



# HCS BOARD OF EDUCATION MONTHLY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

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## New Year, New Decade

## Better together.

### Board Members

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**Mary Elizabeth Davis** Superintendent  
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### District Strategic Priorities

#### Unify

Unify Henry County around excellence in public education.

#### Strengthen

Strengthen our core business of student learning.

#### Ensure

Ensure a high performing environment for all students.

The calendar has turned once again to a new year for our schools and a new year for our Board of Education. Each January, the board kicks off their meetings by electing their leadership for the year. Josh Hinton and Holly Cobb will once again serve the board as board chair and vice chair, respectively. The board heads into 2020 fresh off of a highly successful 2019 which saw great progress both as a board and across all schools. From increases in student performance to recognition for the work the board has completed toward unified governance, there is a high level of momentum and support to keep pushing the board and school system to even greater heights to start the new decade.



## Employee Compensation Profile

Chief Officers Valerie Suessmith (Human Resources) and Christy Willis (Finance) presented before the board progress to develop a compensation profile for all employees in the district. This compensation profile is being constructed in an effort to demonstrate the financial investment made by the Board of Education. Henry County Schools spends roughly 90% of its general operating budget on salaries and benefits. What is often forgotten for employees are all of the extra benefits, such as health insurance, social security, and pension plan payments. Beyond that, there are other benefits, that when totaled, take the financial commitment to employees well beyond their monthly income.



Board Chair Josh Hinton stated, "I am so glad that this profile is on the horizon for our employees. As a board member, there are numbers that we look at behind the scenes that the public doesn't always get to see, and I'm glad that people will be able to see all that is considered to support our employees."



## Code of Conduct Review

Chief Leadership Officer Kirk Shrum presented before the board information on the Code of Conduct review process. This annual review process ensures that this important guide for our students and school community is up to date with all of the latest modifications to any current laws or the introduction of new laws. There are three important steps in this review process:



### Annual Review Process



- Phase 1: December-February - Stakeholder Feedback
- Phase 2: March - Revised Code of Conduct Available for Stakeholder Review
- Phase 3: April - Board of Education Presentation

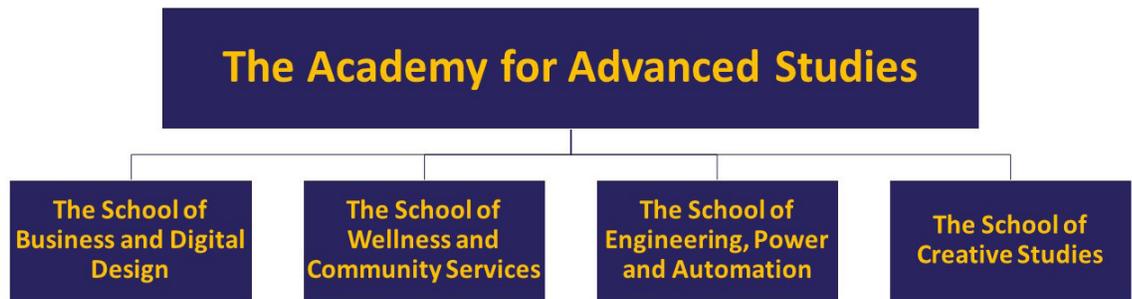
1. Stakeholder feedback - The current Code of Conduct will be reviewed by the legal team and various review committees before providing a revised document for further public consumption.
2. Revision presentation - The revised Code of Conduct will be shared with board members in March and additional time will be given to the community to review all modifications.
3. Final Approval - The Code of Conduct will be shared one final time with board members, and will include the recommendation of approval based on the presented version being inclusive of all necessary changes and suggestions from those stakeholders who shared feedback.

## Academy for Advanced Studies – Future Planning

Melissa Morse, Chief Learning & Performance Officer, presented the board with information regarding the future planning for the Academy for Advanced Studies. This work of future planning is done with direction from the board in partnership with the Academy for Advanced Studies Board of Directors. Through unified focus and shared meeting opportunities, both boards have been able to work in tandem to ensure the district’s career academy is moving in the right direction to meet the needs of a school community that continues to show strong and increased interest in all it can provide to students.

