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Chesterfield County School Board Work Session, Tuesday, March 10, 2026

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[00:00:05] Good afternoon. I'd like to call the March 10th, 2026 School Board Work Session to order. First, we have an update on ESL from Ms. Jenkins. Good afternoon, Vice Chair, School Board members, Dr. Murray, Dr. High.

[00:00:33] I'm so happy to be with you this afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to share an update on English learner services in Chesterfield County Public Schools. Today, I will highlight our student population trends, instructional model, performance indicators, and strategic priorities moving forward.

[00:00:48] Our work centers on ensuring every multilingual learner has access to rigor, relevant instruction, and the opportunity to thrive within our division.

[00:01:09] Thank you for your patience. Our English learners are students who participate in English as a Second Language program.

[00:01:27] Our English learner population represents 16.4% of our total enrollment, and this growth reflects continued demographic shifts in our community. We now serve students representing 102 languages, and while Spanish remains our largest language group, we continue to see growth in our top languages.

[00:01:45] This diversity is strengthening our division, and it requires intentional systems to ensure equitable access and strong academic outcomes. Not all English learners have the same needs. We consider the multifaceted nature of our English learners with a focus on subgroups such as newcomers or recently arrived English learners, Long-term English learners, students with limited or interrupted formal education, and dual-identified students.

[00:02:13] Each group requires differentiated instructional supports, such as long-term English learners who particularly need intentional academic language acceleration in order to prevent linguistic plateauing. Our federal guidance is clear. English learner programs must enable students to attain English language proficiency and participate meaningfully in grade-level instruction within a reasonable time frame.

[00:02:40] Our instructional model prioritizes grade-level access and academic language integration. We are intentional about aligning language development with rigorous curriculum rather than separating the two. Language and content must be learned together, and master scheduling plays a critical role in protecting access and expanding co-teaching opportunities.

[00:03:03] Staffing for ESL reflects an equity-based model under Virginia's updated standards of quality. Support is not assigned solely by headcount. It is differentiated based on student proficiency levels. Schools with higher concentrations of Level 1 and Level 2 students require more intensive staffing, and that is reflected throughout our division.

[00:03:23] We currently have 319.7 full-time employees that are highly effective, quality teachers who are focusing solely on language acquisition. So they are language teachers. Providing students sufficient time with qualified teachers remains essential for accelerating the language growth that we're looking to.

[00:03:46] We have had vacancies, but we work closely with our human resources department through job fairs and intentional programs to support building our own pipeline within the division. English learners directly impact multiple performance framework indicators.

[00:04:05] As an accountability subgroup, their performance is impacting academic achievement, growth, and graduation metrics. And we are monitoring both achievement and meaningful access within that grade level curriculum. We do have an official English language proficiency test for the state, and that is the WIDA Access Assessment, which measures English language proficiency annually across four domains, which is listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

[00:04:34] Students can exit ASL programs once they receive a composite score or overall score of 4.4 or higher. As you can see, we are showing our proficiency level distribution. It is important to notice that we are seeing a decrease in our level 1 student population, which used to be our largest population.

[00:04:52] And on the other side, we're seeing a growth in our level 3 and level 4 students, which that's our developing and expanding language proficiency group. Movement upwards through the proficiency levels is driven by multiple factors, and we understand that.

[00:05:08] However, we are seeing an upward trend in our access proficiency growth, which is promising. We want to remain focused on accelerating growth for those students in level three and level four statuses where the impact is both language and academic access at that point in their journey.

[00:05:25] Beginning for the 25-26 school year, WIDA assessments did reflect the updated 2020 English Language Development Standards Framework. Changes include new tasks and revised rubrics for additional accommodations.

[00:05:41] Specifically, we're seeing new tests in the kindergarten level, but the accommodations and the reflection for the new standards is a K-12 approach to the test, and that's seen throughout grade levels. It is important to note that a statewide recalibration will occur in July 2026 to align scoring with more rigorous standards.

[00:06:01] It's important to also note that shifts in cut scores or proficiency growth targets may impact our proficiency rates statewide, and we're preparing schools accordingly for what that data may look like. Sustainable improvement depends on system-wide capacity.

[00:06:20] This year, we expanded professional learning beyond ESL teachers to include administrators, school counselors, and instructional designers. Administrators are monitoring English learner subgroup data more than ever and with an intentional focus. And so we are making sure that we are providing on-demand reports and support and master scheduling decisions to protect access for our students.

[00:06:43] This work moves us from isolated expertise to shared responsibility. Family engagement remains a cornerstone of our programs as we value our parents as a critical educational partner. We continue expanding family engagement through workshops, transition support, and community partnerships.

[00:07:03] And we've strengthened throughout our division interpretation and translation systems to ensure meaningful communication with families and parents of our students. Strong family engagement supports student academic achievement and graduation pathways. Title III Federal Funds is a strategic partner with ESL programs.

[00:07:25] We use Title III funds to supplement core services and support professional development such as tutoring, newcomer outreach, and instructional resources that are embedded into our schools. Title III also supports job-embedded coaching as well as initiatives for our families.

[00:07:45] Our investments align directly with, again, accelerating language growth and improving student outcomes. So I do note challenges and strategic priorities for our future. When I look at challenges, I don't see them as obstacles, but I see them as those boulders that are going to lift us to the next level of student academic success.

[00:08:06] That includes staffing pressures in high-growth schools, supporting entering students, and accelerating our long-term English learners. But our priorities outline the division's area of focus to further English learner success and strengthen overall division performance.

[00:08:21] We will be focusing on access growth with the new recalibrated scores, strengthening co-teaching models, enhancing those data dashboards that our schools can use, and curriculum resources. We like to say within ESL, every English learner always and in all ways are multilingual learners bringing tremendous assets to Chesterfield County.

