

## Superintendent's Message

Walter R. Clemons, Ph.D.

October 7, 2016

Dear Gloucester County Community:

Gloucester County Public Schools has gotten off to an outstanding start in the 2016-2017 school year. I want to personally thank all faculty and staff, students, parents and the entire community for your efforts as we continuously strive for excellence in all that we do. To that end, there have been some exciting things happening in the school district that I would like to share with the community at this time.

Academic results from the spring 2016 Standards of Learning Assessments remain strong with seven of our schools earning "Full Accreditation" status. In addition, we have made tremendous academic gains over the past two years with increases in student performance in 26 of 31 reporting categories. As always, we will continue to move forward to even higher levels of academic excellence. Please visit the GCPS website homepage under "Division Calendars/Information" and click on GCPS Division & School Report Cards for more detailed information on each school and the division. I am also pleased to announce that Gloucester County Public Schools has just received a security grant award from the Virginia Department of Education in the amount of \$78,877. These funds will go towards continuing our security upgrades at our schools.

We have added seventy-eight (professional and support) new staff members (full-time & part-time) to the Gloucester County Public Schools family for the 2016–2017 school year and we are extremely excited to have them as part of our team. We also have four new principals which are as follow: Mrs. Anna Harwood (Abingdon Elementary, formerly an assistant principal at Petsworth Elementary); Mrs. Felicia Hudgins (Botetourt Elementary, formerly an assistant principal at Botetourt Elementary); Dr. Patricia McMahon (Page Middle, new to GCPS) and Mr. Craig Reed (Peasley Middle, new to GCPS). In addition, we have selected two new assistant principals which are as follow: Mrs. Elizabeth Galbreath (new to GCPS) for Petsworth Elementary & Mrs. Katharine Litton (formerly an 8<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher at Page Middle) for Peasley Middle. Also, Mrs. Jodie Simpson has transitioned from the assistant principal's position at Peasley Middle to the assistant principal's position at Botetourt Elementary.

As a follow-up from my last message in July, we are moving forward in the GHS "Master Plan Study" process with a screening of an influential educational documentary film entitled "Most Likely to Succeed", as well as an opportunity for reflection and discussion of next steps. Again, we feel the time is right to take advantage of this state and national interest and begin the

important community conversation about the promising potential for Gloucester High School and its importance as a social, cultural, and developmental cornerstone of Gloucester County. The screening will occur on November 28, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at Gloucester High School. Additional information about this exciting event will also be forthcoming in the near future.

Finally, I encourage you to support the Gloucester County Educational Foundation as plans for the annual 3K Walk/8K Run which will be held on February 18, 2017 are now underway. Your contributions will be greatly appreciated as the Educational Foundation provides scholarships for students, mini-grants for teachers and sponsors our annual Teacher of the Year program. I also encourage you to join and support the various parent/teacher associations/organizations. All of these organizations are extremely vital to the school division and provide support in various areas including grants, awards, fundraisers, materials and supplies, equipment and other incentives. In addition, please take a moment to thank our faculty and staff when you see them for the wonderful job they do with our students each and every day. Your participation, support and involvement is greatly welcomed and appreciated. In closing, I look forward to continuously working with all community stakeholders and I sincerely thank you for your time.