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Chesterfield County School Board Business Meeting, Tuesday, October 14, 2025

Date Tuesday, October 14, 2025
Place Chesterfield County School Board, Virginia
Length 2h 11m (video)

- Official meeting video (Swagit): <https://chesterfieldschoolsva.new.swagit.com/videos/358054>
- Official minutes (BoardDocs, on the Nov 12, 2025 agenda for approval): [https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/chesterfield/Board.nsf/pfiles/DN4Q5Q67A713/\\$file/DRAFT%20MINUTES%20-%202025.10.14%20Business%20Meeting.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/chesterfield/Board.nsf/pfiles/DN4Q5Q67A713/$file/DRAFT%20MINUTES%20-%202025.10.14%20Business%20Meeting.pdf)

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-24. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:00] carries. Good evening, everyone. I'd like to call the October 14th, 2025 School Board Business Meeting to order. Before we begin the meeting this evening, I would like to thank everyone for attending the October 14th School Board Business Meeting and remind the audience that comments to this board may only be made at the podium during the public comment period. Comments from the audience are prohibited and are in violation of section 18.2-415 of the Code of Virginia, Disorderly Conduct in Public Places, and School Board Policy 6141. I appreciate everyone's patience

[00:00:39] and understanding so that we can conduct the business meeting in an orderly fashion. We will now have Invocation by Mrs. Chatters, followed by Flag Salute, led by Mrs. Hudgens. I'll be reading a poem called The Slip and the Rise.

[00:00:57] I missed a step, the note went wrong, the silent cut, though brief, not long. The crowd looked on, their brows a-frown, as if my shine had tumbled down. Yet even stars will dim, then blaze, a flicker cannot end their days.

[00:01:17] A stumble shows the path I take to rise again from one mistake. I breathe, I move, I find my place. The rhythm lifts, I match its pace. For greatness isn't flawless art, it's courage beating in the heart.

[00:01:36] So when the curtains close, they'll see instead, not where I slipped, but where I led. A spark that turned my flaws to flame and lit the stage with a brighter name. Please join us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

[00:02:19] Tonight's consent agenda includes agenda adoption, approval of the minutes from our September 9, 2025 work session, September 9, 2025 business meeting, September 19, 2025 special meeting, and September 23, 2025 special meeting.

[00:02:38] memo number 135-25 recommended personnel actions memo number 136-25 acceptance of donations memo number 137-25 deed of gift for storage shed at midlothian high school memo number 138-25 approval of the chesterfield county school board chesterfield county police department memorandum of understanding memo number 139-25 correction to ccps memorandum number 103-25

[00:03:14] approved on august 12th 2025 review and approval of fy 2026 tuition rates for non-resident students and memo number 148-25 appointment of members to school board advisory committees are there any additions or corrections to the consent agenda. Madam Chair, there are no additions or corrections to the consent agenda. Are there any requests from a school board member to separate an item from the consent agenda for discussion and individual action? Hearing none, may I have a

[00:03:49] motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. I make a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Is there a second? Second. Madam Clerk, would you please call roll on the motion? Dominique Chatters. Aye. Stephen Pronto. Aye. Lisa Hudgens.

[00:04:04] Aye. Ann Coker. Aye. The motion carries. Next, we have awards and recognitions. Mr. Smith. Thank you, Madam Chair and board members. If I could first call up the Manchester High School students.

[00:04:38] Manchester High School students won top awards in the Virginia High School League Film Festival. It took place at the end of the 24-25 school year. First place in experimental films for Mesh, directed by Chloe Lawson and Sierra Lackert. First place in narrative films for To All Ends.

[00:04:54] directed by Ben Armstrong and Gideon Bradner, second place plus audience choice award in public service announcements for Memories, directed by Valentino Margantini Toscano. Christopher Okamoro teaches video production at Manchester High, which had a total of seven films selected for the statewide film competition.

[00:05:15] Flood won second place in experimental films, Catalyst won third in narrative films, Paul Brawl won sixth place in animation, and Yearbook won sixth in public service announcements. Please don't be congratulating these students.

[00:05:37] Well, first of all, I have to say, you make all of us proud. So congratulations, especially with Manchester High School. Not surprised coming out of Manchester. Fantastic news to hear of your accomplishments. And what you do, there's a lot of work that goes into that.

[00:05:53] There's a lot of behind-the-scenes stuff that we see the finished product, right, which only lasts so long, but the amount of time that you spent creating that, to me, is really where the rubber meets the road. And so I'd like to find out from each of you, if you want, what is that passion that drives you to put that work in so that you have the finished product that you have?

[00:06:18] Okay. Wait, what? Okay, my bad. I really can't put a word to it. I don't know exactly what it is. I think it's just unbridled creativity that keeps me going.

[00:06:40] And I liked it so much that right now I'm pursuing cinema at BCU. And I definitely wouldn't have had that without all the stuff that I got from Mr. O and all the other teachers that helped me in Manchester, MassCom, anything like that.

[00:07:00] Yes, for me, I am a storyteller at heart. I've been making videos for as long as I can think of. So filmmaking with short films is just the new medium that I'm able to express my stories, the ideas I want to share with people in. And it is thanks to Mass Communication Specialty Centers at Manchester and also the film team that I'm able to have an avenue to pursue my dreams and hopes.

[00:07:29] For me, it's stemming from a passion for photography. It's something that I want to pursue in the upcoming future. And thanks to Mass Communication and Mr. Okomoro, I'm able to pursue that through the film team and create short films that I'm proud to call my own.

[00:07:51] Yeah, I mean, I personally want to thank Mr. O, especially, right? But, I mean, I think I just really love putting work out there for people to enjoy, and it drives me to make more and more. And that's really why I do it, is for you guys to have you enjoy what you do and to watch me.

[00:08:09] And, yeah, thank you.

[00:08:21] Now, before you go, I just want to let you know, the reason we ask the questions, especially of our students, is an opportunity for you to hear something that you may not know that's going on, and to hear it straight from them and their passion, I think, is extremely important and motivating for others as well.

[00:08:39] I'm not a betting person, but if I was, I would say probably in the next five, six, if not that, shorter time, when we see credits after a movie, we'll probably see your name. We'll probably see your name. Congratulations. Next up, we have our recognition for the National PTA Schools of Excellence.

[00:09:41] Moseley Elementary, Spring Run Elementary, and Salem Church Middle have been named National PTA Schools of Excellence for 24-26. This designation celebrates strong partnerships between local PTAs and their schools that enrich the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.

[00:09:57] Across the United States, only 330 PTAs and schools achieved this designation for 24-26. Please join me in congratulating these schools and these PTAs. So I get to give out this award because I think I'm the PTA mom on the board, right?

[00:10:20] I started in PTA, and my heart is always with PTAs. And so I understand the work, the volunteer work, the unpaid volunteer work that goes into making sure that we're taking care of our students and our faculty and our staff and loving on them every day.

[00:10:39] And I know it's a thankless job. So this right here means that we are beyond stellar, and I am super proud. Special nod to one of my schools on the list, Salem. Thank you so much. And I want, I'm going to give the bag to the PTA presidents right here.

[00:10:57] Have you raised your hand? Are they PTA president? PTA president number three. So I'll start over here. I do a shameless plug about PTA every time I go speak, right? So you can do the plug for me and tell them why they should be part of PTA.

[00:11:15] So, PTSA. We're a special network of PTSA, so the students hold membership in our organization. It's so important because it fosters a sense of community between the school, the families, the students.

[00:11:31] We also have student ambassadors at our school, which represent the PTSA, and get to speak to their peers and advocate on their behalf. And it's a wonderful thing to join just because the money that you put in through membership goes 100% back into the school, into the community into events into supporting our teachers and that's why we do what we do we love it so much and we think you should always join the pta hi spring run elementary um she pretty much took my answer um why should you join the pta um personally i believe that at such a

[00:12:09] young age for our children um it is important for their parents to be involved it is important for them to see their parents be involved in the school I believe that if a parent is involved with the school their child will succeed will succeed so yeah that's my answer hello I will say ditto and ditto and then I also will speak I feel our PTA we go a step above with our staff

[00:12:42] I know teachers and staff and in Chesterfield County are the top in my opinion in the world um but also it's a thankless job a lot of days and just when we bring a little snack cart we bring you know just a little treat every month things like that just make their day and you know they walk around happy and then they that goes back to our kids so that's what we like to do it mostly thank you you can go there and i'll make one shameless plug that they didn't mention you do not have to be a parent at the school to join the pta or the pta so if you have free time on your

[00:13:22] hands, you like helping children, you want to donate back to the school, you can join as a community partner. And that's even more important because we need those as well. So you can reach out to County Council PTA to get your way in or reach out to the school closest to you. That is my

[00:13:40] plug. Next up, we have our Mirror Me program recognition. The Mirror Me program recruits and

[00:14:40] supports a diverse future teaching workforce by increasing the number of minority educators, reshaping perceptions of hiring practices, and elevating the value of the teaching profession. Funded by the Chesterfield Education Foundation and offered in partnership with Bright Point Community College, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Virginia State University, Mirror Me provides CCBS juniors and seniors with a pathway to education degrees and supports college students at these institutions who are committed to teach in Chesterfield County Public Schools.

[00:15:06] Mirror Me recently accepted its fourth cohort of students, Esperanza, Elvarado, Gomesindo, Meadowbrook High School, Ashley Butler and James Oliver, Brightbrook Community College, and Sydney Nutter, Virginia Commonwealth University. Additionally, Mirror Me program graduate Ebony Moore was hired at Reams Road Elementary this year, and two other participants are on track to graduate and earn their teaching credentials by fall of 2026. This would not be possible for our partnering organizations at the Churchill Education Foundation, Virginia School for VCU School for Education, VSU College of Education, and Brightbrook Department of Education.

[00:15:45] Please join me in congratulating these participants and the program. Okay, I can't do this and hand this out. Oh, thank you, darling. Congratulations.

[00:16:01] This is incredible. This program is impactful on so many levels. You guys are, I see all these smiling stars. You all are amazing. I would love to have everyone say something, but in particular, the students, the people who are teachers-to-be or are already teachers.

[00:16:25] Tell us what drew you to it and what you, I don't know, what you expect. What drew me to the program was my love for children. I currently work for CCPS as an IA in one of the special education classrooms, early childhood, at CECLA.

[00:16:45] And so doing that has really grown my love for the children, and I love working for the county. This is my second year, and I love it. I love working at STICLA, and I hope to be a teacher there in a few. - Hi, I'm here representing actually one of the mentors, and what drew me is that this is my 29th year in this wonderful county, and I have always wanted to see an increase in minority representation in our teaching staff, so I'm committed to it all the way.

