



Igniting Sparks that Launch Students to New Heights





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A Message from Superintendent Sharon L. Contreras, Ph.D.

Guilford County Schools is more committed than ever to our mission of graduating students as responsible citizens prepared to succeed in higher education, or in the career of their choice.

We have incredibly talented students in GCS, more than 73,000, who will rise to our level of expectations for them. And, we have more than 10,000 educators and school leaders who work every day to improve the educational outcomes for our students. As a community, we work together to achieve the high-level outcomes we expect and our students deserve.

We are pleased to provide this annual report to the GCS community, highlighting our achievements and opportunities for growth.

This past year, 83.6 percent of our schools met or exceeded growth, an accomplishment that reflects the hard work of our educators and students. We had a higher percentage of schools exceed growth – 32.5 percent – than other large districts in our state. We also posted a new record high graduation rate of 89.8 percent, and matched the state average for the first time in terms of our more than 5,500 eleventh graders ACT scores, with 59.3 percent achieving a 17 or higher, which represents the minimal score accepted by most UNC system universities. We have 17 State Schools of Character and 12 National Schools of Character. We have three high schools among the top 25 in the state on the U.S. News and World Report 2017 Best High Schools list. Weaver Academy was named the best high school in the state.

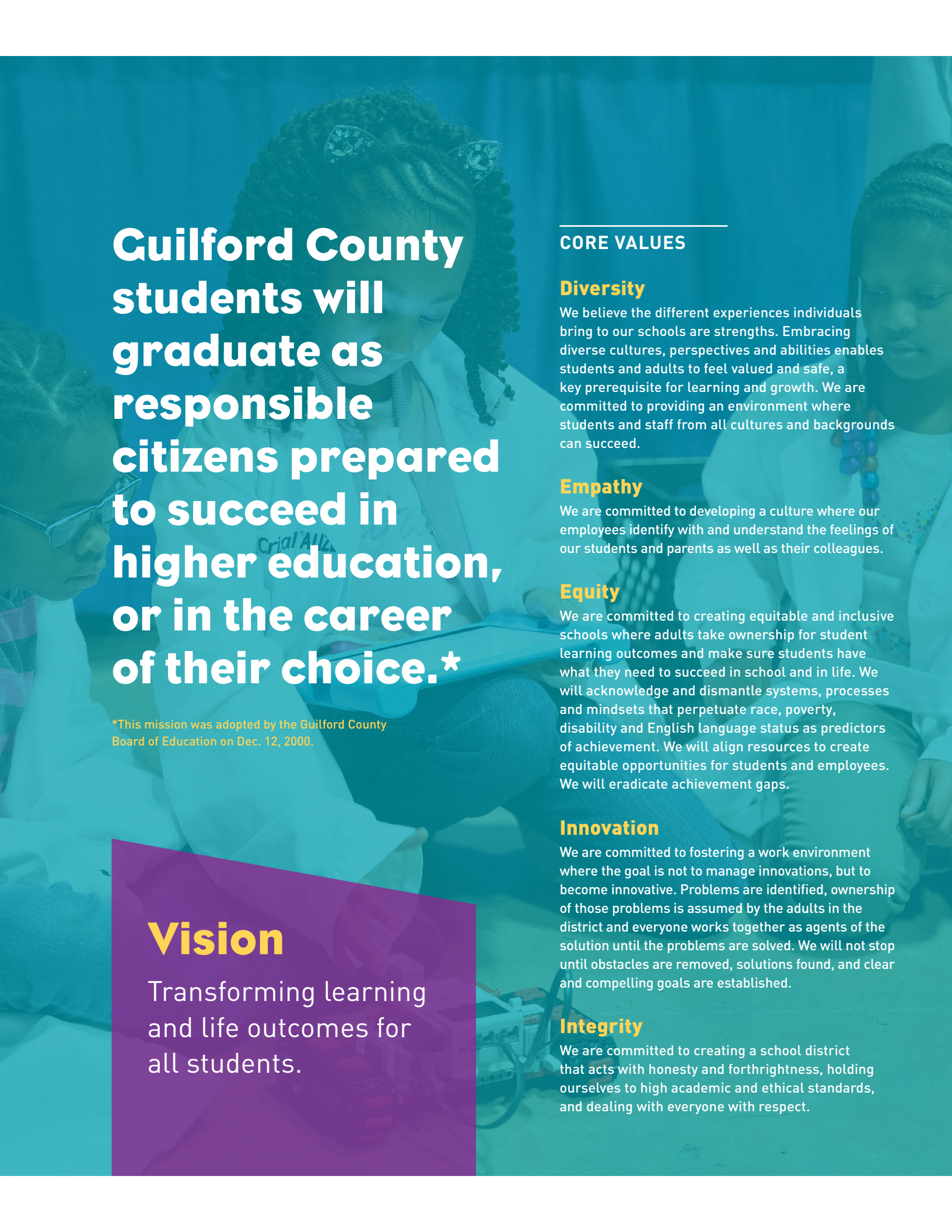
With notable achievement comes the hard truth, we still have a considerable amount of work to do. There is clearly a gap between college and career readiness standards and what we teach in our classrooms and the resources provided to our schools. AP courses in computer science and informational technologies/systems, and the vast majority of our career and technical education students are using outdated equipment, machines and technology to learn lower-level job skills in Microsoft Office that aren't going to pay them enough to live a quality life. Forty-five percent of all GCS students matriculating to GTCC have to take remedial math or reading courses. Our black and Latino students trail white and Asian students on just about every academic measure. They are under-represented in gifted programs, honors and college-level courses and are over-represented in special education and disciplinary data. Our work now must be about intervening and turning the tide in favor of improving learning and life outcomes for all children attending our schools.

