCS will also have access to STEM resources and funding from the more than 200 other partners, which include STEM content experts, other teacher preparation models, philanthropic organizations and more.

## GCS STEM TEACHER EARNS STATE, GLOBAL HONORS

GCS already has more than its share of award-winning STEM teachers, including Mark Case, science teacher at Southern High, who was honored as the District Five Outstanding High School Teacher of the Year by the North Carolina Science Teachers Association (NCSTA).

Mark served as president of the organization, which was formed in 1969 with the mission of promoting excellence in science teaching and learning in North Carolina. He is also a current fellow with the North Carolina Science Leadership Association.

In addition to teaching physical science and honors earth science at Southern High, Mark leads the school’s Energy WISE team, which received recognition as the 2014 North Carolina Senior School of the Year from the National Energy Education Development (NEED) project.

Mark also was recognized as one of 18 Leadership Award winners by Discovery Educator Network (DEN), a global community of educators passionate about teaching with digital media, sharing resources, collaborating and networking.

He has served on the leadership council since 2008 and is a member of the DENvisory Board.

# GCS, YES! SERVANT LEADERS



## BOARD CHAIRMAN RECOGNIZED BY NC BAR ASSOCIATION

Guilford County Board of Education Chairman Alan Duncan was also honored for his service to the community.

The North Carolina Bar Association awarded Alan the Dr. I. Beverly Lake Public Service Award at its annual meeting. The award recognizes an outstanding lawyer in North Carolina who has performed exemplary public service in his or her community.

## SUPERINTENDENT GREEN RECOGNIZED AS SERVANT LEADER

The district's superintendent, Maurice O. "Mo" Green, also received accolades from The Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) and local groups for his work to transform students' lives and entire communities through education.

CGCS included Mo in its Profiles in Courage Award. He is the only North Carolina superintendent who added his name to the Guilford County Board of Education's lawsuit, which sought to protect tenure rights for teachers who had already earned them.

The Welfare Reform Liaison Project also awarded Mo with its Thurgood Marshall 2015 Esther Award, which recognizes a person who is a champion for change.

GCS Board Member Ed Price, who represents the High Point region, won the Esther Award in 2014.

The Guilford County Board of Education typically devotes a portion of their meeting to recognizing employees and students who have achieved excellence, but in March of 2015, they received some recognition of their own.

The Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) presented the board with its Profiles in Courage award, saying GCS serves as a model for other large urban districts.

Executive Director of CGCS Michael Casserly highlighted GCS' pioneering work in improving African-American male achievement and high school graduation rates; launching one of the nation's most robust character education and service-learning initiatives, which has helped decrease the district's dropout rate.

Michael also noted the district's nine early and middle colleges and its efforts to increasing student access to advanced, honors and college-level courses as well as the board's legal action regarding the constitutionality of recently adopted teacher tenure and voucher legislation, among other accomplishments.

## GCS, YES! OUTSTANDING GRADUATES 2015

**89.3%**

Graduation rate reached an all-time high

**5,323**

Diplomas

**\$156.1 million**

Scholarship Offers

**12**

National Merit Scholars

**40**

National Merit Commended Students

**11**

National Merit Semi Finalists

**15**

National Merit Scholars Finalists

**4**

National Achievement Scholarship Winners

**34**

Presidential Awards

**1,137**

Qualified for Cool to Serve

**603**

Service Learning Diplomas

**63**

Military Academy Appointments

**936**

North Carolina Scholars

**495**

World Language Endorsements

**659**

Qualified for Cool To Be Smart

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE 2015 GRADUATION VIDEO](#)



# GCS, YES! SERVICE AND CHARACTER

GCS students discover how to channel what they've learned into positive change in their communities through character development, citizenship and civics, and service learning.

Research shows that students involved in service learning are far more likely to become civic-minded and involved in their communities years after they graduate. Students involved in their communities also improve their social and interpersonal skills, which are considered essential skills in today's job market.



"MY TEACHERS HAVE ALWAYS MOTIVATED ME TO DO MORE THAN JUST THE SCHOOLWORK, APPLYING LEARNING TO THE REAL WORLD. GRIMSLEY IN PARTICULAR HAS A GREAT FOCUS ON SERVICE LEARNING."

Jacob Coughlin, Senior  
Grimsley High



# “INTELLIGENCE PLUS CHARACTER - THAT IS THE GOAL OF TRUE EDUCATION.”

– Martin Luther King Jr.

“Service learning is so important, not only because it teaches our students to be better citizens, but it also helps to increase their understanding of what they’re learning in the classroom,” said Yvonne Foster, GCS coordinator for character development and service learning.

“I am so proud of our students who are going above and beyond and sharing their experience and knowledge with the rest of the world.”

Simply being smart isn’t enough. Students also need to know how to work as a team, communicate with people from different backgrounds and cultures, and step in to help when needed.

Service learning, with its emphasis on hands-on projects that combine classroom learning with real-world applications, helps students develop these vital skills and attributes.

GCS is a national leader in integrating character development into the K-12 curriculum and using service-learning as a way to put good character to work while reinforcing core values and academic lessons taught in the classroom, at home and in the community.

The district’s expertise extends to its students as well. This past year, eight GCS students were invited to Washington, D.C., as presenters for the National Service-Learning conference, including one student who was selected to serve on the National Youth Leadership Council’s Youth Advisory Council.

GCS is recognized nationally for the work it does locally, where district teachers and schools are inspiring students to make a difference in their communities – and all on a volunteer basis.

One example is Jacob Coughlin, a senior at Grimsley High, who currently serves as an honorary member of the Board of Directors of Greensboro Urban Ministry.

Jacob was given the honor in recognition of his ongoing work organizing food drives, which have brought in several tons of food and thousands of dollars in donations over the last several years. He organized his first food drive in sixth grade.

“My schools, Lincoln Middle and Grimsley High, have been amazing experiences,” says Jacob. “My teachers have always motivated me to do more than just the schoolwork, applying learning to the real world. Grimsley in particular has a great focus on service learning.”

Jacob plans to turn his food drives over to his sisters when he graduates this year, but says he will continue to find ways to help his community.



These GCS students presented at the 27th Annual National Service-Learning conference:

(front row from left) Erin Gamba, Southwest High; Danasia Eubanks, Middle College at Bennett; and Bridgette Agbozo, Greensboro College Middle College; (back row from left) William Manneh, Andrews High; Kenneth Brown, Smith High; and Luke Strobel, The Early College at Guilford.

## GCS, YES! IT'S COOL TO SERVE

In GCS, we want students who are caring and committed citizens as well as smart. That's why we recognize students who devote extra time to community service and demonstrating good character as well as academic excellence.

In 2015, 1,137 students or 23 percent of graduating seniors earned a service-learning recognition, including 603 students who recorded at least 250 hours of service and earned GCS' Service-Learning Diploma.

"I just plant the seed in my students' brains and see what they do with it," says Kathleen Saunders, English teacher at Grimsley High and one of this year's award winners. "It's amazing to see what these students can accomplish when you let them."

In the five years since the award and diploma were first established, GCS students have recorded more than

**1 million hours** of service-learning time, at an estimated economic value to the community of more than **\$21 million**



Dudley High graduate Lindsay James was the lucky winner of a new car at this year's Cool to Serve event, sponsored by Guilford Education Alliance and Ilderton Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram. Most of her volunteer hours were with the Greensboro Youth Council, where she served as a counselor in training to students and worked in early childhood development programs.