[00:08:45] And by aligning instruction, staffing, and data monitoring, and including and bringing in our family engagement, we are building a system that ensures language is not a barrier to opportunity. I thank you all for your continued support, and at this time, I welcome your questions.

[00:09:02] Thank you, Ms. Jenkins. Board members, is there any discussion? Okay. I do want to thank you for the slide in which you had graphs, a bar graph on there, and they were individualized.

[00:09:18] there's a legend and different shapes to signify what was which i greatly appreciate that so thank you very much for thinking outside the box so to speak to make sure that anyone looking at that chart would be able to comprehend the information we i do appreciate it my pleasure thank you

[00:09:35] everybody next we have a literacy update from dr staines and miss carpenter good afternoon vice chair school board members and dr murray i am jasmine carpenter the director of elementary Curriculum Development and Support, joined by Dr. Sains, our Secondary Curriculum Development

[00:10:10] and Support Director, excuse me, and I am also accompanied by Karen Hoover, our Division's Elementary Literacy Curriculum Support Specialist, Dr. Caroline Canning, our Division's Secondary Literacy Curriculum Specialist, and Kate Hundley, our Division's Secondary Literacy Intervention Support Specialist. So today we're excited to share our team's work across four key areas our core promise to students how we have worked with the community this school year our roadmap for next school year and a status report on how we're leading the way with virginia literacy

[00:10:49] act we last provided provided a update to the board in april of 2025 our work is anchored in the fundamental belief that all students must be equipped to be a critical thinker an effective communicator and a strong reader and writer this isn't just a goal it's a promise we've made to our community to ensure our students can truly influence the world around them through literacy.

[00:11:19] This year has been defined by partnership. We've collaborated with our school leadership directors and school improvement teams to work with our principals to track student growth more closely through regular data reviews. Our team has also worked with division partners to support our principals to monitor student growth. We've partnered with families to get more books into homes through our grant funds and family literacy nights and finally we've prepared our teachers to become experts in the new 2024 English standards of learning by providing them with hands-on

[00:11:53] professional learning to bridge the gap between research and daily classroom best practices. This continues to be a true team effort. For next year's implementation of the CCPS literacy plan we will move from implementation to sustainability and impact. We will unpack the literacy plan action steps with school leaders to ensure shared ownership and clear goals at every level. We will also expand family and community engagement through media spotlights and by developing our division-wide family literacy plan. Most importantly, we will continue equipping our

[00:12:31] teachers with the professional learning and tools needed to continue using evidence-based literacy practices. At the elementary level, we are focused on high-quality instruction for all students. We are engaging in ongoing collaboration with principals, English as a Second Language staff, and the Office of Special Education to support all learners.

[00:12:58] To support this, we've updated our instructional guides. We have also introduced the Imagine Language and Literacy digital tool, which provides every student with personalized practice tailored to their specific pathway. But we aren't just looking at data. Our division leadership team is joining school-based teams to conduct literacy instructional walks in schools.

[00:13:19] These visits allow us to support teachers with classroom practices that align with the high expectations of the 2024 standards. Together, these efforts are strengthening consistency in instruction

and building confident, capable readers during their foundational years and beyond.

[00:13:34] At the middle school level, our literacy-specific focus continues to prioritize high-quality instruction for all of our students.

[00:13:53] We've continued to provide updates and refinements to our curricular resources to support our teachers who are supporting our students and all aligned to the state's 2024 English standards of learning. Our teachers co-designed these resources using evidence-based strategies to meet the Virginia Department of Education standards, especially underneath developing skilled readers and building reading stamina.

[00:14:19] With our Literacy Intervention Support Specialists leading our now 19 middle school reading specialists, we are building an articulated system that gives intervention strategically to our students as needed with our recently adopted Virginia Department of Education's approved Literacy Supplemental and Intervention Resources.

[00:14:38] This year, all students in kindergarten through second grade and select students in grades three through eight have been assessed on the Virginia Language and Literacy Screening System, also known as VOWS, to specifically monitor the literacy skill progress.

[00:14:56] We have also expanded student reading plans into grades four through eight. This work ensures that literacy development is vertically aligned and sustained beyond the primary grades. One of our biggest successes this year is efficiency. We've used technology to automate the data for student reading plans, and previously this was a very heavy burden on our administrative teams. With the data being pre-populated, reading specialists and families can spend their time focusing on the best interventions for those students instead of filling out the document. We want to largely thank our Office of Research

[00:15:33] and Evaluation for their efforts in automating this for our teachers and our students. Moving forward, we will align the upcoming Virginia Literacy Act work group recommendations with our CCPS literacy plan and strengthen integration with multi-tiered systems of support to ensure a cohesive, responsive system of support. We will also elevate family literacy efforts and ensure interventions are tightly aligned to individual student reading plans. This work reflects our long-standing promise that every student graduates as a critical thinker, effective communicator, and skilled reader and writer.

[00:16:14] By aligning systems, strengthening partnerships, and supporting educators, we remain committed to advancing literacy for every learner. Thank you for your time this afternoon, as well as your commitment to literacy for all students in Chesterfield County Public Schools.

[00:16:31] Ms. Carpenter and I are happy to answer any questions that you may have at this time. Thank you, Dr. Staines and Ms. Carpenter. Board members, is there any discussion? Mrs. Chatters? Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. I just had to... When I was talking to some reading specialists in the county, we were talking about how do we address the students who are still struggling.

[00:16:54] So if you have an individual plan for Dominique, but now it's time for Dominique to move on to the next grade, but we're still not at the reading level that we need to be, what do we have in place to help get the student there if we're going to move them to the next grade?

[00:17:13] I'll take both. We are currently in the process of developing our multi-tiered system of supports. So I know that there are some schools that are implementing different interventions with students. So it really would depend on what is identified in the student reading plan, what specific skills they're targeting.

