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"It's time."

Superintendent's Recommended Budget Includes County Increase

Greensboro, N.C. – Guilford County Schools Superintendent Maurice "Mo" Green is asking the county for \$13.6 million in new operating funds for the 2013-14 school year, as well as \$10 million in capital outlay for school maintenance. Green presented his recommended budget to the Guilford County Board of Education during its meeting on Thursday, March 28.

The recommendation includes a total operating budget of \$629,085,238, with nearly 7 percent coming from the federal government, nearly 62 percent coming from the state and 31.2 percent funded locally by Guilford County.

The recommended request of the Guilford County Commission is \$189.2 million, including \$13.6 million to fund items in three categories:

1. An increase of \$5.9 million to sustain operations. Over the past three years, GCS has requested \$13.9 million in increased funding, but has not received it. As a result, the district has absorbed \$19.1 million in increased costs in student enrollment at the district and charter school level, health insurance, retirement, utilities and hundreds of thousands of square feet of classroom and school space.
2. An increase of \$3.4 million to cover a salary increase for all employees. The funding also includes \$1.8 million to recruit and retain quality employees and hard-to-fill medical and health care educator positions.
3. An additional \$3.2 million to restore cuts made as a result of the Great Recession. In the past five years, GCS has cut central administration and school-based positions, supplies, materials and professional development, as well as increasing class size by one student. This funding would undo the increase by .5 students per class by adding approximately 63 teacher positions.

"During the past five years, our students and staff have endured budget cuts, increased class sizes, reduced supplies and equipment, and the loss of critical administrative support for schools," Green said. "After five years of cutting resources, and after five years of doing more with less, I believe it is time to seek adequate funding to support our students."

In addition, the recommended budget includes \$10 million in local funding for maintenance, upgrades and support for school buildings and property. In 2005-06, county commissioners provided \$10 million in capital funding to maintain approximately 9.5 million square feet of facility space. In 2013-13, GCS received \$2 million to maintain over 12 million square feet.

The recommended budget lays out \$13.2 million in potential reductions and redirections, including:

- Using approximately \$1.4 million held centrally in the 2012-13 budget for unexpected situations, school needs or the 2013-14 budget;
- Reducing or redirecting \$1.8 million from central office divisions and departments;
- Eliminating seven middle school literacy facilitators funded locally after the state stopped funding these positions in 2009-10;
- Holding \$2.4 million of the Weighted Student Formula (WSF) funding normally allotted to schools in abeyance;
- Holding 10 percent of federal Title I and Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act funding in abeyance;
- Generating \$1.8 million in savings by increasing the class size student-teacher ratio by .25 students in grades K-12; and
- Holding \$3.3 million in funding in abeyance in student at-risk and student accountability dollars, along with teacher mentor pay.

That savings generated by the reductions would be used to cover anticipated losses in funding for the 2012-13 budget and the impact of federal sequestration on Title II programs. Redirections also would help fund Strategic Plan 2016 initiatives that will launch in the 2013-14 school year, including a junior class at the Middle College at UNC-Greensboro and a sophomore class at the STEM Early College at N.C. A&T.

“It’s time to reverse this and fund our students’ education at a level that allows them to compete with others across the United States and around the world,” said Green, noting that a 2013 report by the National Education Association now ranks North Carolina 46 out of 50 states in total per-pupil (local and state) funding.

Despite more than five years of cutting resources, GCS students and staff continue to celebrate major accomplishments:

- GCS’s graduation rate increased to 84.5 percent, the highest four-year cohort graduation rate ever achieved in GCS.
- In 2012, 19 GCS schools were named Schools of Excellence or Honor Schools of Excellence under North Carolina’s school accountability system and 27 GCS schools were named Schools of Distinction. That translates to more than 33 percent of schools receiving the highest state designations.
- The Class of 2012, about 5,000 students, earned more than \$139 million in scholarships, the most ever in GCS.
- 676 members of the Class of 2012 earned college-level scores in four or more college-level courses through the Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate programs and/or a “B” or better on equivalent college-level courses.
- GCS is a recognized state and national model for character development and service-learning.

- More than 520 members of the Class of 2012 earned Service-Learning Diplomas for completing at least 175 hours of service-learning activities, while another 350 members earned Exemplary Awards for completing at least 75 hours of such activities.
- During a three-year time frame, in response to one, two and three million book reading challenges, GCS students read more than 7.5 million books.
- GCS opened innovative and important schools, including the Middle College at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the STEM Early College at North Carolina A&T State University, the Haynes-Inman Education Center and McNair Elementary School.
- GCS transformed various previously state-designated, low-performing schools, including Montlieu Academy of Technology, Oak Hill Elementary and Wiley Elementary, into Schools of Progress, while the number of low-performing schools went from nine to one.
- GCS established Guilford Parent Academy, serving more than 20,000 individuals since its launch in January 2011.

The next step in the budget process is for the Board of Education to conduct budget work sessions. The first is scheduled for April 22 at 11:30 a.m. The Board also will hold a public hearing on the budget during the April 30 Board meeting. The Board will adopt the budget on May 14, and will submit it to the Board of County Commissioners no later than May 15.

[Click here to visit the GCS budget Web site](#), which includes the superintendent's full budget recommendation, the presentation to the Guilford County Board of Education, and Frequently Asked Questions about the budget process.

About Guilford County Schools

Guilford County Schools, the third largest school district in North Carolina, serves more than 72,000 students at 124 schools. With approximately 10,000 employees, the district's mission is to graduate responsible citizens who are prepared to succeed in higher education or the career of their choice. Guilford County Schools is a national leader in providing specialized schools and instructional programs designed to meet the educational needs of a culturally diverse citizenship. For more information, visit the district's website at www.gcsnc.com.