## GCS, YES! LEADING BY EXAMPLE

GCS' schools and staff lead by example when it comes to character and supporting the community. For the third year in a row, the United Way of North Carolina named GCS and Pearce Elementary as Spirit of North Carolina Award Winners.

"The compassion and generosity within Guilford County Schools is how we are able to impact so many lives in Greater Greensboro," said Michelle Gethers-Clark, president and CEO of United Way of Greater Greensboro. "GCS has been an incredible partner to United Way in many ways, and we are honored to recognize its leadership and demonstrated community impact."

During the 2014 campaign, GCS raised more than \$384,000 for the United Ways of Greater Greensboro and Greater High Point. Pearce Elementary donated \$12,600, making it the third year in a row the school raised more than \$10,000 for the United Way.

"We are extremely proud of our students, parents, staff and community for their efforts in helping us support many individuals who are assisted by the United Way," said Erik Naglee, principal at Pearce Elementary. "Our campaign specifically provided our students with an excellent service-learning opportunity and allowed them to give back to our outstanding community on behalf of Guilford County Schools and Pearce Elementary."

"GCS STRIVES TO SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS INSIDE THE CLASS AND OUT," SAID DR. PHYLLIS MARTIN, REGIONAL SUPERINTENDENT FOR GCS' SOUTHEASTERN REGION. "WE ARE PROUD TO PARTNER WITH UNITED WAY, WHICH SUPPORTS SO MANY IMPORTANT COMMUNITY SERVICES THAT BENEFIT OUR STUDENTS."

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## GCS, YES! TO CHARACTER AND CARING

Character isn't just a lesson, it is woven into the culture of our schools and district, earning state and national recognition as a result.

In 2015, three schools were recognized by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction as state Schools of Character, and nine earned Honorable Mentions.

That's in addition to the four schools that were named state Schools of Character in 2014 and one Honorable Mention. One GCS school, The Middle College at Bennett, was also named a National School of Character, and 19 schools received Promising Practices Awards from Character.org in Washington, D.C.



In 2015, the North Carolina Board of Education recognized Joyner Elementary, Brooks Global Studies and The Middle College at Bennett as State Schools of Character.

To earn recognition as a National School or District of Character, the school must undergo a detailed evaluation process to show character education has had a positive impact on the school's academics, student behavior and school climate. Once named a National School or District of Character, the school keeps the distinction for five years.

Since the program's inception in 1998, only 312 schools have been named

National Schools of Character and only 21 districts have earned this recognition. GCS is one of the 21 and has four National Schools of Character as well.

Focusing on others can also lead to changes within. Since the GCS Character Development Initiative started in 2009, out-of-school suspensions have reduced by 45 percent and more students say they feel safe in their schools.



## GCS, YES! **FIGHTING FOOD INSECURITY**

GCS students and staff have taken on one of the biggest issues facing our community: hunger. In 2015, GCS schools signed a district-wide pledge to fight food insecurity.

Last school year, a Gallup Poll ranked the Greensboro–High Point area as number one in the country for food insecurity. GCS students do everything from organizing food banks to holding fundraisers to donating their time and talents at local shelters.

At Northern Middle, students formed a garden club, also known as the “grub club,” using a \$3,000 grant from Lowe’s Toolbox for Education to expand their greenhouse and raise garden beds at the school. The food they grew was donated to Share the Harvest to help feed area families in need.

“We started the Grub Club at Northern Middle because the area is ranked as a top area in the U.S. for hunger,” says Emilie Morton. “I love Grub Club because I am doing what I love while making a difference.”

The Guilford County Cooperative Extension, in partnership with GCS, takes that idea one step further and shows our families how to prepare those foods so that they end up on the table instead of in the trash. Classes are already being offered in schools and through community organizations.

“EDUCATION IS FOR IMPROVING THE LIVES OF OTHERS AND FOR LEAVING YOUR COMMUNITY AND WORLD BETTER THAN YOU FOUND IT.”

-Marion Wright Edelman





# GCS, YES! 2015, A YEAR OF GIVING BACK

## JANUARY



- **Aycock Middle** student PTSA club members received a grant to establish a food pantry to provide snacks and food to families at Aycock on weekends and school breaks.



- **Andrews High Marching Band** students assembled Winter Necessities Packets consisting of hats, gloves and personal hygiene items for unsheltered homeless individuals in the High Point area for MLK Day of Service.

## FEBRUARY



- **Jamestown Elementary** students presented \$530 checks to both Open Door Ministries and Leslie's House in High Point. The students raised almost \$1,100 through a Penny Wars competition after learning about homelessness in their classes.

## MARCH



- The **Northern High Nighthawk** Baseball team hosted its second annual vs. Cancer Foundation Fundraiser to cure kids' cancer and raised \$11,000. After the game, the entire team shaved their heads.

## APRIL



- Early childhood education students at **Eastern High** prepared lesson plans, selected reading materials and designed follow-up questions before taking time to read to younger students at McLeansville and Sedalia Elementary schools.



- **Pleasant Garden Elementary** students, staff, families and community members raised more than \$23,000 to buy and package more 71,280 meals for an orphanage in Haiti.

## MAY



- The students at **Summerfield Elementary** collected and donated more than 800 pairs of shoes to the Ntibonera Foundation. The foundation works to deliver shoes to people in Congo, most of who have no shoes and suffer from a parasite called jiggers that burrow in the foot and make standing and walking very painful.



- **Southeast Middle's** Falcon Friends Care Club provided every teacher at Foust Elementary with a classroom library of 40 or more books. The 1,000+ books were collected through a schoolwide book drive.

## SUMMER

- GCS partnered with the **Volunteer Center of Greensboro** to offer a **Service Learning Leadership Camp** during the summer, allowing high school students a chance to engage in service learning projects and make a real impact in their community.



- **Weaver Academy** students are building Little Free Libraries for every GCS elementary school.

## SEPTEMBER



- **Erwin Montessori** students and staff raised more than \$1,000 for and more than 30 members participated in Greensboro's Walk to End Alzheimer's.



- **Northwest High** pre-nursing students performed vision screenings at various schools. The work provided assistance to school nurses and allowed the high school students to gain valuable experience in the health field.

## OCTOBER



- 5th grade students at **Archer Elementary** incorporated service learning with core science concepts by cleaning a stream adjacent to the school.

## NOVEMBER



- **Middle College at GTCC-Greensboro** students collected 1,979 (890 pounds) non-perishable items and assembled more than 689 care packages for people who are homeless during their 'Sleep Out for Homelessness' event.



- **Southwest High** collected 3,732 pounds of food at its annual food drive.

## DECEMBER



- **Grimsley High** students studying themes of homelessness and poverty in English class used their math and business skills to organize a toy drive for local elementary schools. They collected and delivered more than 700 toys.



- **Southeast High's** Occupational Course of Study class received the Salvation Army's "Doing the Most Good" award for volunteering as bell-ringers Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to noon for three straight weeks during the last few years.



- **Allen Jay Elementary, Irving Park Elementary and Hunter Elementary** ACES students donated dozens of new and gently used stuffed bears to the "Officer Ted E. Bear Program." The program allows police officers to carry a few bears with them and offer them to children at crime scenes or who have experienced some type of trauma.



