August 4, 2016

For Immediate Release:

**BOARD HEARS CURRICULUM AUDIT RESULTS**

Griffin-Spalding County School System Board of Education commissioned a curriculum audit which was conducted from February 22-25, 2016. Findings in the curriculum audit identify gaps in the district/school program. A curriculum audit is an exceptions report. It does not give an overall view of the system or what is being done well.

Lead auditor Dr. Eve Proffitt summarized the 433-page report for board members as well as school and district administrators. In her presentation she outlined for the Board how a system of standards is used to compare our district with expectations of outstanding programs. Specifically she expressed to the board a need for revision and expansion of board policies relevant to instruction.

Standard audit practice is that the superintendent and the district’s board of education receive an audit but they do not accept or approve it. After review of the audit report, the board requests the response of its superintendent on the audit recommendations. When the superintendent’s response is received, the board makes a determination regarding how it will act on the recommendations.

“I am excited to receive the results of the curriculum audit we requested and to begin the process of turning recommendations into actionable steps for improving our processes and programs. The system recently completed design of a five-year strategic plan covering the years 2016-2021. The curriculum audit was part of the strategic plan and will form the basis of many improvement strategies,’ stated Superintendent Jim Smith.

“Administrators are reviewing the 10 recommendations set forth in the audit and will create a plan to incorporate these recommendations into the new strategic plan,” said Jim Smith, superintendent. “I expect we will begin with policies in year 1 and appoint work groups to study and create an implementation of the other recommendations,” he added.

“The curriculum audit recommendations will be long-term change,” said Smith. “By incorporating these recommendations into the strategic plan we can ensure we are working toward student success.”

 A curriculum audit is an independent examination designed to reveal the extent to which officials and professional staff of a school district have developed and implemented a sound, valid and operational system of curriculum management. The audit looked at how the school district: demonstrates its control of resources, programs and personnel; established clear and valid objectives for students; demonstrates internal consistency and rational equity in its program development and implementation; uses the results from district-designed or –adopted assessments to adjust, improve or terminate ineffective practices or programs; and improved productivity. Visits were made to every school and most classrooms and curriculum materials were reviewed. Personal interviews with staff were also held. GSCS was reviewed against a set of universal standards.

GSCS requested the audit as a launching point for initiatives included in the new five-year strategic plan.

The 10 recommendations are:

1. Review, revise, adopt and implement board policies to provide for a sound system of curriculum management and control;
2. Revise, adopt and implement a table of organization with corresponding written job descriptions that will provide sound management of the GSCS with focus on the design and delivery of quality curriculum and programming to assist in attaining higher achievement for all students;
3. Initiate efforts to incorporate planning for all functions under the umbrella of the comprehensive planning process to ensure linkage of organizations efforts and to support shared purpose. Review and revise the strategic plan, technology plan and facilities plan to meet audit criteria;
4. Develop and implement a comprehensive curriculum management plan to provide system-wide direction for the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum;
5. Develop a comprehensive student assessment and program evaluation system that provides for the systematic collection, analysis, dissemination and use of data to monitor the effectiveness of the district’s programs and practices at all levels, ranging from the academic progress of individual students to the long-term effectiveness of district-wide programs and goals;
6. Establish procedures for formal monitoring of district instructional practices to promote consistency across all levels of the school district. Provide training in curriculum and instruction monitoring for elementary and secondary administrators;
7. Develop and implement both short-term and long-range strategies that will identify and eliminate disparities and inequities affecting students’ learning success in all schools;
8. Develop a district professional learning plan that incorporates emphasis on growth in curriculum, design, writing and delivery; effective classroom strategies to engage the variety of learners and skilled data use for instructional and curricular decision making;
9. Design and implement a comprehensive, curriculum-driven budget process that links resources to instructional priorities to enhance student achievement;
10. Develop and implement a system for selecting, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating program interventions.

# # # # #