[00:17:14] - Hi, what drew me into me was my desire to make a meaningful change in the development of children through however way I can, as meaningful as teachers are. Something that drew me to mirror me was definitely wanting to see more teachers that look like me in the classroom, because growing up, I didn't really have minority teachers, and also my love for children and my passion for teaching, and I want to bring my passion back into the classroom.

[00:17:51] I'm a teacher of the teacher of the students, actually. I teach at the courthouse location, and I teach teachers for tomorrow. When Mr. Russell asked me to be the teacher for teachers tomorrow during COVID, I have returned back to my passion, making a long story short, but it's a poignant story.

[00:18:16] When I returned back to the Tech Center, which was my first career in Chesterfield County as a career switcher 20 plus years ago, I did not know how to be a teacher. I was at Monacan High School and the students there took me under their wing and cultivated me on becoming a teacher.

[00:18:36] They said, Ms. Kay, you got this. We're going to teach you how to be a teacher. And from that point, I became a good teacher. They kicked me out, the students from Monacan High School. They said, Ms. Kay, it's time for you to go on to something else in Chesterfield.

[00:18:51] I said, well, what should I do next? You need to be a guidance counselor. I said, why do I need to be a guidance counselor? Because you're always giving us so much guidance and direction of what to do after we graduate from high school. I listened to them. I went back.

[00:19:07] I got in my endorsement. I went down to middle school for a while so that I can learn the gambit of middle school, which I passionately loved. And then I got a phone call from HR. I said, Ms. Kay, we need you to go back to high school. I said, no, please. And so they gave me the opportunity to return back to high school at one of my schools that I'm very passionate about, Thomas Dale.

[00:19:31] At Thomas Dale, I served as a school counselor for years there. And one day, my students came into my office in variable degrees, and they said, Miss Kay, it's time for you to leave. And I said, are you kicking me out? They said, yes, it's time for you to go again.

[00:19:47] And I said, well, where am I going now? They said, it's time for you to return back to career and technical education. So make a long story short, I then went back to the tech center. Mr. Russell asked me during COVID, would you mind teaching teachers for tomorrow?

[00:20:03] I was ecstatic because at this venture in my career, it's the coup de grace of gifting back everything that the students gave me. so that I can pass the baton, so that they become the next teachers for tomorrow. So Savannah is one of my lamb chops.

[00:20:21] And if you hear students throughout the county say, I was Miss Kay's lamb chop, that is correct. And forever will they always be my lamb chops, because I am their shepherd to take care of them. Hi, I'm Ebony.

[00:20:41] I just recently graduated from VCU as of May 2025, and I'm currently teaching at Reams Road Elementary in 3rd grade. What drew me into the program is that I wanted to see more people of color in Chesterfield County Schools.

[00:20:56] I'm a third-generation teacher, so this was something that's in my blood, I'm very passionate about, and I am so happy. I just want to say thank you to Dr. Weatherford and Dr. Hill for supporting me throughout this journey. It's been amazing. Thank you. Ebony is a superstar. Every time she speaks, I don't want the mics, but here I am.

[00:21:15] So I thank you all for having us and for recognizing Mirror Me here today. I just want to share that Mirror Me is more than a pipeline. It's a reflection of our values in CCPS. When our students see teachers who reflect their identities, language, and their life experiences, they see new possibilities in themselves.

[00:21:33] Research tells us that having even one teacher of color can increase a student's engagement, confidence, and likelihood of graduating. That's the kind of lasting impact we aim to multiply through Mirror Me. The program's potential reaches beyond individual classrooms. It strengthens our profession by nurturing educators who are deeply rooted in their communities, committed to equity and belonging and excellence for every child.

[00:21:55] It also strengthens our school division by ensuring that our workforce reflects the diversity, creativity, and the promise of the students we serve. With the continued support of the Chesterfield Education Foundation, our higher education partners, and this board, Mirror Me hopes to continue to grow each year, transforming opportunity into action and inspiration into impact.

[00:22:14] Because when our students can see themselves and their teachers, they could begin to see themselves anywhere. Thank you all. Thank you so much. Good job. If I could ask our representatives from Cornerstone Assembly of God, the greater is from YMCA, Cheshire County Community Engagement Resources, and Cheshire County Public Library to come forward this time.

[00:23:00] The work of Cheshire County Public Schools teachers and staff members demonstrates the uplifting power of education in our community.

[00:23:18] But our school division cannot do this alone, and we do not operate in isolation as we work to educate 64,000-plus students and help them find their path to success. Our schools are robustly supported by community organizations, businesses, and individuals who support us and work with us in partnership.

[00:23:34] Tonight, we recognize four local organizations for their generous support of our Participate Learning teachers. Cornerstone Assembly of God, Greater Richmond YMCA, Chesterfield County Community Engagement and Resources, and the Chesterfield County Public Library. This is the third year

that Participate Learning teachers have traveled across the globe to work in our school division and live in our community.

[00:23:55] During the teachers' first days in Chesterfield, these four organizations opened their doors to host welcoming dinners, and these gatherings provided friendship, resources, and meaningful connections. By surrounding our teachers with hospitality and care, these organizations helped ease the challenges of relocation and affirm the value of our community.

[00:24:11] Please join me in thanking and congratulating these four organizations. The Chesterfield County Community Engagement and Resources. Can you raise your hand, please? That's for you. Thank you.

[00:24:30] Chesterfield County Public Library. Thank you so much. YMCA of Greater Richmond, all three of you. And last, but certainly not least, Cornerstone Assembly of God.

[00:24:55] There's a saying that it takes a village, right, to raise a child. And what you're doing is that very thing. And you're living it out. And you're leading others to live that out as well. Because without our community, we would not be as great as we are and getting better in Chesterfield County if we did not have the support from our library, from our churches, From organizations, from nonprofits, without you, we can't be who we are.

[00:25:25] And so on behalf of the Chester County School Board, thank you so much for what you do for us, for our teachers, and for our students. Small token appreciation, right? You deserve that, the hand claps, and much more. We just greatly appreciate each and every one of you and your organization.

[00:25:43] So thank you for being here. And real quick, real quick, I would like to know, what is it about what you do that drives you to help Chesterfield County Public Schools, if you'd like to? Well, being a participate teacher myself, I dearly appreciate everything you do for us.

[00:26:07] Because coming from a country and leaving all your things, your family and everything behind, and come to a new place where you don't know anybody, and then they open their arms and welcome you into their community, really, really make us feel at home.

[00:26:26] And certainly Cornerstone and Danielle with the YMCA, they make us feel like home. Thank you. - Being with the public library, we get the opportunity to work with learners from birth to 99 plus.

[00:26:47] The schools get students from K to 12th grade, but having the opportunity to engage with the schools helps ensure that we maintain connections with students after they leave school and help commit them to being lifelong learners.

[00:27:05] Well, from the YMCA, our mission statement is to put Christian principles into action to create programs that create healthy spirit minds and bodies for all.

[00:27:21] I'm proud of that. And so that's what we do, right? We try to make sure that everybody that comes to our community feels like they belong. And so this recognition is for the whole entire association. And on behalf of the association, we really wanted to say that we're grateful to be here. We're going to continue to do the work.

[00:27:37] And then this is something that is just beginning. And we can't wait. We work with Cornerstone. I'm so happy to have my friends here. And we can all get to be recognized in a way. But also reminds me, as I was sitting there, being grateful and also to the board.

[00:27:54] You guys are doing a great job, and I know the work is tough, and a lot of people may not see some of the things that go on, but I think that being able to interact with the teachers, the people that come from other places of the world, and to be here, it's a life-changing experience for a lot of them.

[00:28:10] And you may not be able to realize that, but the work that the county is doing, the work that the school board is doing, and everyone else, Juan and Amy and everybody that's part of that, it's life-changing for a lot of people.

[00:28:26] And I could sit here and tell you hundreds of stories, but I'm going to leave it at that. I'm here representing Chesterfield County Community Engagement and Resources, and I want to begin by thanking Amy Barlotti for bringing us into this opportunity to be a welcoming space to our international teachers.

[00:28:48] And I will just keep it short and say that what inspires me to do this work is, you know, I'm a proud graduate of Chesterfield County Public Schools. I graduated from the Midbrook High School, which is one of the most diverse high schools. And so we're grateful for the opportunity to just provide a welcoming dinner, a welcoming space, knowing that these are the teachers that bring a global perspective to our classrooms.

[00:29:12] So thank you so much to Amy Bartolotti and the entire Chesterfield public schools team for inviting us into your work. Well, on behalf of Stone, we are so grateful for the leadership of our school system.

[00:29:32] And we applaud and appreciate the vision to bring the richness of the nations into our community. And with the school system that speaks over languages in their homes, what a joy to bring different teachers, the culture from around the world to our school system to make even better citizens for the future.

[00:29:56] So thank you so much. It's our joy to support your vision, and we're grateful for it. Thank you all very much for coming out. Greatly appreciate you. Thank you. Next, we have the recognition of outstanding drivers, Dr. Fry.

[00:30:22] Good evening, Madam Chair, board members.

[00:30:39] Mr. Roberts, it's my pleasure this evening to present to you our Drivers of the Month. There are many bus drivers that could be recognized this month, but each transportation area manager had to make the tough decision of selecting a single bus driver who exemplified excellence and dedication to represent their area.

[00:30:56] We'd like to recognize and honor the following drivers. Danielle Key, Area 1, bus 735, one year of service. Danielle's not able to be here this evening, and accepting the award for her is her manager, Ms. Harris.

[00:31:16] Danielle has worked hard over the year learning her way around the county and learning to connect with her students. She's done a great job this year, and we appreciate her hard work. Christopher Turner, Area 2, bus 481, one year of service.

[00:31:36] Chris enjoys his position as a bus driver, and that is conveyed through his big smile and warm, friendly greeting to everyone he meets during his day. His positive attitude is contagious to students, staff, and team members alike. Chris always offers to assist and is eager to take on new challenges.

[00:31:55] He also sets up a positive example for his fellow drivers and loves to work with students. Mark McWilliams, Area 3, bus 34, three years of service. Mark says he truly believes that education is the currency of the 21st century, And he is proud to be part of an amazing team that transports our students to school daily to achieve their learning goals.

[00:32:26] And I'd like to thank Mark for being part of my driver's counselor for the last couple of years. You've done a great job. Sharon Timmons, Area 4, bus 838, 12 years of service. She's unable to join us this evening, and her manager is coming to, Jennifer Davis, is coming to accept her award.