- **Colfax Elementary** donated about 200 toys to Toys for Tots.



# GCS, YES! ENGAGED PARENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Students do better in school and in life when parents, families and community members are actively involved in supporting their education. More than 50 research studies show a connection between effective communication, family and community engagement, and student success.



"I THINK THAT SCHOOL IS THE BEST PLACE TO GO! WITHOUT ANY EDUCATION WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO LEARN, GET A GOOD JOB OR CAREER."

Muzzamimil Khan, 5th Grade  
Oak Hill Elementary

# GPA BY THE NUMBERS

## 410

410 workshops and presentations in 2014-2015 with an average of 93 participants per workshop

## 1,600

More than 1,600 Spanish-speaking families attended workshops

## 10,013

10,013 parents and community members have established GPA accounts to access online resources and videos

## 7,500

7,500 people attended the 5th annual Family Fun Day

## 85,807

Since its inception, GPA has served more than 85,807 families through 1,026 workshops, presentations and events



The most valuable partnership GCS has is with its parents. We know student success depends greatly on parental involvement, which is why the district partnered with families and community groups to create Guilford Parent Academy (GPA) in 2011.

In 2015, more than 38,254 parents participated in GPA workshops, activities and events, surpassing last year's numbers by more than 16,000. GPA also launched two new online resources through BrainFuse that give students access to 24-hour live tutoring services and also gives parents access to career planning resources to help improve their future.

An external evaluator, Leadership Solutions Group, said,

**"THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OFFERINGS OF GPA ARE NOTHING SHORT OF AMAZING, AND THIS PROGRAM SHOULD SERVE AS A MODEL FOR DISTRICTS ACROSS NORTH CAROLINA AND THE UNITED STATES."**

### **ENGAGING MORE PARENTS**

The value of parent involvement can also be seen as GCS works to improve its Exceptional Children's department.

The department organized and hosted its first-ever Summer Institute in 2015. The institute, titled "Empowerment, Learning and Growth," covered an array of topics.

Parents, family members, care givers and educators all learned together as they explored strategies for helping students master academic content, learn life skills and achieve greater independence.

The district partnered with the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Cone Health, Autism Society of North Carolina and other distinguished professionals and groups around the state to offer this opportunity free of charge to educators and parents.

The department also hired a new parent liaison, who is responsible for reaching out and working with various parent and community groups in the district and Triad to help improve communication and services.

"The goal for each of our students with disabilities is to be safe and successful in a quality learning environment, and to become as independent as possible," says Vicki Simmons, adapted physical education teacher at Haynes-Inman Education Center. "And isn't that what we want for all of our students?"

# GCS, YES! VOLUNTEER DEDICATION

Volunteers donate their time, skills and knowledge to helping GCS students prepare for life beyond the classroom. Their valued support makes a difference in GCS schools and the community.

In the 2014-15 school year, 17,160 volunteers served as mentors, tutored students in math and language arts, read books to individual students and groups, helped in school offices, served as lunch buddies, worked with parents, managed campus clean-up projects and talked to students about career opportunities.

Those volunteers contributed a total of 558,138 hours of service. Their time is priceless, but at the national value of an hour of volunteer time, their service totals more than \$12.8 million.

Some of those volunteers include our own students. The December 2015 Volunteer of the Month, Bryan Cao, is a 7th grade student at The Academy at Lincoln.

Bryan donates his time three mornings a week in the media center at Brooks Global Studies, having attended there previously and with younger siblings attending the school currently.

At an early age, Bryan decided to make a difference at his former school with the help of his mom, who also volunteers at Brooks Global Studies.

Not only does Bryan help students find books, but he also works the circulation desk assisting students with checkout and restocking books before heading off to his own school.



“THINGS CAN GET VERY CRAZY IN OUR LIBRARY IN THE MORNINGS, BUT BRYAN HANDLES EVERYTHING WITH A CALM PRESENCE AND A POSITIVE ATTITUDE,” SAYS COLLEEN PINYAN, MEDIA SPECIALIST. “THE STUDENTS LOOK UP TO HIM, AND I NEVER HAVE TO OFFER DIRECTION.”

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## 2015 VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH

 <p>CLAXTON ELEMENTARY <b>Bill Bott</b></p>	 <p>SEDALIA ELEMENTARY <b>Donna Stepp</b></p>	 <p>AYCOCK MIDDLE <b>Kerry Charles</b></p>	 <p>ERWIN MONTESSORI <b>Garner Stewart</b></p>	 <p>HAIRSTON MIDDLE <b>Allen Talbert</b></p>	 <p>COLFAX ELEMENTARY <b>Susan Hedgecock</b></p>	 <p>BROOKS GLOBAL STUDIES <b>Bryan Cao</b></p>
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# GUILFORD COUNTY NAMED A SAY YES TO EDUCATION COMMUNITY

“This is a historic day for the children of our community and for Guilford County Schools. Entire generations of young people and their families will find their lives forever changed because our community and the Say Yes National Foundation believe in them and are willing to help them make their dreams of a college education possible.” Maurice O. “Mo” Green, Superintendent

Cheers, excitement and joy filled the gymnasium of Ragsdale High, where business leaders, parents, educators and students attended the launch of Say Yes to Education Guilford.

With the announcement in September of 2015, Guilford County became the first community in North Carolina, the first outside of the Northeast and only the third in the country named as a Say Yes to Education community.

The culmination of nearly two years of planning, fundraising and a highly competitive vetting process, the new community-wide partnership with Say Yes to Education, a national non profit organization headquartered in New York City, is making the dreams of a college education a reality for thousands of GCS students.

Starting with the Class of 2016, eligible GCS graduates who are accepted to and attend a public (two- or four-year) college or university in North Carolina can apply for last-dollar tuition scholarships.

Scholarships are paid after Pell Grants, academic awards, state grants and other financial aid for tuition. Students with greater longevity in GCS will qualify for more funding than those who start with GCS in high school. Students who enroll in GCS as seniors will not qualify for assistance.

GCS diploma graduates who attend any of the more than 100 private colleges and universities that are part of the national

Say Yes to College Compact can also apply for choice scholarships of up to \$5,000 per year.

GCS students who receive full tuition awards at state public colleges and universities may qualify for an opportunity scholarship, although the amount and criteria hasn't been finalized yet.

Both the last-dollar tuition, choice and opportunity scholarships are provided by an endowment fund, which is being raised and managed locally by the High Point Community Foundation and the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro.

GCS and Guilford Education Alliance are partners in this effort and submitted the original application to Say Yes to Education. So far, approximately \$35 million toward a \$70 million goal has been raised.

As part of a national effort, GCS students will also now be considered for scholarships provided by Compact members only to scholars from Say Yes communities. Typically, these scholarships are awarded to students whose families' income from all sources is around \$75,000 or less, although this number varies by each institution.

In addition to scholarship support, the Say Yes Guilford partnership plans to identify and remove barriers that prevent children and families from reaching their goals of a high school and college diploma.



The goal is to make access easier to school and community supports and services, while also improving teaching and learning in GCS classrooms. By wrapping its arms around students and families from early childhood to the classroom, and then on to college and career, the Say Yes to Education Guilford partnership wants to make education the top community priority.

This bold initiative is not only creating a future for young people that will include a more diverse and educated labor force, but it will also bring benefits to the entire community.