[00:17:33] There are opportunities to work with a reading specialist based on what's in that plan, based on if they are receiving any certain type of services as well. So it would be very student-specific and based on targeted skill intervention.

[00:17:52] And that would be for elementary and middle? We also work very closely in the middle schools to ensure that the reading specialists and the teachers are working in tandem year over year. So part of that is ensuring that there's no gap in service. So when students are part of a literacy intervention in grade six, we want to make sure that the seventh grade teachers are aware going in of what specifically that student needs, and that's part of their reading plan.

[00:18:17] It's also why we administer vows typically to those students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade in the fall, so that we can see any growth that might have happened, especially if a student attended maybe a summer intervention or a remediation program or even summer school. We always want to use the most up-to-date literacy information to help really provide wraparound services for the student. So if we're, you move Dominique to the second grade, the second grade teacher knows that Dominique is struggling a little bit. This is her targeted skill area that we're trying to work on. And Dominique's still not getting it. Now it's time for third grade. Does Dominique move on to third grade knowing that I'm not advancing in the

[00:18:56] targeted support like how does that work there are several different measures that ultimately happen of moving a student along and it isn't just based off of their reading so for example if the parent and the teacher are agreeing that they do have enough of the acquired skills to move on to the next grade level they may move on however there may be an enhancement of the intervention system starting on day one for that student and then my last question was about non-digital products are we incorporating non-digital products to help students with their reading development and if so which ones are we using yes so OCR has a physical component

[00:19:35] to it as well so we are we still value having books in hands we also have the decodables that students can access in the classrooms as well we are partnering with the family and community engagement office to also make sure that we are providing books to families as well so there is definitely a physical component through OCR, which is our core resource at the elementary level. Thank you. Dr. Darby. Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. So there are only so many hours in the day, and I love reading, and I wish our children could

[00:20:11] all gain all these skills, but I know that at some point something has to go. So I'm curious, how many students are we talking about who have these reading plans and who is responsible for monitoring them and when during the school day is this type of support. You mentioned summer school, but that's the only one that I heard that's like an outside of school time type of activity. Well, I can speak specifically about middle school. For our students who currently have a student reading plan, let me just make sure or else Kate's going to jump up

[00:20:48] and correct me, we recently tested in our fall subtests 4,116 middle schoolers. So as we think about that number, that is 6th grade, 7th grade, and 8th grade across the district. I love that you

highlighted, Dr. Darby, that it isn't just summer. In particular, in the middle school schedule, we offered three different options for our students to currently receive intervention this year. The first option, well, really two of the options were during flex time. That is our extended day where the students get an additional 20 to 30 minutes depending on the school and they were

[00:21:27] coming out of their traditional flex times and they were going into a specific intervention experience. The third is really when we are thinking about are there other times during the day that we may be able to specifically move them, not moving them out of an English class, but what could that look like as a supplemental resource for them as well. We also always encourage before and after school that as you can imagine, especially at the middle school level, that can get really complicated with transportation and trying to ensure that students still get to participate in after school or before school activities. So we do try to provide families

[00:22:01] an array of different opportunities that they're able to participate in. Very similar to elementary school with the options that we have. We are, some of the schools are identifying it as when time that they're using, which is kind of the adjacent to a flex time that you would see in a middle school classroom. So we know that students are getting time there. We're also doing before and after school through our all-in funds as well as our EIRI tutoring that's happening before and after.

[00:22:33] And I know that elementary teachers are masters of multiple contents, but they are very much focused on literacy through all content areas as well. Thank you both, and I appreciate your support of our students. Thank you guys. Appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. I appreciate it.

[00:22:54] thank you all for your patience next we have our school board self-evaluation code of conduct and governance manual discussion um so if we want to we're just going to go down read the list and do we want to go in the same order do we want to move it down how okay sounds good all righty so i'll read the question and then you answer okay so number one our board is committed to a vision

[00:23:31] of High Expectations for Student Achievement and Quality Instruction. So I know our scoring was strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. So for this, I said strongly agree.

[00:23:52] I will agree as well. I strongly agree that this is not only a commitment and a vision, but also emphasis on an expectation for student achievement and quality instruction. So I do strongly agree.

[00:24:09] I was in between agree and strongly agree just because I tend to be very optimistic and like to pull myself back. But I do believe that we have high expectations of student achievement and quality instruction.

[00:24:27] So I'll just give it a halfway hanging on that line. I said strongly agree. I strongly agree. Next we have, we have defined goals toward our vision of high expectations, and you need to identify one of those goals.

[00:24:52] So I scored us a strongly agree, I said, with the work between staff and the board and what we have done with our new strategic plan that we started for the school division demonstrates that we have defined goals towards our vision and high expectations.

[00:25:15] I also said strongly agree the goal I identified was our truancy and the amount of work, time, financial commitment, and leadership on all levels of our education in Chesterfield County to lower that number, which we have.

[00:25:32] So that was an identifiable goal that I thought we excelled at. I said strongly agree on this one, and I do not have a goal that we did not have that one, but, you know, I think of the one that you're talking about truancy, and I'm talking about absenteeism, which is the same thing, and that is, it seems like if the kids aren't in class, they aren't learning, and that is pivotal to everything, and I've noticed across

[00:26:09] the board we have we have brought those numbers down i also said strongly agree um i was looking at our goal of um having graduates who are ready to engage as productive citizens and i'm particularly excited about the new cte programs at cte hull street and um the work that has to go into that in budgeting for construction of the new buildings and hiring new employees and um the opportunities that the students will get in those programs i also strongly agree and i

[00:26:47] referenced that same one but i focused on the cip portion of it that the collaborative work between our board and the board of supervisors is evident of our high expectations because we're actually working towards building the relationships we need to build in order to make sure that we're providing the types of schools and space and things of that nature that our students deserve

[00:27:06] All right. So number three, we have strong shared beliefs and values about what is possible for students and their ability to learn and of the system and its ability to teach all children at high levels and then identified one of these shared beliefs.