[00:32:52] Sharon is a wonderful transportation team player. She is always looking out for her students and her coworkers and often brings suggestions to her area office to boost driver efficiency, morale, and retention. We recently had a back-to-school picnic, and Sharon was an integral part of making sure the event was a success.

[00:33:14] Sharonette Spencer-Mitchell, Area 5, bus 853, 26 years of service. Sharonette says, what I like about working for CCPS is the connection with the kids.

[00:33:32] You get to know them, watch them grow, and be a small part of their day. Sometimes that good morning or have a good day means more than we realize. It's a job that takes responsibility, but it's also full of heart. Thank you, everyone.

[00:33:51] So I have four children that ride the bus, and so I hear the stories, and I appreciate the love that bus drivers are sharing with our children every day. You're the first ones to see them and the last ones to drop them off, And I know you know all of our secrets, and I appreciate you keeping it to yourself because they just like to talk, especially on the elementary school bus.

[00:34:16] So I appreciate what you guys do every day. I know in bad weather, when they're a little bit rowdy, you're the ones that are calming them down before they get off the bus. You're taking care of issues sometimes that we don't even know exist. Frenemies today, friends, you know how it goes on the bus.

[00:34:31] And I appreciate everything that you guys are doing to get our kids to and fro safely. And I would like to ask, what's the best thing about driving the bus? 26 years, we're going to go around. 26 years of driving the bus is just being there with all the babies from pre-K all the way up to 12 years.

[00:35:00] So I'm going to put my fellow drivers to the test. I'm honored to be here with them every morning, watching them fire up their buses and make sure they're safe. So I'm honored to be a part of y'all's team.

[00:35:15] yes i would say um i don't have any kids um but now i have hundreds of kids and i i love them all and it's you grow a relationship with them and it's just um it's just it's different every day and i want to thank area two pam i want to thank um everyone in the office of area two they're

[00:35:44] great they're awesome so i just wanted to say thank you for recognizing me thank you so um i'll tell a story, a bus driver's story. 34, 34, area three, area three. So last May, I was walking through the parking lot, heading to my bus, and a civilian approached me and said, you're a bus driver. I said, yes, sir, I am. You served in the Air Force? I said, yeah, I did. He said, well, what a

[00:36:18] thankless and unappreciated job you must have. And I was like, I can't let that go. So I thought about it, pre-K to graduation, right? May time, right? May time frame. If a child rides a bus from pre-K through high school, that's 2,500 days, Dr. Fry, over 5,000 trips if they do morning and evening. And a bus

driver has to show up from pre-K. That's the first person, you know, the child sees in the morning and probably the last person he sees before he leaves to go receive his

[00:36:55] parents. So we're caregivers. And I shared that story with them. I said, today, you know, we're getting close to graduation. Thousands of kids are graduating high school in Chesterfield over the next two weeks. I said, somebody had to be with them pre-K to get them to school safely, to be their nurse on the bus. I can tell you some stories about that, especially with kindergartners. You have to be there to help them get through their day because sometimes they keep little too many suites. You know, to encourage them, we have trivia on our bus as well,

[00:37:32] and to tell them they're going to be all right, right? We're caregivers. I said, and you have to do that and when you do it pre-k through high school graduation day is the culminating event so to think about that being thankless or unappreciated i served in the air force and i can't think of a job that's more appreciated or thankful in any career and he said i never thought about it that way i said well that's how i think about it today just by thinking about it

[00:38:03] but when you have good procedures good leaders and great buses equipment it makes it so so nice right so so and we do have great i have i have a i have a really nice bus thank you very much after three years it's a 2025 thank you dr fry it's really nice but uh it makes it so much easier to be caregivers and i thank you for all your support i really appreciate it thank you i definitely can't follow up with that because that was absolutely amazing um but sharon is one

[00:38:39] of our veteran drivers in area four and she comes to work with a smile she might have had the roughest day ever and she'll come in and she'll just be like all right what can I do next what can I do to help where can I go and those are the drivers that make Chesterfield run they're here and they show up and they're willing to go from Chester to Midlothian to Richmond wherever they need to go and our job definitely goes outside of Chesterfield every single day and we get a lot of time on the buses with these kiddos and Sharon is one of our people that picks up our kids at 5 30 in the

[00:39:19] evening and she's one of the very first ones on her bus at 5 30 in the morning so we definitely appreciate her a lot. Thank you. Next we have recognition of outstanding food service employees

[00:39:42] Mr. Dunbrek. Good evening Madam Chair, Board Members, Dr. Murray, Mr. Roberts. Thank you as always for the opportunity to recognize some of our outstanding food nutrition services team members. I'm particularly happy to be able to present to you this week during National School Lunch Week, a week where we have the opportunity to highlight what an important component of a healthy lunch is to a student's school day. Nutritious school meals have been shown in studies to improve a student's ability to focus in the classroom, improve their cognitive functions,

[00:40:22] and their overall academic performance, while simultaneously reducing absenteeism and improving their mental health. We are so fortunate in Chesterfield to have dedicated individuals to understand the importance of every lunch that they serve. Unfortunately, as is often the case with a food service environment, both of our honorees were unable to join us this evening due to unforeseen circumstances. While they are unable to join us this evening, I want to make sure that we were able to highlight the efforts that resulted in their nominations. First, we have Karen Suarez. Ms. Suarez is a food service associate at Manchester High School and has been

[00:40:57] with the county for 15 years. Ms. Suarez's nomination included the following. We are nominating Karen because she has come every day since the first day of school with a positive attitude and a great work ethic. She's always willing to help others. She even went to help at Deep Creek Middle School for over a week as they got into the new school year. She was eager to get back here and support her Manchester family. Ms. Suarez says, I love my job because I get to make a positive difference every day and work alongside such supportive co-workers. I love being a part of a team where we all help and encourage one another, which makes my job truly meaningful and rewarding. Then we have Nicole Bennett. Miss Bennett is our assistant manager at Meadowbrook

[00:41:36] High School and has been with the county for six years. Miss Bennett's nomination included the following. Nicole comes to work every day in a wonderful mood. She's friendly to everyone and she cooks her tail off making beautiful food. She's also an amazing assistant manager who is always willing to learn and improve herself. Miss Bennett says what I love most about my job is being in the kitchen where the heart of the school really beats. Cooking for the students every day makes me feel connected to them, knowing I'm helping them feel cared for and ready to take

[00:42:04] on their day makes me feel proud. So I appreciate the time this evening. Next, we will proceed with the presentation of the interim application submitted for the Clover Hill District. Mr.

[00:42:23] Smith. On October 1st, 2025, this award announced a process to identify an interim representative for the Clover Hill District who began serving on January 1, 2026. For individuals interested serving this interim capacity, a 10-day application period was open for October 1 until 5 p.m. October 10. In accordance with section 24.2-228A of the Code of Virginia, the board must hold a public meeting in accordance with 2.2-3707, at which the body or board shall announce the names of all persons being proposed for the interim appointment and shall make

[00:43:00] available for inspection each person's resume and any other materials required by the body or board. As such, all these documents are listed on board docs under this agenda item. The board will consider these applications and name the Colorado District Interim Board Representative at a meeting to be held on a later date.

[00:43:20] Thank you, Mr. Smith. Board members, is there any discussion? Mr. Paranto? Thank you, Madam Chair. For the citizens that put in to be the interim board member, I just want to thank you for your consideration and understanding that that is a commitment to our community, to our schools, and to our teachers and students.

[00:43:49] And so I just wanted to thank, just take a minute, Mr. Smith, and thank those individuals for putting their name out there and taking a big step for consideration from this board. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Perranto.

[00:44:06] I, too, want to also thank the Clover Hill residents for those that have put their applications in. It is, as Mr. Bronto said, it is a commitment, and we look forward to continuing the process. So, thank you. Next, we have public comment.

[00:44:23] For this meeting, citizens were given the option of submitting their comments online or in person. Comments submitted via the online form were sent to the board prior to the start of tonight's meeting, posted to board doc site and will be included in full as an amendment to the meeting minutes in-person comments will be summarized by the board clerk and included in the official meeting minutes

documents submitted along with in-person comments will upon request be distributed to the board but not included as a part of the board's official minutes madam clerk would you please announce

[00:44:58] this evening's in-person speakers madam chair we have 27 speakers this evening they are brit Holland, Brian Aramanet, Tamara Ellett, Stacey Wolford, Sarah Tostanson, Jen Dunning, Andrea Torres, Heather Mitchell, Pamela Matassa, Christina Carpenter, Gary Rizek, Philip Whitaker, Chris Grubb, Donald Payton Jr., Chris Fugate, Lynn Jones, Shannon Murray, Cody Porter, Chris

[00:45:33] new rob hamill amy town jacob weatherford jason spoon laurie johnson joe maltempe robert evereth and mike carabino each speaker will have four minutes to address the board there's a timer set up on top of the podium that will turn green when you begin speaking yellow when you have 30 seconds remaining and red when your time has expired as a reminder no personal belongings other than a cell phone and speaker notes are allowed at the podium please have your materials organized in a manner that as you arrive at the podium you are prepared to start speaking. Please note that comments equivalent to campaigning for any public office are in violation of school board policy 1110 are

[00:46:10] prohibited. I'm going to call the first five speakers up and I also have a powerpoint. I'll call the first five speakers again if you line up on either side of the wall so you can be prepared to start speaking. May we have Britt Holland, Brian Aramanok, Tamara Ellett, Stacey

[00:46:37] Wilford and Sarah Tostenson. Britt Holland is first. Brian Aramanok. All right, move me up to the number one slot, huh? Good evening, everybody. I wanted to thank the school board specifically for taking swift and decisive action and accepting Dot Heffron's resignation, especially you, Ms. Chatters. You're doing something that most Democrats nowadays can't do, and that's denounce

[00:47:16] political violence. So you have the most commendable person up here on the board thus far. It's reassuring to know that at least four out of the five board members have our best interests of our pupils and parents in mind. And it's a shifting environment out there, and doing the best for what's best for our kids is to educate and not indoctrinate. I do want to ask anybody that's standing behind me in the seat in the gallery, if you hear something you like, feel free to participate in this class. And thanks to everybody that wore red for Charlie Kirk's 32nd birthday.

[00:47:53] He received the Presidential Medal of Freedom today from our president. And to me, that's not something that a Nazi would receive. You know, call me old-fashioned, but I remember when all members of the school board denounced school shootings. You know, before TV and social media, town hall meetings were the height of our social activity in these communities.