By offering free college tuition to public school graduates at North Carolina public institutions of higher education, local leaders believe the Say Yes initiative will attract new families and businesses to Guilford County.

“While the scholarships generate a lot of excitement, and understandably so, long-term, this is about educational and economic revitalization,” said Winston McGregor, executive director of the Guilford Education Alliance. “This has the power to transform our entire community.”

For more about Say Yes to Education Guilford, visit, [www.sayyesguilford.org](http://www.sayyesguilford.org)

# GCS, YES! **COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

GCS works closely with Triad businesses, faith partners and community organizations to deliver relevant opportunities that connect a student’s interest and skills with the future economy of our community and the world.

Business, faith, nonprofit and university partnerships continue to support GCS schools and offices. Partners team up with schools in a variety of ways, from organizing volunteer events to offering internships and donations to support school efforts.

The community also plays an important role in the district’s service-learning initiative. There are 160 community partners that have made commitments to provide service-learning opportunities to high school students.

In addition to giving time, Guilford County businesses, nonprofit organizations, foundations and individuals also contributed goods, services and financial resources in excess of \$3.1 million to the district in the 2014-15 school year.

These donations are in addition to the \$35 million pledged in support of building a local endowment to fund college scholarships for GCS graduates as part of Say Yes to Education.



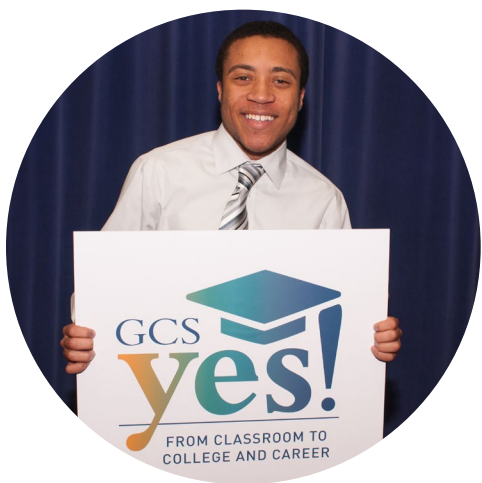
## THANK YOU

### **SAY YES TO EDUCATION GUILFORD DONORS**

- The Edward M. Armfield, Sr. Foundation
- AT&T of North Carolina
- Ed and Vivien Bauman
- The Joseph M. Bryan Foundation
- Dr. Julian and Ann Busby
- Hayes and Clem Clement
- The Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro
- Cone Health Foundation
- Earl and Kitty Congdon Family
- Charles C. and Nancy Cornelio
- Rob and Susan Culp Family
- Doris Deal
- Nathan and Bethany Duggins
- Bill and Candy Fenn
- Louise Foster
- David R. Hayworth
- A.B. and Grace Henley Family
- High Point Community Foundation Board of Trustees
- The Hillsdale Fund
- Honda Aircraft Company
- Ken and Sally Hughes
- Ilderton Automotive
- Dot Kearns
- The William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust
- Lincoln Financial Group Foundation
- Dusty and Kay Maynard
- David and Vicki Miller
- Molly Millis Hedgecock
- Emily Millis Hiatt
- Skip and Peg Moore
- Jim and Ann Morgan
- Mildred Poole
- Phillips Foundation
- Real Kitchen & Market (Lisa and Ray Wheatley)
- Claudia and David Reich
- Sharon Sink
- Jack and Marsha Slane Family
- Summit Rotary Foundation
- United Guaranty
- VF Corporation
- Weaver Foundation
- Martha Yarborough
- Anonymous (7)

# GCS, YES! MAPPING SUCCESS

In order to help our students “say yes” to all that life can hold for them, we need a roadmap to take them from the classroom to college and career.



“THERE’S A CERTAIN ‘DURABILITY’ ONE HAS TO HAVE TO COMPLETE IB. IT’S DEFINITELY NOT THE EASIEST THING IN THE WORLD. WITH THAT BEING SAID; MY REWARD HASN’T ALWAYS BEEN THE BEST GRADE, OR THE HIGHEST SCORE. FOR ME IT LIES IN HOW MUCH I’VE LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF ALONG THE WAY. ”

Douglas McCollum, Senior, International Baccalaureate (IB) Student  
High Point Central



GCS launched its roadmap for success, the Strategic Plan 2016: Achieving Educational Excellence – Personalizing Learning, in January 2013. The strategic plan is built on a vision of excellence in academics, character and service, and all that we do.

The plan includes four major areas: Personalized Learning; Character, Service and Safety; Parent, Family and Community, and Educator and Organizational Excellence.

The original plan had 44 goals and 99 strategies designed to help the district achieve excellence in all areas. Since 2009, GCS has made significant progress on graduation rates, increasing student access to college-level courses, improving ACT scores, expanding visual and performing arts opportunities and reducing in-school suspensions.

Operational measures such as restoring parent and community trust and satisfaction with GCS and its schools, keeping parents and the public informed, increasing volunteer hours and donations, improving energy efficiencies, completing 2008 bond projects and starting each school year fully staffed are also going in the right direction, with some areas – such as communications – showing significant growth.

Sadly, budget cuts have also taken a toll. Thus far, 15 of 99 strategies planned for 2013-2016 have been placed on hold due to funding constraints. While GCS secured increases in private philanthropy and state/federal grants that have helped to keep the district moving forward in a positive direction, these efforts can't replace adequate public funding.

For an updated “report card” on how the district is doing, visit [www.dpi.state.nc.us/src/](http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/src/). For complete report on strategic plan initiatives and district accomplishments for fiscal year 2015, visit our website at [www.gcsnc.com](http://www.gcsnc.com).



**“MY SCHOOL IS THE BEST SCHOOL EVER!”**

Isaac Cravey-5th Grade  
Erwin Montessori

Strategic Plan 2016 Focus Areas	Goals	Measures	Strategies	Project Teams & Plans
I. Personalized Learning	11	29	34	9.5
II. Character, Service & Safety	6	8	17	6.5
III. Parent, Family & Community	7	12	23	6
IV. Educator & Organizational Excellence	8	11	25	7
<b>Total = 4</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Current Status</b>			56 complete 18 on hold* 25 active	0 closed 0 complete 0 on hold* 2 combined 0 active
*15 due to budget constraints; 3 due to community request/developments (avoiding duplication of effort)				

# GCS, YES! MEASURING PARENT & COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Our nearly 72,000 students, 10,000 employees and 127 schools can't thrive without the support and involvement of the parents who entrust their children to us; the investment of taxpayers, business and philanthropic leaders; and community members. When they "Say Yes" to strong public schools, students benefit.

As part of our parent and public

engagement strategy, we hire an outside research firm to conduct a statistically valid public opinion poll of GCS parents and the broader community.

The polls are conducted in English and Spanish and are paid for by private donations. This research is then used to help GCS measure several strategic plan goals while also seeking input about issues and concerns.

The trends over time show significant improvement in several key areas, with large positive shifts in parent and community perceptions when we compare the growth from 2009 to 2015. While not

reported here, measures for GCS schools in these categories are even higher.

The polls also show a gap in perceptions between those who know us the best – our parents who have children enrolled in our schools, and those who no longer have school-aged children, including the vast majority of Guilford County residents.

As this data shows, engaging parents and community members in the work of their – and our – public schools is a team effort, one that requires a great deal of ongoing support, trust and communication.

