

SUPERINTENDENT'S LISTEN & LEARN FEEDBACK



Penn-Griffin School For The Arts, October 5, 2016

Hosted by: Aaron Keith McCullough

District 1

What does Guilford County Schools do well?

- Strong academics, career and college readiness programs, personalized learning and different magnet opportunities.
- GCS does well with a good variety of clubs and extracurricular activities.
- Laptops in middle schools.
- Service learning for students is a great component; it helps students invest in their communities.
- Great recruitment and hiring process for new staff members. Good professional development opportunities for all teachers.
- The overall graduation rate is a reason to celebrate.
- Connect Ed Messages/Communication.
- Separation of elementary and middle and high school students on the bus.
- Parent Academy.
- Flexibility in calendars for year round schools.
- "Say Yes to Education" program for GCS students.

What can Guilford County Schools improve?

- Offer sports at the magnet schools.
- Respectful and responsive service communication from administration.
- Diverse employees in schools; population should match the school's district.
- Address the needs of sub groups to increase the graduation rate and suspension rates.
- Re-think the implementation of ARC in middle and high schools.
- Improve counselor/student ratio.
- Offer more mentoring for first-year teachers.
- Communicating details about magnet opportunities.
- Giving ample time (more than 30 days) to discuss or plan for school name changes.
- Train teachers to handle student behavior and discipline in an appropriate manner.
- Teacher turnover rate is a concern. Offer a more competitive salary for teachers.
- Over-crowded classrooms.
- Transportation needs to be re-evaluated. There are not enough bus drivers and they are constantly late.
- Universal application for the magnet programs. They should not have a zone and a choice option as they serve the whole county.
- Parent Academy should focus more on building parent leaders and advocates that can articulate their concerns to legislators and the school board.
- Maintenance and facilities personnel should schedule walk-throughs with the board member that represents that school.
- The Newcomers Program needs to be expanded. The students need more time than what is given before they transition into their home school.
- All schools need to be equitable with enrichment such as music, art, language.
- GCS employees should not pay more than students for the same breakfast or lunch.
- More support and training for EC student parents so we can help them meet their goals.
- They could give the option for 6th grade students to play sports if they achieve their academic goals.
- Offer better lunches with less processed food.

What advice would you give Superintendent Contreras and the Board of Education that will assist them in moving the District forward?

- Employ a social worker, nurse and school psychologist full-time for each school and not contract them through the health department.
- Install seat belts on buses.
- Implement additional security door prior to entering the main building.
- Consider hiring part-time SRO officer at the elementary schools.
- Continue the focus on character education and service learning.