[00:48:12] Dot Heffern's apology was disingenuous at best. And I feel like she was more sorry that she got caught for rather than what she said. You know what? There's a little bit of Charlie Kirk in each and one of us. We want safe communities. We want to be able to stand up to these podiums and speak what's on our mind.

[00:48:32] And we want to be able to engage in civil discourse, you know, based in logic, reasoning, and facts. And if that's not what public education is for, then what is it for? Elected officials such as yourselves are held to a much higher standard than your average citizen.

[00:48:50] And you can't just have blatant disregard and, you know, speak out of turn. And when you cross that line to libel and slander, you know, that's not protected. That's not free speech. So therefore, the fact

that Ms. Dot Heffern is not even seated in this chair tonight, I'm glad that at least she has some integrity and not to show up.

[00:49:15] I would ask that she even resigns as of today and not receive a paycheck. The fact that that seat is empty, I think, is probably the best for the residents of Clover Hill. There was a gentleman, I think, that spoke at the last meeting and he spoke of irrational fears and he gave a long list of irrational fears.

[00:49:39] Well, I'll tell you what, there is a rational fear that grips many of us. And maybe some people aren't courageous enough to speak up against it, but it's the clear and obvious Marxism that's taking over our society. It's infecting our politics all the way up to the federal level.

[00:49:59] I mean, right now our federal government's closed because we can't find seven Democrats to open up and vote for a continuing resolution that adopted Biden-era policies. Come on, guys. I mean, we've got, you know, Bedlam and Board of Ed meetings like in our counties in northern Virginia and Loudoun and Arlington County.

[00:50:19] So when I saw on the news like those remarks that Dodd Heffron made, that was unacceptable because CCPS is better than that. This is a great community. This is a great school system. My son's enrolled here in CBG. He rides the buses, and it's a healthy environment.

[00:50:35] You guys invest in your infrastructure, and it's clear that you guys are doing a great job of investing in these children's futures. So keep that up. But don't forget that you do work for the people. And I just want to say in the last 10 seconds, thank you for your time.

[00:50:53] God bless you. God bless Charlie Kirk, and God bless America. Thank you, everybody. Tamara Ellett. Tamara Ellett. Stacey Wolford.

[00:51:22] Sarah Tostinson.

[00:51:38] The next five speakers. Jen Donning, Andrea Torres, Heather Mitchell, Pamela Matassa, and Christina Carpenter. Jen Donning, Andrea Torres.

[00:52:07] Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to allow me to speak on this board. And I've been here before, and I wanted to bring my input just as an immigrant. Based upon the recent situation that the country is facing, I can see that this is getting similar to my country.

[00:52:37] I'm a victim of a communist country, which is the most violent country in South America, where my family was going to be killed. All of this because of the chaos that started.

[00:52:52] There was not a Donald Trump 50 years ago. It started just like this. division, words, flammable words that brought a lot of people dead. I was able to escape with my family, and I came to this beautiful country because I believed there was a dream. I believed there was a second chance. My child is, I have three children, and we were going to be killed.

[00:53:28] We were going to be, there was going to be a bomb threat in my house with my children, because my my husband was a journalist, and they wanted to shut him up. This is what happens, and it's scary when we have leaders that are using words in a very unwise way. So I thank you. This never happens in my country, and like I said, because I love this country, and I'm thankful with American people

[00:54:05] for embracing my family, which I came with nothing. Now I have a home. I've been living in Chesapeake County. My three children went to public schools. My youngest one got in the gifted program

because a teacher believed in her.

[00:54:30] She ended up with a 44.228 GPA, and now she's got a full ride in William & Mary. So keep that beautiful country. Keep that beautiful dream. And please don't let this happen again because this is scary.

[00:54:49] Thank you so much.

[00:54:58] Today we have Heather Mitchell, Pamela Matassa, Christina Carpenter.

[00:55:32] Next we have Gary Rizik, Philip Whitaker, Chris Grubb, Donald Payton Jr., and Chris Fugate. Gary Rizik, Philip Whitaker.

[00:55:54] Madam Chair, thank you for the opportunity to speak here tonight to the board. I am in awe at the encouragement and the support that I see from the board, from teachers.

[00:56:10] I have been a teacher for much of my life. I'm now working, since I'm supposed to be retired, I'm working as a day-to-day substitute in Chesterfield County, and I meet a lot of teachers, but I'm working in areas now.

[00:56:27] Well, first of all, I've got prepared remarks here. I'm going to bridge most of them simply because I don't want to say or do anything that would subtract anything from the encouragement and the support and the integrity that I've seen displayed here tonight and the recognition of the fine people that work in Chesterfield County Schools and supporting agencies. I am truly grateful for that. I know that I speak to a lot of audiences where this kind of attitude is not seen. I speak to a lot of audiences around the

[00:57:00] Commonwealth in the work that I do in public policy, where all people want to do is fight. We see too many people yell at each other. And it's been my experience that far too many people are involved with just yelling at each other, rather than talking to one another. I believe my task as a citizen is to seek to understand more than to be understood. And I found acceptance among that and talking to people that politically disagree with me, because my view is that if you

[00:57:36] don't talk to someone you disagree with, you won't learn anything new. I enjoy having conversations with people that we disagree with. My experience has been that in this country, this republic was founded by men who gathered to write the Constitution, and they disagreed with almost every policy they were assigned to debate, and they could not come to agreement on it. But they were able to set aside those policy disagreements and deal with principles underlying them that they already agreed on. And I believe it is our task as public servants to find places where you agree

[00:58:16] on principle. And my experience has been there's a very broad agreement of principle among the people who are, no matter which political party they're in, no matter what position they may take on a particular issue, there's a broad agreement and principle. And I believe that we need to find those principles, start with what we agree on, and to learn to grow from there. I do believe one of my passions is to, that it's really concerning me, is that there is a very large dichotomy in education, public education, between the funding and the regulation. You all know very well that

[00:58:56] the vast majority of funding is local, a little bit more state, and very little is federal. But the regulation burdening teachers and administrators and parents is exactly the opposite. The vast majority of the regulation is federal, done by people who never see and I don't know if they even know or care about the students that our teachers see every day. We need to address that dichotomy. We need to find a way to

work around some of that. I believe there are some solutions that might be available. I believe you have a citizens advisory committee. I am happy to offer

[00:59:34] for what experience I have in that capacity or to the committee or to the board, if there's any way we can do that. Because I'm spending my life, what time God gives me now, to seek common ground, to seek improvement. We've had enough complaining.

[00:59:51] We've had enough fighting. We don't want compromise. We want common ground. Thank you, Mr. Whitaker. Thank you. Chris Grubb. Good evening.

[01:00:15] My name is Chris Grubb, and I'm a homeowner in the Foxfield neighborhood. a parent of a soon-to-be elementary school student previously previously spoke to the board about the districting for the new elementary school built in our area and now that we have those options that have been presented to us i'm back to advocate for option one which includes our neighborhood in the zone for the new deep creek elementary school i do want to start by acknowledging the parents who are hesitant to support an option that would move their child to a new school

[01:00:51] and I empathize with that and know that ultimately option one for them might not feel like the best fit. However, I'm asking the board to consider the long-term impacts of this decision beyond just the current students and look at what is best for current and future students for the next several years. Swift Fox Drive is the road that currently serves as a divider in our neighborhood. My family lives on the corner of the street, meaning our neighbors who are literally a few feet away that we tailgate with on Saturdays and hang out with in the afternoons, our kids will be going to

[01:01:31] different schools. And it's funny, we were out there the other day and I took a picture and you can see the two buses that go to two different schools dropping off the kids at the same time, so it's kind of wild. But we would love for our neighborhood to be unified, sharing one school instead of being split down the middle.

[01:01:52] This would finally unite Foxfield and Wynwood and would help ease that bus traffic down this small street since Chesterfield would no longer have to run those two separate school buses for this one area. So thank you for considering option one and your time this evening. Thank you, Mr. Rowe.

[01:02:12] Donald Payton Jr. Good evening. My name is Donald Payton Jr. I go to Salem Church of the Middle School.

[01:02:31] I'm in seventh grade. Today, I want to address an important issue many students face daily, waiting in long lines to go through metal detectors. As a student, I have personally experienced the frustration of standing outside in the rain while waiting for my turn on days when the weather is bad.

[01:02:50] This can be uncomfortable and even unhealthy. It's not just me. My friend Tyler, who attends Carver Middle School, has shared how he has missed breakfast simply because he was stuck in line while i understand and appreciate the importance of our safety in our schools we need to find solutions to these unexpected problems i would like to suggest a few ideas that could help one canopy our tent this will protect students when they're when the rain is bad design indoor waiting area have an indoor waiting area and move the metal

[01:03:30] detectors when we have bad weather this could ensure that we all that we are sheltered while still following safety protocols three and increasing staff having more staff can help speed up the process

reduce our wait times to prevent missing breakfast and being tardy in conclusion i am acting support from you to consider these these suggestions we appreciate the efforts to keep us safe, but we also need to address issues of wait time and weather

[01:04:04] protection so students can have a comfortable start to their day. Thank you. And we have Chris

[01:04:24] Fugate. Good evening, members of the board. My name is Chris Fugate. I'm a lifelong Chesterfield County resident, combat veteran, and a father of two Crenshaw Elementary students. On Tuesday, September 30th, Crenshaw Elementary received a threat to shoot up the school. I came to the school that morning and saw the police response firsthand. There were four or five police cars,

[01:05:03] but the officers stood together in conversation. I saw no active patrolling and the church lot behind the school, a vulnerable access point, remained unsecured. Within an hour, most of the officers had dispersed. As someone who has responded to real threats in combat, I can tell you this posture did not look like deterrence or security. Then on Wednesday, October 1st, another threat came in before 7 30 a.m. I didn't hear about it from the school. I heard it from a teacher in the parking lot as I dropped off my kids. The official notification from the school didn't arrive until

[01:05:40] nearly 9 a.m. over 90 minutes later. Parents deserve better than to be left in the dark while students are still entering the building. Even a short initial message like we've received a threat, police are on site, more details to come, would have given us a chance to make informed decisions about our children's safety. Here's something that's been weighing on me since that morning, there are 12 other public schools within a five-mile radius of Crenshaw. I want to know, were any of those nearby schools notified during either of these incidents? Because if they weren't, that's an enormous gap in our safety protocol. If a person truly intended harm, they could have

[01:06:19] seen the police presence at Crenshaw and simply driven to another nearby school that had no warning at all. Then there's what came next. Police said the suspect, a Chesterfield student, would not face charges because the threats weren't credible and the student had no means to carry them out. So what does that mean? He gets a pass? Just because the threats were deemed not credible doesn't mean they weren't criminal. Has a mental health evaluation been done? Is any intervention happening while they determine whether to pursue charges? Because to parents

[01:06:53] like me, that reads as no accountability and no prevention. Last week, I met with John Phillips, Executive Director of Constituent Services, and Samantha Wade, Principal of Crenshaw Elementary. I appreciate their time and the steps they've committed to, including reviewing notification procedures, strengthening cross-school communication, and re-evaluating how police and schools coordinate during active threats. That's progress, but promises mean little without follow-through.