## PARENT TRENDS

GCS Strategic Plan Measures	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
GCS keeps me informed (% agree, strongly agree)	74%	75%	80%	83%	85%	90%	87%
GCS schools are safe (% agree, strongly agree)	69%	68%	78%	75%	76%	83%	81%
GCS is responsive to requests (% agree, strongly agree)	67%	64%	66%	72%	75%	82%	79%
GCS is doing a good job using taxpayer money to educate children (% agree, strongly agree)	49%	50%	53%	63%	67%	67%	69%
Quality of education (good, very good)	80%	81%	82%	82%	81%	86%	84%

## COMMUNITY TRENDS

GCS Strategic Plan Measures	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
GCS keeps me informed (% agree, strongly agree)	61%	62%	55%	75%	67%	72%	74%
GCS schools are safe (% agree, strongly agree)	49%	59%	52%	64%	67%	70%	66%
GCS is responsive to requests (% agree, strongly agree)	51%	52%	47%	64%	64%	64%	71%
GCS is doing a good job using taxpayer money to educate children (% agree, strongly agree)	43%	40%	40%	48%	58%	58%	55%
Quality of education (good, very good)	62%	68%	67%	75%	67%	68%	69%

# GCS, YES! COLLEGE READINESS

In addition to succeeding in college-level academics, GCS students are also improving their ACT scores. In 2015, 61.5 percent of GCS 11th grade students met the UNC minimum ACT score, up from 56.3 percent in 2013. It's also above the state average of 59.7 percent and the second highest rate of the state's five largest school districts just after Wake County (70 percent).

Seventeen percent of GCS 11th graders met all four college readiness benchmarks compared to the state average of 15 percent. North Carolina requires all 11th grade students to take the ACT free of charge as opposed to most other states where only students planning to go to college may take the exam.

GCS also reported that while state and national combined SAT scores dropped slightly in 2015, GCS scores continued on a steady increase. The district's combined score of 1440 remains below the state (1478) and national (1490) averages. However, it should be noted that almost 70% of GCS seniors took the SAT compared to 59% of seniors in the state and 52% of seniors in the US as a whole.

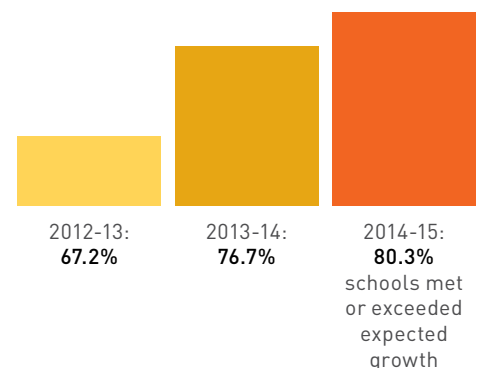
GCS does face challenges when it comes to End of Grade and End of Course test scores, which are essentially flat districtwide. Some subjects and grade levels are improving while others decreasing. Overall, 53.2 percent of GCS students are considered grade-level proficient on state tests. That's down slightly from 53.6 percent in 2014 and below the state 2015 average of 56.6 percent.

The data also show many gaps between race, gender and economic status that still persist.

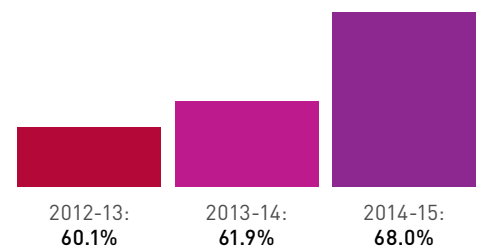
GCS' data mirror state trends. North Carolina's overall EOG/EOC composite for 2015 is essentially flat as well, showing little or no growth over 2014. Higher standards, a new curriculum and a higher bar for proficiency are contributing factors.

A recent study agrees with this assessment, ranking North Carolina's new standards among the nation's highest in terms of what students are expected to know and do at various grade levels. The study by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) ranked North Carolina second in the country for the toughest 8th grade math standards, third in the country for 8th grade reading and fourth in the nation for fourth grade reading and math.

## GROWTH INDICATORS:



## ACT WORKKEYS:



## 11TH GRADE ACT

Year	Number Tested		Composite Score		Percent Meeting UNC System Minimum	
	GCS	NC	GCS	NC	GCS	NC
2015	5,308	97,670	18.9	18.6	61.5%	59.7%
2014	5,020	94,210	18.7	18.5	58.7%	59.3%
2013	4,997	92,816	18.4	18.4	56.3%	58.5%

## OVERALL GCS PERFORMANCE COMPOSITES SINCE NEW STANDARDS

PC	2013	2014	2015
Grade Level Proficiency (Levels 3,4 and 5)	52.5*	53.6	53.2
College and Career Ready Proficiency (Levels 4 and 5)	43.2	43.9	44.0

\*Re-calculated with new Levels introduced in 2014

## EOG PERFORMANCE

	EOG Reading	EOG math	EOG science
2014-15	51.6%	48.5%	62.5%
2013-14	52.1%	49.2%	60.3%

## EOC PERFORMANCE

	Math 1	Biology	English 2
2014-15	62.1	53.2	58.8
2013-14	60.0	56.3	61.8



## PARENTS SUPPORT GCS:

**92%**

of parents plan to re-enroll their child in a GCS school next year

**90%**

of parents say GCS has good programs for gifted or advanced learners.

**85%**

of parents say their children's schools have high quality teachers.

**87%**

of parents say their children's schools values parent involvement

**88%**

of parents say their children's schools support the development of good character in students.

**87%**

of parents say their child's school is safe

## GCS, YES! **RUNNING LEAN, STAYING ON TRACK**

Donor and community support is key to GCS' success, particularly as the district works to offset increased costs and cope with lower overall funding. Since 2008, GCS has cut more than 200 teaching positions and has increased class sizes three times.

In the last six years, the district has asked for an additional \$78 million from the Board of County Commissioners in an attempt to, among other efforts, replace those positions, sustain school and district operations and pay for salary increases. The district has instead received about \$9 million.

Yet, despite these funding challenges, GCS has made every effort to put as much funding as possible toward student and classroom needs.