[00:27:29] So I said agree. One of the shared beliefs is the support that we have for the initiative to make sure that each student takes an honor AP dual enrollment course before they graduate so that they can see their potential and their successes.

[00:27:47] I strongly agree. So some of my colleagues had CTE as number two. I have CTE as number three. And the reason for that is we are focusing on their success and in particular ability to teach children at high levels.

[00:28:09] And so if we're strictly to a classroom with the basic functional subjects and not thinking outside the box and bringing in outside companies to work with our teachers, staff, and children, we're missing the mark, and I don't think we're missing the mark in that realm because that is a shared belief that we have in ensuring that our students are learning at a higher level because we're meeting them where their skill sets are, where their interests are, and then helping them advance that as they continue to move on and graduate.

[00:28:42] And then, for the most part, for those CTE students potentially transitioning into a job offer by the time they graduate because of the companies that are here within CCPS. So, for those reasons, I said strongly agree. For this one, I said agree.

[00:29:00] I do believe that we believe every child has unique strengths. And I was less specific. I'm just more global. We believe as a group that every child has the ability, the unique strengths to succeed.

[00:29:17] And that is what it's our responsibility to as as a division to allow them to realize their full potential and be fully, fully formed beings that are ready to go out into the world.

[00:29:37] And that is, I believe, that every single thing that we say is having that in mind. I agree on that. I said strongly agree. I was thinking of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, that we all believe that our children can succeed, but they have to have the basic necessities of safe schools and things like the priority put on

major maintenance in the most recent budget talks and the priority for adding a school for communities and schools

[00:30:13] show that belief in supporting students in all the ways that allow them to achieve all that they can achieve. I also said agree, and the shared belief was the infinite learner mindset that we talk about and how we're executing that with our L students and the work that we're doing in there and the effort that we're putting in there, the resources that we're putting in there to make sure that we're not leaving any student behind on our path to getting them to the ultimate goal of graduation.

[00:30:50] So number four, our board is accountability-driven, as evidenced by the fact that we spend more time focused on policies to improve student achievement than we do on operational issues. I said agree.

[00:31:08] I also agree with that. This is always a tricky fence to walk, if you will, because you can easily find yourself on the operational side. And I think sometimes I find myself on the operational side because potentially a policy maybe isn't as well-rounded or as defined as maybe it could be to help navigate some of those things.

[00:31:34] And so, you know, although we do our best to not get in the weeds of things, potentially when we find ourselves, I do remind myself, okay, let me go find the policy about this. What does that say? Does this make sense? And so I do agree with number four.

[00:31:54] I agree with number four. Similar to what Mr. Bronto said, it is very easy to move into that operational. I almost hovered on the in-between line because it is very difficult to do.

[00:32:09] But I feel like as a board, we've gotten better. I know I've tried to get better. And so I'm going to give us an agree on that. I also said agree. Well, I said disagree for the examples that you both gave.

[00:32:26] Because of the magnitude of the emails and the phone calls that we get that are operationally based questions and concerns, sometimes there is not a policy that directly relates to what they're calling us about or emailing us about. So I said disagree because I'd say it's 50-50 on how much time I dabble in the operational and dabble in the policy side, right?

[00:32:51] I pull myself back up out of the operational side once I hand it over to the proponent who needs to take care of it. But we're being honest. I think it's a disagree. And honestly, if you're doing the job right, it's probably a disagree.

[00:33:06] Because you're going to get complaints or concerns or questions from constituents who don't have that is not related to policy at all. And so it makes it a little bit hard to help them because I can't refer them to a policy right away. Because we don't have one that talks, to Mr. Peranto's point, to that level of detail or that well-rounded language that we need.

[00:33:27] And if I could, I'll just add to your comment. But I think once you pass that over, then you have stepped back out of that operational side. So that's where I see that it is a dance, and you can find yourself in that operational space very quickly.

[00:33:43] But as soon as you pass it over to staff where it should be, then you're back in where you need to be in your role. And then we can go and address a policy if that's the case at that point. Okay, number five, we have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community.

[00:34:02] I said strongly agree. I also said I strongly agree. There isn't a staff member that I have not met that has not been outstanding in their role to the point of listening to what the concern is, potentially offering suggestions, and then the follow-through and coming back to say, hey, just wanted to keep you in the loop, we did X, Y, Z, which they didn't have to do.

[00:34:31] I could have prodded and asked those questions, but I don't find myself having to because I do get the feedback from staff, and it's not just Dr. Murray or Dr. High. It's the chiefs, it's the directors, it's the principals, teachers themselves, whoever it might be that want to collaborate and want to make sure that we're heading in the right direction.

[00:34:54] So I strongly agree with number five. I strongly agree with number five. I also strongly agree. Strongly agree. All right. Number six, we have a strong communication structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals.

[00:35:19] And please provide an example if you can. I said agree. I said that we are all responsive to both internal and external stakeholders. I agree. if you have not received an email from ccps about something can you please raise your hand exactly my point we i do think to a certain extent have a lot of emails out there from the district from the schools from the teacher which it's all great i am a firm believer that you can never

[00:35:57] over communicate um but i do think there are times when the communication can be more finite in what we're after versus leaving maybe things a little bit broader for interpretation that then might leave some wondering, okay, what does that mean or how do I get more information on this?

[00:36:17] And so I think maybe that's an area for us to go back and look at, but it is an agree for me. I'm going to agree on this. I think, to your point, Mr. Pronto, that we get a lot of information coming from the county, coming from the district.

