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News Release

For Immediate Release

November 6, 2018

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Board of Education hears report from School Safety Committee

At its November 6 work session, the Fulton County Board of Education received a report from the district's School Safety Committee. The committee was created in July of this year in response to national safety incidents as a way for the district to examine ways that further improve school safety.

"We believe that Fulton County Schools has some of the most progressive procedures and processes when it comes to school safety," said Dr. Shannon Flounnory, Executive Director of Safety & Security. "But as good as that is, we value the unique perspectives of this committee, as well as the opportunity to receive community input, on how we can get even better."

The committee is a cross-functional team of 26 school system leaders, partners and experts from Fulton's public safety community, and parent representatives from each school board district. They met four times in August and September to review the district's current systems, including processes and protocols, and to identify opportunities for improvements and possible investments that would increase safety.

Dr. Flounnory presented the committee's initial recommendations, which include hiring 16 additional school police officers to serve the district's four learning communities and providing appropriate support equipment. Police officers already are in place at each middle and high school campus, but the expansion of officers allows four additional officers to patrol each learning community, including frequent visits to elementary schools, and be available for any situation that arises.

Other recommended investments include 10 campus security associate positions – non-sworn personnel that assist in securing schools and buildings – moving under the FCS Department of Safety & Security where they can assist with monitoring video surveillance systems around the district during the school day and after hours.

Wesley McCall, Deputy Director of Public Safety for the Alpharetta Police Department, served on the committee and shared his views with the school board.

"Everyone had the same goal – to improve the safety of the students and staff. No one ever took the opportunity to interject their own agenda, but took the time to listen and learn from what others had to say. It was very professional and mission focused," said McCall. "I hope this is just the start of several future courageous conversations about school safety."

The committee also recommended adopting resources for an online mental health resource center. Already in use in many large school districts with similarities to Fulton County, the websites provide 24/7 access to videos and other resources for students and families suffering from depression, suicidal ideation, bullying, peer

pressure and other mental health issues. The resources don't replace counselors or other mental health professionals, but instead provide an alternate way to provide support to students and staff.

The total investments recommended are:

Recommendations	Capital Fund/One Time	General Fund
16 Additional School Police Officers		\$1,210,844 (R)
Police Equipment for 16 Officer Positions (uniforms, duty gear, radios, etc.)	\$130,000 (O)	\$18,800 (R)
Police Vehicles for 16 Officer Positions		\$560,000 (O)
10 Campus Security Associates		\$311,300 (R)
Online Mental Health Resource Center	\$100,000 (O)	\$50,000 (R)
Total	\$790,000	\$1,590,944
<i>O = One-Time Investment R = Recurring Investment</i>		

The school board is expected to vote on these recommendations at its Thursday, November 15, meeting for possible inclusion in the current year's budget.

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About the Fulton County School System. The Fulton County School System is the fourth largest school system in Georgia. More than 95,000 students attend 106 schools in the cities of Alpharetta, Chattahoochee Hills, College Park, East Point, Fairburn, Hapeville, Johns Creek, Milton, Mountain Park, Palmetto, Roswell, Sandy Springs, South Fulton and Union City.