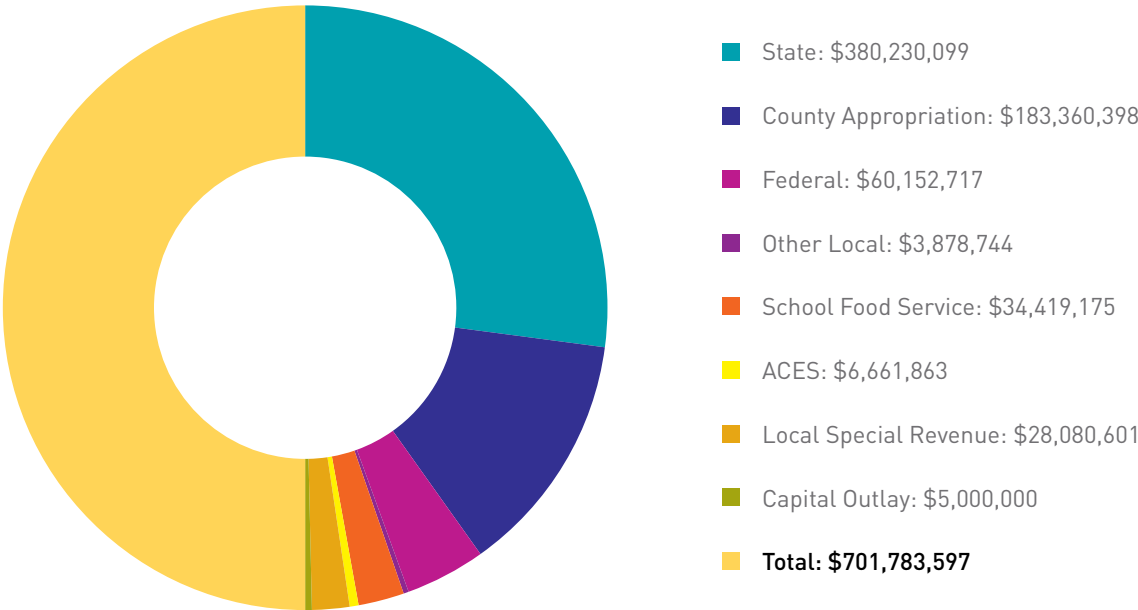
Outside reports have confirmed that GCS runs lean, and that the district spends nearly all of its money on schools. According to the report from Schoolhouse Partners, 95.9 percent of total district spending went to teaching and providing direct services for students, training or supervising teachers, general curriculum and operating and managing school campuses.

"From 2011 to the budgeted expenses from 2015, program expenses did not fall below 95.9% of total district spending." Schoolhouse Partners also notes that "there is broad consensus that leadership has done, and is doing, what it can to get resources into the classroom, but also that many supports have been cut in the past few years, and that the District suffers from those cuts."

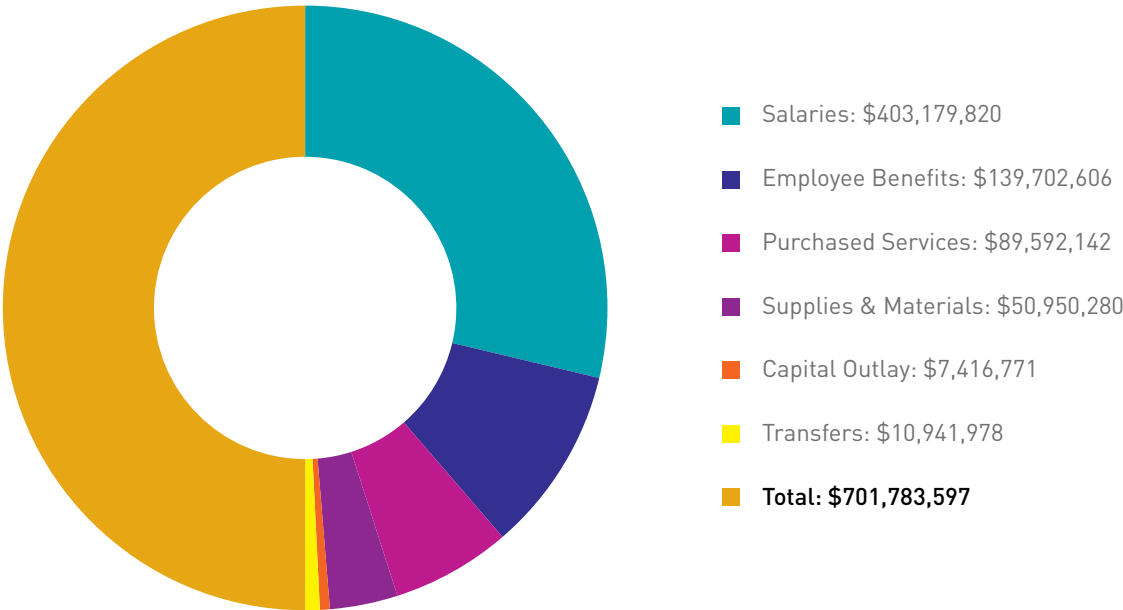


# BUDGET: COUNTING EVERY DOLLAR

REVENUES/SOURCES



EXPENDITURES/USES



# 2015 CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

In March of 2015, the Guilford County Board of County Commissioners approved allocating \$60 million to start work on renovation and expansion at Northwood Elementary and High Point Central High, new traffic patterns at Dudley and Northwest High, renovations and upgrades at Bluford Elementary and a replacement school for Hunter Elementary.

Money was not released by county commissioners for three remaining priority projects, at Western High, Smith High and Guilford Middle, but is expected to be discussed this spring (2016).