[00:36:41] It is, there's a lot going on and there's a lot going out. I was somewhere yesterday that we, the county, the district, we thought that we were communicating something and it turns out we weren't.

[00:36:58] And so there's always room for growth. But, you know, I'm thinking about the town halls that we just hosted, the budget town halls, and they have historically or, you know, recently not been as well attended as maybe we would have liked and so we clustered them together now that was probably due to the snow but we were doing that anyway um and and we had a robust um attendance and conversation and it felt um it felt like the engagement level was heightened

[00:37:33] uh and i think that can only be good for us as a as a district so um i said agree on this one i echo your statement about emails and I would add to that social media and I think that there is a robust communication system. I was stuck on the idea of it being toward setting and achieving district goals and I think that we are really great at celebrating really great things publicly and communicating that information but I think achieving goals also implies that we have to

[00:38:11] um, say where things aren't going great and, and invest, um, time into communicating with stakeholders about how we can work together to improve and, um, achieve the goals that we have set, which are great goals and lofty goals. Um, and it takes work to get there. So I think communicating, um, maybe not through social media and email, but, um, communicating those types of steps along the way is an important thing. I had agree for this one. And I'd say that we've gotten better over the last this is year three we've gotten better in how we're communicating but I

[00:38:47] would agree with Mr. Perron so about a finite message because sometimes and we and I've had constituents once I talked to them acknowledge you didn't read the email all the way through right like it's all the way down at the bottom second paragraph from the top right we might need to do a better job in conveying information that's more important succinctly right so that people can get it. And I would agree with Dr. Darby's assessment about when we're talking about achieving district goals, when we're falling short, that should be discussed as well, right? We're not trying to

[00:39:22] mask where we're having struggles. We should discuss them the same way we discuss our wins so that the community can help us achieve those goals. So we have buy-in on all things that'll get us there so number seven uh our board is data savvy we embrace and monitor data even when the information is negative and use it to drive continuous improvement and uh if you have an

[00:39:54] example that'd be great yes so i said agree i said obviously we use data lots of our decision making even in the tough ones um and lots of times our data is year obviously we look at it year over year and even in the tough one when we had to do away with year-round school right so we looked at that data over a multi-year period to decide that that was the best move so i said strongly agree we have a lot of data and this board uses a lot of data and if it's not presented we ask for it

[00:40:31] mrs chatters and i more often are the ones that are asking for specific data points and we use that to tell the story of what we're looking for or heading towards the direction of which we want to solve. And it doesn't matter who's presenting, if we've asked for certain information, it is given right away, even if that department, through that information, may not look good, if you will.

[00:40:58] Their acknowledgment of that, I think, is also extremely important to say, yeah, we know this is where we are, and the goal is to get here, but you asked for the data, so here you go. So for those reasons, I believe it's a strongly agree. I too strongly agree. I think we, it feels like everything is data-driven. The most recent one that I can really think of is the learning cottages. Our trailers, classroom trailers, we, no one is going to say that that

[00:41:35] is a great thing to have plunk down on your schools but in our case it's a necessity and so that would be data that is something we don't want to look at except what we did was we have it as a goal in our strategic plan to have by you know the next five years for for our students to be all in under a building instead of in a classroom and so that's that's a place where we are looking at the data and we are saying okay not saying what we want we want to move forward another way i said

[00:42:11] agree i have a much shorter time in this chair than the rest of you um so my most recent um understanding of the use of our data was um dr wadika's talking about the facility condition assessment and using that to inform the decisions that we make moving forward with improvement of our buildings i said strongly agree and i like that we don't just take the data for what the data says right because our students are more than just data points and so we're looking at the whole student and the whole impact of what we're doing and my example was the new

[00:42:49] district elementary school right to ms hudgen's point about the number of trailers or the learning cottages we're able to get rid of them right a significant amount of them out of my district in particular, and take 150 children off a waiting list who want to get an opportunity to get into pre-K, and we wouldn't know those numbers if our team didn't do the research and have the data to support it, so that we could provide it to the board of supervisors to get them to buy in to why this is important and why it's needed.

[00:43:19] So I think we did a great job with that. Number eight, we work to align and sustain resources to meet district goals, even in the midst of budget challenges. I said strongly agree.

[00:43:35] We have a great financial team. Enough said. I'm just going to say ditto with Mrs. Coker. I greatly appreciate our financial team, our operations team, and the collaboration that goes in that to say, okay, what do we need?

[00:43:56] And, you know, we heard it several times this budget season, you know, not only from Mr. Meister but also from Dr. Murray, the ask of chiefs and directors to go back and say, hey, What can you acknowledge that you can cut? What can we do without so that we can focus on these other goals?

[00:44:14] And it was an overwhelming response that was given. And so I think that's extremely valuable to remember when we're grading this. And that's why I say I strongly agree. And I also strongly agree for things that you guys, similar, it's just a great team and it feels very aligned across, frankly, the cabinet.

[00:44:43] And so I was very impressed, as you said, with the red papers going back and telling me what can we drop, what is no longer either working for us, the time has come. It's very rare outside of or in a public setting for that to happen, and I find that remarkable.

[00:45:08] And we found money, so that was great. And so I'm strongly agree. I also said strongly agree. I said strongly agree, and I was hovering between agree and strongly agree, but I would say that we've made progress.

[00:45:27] So that's why I went with strongly agree. There are a lot of challenges in certain districts, right? I would say that mine has the most challenges, unfortunately, for different reasons that are not this board's responsibility, right?