[01:07:22] Since then, I've also heard from Delegate Mark Early and Major Mark Haynes with the Chesterfield County Police Department. I'm grateful they took the time to respond. Delegate Early, expressed his support for strengthening parental notification laws through legislative measures, and Major Haynes provided clarity about why charges have not yet been filed in this particular case.

[01:07:44] I appreciate those responses, but parents still deserve greater transparency, visible preparedness from law enforcement, and documented accountability when threats are made. My goal isn't to assign blame. It's to make sure that when or if this happens again, every minute counts and every parent knows what's happening. When we tell our children that school is a safe place, that has to be true,

not just something we hope for. Our children deserve better. I'm asking this board to act immediately to fix four things. Faster and earlier parental notification, stronger and

[01:08:19] sustained police posture, real coordination and alerts to nearby schools, and accountability and intervention for every threat, credible or not. I entrust my children's safety to the system every single day. I need to see proof, and I think every parent in this county deserves to see proof that their children's safety is your top priority. Thank you. The next group of five are Lynn Jones,

[01:08:49] Shannon Murray, Cody Porter, Chris New, and Rob Hanell. May we have Lynn Jones. Good evening. My name is Lynn Jones. I'm a student at Matoka High School and the older sister of three amazing second graders at Ecoff Elementary, located in the Bermuda District. Ms. Coker, in your board election campaign, you say that you are a mom and a leader who listens. Although I am not a mom, I am speaking on behalf of my moms who are too emotional to do so themselves and asking that you please listen. My family moved from Texas to Chesterfield in 2024 with the promise of top-notch

[01:09:28] school systems and more educational opportunities, but we can unfortunately say that has not been our case. During my brother's first and now second grade years at Ecoff Elementary, all three have been physically assaulted by the same student who has been moved through all three of their classes at some point due to behavioral disruptions.

[01:09:46] Thrown chairs, desks, and other objects, scratches, cornered and blocked in classrooms, and destroying others' classwork, yet the administration has neglected to properly handle it. I will not be naming said student today because we care about their privacy, and the issue at hand is not the child himself, but rather that actions are not being taken to protect the safety and learning of others.

[01:10:08] This year, we celebrated my brother Credence being placed in a gifted and talented class, a direct result of his dedication and love for learning in school. But the said student was also placed in class with him, turning multiple days that Creed should have spent learning and today staying home out of intense fear and anxiety from his classmate, leaving him physically ill.

[01:10:30] Additionally, even when he is in class, the student's outbursts mean the classroom is frequently disrupted by administrators being called down to assist with his behavioral disruptions, which often turn violent. My moms have had countless meetings with teachers and administration to try and resolve this matter, but have been met with an action that is now taking a severe impact on not only the education of my brothers, but the education of others.

[01:10:56] The current plan for when said classmate begins his outrages is for my brother to go to the classroom of his old teacher who he knows and trusts can be a safe space for him, which is not only disruptive to his own learning due to time missed in his class, but also distracts said teacher from tending to her own students.

[01:11:13] Moreover, trips to her classroom have become a part of Credence's daily routine, a solution that has been the only thing to persuade him to go to school amid his anxiety about his own classroom. Even today, I heard on, this is not on my script, but my mom informed me that he spent some time in the nurse's office because said teacher was not here for him to be able to evacuate to that class, and there was another incident with the same student.

[01:11:38] Enough is enough. My family is tired of choosing between peace and safety or my brother's educations, and we would appreciate any help the board can offer in finding a real solution to this issue

and demanding accountability from ECOF Elementary Administration. Thank you.

[01:11:54] Shannon Murray. Good evening. My name is Shannon Murray, parent of two children in the district, a senior at Midlothian High School and a third grader at Old Hundred Elementary.

[01:12:15] I'm here because what's called Prank Week, organized by students before homecoming, has become something else entirely. What happened to my family was not a prank. It was hate, it was criminal, and it was dangerous. At 1 45 a.m. on September 22nd, six to eight masked individuals grown bodies in hoodies stood in our yard throwing jars of mayonnaise and cans of soup. They sprinkled flour on our porch, curled toilet paper, stuffed sardines under my son's car hood, and wrote the n-word across it. From our window, we watched them moving without fear, not hiding from who

[01:12:54] was inside or what might happen next. Any homeowner could have justifiably defended their family. That's how close these pranks come to tragedy. This wasn't the first time. Our home was hit last year. Feces in the driveway, raw poultry in the mailbox. Parents call every year because this is a pattern. Even Principal Sean Abel admits he dreads this week every year, as families report thousands of dollars in damages. That dread is proof that this is a known school community threat,

[01:13:29] not an off-campus excuse. This wasn't the first time. I'm sorry. Yes, yet when I asked for a public statement condemning what happened, I was denied. The two students who confessed still attended homecoming. Even after one provided all eight names involved. No follow-up, no escalation, no accountability, and that's more than moral failure. It's a policy failure. Policy 4010-R requires principals to refer incidents involving violence, danger, or unusual circumstances to the

[01:14:04] superintendent and law enforcement. It allows discipline for off-campus acts that endanger others or disrupt the learning environment. It forbids racial intimidation and bullying, even between students outside school hours. It authorizes removal from extracurriculars during investigations. Every tool was there, every duty written in black and white, and still nothing.

[01:14:31] This was an attack on my biracial family. My husband is black. My daughter is biracial. Last year, two classmates in her elementary school told her to finish the second syllable of the word vinegar. She didn't know the word, but felt it was wrong.

[01:14:49] Later that day, I had to teach my eight-year-old what that N-word meant, and why it's been used to wound people like her and her father. She cried, asking why anyone would say something so cruel. No child should have to learn about hate that way, not in a district that claims to value inclusion, yet hides from the truth.

[01:15:11] I've seen a video of students using the same word casually, as if it carries no history at all. This is not the word reclaimed in music. It's the one still used to demean, and our silence is what keeps it alive. If eight black students had done this to a white family in Halsley, we wouldn't be debating this policy.

[01:15:29] And we all know it. The board moved within 48 hours when a member made an inappropriate social media post off campus, harming no one. But when families were targeted with hate tied to a school event, there was silence.

[01:15:47] That silence teaches that some families matter and others are left to fight alone. So tonight I'm asking for action, not sympathy. Condemn what happened. Make it clear that Prank Week, the culture of sanctioned chaos, has no place in our schools. Enforce your code of conduct. Teach the truth about hate.

[01:16:04] And hold accountability to the leadership that failed to protect. Cody Porter. Good evening, Madam Chair, members of the school board.

[01:16:25] My name is Cody Porter, and for the past seven years, I've worked in politics, starting while I was still in high school. Most of that work has been behind the scenes, between organizing campuses, training activists, knocking on doors, and registering voters.

[01:16:42] But this moment feels too important for me to stay exclusively behind the scenes. I had the privilege of meeting Charlie Kirk on two occasions during political events that I spoke at, so this is certainly personal for me. To me, Charlie Kirk is not just someone whose videos popped up in my Facebook or my Instagram feed.

[01:17:03] He was a real person. When Charlie was murdered, even those who hadn't known him, including many in this room, I'm sure, felt that loss deeply as well. Charlie would have been 32 years old today. So when we see, of course, that a member of Chesterfield's school board, who has direct control over the decision-makings that's impacting thousands of kids' education, made the following comment that I now quote directly in the wake of his death.

[01:17:35] Call me old-fashioned, but I remember when we used to be okay with shooting Nazis. We should call this what this is. Hateful, offensive, and ultimately dangerous. This rhetoric is not normal in any way, and we can't allow it to become normal.

[01:17:55] Now, I want to be clear. I personally forgive her completely. I truly do, and I'm sure that many others do as well. As Charlie Kirk once quoted from C.S. Lewis on his own social media page, To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.

[01:18:14] I'm thankful that that grace extends to all of us. But make no mistake about it. The need for forgiveness is evidence of the fact that an offense was indeed committed. Accountability for actions is a mandate of the government.

[01:18:33] And it stands to reason that anyone in a position of public trust who uses their platform to justify violence is forfeiting their right to continue in that role. I want to thank all of you on the school board for taking action on this. I do truly believe that there has been a good faith effort to make this right on behalf of all residents of Chesterfield.

[01:18:54] My only request at this time is for Ms. Heffron to do the right thing and step down immediately. Thank you all again for your service. Chris New.

[01:19:21] Thank you very much for the time that I've been given to speak this evening. I'm going to jump right into it. Today is Charlie Kirk's birthday. how appropriate, how poetic even it is for us to discuss speech and safety here tonight. I'm here to bring attention once again to the words that Ms. Heffron expressed on her Instagram page where she stated, and I quote, call me old fashioned, but I remember when we used to be okay with shooting Nazis. So maybe we should define Nazi. A Nazi was an individual with ties to the now defunct National Socialist German Workers Party, which was outlawed in Germany following

[01:19:59] World War II. So to label anyone as a literal Nazi is anachronistic and even lazy at best. Do Nazis sit under a tent with a sign that says, prove me wrong, and then hand their opponents a microphone? This isn't exactly the hallmark of fascism to invite dialogue. Usually their regimes are

centered on autocracy, not productive and meaningful conversation. I personally had a grandfather who fought actual fascists and knew the difference between a patriotic American and

[01:20:35] a true fascist. It was the fascists who shot at him. Again, it was the fascists who shot at him. Approximately 64,000 children and their families are impacted by the reckless, careless words from Mrs. Heffron, whose absence is notable tonight. How many of the families with children in CCPS would fall under Mrs. Heffron's terrifyingly broad definition of Nazi?

[01:21:03] How can they expect to believe their children will be safe on CCPS property or at CCPS functions? Many of these families have views mirroring Kirk's. Should they be counted as Nazis as well and suffer a similar fate? Her words in the wake of Kirk's passing are yet another reason why so many families decide to homeschool rather than entrust their children to government oversight.