As we launch the 2022 Strategic Plan: Ignite Learning, we invite you to be a part of GCS' on-going journey to greatness. We welcome your participation and expertise on behalf of the students in our community.

In the interest of all children,

Sharon L. Contreras

Sharon L. Contreras, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Guilford County Schools



Guilford County students will graduate as responsible citizens prepared to succeed in higher education, or in the career of their choice.*

*This mission was adopted by the Guilford County
Board of Education on Dec. 12, 2000.

Vision

Transforming learning
and life outcomes for
all students.

CORE VALUES

Diversity

We believe the different experiences individuals bring to our schools are strengths. Embracing diverse cultures, perspectives and abilities enables students and adults to feel valued and safe, a key prerequisite for learning and growth. We are committed to providing an environment where students and staff from all cultures and backgrounds can 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.

Equity

We are committed to creating equitable and inclusive schools where adults take ownership for student learning outcomes and make sure students have what they need to succeed in school and in life. We will acknowledge and dismantle systems, processes and mindsets that perpetuate race, poverty, disability and English language status as predictors of achievement. We will align resources to create equitable opportunities for students and employees. We will eradicate achievement gaps.

Innovation

We are committed to fostering a work environment where the goal is not to manage innovations, but to become innovative. Problems are identified, ownership of those problems is assumed by the adults in the district and everyone works together as agents of the solution until the problems are solved. We will not stop until obstacles are removed, solutions 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 dealing with everyone with respect.

A Launch Pad for Success: GCS-At-A-Glance

GCS is dedicated to igniting the passion and promise of every student in our district. As the third largest school district in North Carolina, the 47th largest of more than 14,000 in the United States, and as the largest employer in Guilford County with 10,027 employees, taking on that responsibility is no small feat. As the numbers show, our district requires significant resources to serve our diverse community and to create the sparks needed to launch the dreams of each student.



Facilities

126 schools

Elementary - **69**
Middle - **22**
High - **28**
Alternative - **10**

(including GCS Newcomers School, SCALE and High School Academy). Some campuses, such as Penn-Griffin School for the Arts, house multiple grade levels, like middle and high school.

12,538,725 square feet of facilities

51 years is the average age of district buildings

43 cents per square foot funding for maintenance



Transportation

567 buses
2,651 routes
38,400 stops per day
48,805.34 miles traveled daily
700+ bus drivers

Employees

9,008 Full-time | **862** Part-time

School-Based

7,705 Full-time | **790** Part-time



Students

PreK-13 - 73,259
Languages - 112
Economically Disadvantaged Students - 65.1%
Special Education Students - 10,324
Advanced Learners - 14,490

American Indian - 0.39%

Asian - 6.42%

Black - 40.65%

Hispanic - 15.70%

Multi-racial - 4.20%

Pacific Islander - 0.15%

White - 32.49%

Guilford County is made up of 11 cities and towns:

Browns Summit, Gibsonville,
Greensboro, High Point, Jamestown,
Oak Ridge, Pleasant Garden, Sedalia,
Stokesdale, Summerfield and Whitsett.