[00:45:44] this was inherited things. But I appreciate the work that Mr. Meister and our superintendent, Dr. Murray, have done to try to close the gap on those challenges, close the gap on the differences and the inequities between what my district has and what other districts have. And the conscious effort to put that there speaks volumes to both teams looking at the big picture and seeing how we can make this better for all of our students how can we do that and i truly appreciate all the work that went into making miracles happen to not have a list of things on the side where we can't do

[00:46:23] um for the first time felt really good to look at and i appreciate all the work that went into making that happen yeah to your point miss chatters i was at a meeting last night and i was very pleased to say someone asked about the column of the things that we can't you know if we get extra money. And I was like, we don't have that column this year. That was fantastic. All right, number nine, we lead as a united team with the superintendent with strong collaboration and

[00:46:56] mutual trust. I said strongly agree. We have a great relationship with the superintendent, with really all of cabinet and all staff members, you know, doing our job not to reach out and get into those weeds. But if we, you know, had a question, the response is immediate. So thank you.

[00:47:23] I also strongly agree. I think we have a very good rapport with our superintendent. That speaks volumes of this board, but it also speaks volumes of our superintendent. He's dealing with five very different personalities, and we all have our individual goals and what we think CCPS should look like and the different things that we'd like to do.

[00:47:44] And he has to juggle all that and figure out, okay, I hear you, but this is important, and would you please look at this? I want to explain why the answer might be no right now, but I'm not hearing you. And I think, you know, that goes a long way for someone to not only process the information, but then get one, be confident in giving feedback, but in addition to that, then explain the why.

[00:48:10] A lot of times it's just very easy and quick to go, no, we can't do that. Okay, what else do you have? But why, right? And I don't find myself very often asking why, because in my conversation with him, I find out the why.

[00:48:26] And kudos as well to Dr. High. It's similar. I know it doesn't say your title in here, but a group of the both of you together, what you get from one, you get from the other, in my opinion. And I greatly appreciate that about you.

[00:48:41] So thank you.

[00:48:50] I also strongly agree. This is, you know, we're starting our year. your full first year, but it's really a year and a half that you, how long were you in Rome? It did. It did. Sorry. It's been a while. So, you know, I feel like we as a board have gelled and this relationship has also grown and it is, I think, fruitful. Strongly agree.

[00:49:21] I also said strongly agree. I also said strongly agree for some of the reasons Mr. Paranto mentioned that managing, same thing with Elkie, having to manage five different personalities and five different calendars, both of you managing five different personalities, five different calendars, five different objectives. We don't agree to disagree. We just disagree, right? And I think that's better. I don't like the term, let's just agree to disagree. No, because I have strong opinions. We all have strong opinions. Superintendent and deputy have strong opinions, but I appreciate the way that they're communicated to us. I appreciate the fact

[00:49:59] that we're not just shut down with the idea. Crazy, it may seem, but they entertain it, right, briefly, and then explain why it can't be done. And that's fine, and I appreciate the willingness to have the dialogue in the first place. So I said strongly agree.

[00:50:18] Madam Chair, if I may, something else to add to this that stood out to me, when it talks about mutual trust, and when we were at CTC in the auditorium in front of numerous staff members and teachers, a lot of stakeholders in leadership of CCPS.

[00:50:40] And when it was announced that Dr. Murray was going to be the superintendent, and board members, I don't know if you recall this or not, the place erupted. It was deafening. It was deafening. You don't get mutual trust, in my opinion, from somebody if that's not the response you get, right?

[00:51:00] If it was crickets and it was like, oh, dear God, right? then mutual trust might be of concern. I just bring that up to say not only are we trusting our superintendent, but I firmly believe those that are under him trust him as well.

[00:51:15] And I think that's extremely important to highlight in this number nine. Thank you. All right, on to number 10. Our board takes part in team development and training to build shared knowledge, values, and commitments for our improvement efforts.

[00:51:34] I said agree. It's a line on disagree, agree. I see that look, Dominique, because I think we could do more. Definitely think we could do more.

[00:51:51] I said disagree. I'm not on the line. Look, look, we do. We do. We go to Williamsburg. That's an experience in and of itself. We attend the VSBA conference, and it's on us as individual board members to attend the other VSBA things that are presented virtually.

[00:52:11] If you can't go in person, I know I had gone to the, there was one senator around school board law. And, you know, that was very informative. I don't feel the need to go that again the next year and the next year. But, you know, that's something that I had interest in.

[00:52:28] So I don't expect, you know, Mrs. Hudgens, if you're not interested in that, you know, for you to go is not going to be a value to your time. And if you're, you know, more into, you know, let's say transportation or something, and I'm not, I'm not going to necessarily attend that.

[00:52:45] But I do think it's important that when we attend these things that, you know, we do some kind of nothing extravagant, some kind of report or some kind of email to the board members of what was learned, maybe something that was of interest, something to look into for our own district, school district, division-wide.

[00:53:05] So I think we can we can get better at that. Now, I also recognize that I also have a full time job. And so I'm not always available to attend a Thursday afternoon session in person, you know, down in Virginia Beach, for example.

[00:53:22] Right. And it's not offered virtually. So there are some things that because of our commitments, we do miss out on. But the things that we can attend, like there was one this afternoon that was virtual for board docs. I think that's extremely important, and from what I saw, pretty much all board members, including our superintendent, were in attendance for that.

[00:53:43] So things on those lines are good, but I do agree we need more of that as much as we can. So I called mine a week A, so I guess that's, I mean, it's the same. So it's hovering on the line.

[00:54:02] We did that professional development together, the team building in that first year. And I think that was really helpful. I don't know if that's something that we wanted to look into again or what Mr. Peranto is talking about is individually learning for our, you know, for this job, which is always, always good.