[01:21:29] Freedom of speech allows individuals to express their opinions without government interference, but it can come with social consequences such as criticism, ostracism, loss of employment. While the First Amendment protects the right, it does not shield individuals from the reactions their speech may provoke in society. I say that to ask this, why should Mrs. Heffron be able to define her own terms of departure just because she was elected before she revealed her hatred when others who think the way she does were dismissed that very day from their private

[01:22:03] sector employers. So tonight I call on Mrs. Heffron to not just do the right thing, but also do the better thing. Not to wait for December 31st and resign tonight before this audience. This will ensure no further damage to Chesterfield's prestige is incurred, and it will allow for a replacement to be chosen that much faster. Anything less just looks like she is buying time, hoping people will forget what she said so she can withdraw her resignation and slide back into her role on the board but as we know the internet is forever and we will not forget if Mrs. Heffron is unfit to

[01:22:42] remain in her post come January 1st why is she still fit to occupy it on October 14th I leave you with one line that impacted me from Charlie Kirk himself the best political idea is to stick to what made this country uniquely successful from the beginning and it wasn't socialism or fascism I thank you for your time.

[01:23:10] Rob Hamill. Hello, Chesterfield.

[01:23:29] It's always wonderful to have the opportunity to speak about the good work our staff is doing. In the month of September, CEA visited several schools and talked to members about their work. We happened to be in Bensley Elementary on September 26th when the area unexpectedly lost power. I don't know how many times I heard lower grade teachers call out, we're going on an adventure, as they led their class down a dark hallway by the light of their cell phones.

[01:23:52] We also saw the front office team skillfully managing requests from anxious parents, dominion energy ccps administration and their own staff all at the same time our love for our students and our teamwork skills were prominently displayed prominently displayed at Bensley that Friday we also met a number of teachers from the participate learning program and it was great to see their enthusiasm for teaching and here's some of the unique perspectives they brought from a variety of different cultures we visited the new Deep Creek Middle last week and we were very impressed every staff member we talked to was excited about their new facilities in the start of the new year, their positive energy was infectious. So in the last month, we've heard

[01:24:32] from some members at Bensley and also at Bellwood that their schools have lacked lunch coverage in the cafeteria for a number of days this year. Teachers say this can result in them working through lunch to cover the gap in staffing. On days when they also have meetings during planning time, they may end up working seven hours or more without any time for a break. We hope to determine if these are, I'm sorry, we have asked staff to document these occurrences during the month of October, and we hope to determine if these are isolated incidents or part of a more serious pattern. If there is a pattern of continued loss of break time in some of our buildings, we hope that we can all work together to find some coverage solutions. I know that we all want

[01:25:09] to be able to offer our staff a great working environment, and I'll update you with our findings next month. Finally, I'm happy to report that the first CPR class offered at our office was a rousing success. Registration for the class filled up in less than 24 hours. Both members and non-members of CEA gathered with us last Thursday and received their certifications.

[01:25:28] We have already set November 13th as the date for the next class and registration will open next week. Given the amount of interest shown so far, we would be happy to partner with the district in using our meeting room for future classes or in scheduling classes with our instructor. We would love to help provide this licensing requirement for our staff across the district. Thank you once again for this opportunity to speak as a representative of your Chesterfield Education Association. The next group of five, Amy Town, Jacob Weatherford, Jason Spoon,

[01:26:00] lori johnson and joe maltempe maybe we have amy town jacob weatherford jason spoon good evening

[01:26:36] board members uh superintendent i'm jason spoon i'm the director speaker of chester chesterfield resident of clover hill and father of three school-age daughters tonight i'm here with uh sounds like most of these folks uh to speak about dot heffron and ask for some assurances from the board um first i want to thank the board for their swift action and calling out uh miss heffron's resignation. You know, we've been pretty regularly requesting information, and we've received it for the most part, and we thank you. You know, this is a tricky situation, and we think you've done very well in navigating it. You know, I understand and appreciate the situation.

[01:27:15] I also understand that you really have no further power to kind of remove her from the position of representing Clover Hill. The problem is she hasn't been representing Clover Hill well. Mrs. Heffron's violent comments on social media proved to everyone that she should not be in a position that influences or inspires other people's children.

[01:27:37] I'm happy to hear that she's not tried to participate in board proceedings, and I'm happy to see that she's not here today. But it does, like some other folks have pointed out, it does beg the question, though, you know, why linger until the end of December? If Mrs. Heffron is as removed from the board as it appears, why wouldn't she step down now?

[01:27:59] so we can choose a replacement as quickly as possible. We can only speculate on the actual reason she wants to wait until the end of the year, and I can't think of many positive reasons why she would do so. It seems that the people of Clover Hill would be better served if she resigned immediately.

[01:28:17] So I'm here to ask, please, Mrs. Heffron, if you're listening, resign immediately and let our community start to heal. We'd also like to ask for assurances from the rest of the board members that Mrs.

Heffron will not be voting, advising, or otherwise involved in policymaking for the school division. We'd also like further assurances that she'll have no influence over the selection process to hire the interim board member and that anyone that she has kind of propped up or endorsed is not considered as a valid candidate. We're happy to see the resumes of the interim board

[01:28:54] members applicants. We are the interim board member applicants. We look forward to going through them with better scrutiny. But we, or I would like to suggest some, some kind of character recommendations we'd like to see in the, in the nominees. You know, I hope that they'll be more friendly to the concerns of parents, less political, less of a political activist, someone who would put common sense over politics and even current policy, someone who will, will inspire all the students of Clover Hill. We look forward to offering input on the applicants as we go through them

[01:29:30] And, hey, thank you for hearing me out, and we look forward to hearing your assurances about Mrs. Heffron. Thank you. Lori Johnson. Good evening.

[01:29:53] My name is Lori Johnson. I'm speaking on behalf of my husband, Bob, and myself. I'd like to give a heartfelt thanks to the members of the school board who responded professionally to my email, and thank you for your intentional and appropriate actions regarding Dodd Heffron.

[01:30:15] There are codes of conduct for school board members. CCPS Code of Conduct for School Board Members No. 1. I will have integrity in all matters and support the full development of all children and the welfare of the Commonwealth, community, and nation.

[01:30:34] For the last 10 years, I've heard government leaders, and now one of our school board members, call anyone who disagrees with them, religiously or politically, a fascist or Nazi. Is that ethical conduct, or has it had a disastrous impact on our nation?

[01:30:52] Have we taught our children the exact definition and history of Nazism and fascism? Is it ethical to promote violence against anyone for their views? I say these things with love and deep concern for our children.

[01:31:10] There can be forgiveness for Mrs. Heffron. There should also be justice for our impressionable students. This is why I am asking her to step down immediately and not wait until the end of the year. And for you to encourage her, again, to immediately leave her position on the school board.

[01:31:29] As you interview for the interim school board position, please look for a candidate who will not have a political agenda in school and who will put the welfare of our students first. We need school board members who are interested in giving our students the highest quality education in reading, math, science, civics, history, and the Constitution of the United States.

[01:31:57] Thank you. Joe Maltempe. Good evening, school board. My name is Joe Maltempe. I'm a father of three and a Chesterfield resident, a former Dale graduate.

[01:32:17] I just wanted to come to the board tonight representing fathers in Chesterfield, really to talk to generally about the people that we put over and are in positions of authority over our children. That's my main concern for tonight, starting with Dot Heffron, and thank you for pushing for her removal from the board.

[01:32:37] That's very much appreciated and was the right thing to do. I want to go ahead and talk to her replacements, potentially. After a review of those candidates selected, I would just like to put out there that

Ms. Phillips, Ms. Froman, and Mr. Connan do not appear to be suitable for replacements based on the resumes that were submitted.

[01:33:01] And thank you for providing those. That's very beneficial. The other people that I would like to speak to generally that are generally over in positions of authority over our children are those that either identify as trans or have trans children.

[01:33:17] As many of you know, that has been the perpetrators of those many political violence over the last few weeks, and it appears to be a mental illness that is coming through much of our society. Previously, time speaking about the policy 1015 situation that was last year, many of those that came out in support of it were teachers, counselors, and school administrators in Chesterfield, and it brings a lot of concern. As far as making real change in our county,

[01:33:52] if we change the school superintendent, it makes a little bit of change. If we change the school board members, like Ms. Dot Hefron will apparently be, it brings a lot more change, but really to get substantial change, that gets down to replacing faculty at individual schools, And that's one of the things I think we need to evaluate here going forward due to the increase in violence that's been seen from those that are trans-aligned.

[01:34:21] So I want to just take that time to say that. And also, I want to go back to one topic in regards to Ms. Dot Hefron's replacement. I want to see that be someone who will not take the opportunity to offer an invocation, which is usually supposed to be an opportunity for prayer and replace it with a poem.

[01:34:43] So in closing, I would like to say that I would like to see more positive steps from the county and only instill those in authority over our children who will help them strive for a greater purpose than themselves. So thank you. The last two speakers are Robert Eberth and Mike Karabinos.

[01:35:06] May we have Robert Eberth? All right. It's been a hot minute since I've been here. How are you guys doing this evening? So first, I want to say happy birthday to Charlie Kirk. He would have been 32 years old today.

[01:35:22] No one should be killed for their freedom of speech and idealism. not be able to speak for their own opinions and not being sniped out by people that disagree. Anyway, with that being said, I know everybody's been, mind if I move these up? Sorry, I'm kind of tall. Dot Hefron. Well, this is the first time that this has happened. Some of you guys were here before. Two years ago, I brought this up, and she brought something on her Facebook page, which I believe is private now. It says, for many years, I have struggled with the absolute brutality of the game in NFL. And it cannot be ignored that the majority of the players in NFL are black and brown, and the majority of team owners are not. Teams are owned by white people.

[01:36:02] Minority, monetizing of minority lives, brains and bodies by wealthy white men must be called out. The NFL industry has created a system where the minds and bodies of black men are leveraged for white people. That doesn't sound very unifying to me. That sounds very dividing. So this is not the first time that we've dealt with this two years ago I brought this up but nothing went down I am glad that though that she is finally that karma has finally gotten this particular situation and I'm actually shocked that the actual four members of the board actually voted or asked for her resignation I'm very impressed with that um so um that's a good thing so with that

[01:36:39] being said something's getting being looked over right now the dean of students also said that Chesterfield County when you promote violence and advocate for a percentage of teachers and students to be sacrificed to school shootings, you reap what you sow. If you aren't in a school and you aren't responsible for kids, you'll never get it. Once again, Charlie Kirk, you reap what you sow. This is actually after he got shot in the neck. Dean, and I'm not going to mention her name because she's an employee and I think that's against the policy, but I think everybody knows what I'm talking about. All right, I'm going to spend the last two minutes talking about Crenshaw Elementary. So my grandchildren, actually I'm exposing myself now, goes to Crenshaw Elementary.