## 2008 SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION BOND SPENDING THROUGH 2015

Construction Contracts

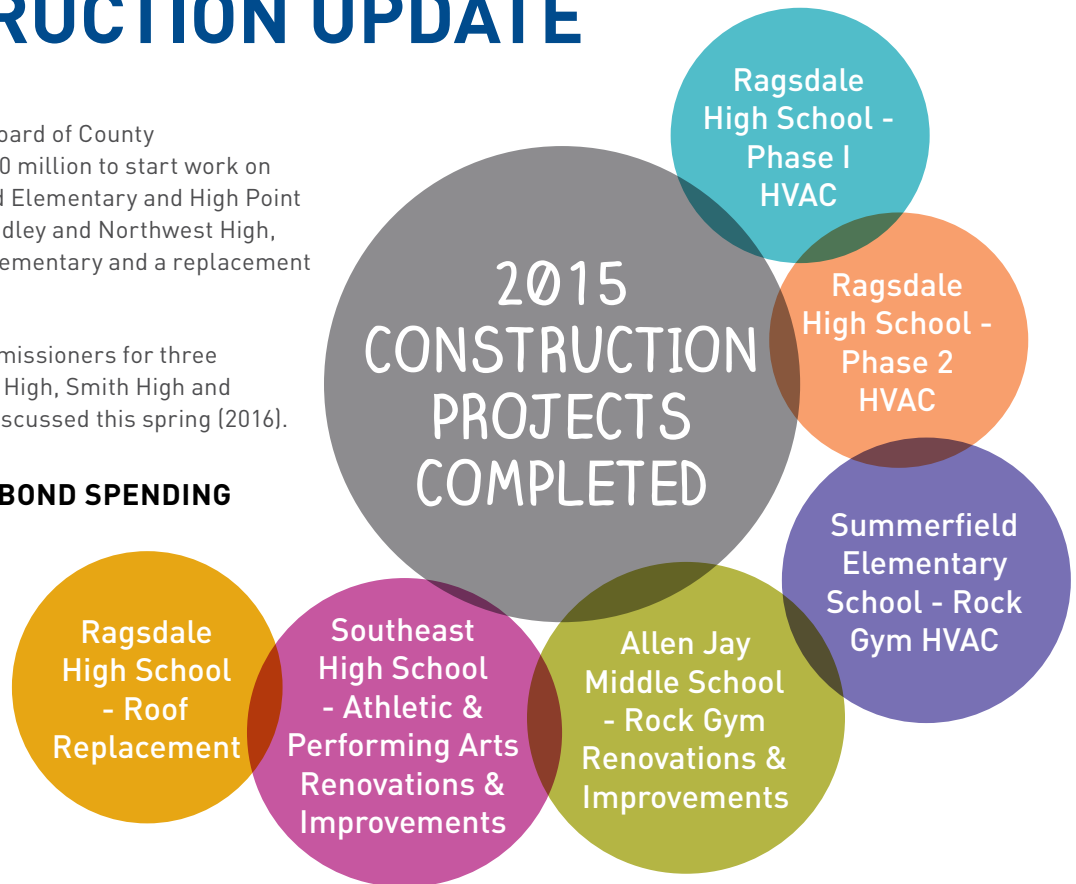
**\$316,379,159**

Design Contracts

**\$25,181,336**

Total

**\$341,560,495**



## 2015 PROJECTS IN PROGRESS:

- BLUFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** - RENOVATIONS & ADDITIONS
- DUDLEY HIGH SCHOOL** - TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS
- HIGH POINT CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL** - RENOVATIONS & ADDITIONS
- HUNTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** - REPLACEMENT SCHOOL
- NORTHWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** - KITCHEN EXPANSION
- NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL** - TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS
- SMITH HIGH SCHOOL** - PHYSICAL EDUCATION IMPROVEMENTS
- WESTERN HIGH SCHOOL** - PHYSICAL EDUCATION IMPROVEMENTS
- GUILFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL** - REPLACEMENT SCHOOL
- ALLEN JAY MIDDLE SCHOOL** - ROOF REPLACEMENT
- SOUTHEAST HIGH SCHOOL** - ROOF REPLACEMENT



# SPECIAL THANKS FROM A SPECIAL LEADER

An excerpt from an Open Letter to the Guilford County Schools Community

December 8, 2015

Thanks for allowing me to be part of something wonderful – the education of our children – including my own. My soul is full to overflowing with gratitude.

On my son's eighth birthday, July 24, 2008, the Guilford County Board of Education selected me as the Superintendent of Guilford County Schools. It was an outstanding honor for me to be selected and it has remained an incredible privilege to work on behalf of more than 72,000 students each year for the last seven plus years.

Today, I announce that I am resigning from this position to become the Executive Director of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.



Read full letter at [www.gcsnc.com](http://www.gcsnc.com)



The Guilford County Board of Education is conducting a state and national search and plans to name a superintendent by the start of the 2016-17 school year. Until then, co-interim superintendents Dr. Nora Carr and Dr. Terrence Young, have been tapped by the board to lead the district. Together they have more than 50 years of experience in education and a diverse range of skills to keep moving GCS forward. Green's last day will be March 18, 2016.

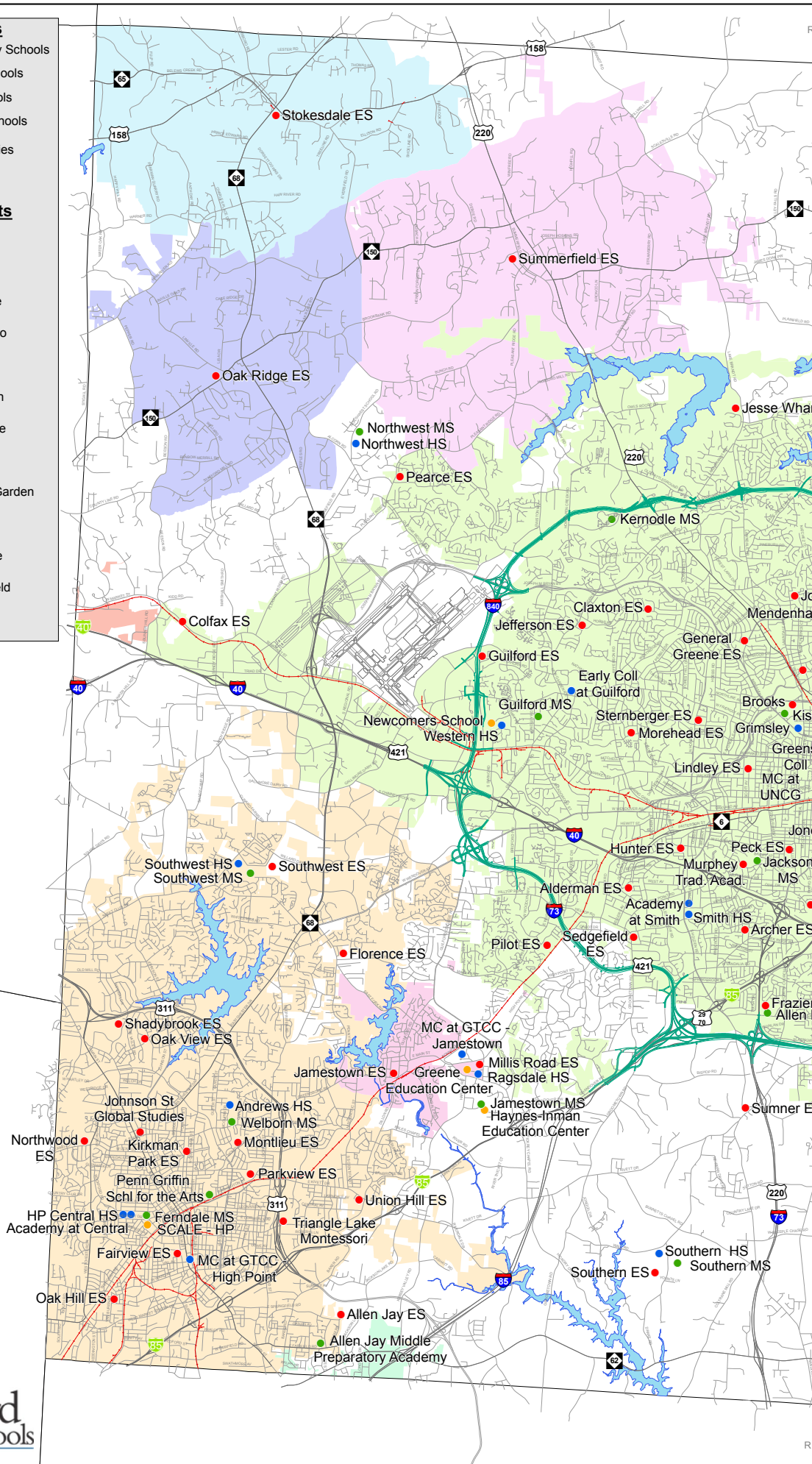
- Schools**
- Elementary Schools
  - Middle Schools
  - High Schools
  - Special Schools
- Water Bodies**
- RR**
- Streets**
- City Limits**
- Archdale
  - Burlington
  - Gibsonville
  - Greensboro
  - High Point
  - Jamestown
  - Kernersville
  - Oak Ridge
  - Pleasant Garden
  - Sedalia
  - Stokesdale
  - Summerfield
  - Whitsett