[00:54:29] And I remember back when I was a yearbook teacher, advisor, we would go to conferences and no one was allowed to attend the classes, you know, together. everybody had and we divided and we conquered and then we came back and reported and so that to your point would be a really good plan for us to do if there are things that are beneficial so that's that's why I gave us a week I said agree I also again have a much shorter time in

[00:55:02] this seat than anyone here and so I was reflecting on the Williamsburg BSBA conference as well as the new board member that everyone weighed in on whether that would be helpful to someone from a larger division and so I do feel like we have many more opportunities that we could seek out but we are maybe agree like your week a but I don't think that was on the charts I said disagree because it's about team development and training and we haven't I know we had talked about in our

[00:55:42] governance document that the vice chair might be responsible for spearheading how we do our team development i think we could revisit that and codify that a little bit more but the team development is important and to mr paranto's point i do sometimes take the classes too the individual

ones but i look at the price tag of how much it costs and then i'm like the bang for the buck on whether or not i'd rather use that money on a team development so that the five of us can do something with because the one we did before when merv was here that one was really eye-opening. I think that was, and I'm sorry you missed that, Dr. Darby, but it was really good,

[00:56:17] and so we should revisit doing things like that again. Madam Chair, if I may, Mrs. Chatters, I appreciate you bringing up the price, because when we're spending the people, you know, our constituents' money, we have to be able to speak as to why, and if we can't add the value to it, I don't think we need to be spending it. So yes, that is also another reason, and I appreciate you pointing that out. Thank you. Now we have our long answer portion. We have two questions. First one is what do you believe is

[00:56:56] one of your board's greatest strengths? Second one is, you know, we've got the glow and now we'll have the grow. So first time is grow. Glow. So one of what I wrote here for our greatest strength or strongest strength is the answer actually back up to number nine, which is the relationship with the superintendent and leadership team, you know, we have clear understandings of each other's role and support those roles in a respectful manner. One of, I believe, our board's

[00:57:33] greatest strengths is the diversity of our passions and what we're after, and, you know, if we can find ourselves, I think, sometimes siloed, but if we take a step back and look at what we're, you know, we're all collectively doing, it's, we're after the same goal, which is our students. We just go about it differently. I wouldn't go about it the same way maybe Dr. Darby would, but she gets to the same point that I would eventually get to. It's just a different way of doing it, which is not wrong. It's just different. And I like that about this board.

[00:58:07] We bring different backgrounds from education to military to operations to teaching at a collegiate level and working in the business world, and, you know, all that has its values that we utilize as a board, whether we recognize it or not, because of what we're saying to each other when we're interacting or making decisions, and it's a different viewpoint that maybe I don't think of, but because somebody else on the board said whatever that is, it's like, okay, well, let me understand why that person believes that or thinks that or, you know, for me to understand

[00:58:44] so that we have that opportunity to continue moving forward. So I do think that's one of the board's greatest strengths. I remember last year, that's the one that I chose. That's always a big piece for why this works.

[00:59:05] What really stood out to me this year as I was thinking this through was our respectful collegial relationships. To Ms. Chatter's point, agree to disagree. or just flat out disagree, but remain a respectful relationship.

[00:59:23] And I believe that we, I think that's what we do, and I think that when you can do that in an atmosphere of, you know, how great are you if you always agree and you're nice to each other, but when we don't always agree and yet we remain respectful and having this goal of our students, you know, the student success remaining at the center of every single decision that we make. And I think a lot of times that's how, you know, we understand,

[01:00:00] hey, you might, we might disagree, but I know in your heart, this is your goal. And so that's how we can remain mutually respectful. I said this board's desire to listen and discuss, especially as you all

have worked to get me up to speed, your willingness to share information, your willingness to share time and suggestions.

[01:00:26] I think it shows this board's willingness to work toward a vision of a common vision where we are a thriving board where every member is active, where it wasn't just that I was going to fill the seat.

[01:00:42] You wanted me to be able to be active. That we are a thoughtful board, a respectful board, even when we don't agree on things. And I have really appreciated being a part of that. I said resilience because of the things that have gone on for this board.

[01:01:03] And we've received our fair share of attacks and name-calling and visceral comments from the community to us.

[01:01:18] And we're still sitting here. So I think our resilience to the goal, which is to make CCPS the best that we can for our students and our teachers, that is why we're still here. But resilience after been a rough some moments, right?

[01:01:38] And so I think we're resilient. Okay, final. What do you believe is a growth area for your board? Pulling from the questions above, I did say we need a team building exercise.

[01:01:55] Sorry if I took yours. I think it would be worthwhile, not educational, right, but then just adding a little fun in there to learning about each other. So we're going to go paintballing and Mrs. Chatters and I are on the same team. Good luck to all of you. You'll need it. In all seriousness, I believe the growth area and not to repeat what Mrs. Cooker said, but it was the only one that I disagreed with in the survey which was our development together as a team and so as a vice chair of which I'm

[01:02:34] honored to be but you know with for this board is looking into that development and reaching out to the individual members to say hey what what interests you do we have you know uh the same level of interest in an activity or what have you to mrs cocker's point to you know have some kind of academic spin to it, but then also, I have found in team building, relationships grow out of the, just the spontaneousness of the occasion, right? You know, doing rope climbing,

[01:03:10] I'll just pick on myself, I might be afraid of heights, and Dr. Darby isn't, right? So she's coaching me along, and what have you, like, those are things that you wouldn't think somebody might step up to the plate and do, but through that, you realize, okay, we have a common goal here of success to see ourselves forward, so I do echo Mrs. Coker. I do think number nine, 100 percent, is my growth area for the board, and as I said, as vice chair, we will dive into that in 2026. I appreciate this board's willingness and want to do that. That's also extremely important.

[01:03:48] Thank you. And we'll include. Yeah. So I hearkened back to one of the previous ones where, and I don't think we're terrible at this, but I do think it's easy to slide the clear boundary between governance and management.

[01:04:16] And that slide that we, I feel like we have to beat it back every day. And so I think that it's something that we have to be aware of, and we have an incredible staff.