[01:37:16] So this is a little special heart for me. I got a message from my daughter saying that she got an email stating that there was a shooting on a mountainous caller shooting threat. So I was like, an email? Is that it? Yeah. And then she didn't even know about her email. Some friends of hers had to tell her, go look at your email. I said, that's not sufficient at all. At first, I said, okay, well, at least you know, here's what you need to do next. Message your principal, message your school board member, message the superintendent, and give them your concerns. That's your first step. And she did. And she got an answer, and that's fine. But it wasn't until the second day it happen again immediately the second day almost the same time day two i didn't say anything i

[01:37:55] didn't talk to many people i didn't say nothing i didn't make it public i just kept it internally well that was too much she didn't get anything it got an email again not a phone call not a text message no parent that i spoke to in fact that was the major complaint no text minute we can text message when the buses are going to be late the weather everything else this is very important now i understand there's some police matters there that maybe you don't want the perp to know that you're doing this but what's important is the safety of children i know all y'all agree that that there's no one on there that disagrees with me that safety is number one um so every school i don't know if everybody knows every school develops their own security plan alongside a

[01:38:31] law enforcement medical i've read up on this and so what i've done is i foiled three schools that are interest to me i want to see what their plan is i want to see the audit that was sent to the superintendent and everybody else here so i'm hoping to get that soon um the point is it's like communication is key to the parents. A lot of them I talked to felt like they were left out of this, like it was being covered up. And I don't believe that. I just think that the communication, the method of communication dropped. And I think we can do better. We need to send out a test message, urgent, even if it's through just the school system. I'm not sure how, I think, blanketly you send out stuff. But if they can tell you the bus is going to be 15 minutes late, this is very important for parents to know. Let the parents decide what's safe for the children

[01:39:10] and not the school system themselves. So that's very important. So anyways, thank you again, Robert Evers, have a great night. Mike Karabinos. I'm going to start my usual fact check because I heard some falsehood spoken tonight. Since 2018, there's been over 400 mass shootings in the United States and only four of those shooters have been trans. I remember the first time I received a

[01:39:46] credible threat to my own life. It was 2015. I had written a letter to a Catholic paper advocating their families except Syrian refugees. The article in the paper did not list my address, did not even list my last name, and yet I received a letter to my home. Our discourse is toxic and it

[01:40:15] has been for some time. So I welcome any good faith attempts to lower that temperature. After all, just today there was a massive release of text messages between young members of a political party

using racist, toxic, and hate-filled speech. I have been called a commie, a terrorist,

[01:40:43] a Marxist, and a groomer, sometimes in this very room. At the same time, we must be wary of those who would use and weaponize a tragedy to advance a political agenda and silence their opponents.

[01:41:14] A public servant should always be cautious with their use of social media, and it is never a good thing to celebrate or mock a tragedy. But I would hate for all of us to be judged by the worst click and the heat of our emotion in the middle of our toxic discourse in this country.

[01:41:39] I talk often about moral panics, and one of the tools of that moral panic is the appeal to emotion. We see examples of this all the time. It's a tool that is devoid of fact.

[01:41:58] We hear words like groomer, Nazi, Marxist being thrown around right and left because it hits the emotional cords. Be wary of those who use those terms. Often those who speak them usually mean something else.

[01:42:17] And often the intent they have when they use them is to try to frighten, cow, and silence the ones they're using that with. And I do agree that it is a tragedy what happened to Charlie Kirk.

[01:42:38] I would much rather have an opportunity to debate him and defeat him in public, because while he did say some things that were lauded in here, he's also the same person that called George Floyd a scumbag. He mocked and laughed when Paul Pelosi was attacked, and he helped bus people to January 6th.

[01:43:07] So again, I must say, I honor any attempt to make our discourse more civil, but beware those who would use this to silence. Madam Chair, that concludes this evening's public comment.

[01:43:31] Thank you, Madam Clerk. Next, we have this evening's superintendent's report, Dr. Murray. Madam Chair, projects, they explored the wonders beyond Earth's atmosphere and even had the chance to meet a special guest astronaut.

[01:44:01] This video highlights the excitement and curiosity sparked when learning is brought to life, and it shows how our schools inspire students to dream big and reach for the stars. Enjoy.

[01:44:23] We are done with our science unit. We've done Earth, space, the planets. As we've been learning about the planets, we've been kind of adding things around our room.

[01:44:41] The kids have been making models, kind of exploring all the parts of outer space, kind of planets, bringing it back down to Earth. So our room has kind of been going under like a metamorphosis the whole time. So this is kind of like a celebration of being done with our unit, Just kind of wanting to leave a lasting impression for when those kids want to take the SOL in fifth grade that they remember their space material.

[01:45:08] So when the kids showed up today, had different centers, rocket building, make your own crater on the moon, and then we had astronaut food tasting. And now they are working on building their rockets, kind of like a STEM activity that they started yesterday.

[01:45:26] They got to name their rocket, decide where it's going, and we are about to do a launch. So they're going to test their rockets to see if they can reach outer space. I was in contact with Doug Hurley, and he's worked for NASA and SpaceX.

[01:45:46] So at 2 o'clock this afternoon, he's going to actually Zoom call us. And yesterday, the kids wrote questions to ask him. So they're really excited to hear what he has to say and talk to a real-life astronaut. Usually it prompts millions and millions of questions.

[01:46:03] We even have a question box in our room that is constantly filled with questions I can't even get to throughout the day, but it really gets them thinking and applying those skills and making those like real world connections. Space, we can't reach it.

[01:46:24] Not many people can, but just kind of having the kids live it as much as possible. If they're doing it and actually a part of what they're learning, definitely I've seen it has kind of more stuck and been more meaningful to the kids. Thank you, Dr. Murray.

[01:46:50] board members, is there any discussion besides that? It was just amazing. And what a great way to engage our students in outer space and how creative do we have. We have amazing creative teachers, just amazing teachers. Great job, Bellwood. Next, we have action items. Dr. Wodoka.

[01:47:15] With the very exciting opening of the new Deep Creek Elementary School in the western side of the county, we have an opportunity now to establish a new elementary attendance zone in that area. Consistent with prior school board actions in previous years, we have attached the proposed options for school boundary adjustments that will impact three established existing school zones from Grange Hall, Mosley, and Woolridge Elementary Schools. Those options result in the

[01:47:50] reduction in enrollment in each of these schools to the point where we will have all schools within program capacity at this time, though we know that future development may impact those enrollments over time. Additionally, both proposals will reduce up to 20 classroom trailers, and that is consistent with the School Board Strategic Plan Objective 2.1D. In addition, because both options potentially result in substantial reductions in enrollment at Grange Hall, there is an opportunity to consolidate programs in the western part of the county,

[01:48:26] as you heard about earlier this evening so following our overview that we provided in september at the school board work session we held a public meeting on september 30th at deep creek middle school for the community to provide input we had a number of folks be there as well so tonight's recommendation is that the school board adopt one of the proposed deep creek elementary school attendances thank you dr wotica board members may i have a motion to approve memo number 146-25 as presented so moved is there a second second board members is there any

[01:49:02] discussion mrs chatters so just for the community's understanding we know that both option one and two in a five-year window put our school at 100 we understand that and i want to help the community advocate properly or not probably but advocate to who you need to make that issue to right um it is not our decision on where new homes go or apartments go and things of that nature. And we are doing a better job working with our board of supervisors to encourage them to slow it down

[01:49:40] a little bit, but it helps to hear from the community. So if an overcrowded school in five years is a problem for you, then you can't just tell us because we're not the ones who control that part, right? So none of us up here want a school at 100% capacity, over 100% capacity in five years that's not the goal but we have to do something and although both options do put us at over 100 percent it is the best we can do in the moment right and we have to do something to to provide a school for the children that are coming that are already there not even coming the children

[01:50:18] that are already there and i would say your board of supervisors and your state legislators because there is an opportunity for them to put proffers back in so that we can get compensated the county and it can get compensated for every unit that gets open.

[01:50:33] That could help us build more schools. So we hear you when you're making the issue about the size or the capacity of our schools, but please understand that that is outside of the scope of what we can do based on where this particular school is going to be.

[01:50:49] We're not ignoring you. We are listening. It is just out of our bandwidth of control. Thank you. Mr. Perranto. Thank you, Madam Chair. In regards to what Mrs. Chatters had said, I do want to highlight that the Board of Supervisors, Representative from Matoka, Kevin Carroll, worked with Delegate Mark Early on a bill that would allow a county to deny zoning development if the schools were not prepared to handle the volume.

[01:51:29] And it didn't make it out of committee. And so I do encourage you to go to the Board of Supervisors, but I can tell you that that action is already on their plate and they are talking with our state delegates and senators.

[01:51:46] But we do need to have that deeper conversation so that we're not asking you to pick an option that's going to put a school at 100-plus percent projected in five years to then have to have another bond referendum in six to seven years that's going to cost more money, more taxes.

[01:52:09] That's the road we're heading down, but we'd greatly appreciate all the advocacy from our community to reach out to the state senators and delegates. Thank you. So before us this evening is we've got to have a motion for one of the options, whether that's option one or option two.

[01:52:33] So I open the floor to the board. Mr. Bronto. Thank you, Madam Chair. I would move to motion that the board vote on option one. Is there a second? Second. There has been a motion for option one and a second.

[01:52:54] Madam Clerk, please call roll on the motion. Dominique Chatters. Aye. Stephen Bronto. Aye. Lisa Hudgens. Aye. Ann Covert. Aye. The motion carries. Next, we have memo number 147-25 from Mr. Smith. Madam Chair, board members, staff recommends a new policy, policy 5150-F, Statement of Grievance Form.

[01:53:24] This is a new policy to reflect a form currently in use. School Board Policy 1200 provides that, quote, if circumstances warrant immediate action on proposed policy regulation, the school may suspend its rules and bring up the policy or regulation up for immediate adoption following the first reading, end quote.

[01:53:40] Therefore, it's recommended that the school board suspend its regular rules of policy adoption by waiving a second reading of the policy contained in its memorandum and approved following the first reading. Proposed changes have been reviewed by the school board attorney. If approved, the revision will become effective immediately. Madam Chair, you have two recommended actions.