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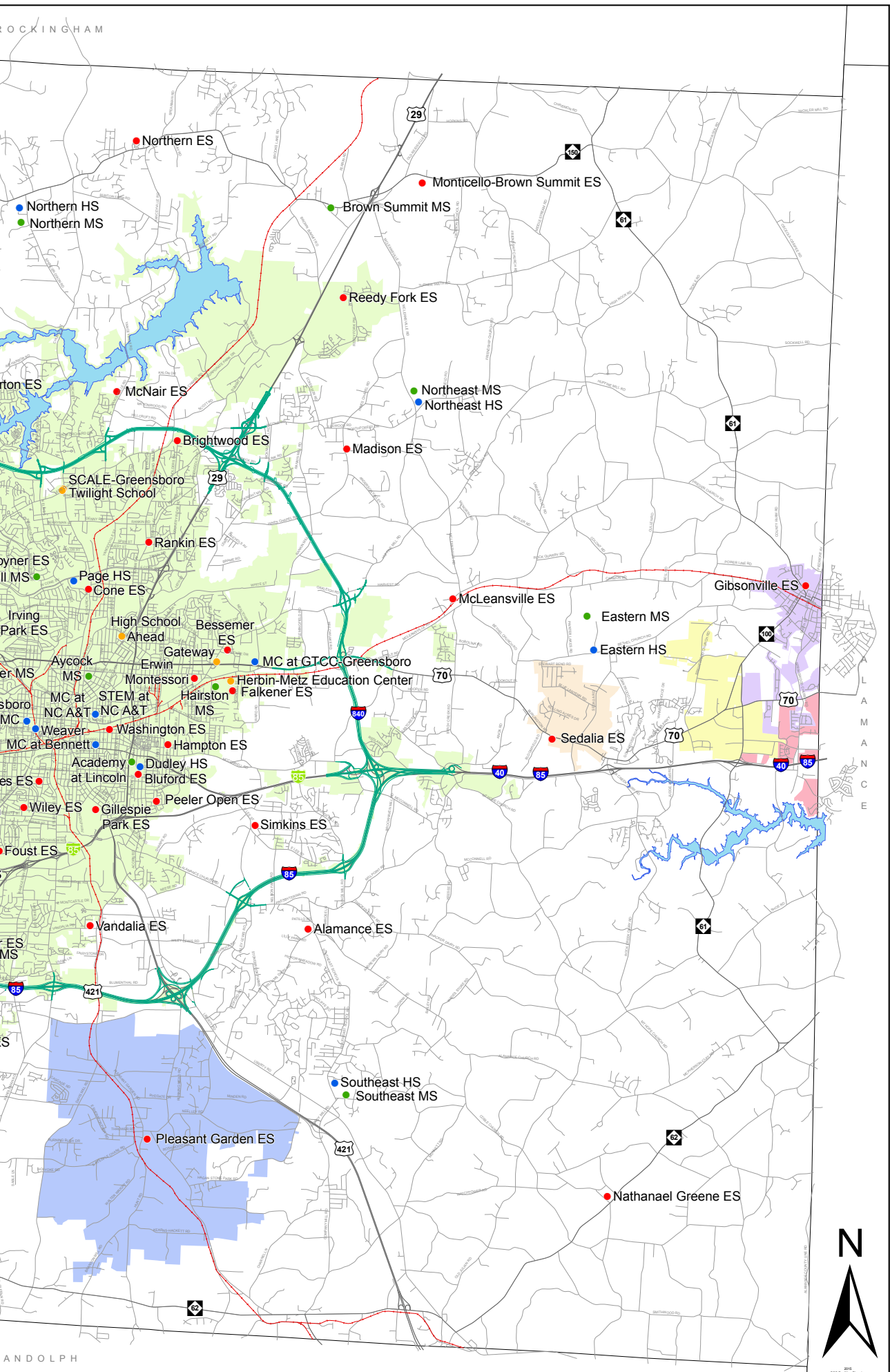
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**Guilford  
County Schools**







# GCS, YES!

## EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE & EQUITY

As GCS continues its journey toward educational excellence – excellence in academics, character, service and all that we do, we must also focus on equity.

The quality of education a child receives is too important, too life-altering, to depend on the variances of race, ethnicity, language spoken, disability, gender, sexual orientation, homelessness, zip code, family income or other personal circumstance.

While this report shows we've made significant progress on our journey toward educational excellence, our results also tell us that we have a long way to go in terms of ensuring equity of opportunity and experience for each and every child.

The fact that GCS mirrors national and global trends and issues when it comes to the impact of race and poverty on student learning and life outcomes is of little comfort or consolation. We want to become the community and public school district that once and for all breaks free of student outcomes that are identifiable by race, class, immigration status and disability.

We want to serve as a lighthouse for the country in proving what we all know is inherently true – that all children can learn and achieve at high levels, and that it is up to us, as the adults in their lives at school, home and in the community, to make sure that every child gets what he or she needs to not only survive, but thrive now and in the future.

We believe that Say Yes to Education is a part of the solution, but not the only one. There are no magic bullets in public education. We transform lives and schools one person, one classroom, one school, one district at a time. This is a long-term effort, one that will require sustained commitment.

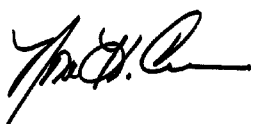
We can't do this alone. Families can't do this alone. Government can't do this alone. The private sector and non-profit communities can't do this alone. The faith community can't do it alone, either.

While we don't know exactly where this road will take us in the future, this much we do know: we will rise or fall together. Getting kids graduated on time and enrolled in college is only the beginning.

As Robert Frost so wisely noted, "We have miles to go before we sleep." We look forward to taking the journey from the classroom to college and career with each of you - our incredible students, families, employees and community members.

Together, we say "GCS, Yes!"

Sincerely,



**Nora K. Carr**  
Chief of Staff &  
Co-Interim Superintendent



**Terrence Young**  
Chief Information Officer &  
Co-Interim Superintendent



# BOARD OF EDUCATION



## DISTRICT 1

**A. Keith McCullough**  
mcculla2@gcsnc.com  
(336) 259-5782



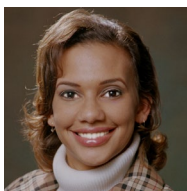
## DISTRICT 7

**Rebecca M. Buffington**  
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(336) 545-1103



## DISTRICT 2

**Ed Price**  
pricee@gcsnc.com  
(336) 878-7575  
(336) 812-3164 (fax)



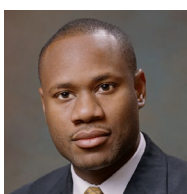
## DISTRICT 8

**Deena A. Hayes**  
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## DISTRICT 3

**Darlene Garrett**  
dygarr@aol.com  
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## DISTRICT 9

**Rev. Amos L. Quick, III**  
Vice-Chairman  
amosquick@hotmail.com  
(336) 273-5579



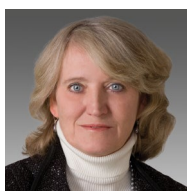
## DISTRICT 4

**Alan W. Duncan**, Chairman  
aduncan@mullinsduncan.com  
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## AT LARGE: ALL SCHOOLS

**Dr. Sandra Alexander**  
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(336) 697-8155 (fax)



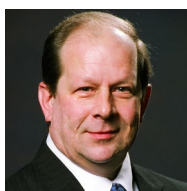
## DISTRICT 5

**Linda Welborn**  
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(336) 601-5440



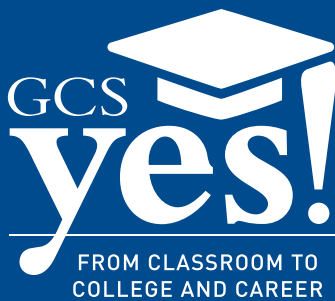
## AT LARGE: ALL SCHOOLS

**Dr. Nancy R. Routh**  
nrouth@bellsouth.net  
(336) 674-7083  
(336) 674-1245 (fax)



## DISTRICT 6

**Jeff Belton**  
beltonj@gcsnc.com  
(336) 299-8805



STAY CONNECTED VIA:



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