[01:04:32] There's an incredible staff out there who's able and willing to help us, so just top of mind. This seems like a really cool, cruel joke that I've been sitting here for two months, and y'all are like, what's an area of growth?

[01:04:48] So I can't really speak for much from my limited time, but what I would look forward to post-budget season is an emphasis on instruction and the ability to reflect on the goals that have been set and some of that more proactive planning and reflection on the data that revolves around the goals that have already been set and instruction.

[01:05:14] So we all have the same answer for the front of the group. For the team development, I also think that's really important. And we have an amazing resource in Carmen. So perhaps something that is related to diversity, equity, inclusion, since it is also part of our mission and our goals, we can incorporate that into a team development opportunity so that we can understand the different perspectives and how that impacts how we do what we do.

[01:05:45] That would be really eye-opening as well. Okay, I would like to thank my colleagues on the board for their input today.

[01:06:02] Next, we have announcements, communications, and school board comments. Members, are there any announcements or comments? Okay, the next school board business meeting will be held this evening, March 10, 2026, at 6.30 p.m. here in the public meeting room.

[01:06:22] If there is no further business, we will enter into closed session, which will be held in the public meeting room's conference room. While in the closed session, the board will recess to attend the REB banquet in room 502 of the county administration building. After the banquet is over, the board will resume the closed session here in the public meeting room.

[01:06:43] Madam Clerk, please announce the items for today's closed session. It is my understanding that the school board desires to enter into a closed session in accordance with section 2.2-3711.A of the Code of Virginia, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and specifically under subsection 1, the discussion and consideration of personnel disciplinary matters, and 2, the discussion and consideration of student matters that would involve the disclosure of student records.

[01:07:11] Members of the board, you've just heard the items requested to be discussed in closed session. Do I have a motion in that regard? So moved. Is there a second? Second. Madam Clerk, would you please call roll on the motion? Anne Coker. Aye. Jennifer Darby.

[01:07:27] Aye. Dominique Chatters. i steven pronto i lisa hudgets i we are now in closed session the recess has ended do i have a motion the recess has ended do i have a motion to reconvene an open session so moved is there a second second the board is now an open session madam clerk would you please read the resolution

[01:08:04] certifying the closed session now therefore be it resolved that the school board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge one only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies and two only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard discussed or considered by the school board is there a motion to adopt the resolution i make a motion to adopt the resolution is there a second second madam clerk would you please call roll on the motion

[01:08:42] Ann Coker. Aye. Jennifer Darby. Aye. Dominique Chatters. Aye. Stephen Pronto. Aye. Lisa Hudgens. Aye. The motion carries. Is there a motion regarding the student matters? In case numbers 2025-

26 slash RE30, 2025-26 slash RE31, 2025-26 slash RE32, it is recommended that the superintendent's recommendation be upheld.

[01:09:12] Is there a second? Second. Madam Clerk, would you please call roll on the motion? Ann Coker. Aye. Jennifer Darby. Aye. Dominique Chatters. Aye. Stephen Pronto. Aye. Lisa Hudgens. Aye. The motion carries. Is there a motion regarding the first personnel matter? In case number 2025-26-56-HR, it is recommended that the superintendent's recommendation be upheld. Is there a second? Second. Madam Clerk, would you please call roll on the motion?

[01:09:47] Ann Coker? Aye. Jennifer Darby? Aye. Dominique Chatters? Aye. Steve Imparanto? Aye. Lisa Hudgens? Aye. The motion carries. Is there a motion regarding the next personnel matter? In case number 2025-26-57-HR, it is recommended that the superintendent's recommendation be upheld. Is there a second? Second. Madam Clerk, would you please call roll on the motion? Ann Coker? Aye. Jennifer Darby? Aye. Dominique Chatters? Aye.

[01:10:20] Stephen Pronto? Aye. Lisa Hudgens? Aye. The motion carries. Is there a motion regarding the next personnel matter? In case number 2025-26-58-HR, it is recommended that the superintendent's recommendation be upheld.

[01:10:36] Is there a second? Second. Madam Clerk, would you please call roll on the motion? Ann Coker? Aye. Jennifer Darby? Aye. Dominique Chatters? Aye. Stephen Pronto? Aye. Lisa Hudgens? Aye. The motion carries. Is there a motion regarding the next personnel matter? In case number 2025-26-59-HR, it is recommended that the superintendent's recommendation be upheld.

[01:11:00] Is there a second? Second. Madam Clerk, would you please call roll on the motion? Ann Coker? Aye. Jennifer Darby? Aye. Dominate Chatters? Aye. Stephen Pronto? Aye. Lisa Hudgens? Aye. The motion carries. Is there a motion regarding the next personnel matter?

[01:11:15] In case number 2025-26-60-HR, it is recommended that the superintendent's recommendation be upheld. Is there a second? Second. Madam Clerk, would you please call roll on the motion? Ann Coker? Aye. Jennifer Darby?

[01:11:31] Aye. Dominique Chatters? Aye. Stephen Pronto? Aye. Lisa Hudgens? Aye. The motion carries. Is there a motion regarding the next personnel matter? In case number 2025-26-61-HR, it is recommended that the superintendent's recommendation be upheld.

[01:11:49] Is there a second? Second. Madam Clerk, would you please call roll on the motion? Ann Coker? Aye. Jennifer Darby? Aye. Dominique Chatters? Aye. Stephen Pronto? Aye. Lisa Hudgens? Aye. The motion carries. Is there a motion regarding the next personnel matter?

[01:12:06] Madam Chair, I move that the decision in case number 2025-26-02-PH be reversed. Is there a second? Second. Madam Clerk, would you please call roll on the motion? Ann Coker?

[01:12:21] Aye. Jennifer Darby? Nay. Dominique Chatters? Aye. Stephen Pronto? Aye. Lisa Hudgens? Aye. The motion is reversed.



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