Through a meeting in June of 2019, three themes emerged for the boards as they looked to the future of growth for the academy. The themes were: 1) enhancement of the academic design, 2) increased exposure and involvement of middle school students, and 3) opportunities for adult learning.

Regarding the academic design, Morse detailed the recommendation of the staff that the academy redesign its academic offerings into schools of focus under the umbrella of the academy. Much in the same way colleges have contextual environments (i.e. School of Business), the academy would utilize a similar structure for its different courses. The proposed schools are as follows:



The development of these schools, along with the coursework for the various pathways offered under each, must involve a strong focus on academic design, partnerships with higher-education and industry officials, and provide outcomes to meet the expectations of students.

When exploring the opportunities for increased exposure of the Academy for Advanced Studies to middle school students, one idea generated was that of the Junior Achievement program potentially having an operation at the academy. Junior Achievement of Georgia has a focus of bringing relevance to academics through authentic learning experiences forged in an immersive learning environment. One of their more commonly known offerings is the Discovery Center where students get this immersive learning opportunity through a miniature city simulation in an effort to work through real-world business and life scenarios.



The final theme addressed by Morse included thoughts and ideas around opportunities for adult learning. She reviewed options such as: the use of lab space for high-skill job training, evening or weekend classes, community classes & certification, and further partnerships with Southern Crescent Technical College.



Board members were able to share their thoughts on the presentation and the outlook on the future of the academy.

“I’m really excited about the future of our academy and how proud I am to have it in our community,” said Board Vice-Chair Holly Cobb. “I wish I had these opportunities when I was a student.”

District 1 Member Dr. Pam Nutt reflected on the inception of the academy and its growth.

“We started very slow with this years ago with only a couple of wings at the former Henry County High School,” noted Nutt. “Fast forward to today, and now we have a free-standing building with more pathways than we could have imagined at the time. The sky is the limit. It’s wonderful to see that there is more out there for our community through our academy.”

### District Strategic Plan Update

In an effort to keep the community informed of the current strategic planning process, Chief of Staff Dr. Carl Knowlton provided updates to this process as it continues across the district. His presentation reviewed the four phases of the planning process, which included particular focus on Phase 2, the phase in which the district is currently engaged. Superintendent Davis highlighted the many meetings that have and continue to take place to generate themes from the community for priority student outcomes and priority strategic themes. There are meetings at all 50 school councils, all 50 school faculty meetings, and multiple meetings with community members at various schools across the district.

Superintendent Davis also highlighted the journey of the district to this planning process. This included reflection on the development of the strategic priorities not long after her entry into the district. This was followed by a status report to update the community on the progress around these strategic priorities. The focus now shifts to the development of the district’s strategic plan for the next five to ten years.

Board Member Sophe Pope shared her appreciation for the involvement of the community in the process.

“I want to emphasize my appreciation for the community being a part of this conversation,” said Pope. “Thank you to all the members of the community who are participating. I think this is absolutely essential to our success.”

### Setting the Course





## Comprehensive Policy Review Update & December Recommendation Action

Dr. Knowlton continued his monthly presentation before the board pertaining to the ongoing comprehensive policy review being conducted by the Georgia School Boards Association. The GSBA analysis includes examining all 170 current Henry County BOE policies to see which ones are required by state law or the state board of education, those that are specific to local action, and those not required at all. Repeal or not required (outdated, laws changed, better served in a regulation or exhibit)

The latest recommendations from GSBA centered on 30 different policies that will be put before the public for their review of the noted modifications. Throughout the review, the policies presented will be put into one of three categories:

- Repeal or not required (Due to policy being outdated, laws changing, or it could better served in a regulation or exhibit.)
- Retain with revisions (Due to changes in laws or local practices.)
- Retain with no changes (Due to policy being sufficient in its current form.)

The local board will consider the recommendation and all public comments as they move forward in the process. The board will continue this review of recommendations in upcoming meetings and take action as needed until all policies are examined. A review of the policies up for review can be found here.

The recommendations for the slate of policies presented during December’s board meetings were unanimously approved.