[01:53:58] Thank you, Mr. Smith. Board members, may I have a motion for the board to suspend its rules and waive second reading? So moved. Is there a second? Second. Board members, is there any discussion? There has been a motion and a second.

[01:54:13] Madam Clerk, please call roll on the motion. Dominique Chatters. Aye. Stephen Pronto. Aye. Lisa Hudgens. Aye. Ann Coker. Aye. The motion carries. Board members, may I have a motion to adopt the policies to become effective immediately? So moved.

[01:54:31] Is there a second? Second. Board members, is there any discussion? There has been a motion and a second. Madam Clerk, please call roll on the motion. Dominique Chatters. Aye. Stephen Paranto. Aye. Lisa Hudgens. Aye. Ann Coker. Aye.

[01:54:46] The motion carries. Next, we have items for board review. Madam Clerk, would you please read the items for this evening? Madam Chair, tonight's agenda includes the following items for board review. Number one, Magisterial District Improvement Funds FY 2026. Number two, FY 2026, August, Expenditures vs. Appropriations.

[01:55:07] Number three, Budget Change Request Summary Across Categories, August 2025. Number four, Board Committee Reports. Number five, Pre-K Update, August 2025. And number six, Summary of Expenditures and Balances, FY 2025. Thank you, Madam Clerk.

[01:55:24] Next, we have this evening, Superintendent's Remarks, Dr. Murray. Thank you, Madam Chair. As always, I'd like to thank our community members for coming out and offering their comments to the board this evening. In particular, I, like each of you, are always impressed when our students come out and have the courage to publicly speak.

[01:55:49] So to Donald and Lynn, I look forward to visiting both ECOF and Salem Middle School to spend some time with Lynn's siblings and with Donald. It's hard to believe that the first nine weeks is coming to a close, and that is the perfect time for our parents to be checking grades, making sure that any missing assignments are getting turned in, but that we continue to show up and contribute each and every day.

[01:56:21] This isn't the time to sit back on our laurels, so to speak. We have several exciting things coming up in the next few days and even week and a half. Tomorrow evening, we look forward to celebrating our Teachers of the Year at our annual gala.

[01:56:38] The last week of this month is a tradition. I guess we can't call it that until year three next year. But something we started last year was not waiting until the spring to appreciate folks. So thank you, Team Chesterfield.

[01:56:53] Staff Appreciation Week is at the end of this month for folks interested in how they can maybe help be a part of the excitement or festivities at their child's school. Please be looking at those principal weekly memos.

[01:57:09] Our eighth graders will be participating in Mission Tomorrow, I believe next week, but if Chad Macklin's not here next week, we're going with next week. It's this month where our kids get to really explore what may be interesting to them when they get to the other side of the graduation finish line or after college.

[01:57:33] And then Thursday, as Elkie upstaged me again, is Bosses Day. So I will take this time to just thank you all for being not just partners in the work, but visionaries and supporters of the work that I and the rest of us are committed to each and every day.

[01:57:53] It is very helpful to have supportive board members in the work. The Deep Creek Elementary redistricting with the action you've taken tonight, Sean's team will send out a communication to those that

will impact to include information regarding center base gifted.

[01:58:19] And as I said, that communication will go out later this evening. And then if you have been to the tucked away corner of Mosley out in deep in the Matulka district, you will see off of Duval Road, the preset of I believe it's probably the gymnasium that is started to go up on the new high school.

[01:58:42] So impressive things are are happening. And then lastly, and I saved it for the end because it's personal, it's personal to each of us, and it is with a heavy heart that I acknowledge that we've lost a friend, a community leader, an advocate, a pioneer, frankly, a CCPS, or a Chesterfield, excuse me, giant, And just an all-around wonderful human being in the passing of our board of supervisor from the Dale District, Jim Holland.

[01:59:22] And I'm going to read something a little more formal. Each time Jim Holland spoke at an event, he would start with, it's a great day in the Dale District. Thanks to him, there have been many great days in the Dale District and across Chesterfield County.

[01:59:42] His death leaves a rip in the fabric of our community that will not easily be mended. Even before he was elected to the Board of Supervisors, Jim was a strong supporter of Chesterfield County Public Schools.

[01:59:59] He lived his belief in the power of public education by volunteering in PTAs and boosters and other school groups. During almost two decades on the Board of Supervisors, Jim consistently spoke up for our community's students, our teachers, and schools to make sure Chesterfield's learning environments and opportunities were second to none.

[02:00:24] Personally, I will miss Jim's friendly outlook, approachable personality, and ability to bring people together to resolve problems. please join me in keeping jim's wife his children his friends and his colleagues in your thoughts and prayers that's all i have madam chair thank you dr murray next we have announcements communications and school board comments school board members are there any announcements or comments this evening

[02:00:56] mrs chatters um first i um also wanted to echo the children that came to speak today that was on my list of things thank you to both of them for taking the courage to come out here and to speak um donald is a member of the transformative tri-cities provisional chapter and we also had the mighty midlothian chapter of jack and jill the pacesetters were here this afternoon to see civics in action so when our children participate in the process it it validates what we're doing because they're learning um good

[02:01:35] better and different they're seeing the discourse um and then about mr holland um we when i was sitting on the other side of this we had our tough conversations and throughout all of them even when i disagreed or i wanted something different he would listen um and and be comforting in his disagreement um and he says and he would just he had a way to make it okay even though i

[02:02:11] didn't get what i wanted he made it okay that i didn't get what i wanted and he was very um an informal mentor on being a candidate right and how this navigating this this space um since he was the first black man elected to the board of supervisors he was the best person to advise me on how i would navigate the space and it is um a tremendous loss to the dale district because he is Mr. Dale District. I mean, everybody knows who Mr. Holland is and his presence will be missed

[02:02:46] and I will keep his family in my prayers. Thanks. Mrs. Sargent? Similarly to my colleague, I wanted to congratulate the two students. Both of them spoke in different ways, but each advocated for others and i i love that heart and i love that spirit and they did it with courage um and

[02:03:21] little donald absolutely the cutest thing ever and i think we could all take a page from his book when he has a complaint what does he do he comes and he has a solution and that was well done and And he just did such a good job.

[02:03:40] Both of them did. And so, but also, Mr. Holland, I did not know him long. But every time I interacted with him, his spirit was so precious. And he just enveloped me.

[02:03:58] I didn't know him at all. And he just, every time I saw him, he remembered me, even in the very beginning, and was just welcoming. and it was remarkable, and he was remarkable, and I recently met his precious, precious wife, and she was adorable, and my heart is breaking for her and the family, and he will be missed.

[02:04:29] Mr. Paranto. Thank you, Madam Chair. I also add my just congratulations to our student speakers that came out tonight very impressive for those that say that ccps schools are going down the drain look at what we're producing all the kids that we had up here today look at what we're producing do we get things right no we do not do we have our difficulties yes we do we meet our

[02:05:06] challenges as best we can with guidance from our community with debate amongst each other but all of that does not supersede the best interest of the education of our children. Abraham Lincoln was credited with this, but it really comes out of Matthew 12, 25, a house divided cannot stand.

[02:05:35] A lot of what was said tonight and was talked about was division. She said, he said, folks, this is not a campaign speech. Like Mrs. Chatters, I'm a veteran. I fought for this country because I believe in it. We cannot continue down this road. It's okay to disagree, but it's not okay to escalate it to violence or to condone it.

[02:06:11] We must meet each other halfway to have a meaningful conversation. We're a republic. But if we stop doing that, what comes next?

[02:06:28] To the constituent from Etoica that came up here, she mentioned that she was from another country, but she also mentioned that she lives and is a citizen of this country. She is an American.

[02:06:48] It's one of the things I love about this country. If I move to Germany and I become a German citizen, but I'm not German, If I go to Italy and become an Italian citizen, I'm not Italian. But if anybody comes to this country and becomes a citizen, they are an American.

[02:07:10] We must work with one another. Miss Murray, she left. What happened to her family is abhorrent and should never be tolerated, never condoned. We must put a stop to that.

[02:07:29] I call on our parents. Know where your children are. Call them. Keep tabs on them. I don't care if they can drive and they're going to college next year. They're still kids. They're still figuring things out.

[02:07:45] And sometimes they don't make the best decisions, especially when they're around like-minded individuals, that thing that we've always wrestled with called peer pressure. We have to do better. We should never have a student writing a slur word about another student on their vehicle.

[02:08:06] We shouldn't have to worry about the safety of our children, but it is the environment in which we live. I appreciate the speakers that came out tonight and offered suggestions as to how we can do things better. I appreciate Dr. Murray, as you were talking.

[02:08:23] Dr. Murray, I could see, was writing. more follow-up to come. We have got to tone down the rhetoric. To say, I'm just a school board member or you're just a citizen, don't say that. You're part of the solution. Be a part of the solution. Have the conversation and come together. Thank you. Thank you to all my colleagues this

[02:09:00] evening. These statements are profound and important. And this night, I think, is important to hear all of the comments that we heard from the public, as well as what you just heard from up here from the dais and for Mr. Holland and his family working with him for the last six years my heart is breaking for them he loved education and he loved CCPS and he is going to be missed

[02:09:33] that is for certain take these words this evening take them to heart spread them spread them wide we need to come together and we need to work together as a community thank you Madam Chair Mr. Gronto. I do apologize if I can call for Mulligan. Absolutely. I do want to comment on Mr. Holland when I mentioned about coming together. Mr. Holland and I did not agree on a lot of things, but what we did agree on was our schools. When I became elected, I received several phone

[02:10:11] calls that night, all from individuals that I recognized their voice. But there was one phone call I didn't recognize, and that was Mr. Holland. To put politics aside and to reach out to another representative and to congratulate them on their victory and he left me with these words looking forward to working with you congratulations my thoughts and prayers are with mrs holland his

[02:10:44] family and all that loved him we definitely lost a great human being in chesterfield county thank you our next school board or the school board will hold a work session on wednesday november 12th 2025 at 4 p.m. here in the public meeting room. Note that is different than our Tuesday night. Tuesday is Veterans Day so we will be meeting on Wednesday November 12th 2025 at 4 o'clock here in the public meeting room. It will be followed by a business meeting at 6 30 p.m.

[02:11:22] If there's no further business we need a motion to adjourn. I make a motion to adjourn. Madam Clerk would you please call roll on the motion. Dominique Chatters. Aye. Stephen Pronto. Aye. Lisa Hudgens. Aye. Ann Cooker. Aye. The motion carries. The October 14, 2025 School Board Business Meeting is adjourned.



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