School Nutrition

5,760,714 breakfasts served
8,010,341 lunches served
618,251 after-school snacks served

Budget

\$729,928,427

(Includes capital outlay, special revenue and enterprise funds)

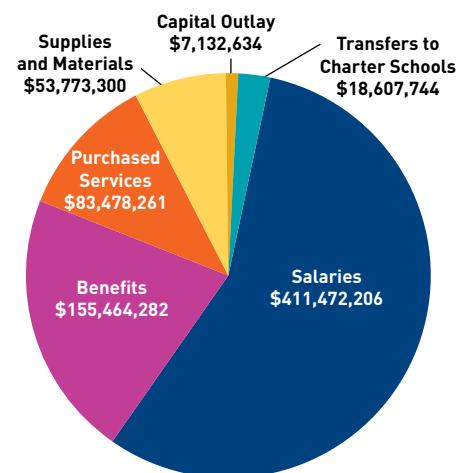
Where the Money Comes From:

State Funds - \$404,135,654
County Funds - \$195,860,398
Federal Funds - \$59,496,194
Other Local Funds - \$4,703,424
School Food Services - \$41,872,322
After-School Enrichment Services (ACES) - \$7,203,221
Local Special Revenue - \$11,657,214
Capital Outlay - \$5,000,000

Technology

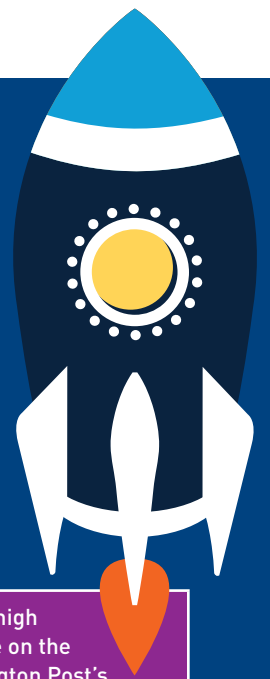
26,000 desktop computers
18,000 tablets (PACE 1:1)
5,000 laptops
11,000 phones
1,700 mounted projectors
4,700 TVs

How the Money is Used:



Launching Success: Student and School Achievements

GCS' team has much to celebrate, igniting new sparks of promise and potential in students and schools each year. The work hasn't gone unnoticed with new records of achievement, as well as state and national honors. Recognitions received in 2017 include:



<p>All-time high graduation rate:</p> <p>89.8%</p>	<p>Class of 2017 earned more than</p> <p>\$148 million</p> <p>in college scholarships and grants</p>	<p>Eleven high schools achieved 100% graduation rates in 2017.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – An additional 12 schools, including 10 traditional high schools, had graduation rates above 90% 	<p>Sixteen (16) high schools were on the 2017 Washington Post's America's Most Challenging High Schools list</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GCS schools also took 4 of the top 10 spots in the state
<p>Three high schools were among the top 25 in the state on the U.S. News and World Report 2017 Best High Schools list and 11 schools recognized overall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Weaver Academy was named the best high school in the state. 	<p>The Early College at Guilford was named the best high school in North Carolina by Niche, a research company.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Nine other GCS schools made the top 100. 	<p>GCS has 17 State Schools of Character and 12 National Schools of Character, all stand-outs in their use of character development to drive a positive impact on academics, student behavior and school climate.</p>	<p>GCS increased AP exam participation over the past three years by 4% districtwide and by 7% among historically underrepresented subgroups.</p>
<p>59.3% of 11th grade students met UNC's minimum ACT composite of 17, the 2nd highest in the state.</p>	<p>86.3%</p> <p>of GCS schools meet or exceeded growth</p>	<p>774</p> <p>National Board Certified Teachers, ranking ninth in the country</p>	<p>In the past five years, students have completed more than 1.7 million service-learning hours, a more than \$41 million in economic impact</p>
<p>Service-Learning Youth Council students represented GCS by leading a national presentation focused on service-learning involvement</p>	<p>96% of Pre-K students met or exceeded the widely held expectations for preschool children.</p>	<p>All middle and high school football coaches earned Heads Up Football certification</p>	<p>1,218</p> <p>students participated in the GCS Battle of the Books competition</p>
<p>GCS retained first through third year teachers at a rate of</p> <p>80%</p>	<p>GCS is one of 20 nationwide out of 70 applicants and the only district in North Carolina to receive the Professional Development for Arts Educators (PDAE) Grant.</p>	<p>GCS conducted and completed a major public art installation at the Piedmont Triad International Airport. Pieces of the sculpture were designed and created by GCS elementary, middle, and high school students.</p>	