### Other Agenda Items

The following business items were also unanimously approved as a part of the consent agenda for the evening meeting:

- Network Equipment Upgrade - The purpose of this project is to replace aging network equipment in school data closets supporting school-wide network connectivity. This pertains to switching and routing equipment. This expands capacity and increases security for our district.
- Professional Learning Agreement - CT3 will provide technical assistance to support the ongoing work of developing school-based and district leaders to create and implement a coaching cycle for continuous improvement centered on improving instruction, leadership, and culture in schools.
- Community Use of School Facilities - A request from Bride Lake Productions to use Patrick Henry High Schools was submitted for the purpose of filming.

### Leadership on the Move

Name	New Position/Location	Former Position/Location
Catina Fenner	Title IX Investigator Legal Compliance	Assistant Commissioner Ga Dept. of Juvenile Justice
Reed Lukat	PAC Manager Performing Arts Center	Band/Choir Teacher McDonough Middle School



Awards and Recognition for Students and Staff



**EXPECT** *Exceptional*



## Awards and Recognition for Students and Staff



**HENRY**  
COUNTY SCHOOLS



## Board Member Remarks



**Dr. Pam Nutt**  
District 1

Dr. Nutt started by highlighting McDonough High School for one of their students going to All-State 2020 Vision at Columbus St. University. Varsity Boys Basketball team from McDonough High School was recognized for winning the Chuck Miller Classic. Luella High School's 9th Grade boys basketball team won the county championship and the girls varsity basketball team won the Tampa Bay Christmas Tournament. McDonough High School invited everyone to their Taste of Electives Night on January 23rd. New Hope Elementary was applauded for hosting a canned food drive to support the Veterans' Support Center. Unity Grove ES was named a Beating the Odds school for their performance on the CCRPI. Rock Springs Elementary was recognized for hosting the Lego Competition.



**Josh Hinton**  
Board Chair  
District 2

Mr. Hinton congratulated Pate's Creek Elementary for two of their students winning the recent Poetry Recitation at the local competition - Shania Reed and Joseph Bui. They also had Zemirah Mishler win for writing. The Singers from Dutchtown HS performed recently around the metro area, including Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta First Day, and their sister school, Dutchtown Middle School. Dutchtown HS students had 68 students audition for the opportunity to participate in the District Honor Band. A total of 25 musicians earned a spot in the 2nd round of the All-State Band competition. He closed his remarks by welcoming the new employees to the district and he thanked our law enforcement partners.



**Holly Cobb**  
Board Vice Chair  
District 3

Mrs. Cobb shared congrats to UGHS for their Beating the Odds designation based on their CCRPI performance. Hickory Flat Elementary hosted its Innovation Station Parent & Community Night with a successful showcase of student work. Ola HS was congratulated for its Ola Over Broadway performance this month, too.



**Sophie Pope**  
District 4

Mrs. Pope noted that Flippen Elementary received a free library from Fathers Inc and the Real Dads Read Foundation. Union Grove HS student Kathryn Kadima received a nomination from Congressman Jody Hice for an appointment to a US Military Academy. Woodland HS seniors Madison Warren and Phu Nguyen received the prestigious POSSE scholarships to attend Texas A&M and Bard College tuition-free. Law enforcement appreciation day was also noted by Mrs. Pope and our law enforcement partners were thanked for their service.



**Annette Edwards**  
District 5

Mrs. Edwards started by recognizing Stockbridge Elementary and Middle school for receiving the Heritage Award for Excellence in Literacy from the City of Stockbridge. The award will be presented at the 9th Annual African American Heritage Celebration in February. Woodland Middle School was one of 15 schools in the metro area chosen for students to participate in the King-Celebrate Difference Student Leadership Development Conference. Fifteen students will be participating in the conference.



**Mary Elizabeth Davis**  
Superintendent

Supt. Davis shared a Happy New Year with the community. She also acknowledged Law Enforcement Appreciation Day and thanked SROs for their work. She also shared that Fairview Elementary was added to the list of Title I Reward Schools by the GaDOE. She noted the upcoming recognition of MLK Day on next Monday and thanked the participation of students and staff taking part in celebrations on this special day. She also recognized a newly appointed administrative team member, Catina Fenner, to the post of Title IX Investigator.