"Imagine what we could do – imagine what our community could be – if we had the resources and more importantly – the will – to carry out what was good for our students and the economic development of our community. Imagine the lives transformed; the hope and trust restored; and the future of our great democracy secured."

Sharon L. Contreras, Ph.D., Superintendent, Guilford County Schools

Spaces for Innovation: Facilities Update

Before dreams can be ignited, students need facilities that encourage their learning and innovation. GCS' facilities department completed the following projects to provide those spaces to more students in 2017:

Completed traffic improvements on the Dudley High and Lincoln Middle School campus to alleviate congestion, and provide additional emergency access.

Opened a new multi-purpose addition at Bluford Elementary School, which provided an appropriate indoor space for physical education.

Renovated the auditorium at High Point Central High School, providing a beautiful venue for use by drama classes, and the school's performing arts program.

Began construction of Western Guilford Middle School, which when open, will transform the 70-year old, multi-building campus, into a 21st century educational facility.

Worked with the Joint Capital Facilities Committee, comprised of Guilford County Boards of Commissioner and Education members, to select a firm to conduct facility condition assessments and student assignment boundary optimization services, which will result in a comprehensive prioritization of capital improvement needs, and assist in the development of fiscally responsible strategies to meet those needs.

The Fuel Needed for Ignition: Parent Engagement

There is no doubt that the fuel our students receive from engaged parents, partnering with our schools is one of the most important indicators of how far those students will fly.

GCS is committed to our parents, and offers year-round resources to help them know we are all in this together through the Guilford Parent Academy (GPA). GPA is a free, year-round, parent engagement and support program of Guilford County Schools, providing educational excellence for students by educating and informing parents about their role in their child's success. This year GPA:

- Launched its very first teacher leadership program for Title I teachers called the Parent Engagement Café. This four-part professional development series used the groundbreaking book Beyond the Bake Sale as its foundation. Sessions focused on family engagement strategies through school-level impact and offered research-based solutions for teacher leaders. The Café also featured innovative virtual sessions that allowed teachers to log into an interactive chatroom format and collaborate with other educators on family engagement best practices
- Created the first-ever Latino Parent GPA committee, composed of 15 families who donated their time and support towards the creation of relevant meetings and events throughout the year.
- Hosted several nationally-renowned speakers who brought their knowledge and expertise to parents and school leaders including one of the original "Freedom Writers," Manny Scott and family engagement expert Dr. Steve Constantino.
- Since the launch of GPA in 2011, 177,056 people including parents, families and community members have participated in 1,863 GPA sponsored events.

Building the Launch Team: Community Outreach & Partnerships

Igniting the dreams and potential of each student is not something schools can do alone. This year, GCS found new ways to reach out to our community, forming new partnerships and teaching students the joy of using their time and talents to give back.

- Launched the Let's Talk! initiative, a 24/7 online constituency relations management program that allows the district to streamline stakeholder communications, capture and respond to dialogues within 48 hours and be proactive instead of reactive to issues that influence our communities.
- Raised more than \$33,000 to support students and families impacted by Hurricanes Harvey and Maria. Just one example of GCS' commitment to educating and preparing our students to be responsible citizens.
- GCS values the work of its volunteers that consists of students, parents, grandparents, business and faith

representatives, and members of local organizations. More than 12,500 supporters volunteered and:

- Worked with teachers and school administrators to provide a nurturing learning environment
- Donated 508,323 hours of their time and talents to GCS students, schools, and families
- Volunteers provided \$12.3M of service hours at the 2017 national average of \$24.14 per hour. In the past six years, GCS leaders served over 4,487 hours totaling more than \$108,316 in economic impact.
- Served as reading buddies, lunch buddies, mentors, test proctors, media center helpers, classroom speakers, and fundraising champions
- Assisted with other activities such as helping staff in the front office, leading campus cleanup or beautification efforts, collecting school supplies, donating backpacks with food, supporting school-based programs

and incentives, or encouraging the community to get involved

- Partnership with Communities in Schools of Greensboro and High Point served 10,269 students in 13 elementary schools and four middle and high schools.
- Guilford Education Alliance continues to support the work of GCS by:
 - Investing significant resources in strategic GCS initiatives;
 - Energizing community and business leaders and building a base for advocacy in support of public education, through programs and activities that provide engagement and facilitate understanding;
 - Connecting business, community and education leaders; and
 - Mobilizing community groups and businesses to focus on activities and programs that help students and teachers achieve educational goals.

- Approximately 2,000 students attended the eighth annual GCS Summer Arts Institute thanks to the support of community organizations.
- Principal Preparation Program grant, in partnership with High Point University, provided GCS with well-prepared principal candidates who have the skills to succeed in highly impacted schools.
- Team 8 Tour Grant, in partnership with the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation, Home Depot, and United Healthcare provided updates and equipment to the athletic programs at both Smith High School and Andrews High School.
- Sprint 1Million Project provided internet service to 2,500 high school students, giving them access to academic resources and homework help.
- Individual teachers applied for and won almost \$1,000,000 in funds for their classrooms.



An Extra Boost: Opportunities for Growth

As GCS works to launch students into the world as responsible citizens, we know there is more we can do to help our students reach new heights. Soon after her appointment as superintendent, Dr. Sharon L. Contreras established her transition team, a group comprised of experts from all areas of the district's local school community as well as state and national organizations.

Four sub-committees focused on the following, specific areas of investigation:

- Student Achievement - Improve academic achievement at all schools and advance learning opportunities, particularly for those who have not yet achieved the level of success needed to access meaningful career and college opportunities.

- School Choice, Equity and Excellence - Expand options and access to innovative programming and schools; create equitable choices for all families.
- Talent Development - Increase organizational and school capacity to recruit, onboard, reward, develop, motivate and retain top talent.
- Organizational Effectiveness for Optimal Learning - Identify school and district facility/operational needs, improve operational efficiencies and develop recommendations for addressing capital needs.

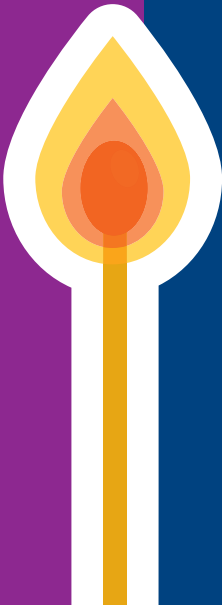
Recommendations from the transition team will help shape priorities for the GCS 2022 Strategic Plan, along with input gathered during the Superintendent's

Listen and Learn Tour, which included 11 public forums, an online survey, and hundreds of meetings and interactions with students, parents, teachers, principals, district employees, business and community leaders, elected officials, and other key constituents.

Five goals have been approved to guide the district's work and help align resources. By focusing on these five areas, the district can improve specific outcomes so that students are prepared to succeed. They are:

- **Goal I:** By 2022, the percentage of students who will read proficiently by the end of third grade will increase to 63 percent (currently 53.4 percent).

- **Goal II:** 75 percent of incoming sixth grade students will pass NC Math I (Algebra I) with a C or better by the end of their ninth grade year in 2022 (currently 69.8 percent)
- **Goal III:** By 2022, the percentage of graduating seniors who complete a rigorous career pathway will increase to 35 percent (currently 28.6 percent).
- **Goal IV:** By 2022, increase by 50 percent the number of schools that exceed growth (currently 32.5 percent).
- **Goal V:** By 2022, decrease the achievement gap between black and Latino students and their white peers by 7 percentage points.



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STAY CONNECTED



In compliance with federal laws, Guilford County Schools administers all educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law. All Guilford County Schools facilities, both educational and athletic, are tobacco-free learning environments.

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