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Fairfax County School Board Meeting, Thursday, November 9, 2023

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- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQ8njuqLN4M
- Official School Board page (FCPS): https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/leadership/school-board

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[00:00:00] 745, 745.

[00:09:45] Board members, please take your seats.

[00:27:55] We'd like to start the meeting.

[00:28:07] This regular meeting will come to order. This November 2023 regular meeting of the Fairfax County School Board will now come to order. We apologize to the community for being a little bit late this evening.

[00:28:25] Please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence and a performance of the National Anthem by Kilmer Middle School, Kilmer Singers, under the direction of Kevin Sapp. I pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

[00:30:33] Okay, agenda item 2.02, certification of a closed meeting.

[00:31:06] In order to comply with section 2.2-3712D of the Code of Virginia, it is necessary for the board to certify that since the Fairfax County School Board convene a closed meeting on November 9th, 2023. To the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed

meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the board during the closed meeting. Do I have a motion? Ms. Colbert Sanders, is there

[00:31:46] a second. Dr. Anderson, all those in favor. Ms. Colbert Sanders, Dr. Anderson, Ms. McLaughlin, Ms. Bukarski, myself, Mr. Frisch, Karen Keyes-Gamara, Melanie Marin, Avaro Mace, and Laura Jane Cowan. Any opposed? Any abstentions? All right, that is unanimous. Thank you. Okay, confirmation

[00:32:18] of action taken and closed. I call on Mr. Frisch for a motion. Thank you. Madam Chair, I move that the chair of the school board be authorized to execute on behalf of the board, the contract for assistant superintendent for region two as discussed in the closed meeting.

[00:32:34] Is there a second, Ms. McLaughlin? Seconded by Ms. McLaughlin. All those in favor, Ms. Corbett Sanders, Dr. Anderson, Ms. McLaughlin, Ms. McCarsky, myself, Mr. Frisch, Karen Keese-Gamara, Ms. Mirren, Ms. Elmash, and Laura-Jane Kenwin.

[00:33:01] That is unanimous. I call on Miss Cowan for a motion madam chair I move that the chair of the school board be authorized to execute on behalf of the board the contract for assistant superintendent department of school improvement and supports elementary support as discussed in the closed meeting is there a second yes I second thank you Miss Marin all those in favor of this motion please Miss Corbett Sanders Dr. Anderson Miss McLaughlin Miss Bukarski myself Mr. Frisch

[00:33:40] Ms. Kieskamara, Ms. Mirren, Ms. Omeche, and Ms. Cohen. That is unanimous for those at the table. I call on Ms. Corbett-Sanders for a motion. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that the chair of the school board be authorized to execute on behalf of the board the contract for assistant superintendent, Department of School Improvement and Support, secondary support, as discussed in the closed meeting.

[00:34:08] Is there a second? I'll second. Thank you, Ms. Bukarski. All those in favor? - Ms. Corbett Sanders, Ms. McLaughlin, Ms. Bukarski, Fitztullen, Mr. Frisch, Ms. Marin, Ms. Elmache, and Laura Jane Cohen.

[00:34:26] All those opposed? All those abstaining? Dr. Anderson and Ms. Karen Keyes-Gamara. Mr. Jackson, would you provide the vote, please? - Madam Chair, the vote for that is 9-0-2.

[00:34:44] - Thank you. That motion passes. Announcements. Ms. Sizemore-Heiser submitted a written request to virtually attend this evening's meeting DUE TO A MEDICAL CONFLICT AND PERSONAL CONFLICT RESPECTIVELY. ALL THOSE IN FAVOR OF APPROVING MISS SEISMERHEISER'S REQUEST.

[00:35:03] MS. CORBET SANDERS, DR. ANDERSON, MS. MCLACHLAN, MR. FRISH, KAREN KEES-GAMARA, MS. MARIN, MS. OMAGE, AND LAUREN-JANE COWEN. AND THAT IS UNANIMOUS WITH THOSE OF US AT THE TABLE.

[00:35:22] IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO REVIEW A COPY OF THE AGENDA AND ANY AGENDA ITEM that is being discussed tonight. That information may be found at the back of the auditorium or on the website at fcps.edu/schoolboard/boarddocs.

[00:35:41] Tonight's meeting is being broadcast on channel 99 and live streamed on the website at fcps.edu/tv/ch99. Before we start our announcements, I would like to welcome some special guests tonight from the City of Fairfax.

[00:36:00] We have with us City of Fairfax School Board Chair, Ms. Carolyn Pitches. We have the City of Fairfax School Board Member, Ms. Sarah Kelsey. And do we have your Assistant Superintendent?

[00:36:15] Oh, okay, he's not with us. But thank you so much for joining us this evening. We appreciate you being here. I would also like to welcome and congratulate some newly elected Fairfax County School Board members who are in attendance tonight. We have Sandy Anderson from the Springfield District - And Mateo Dunn from the Mount Vernon District.

[00:36:39] Thank you for being with us this evening. We also have with us as part of our ceremony for our Purple Star schools, we have our Garrison Commander from Fort Belvoir.

[00:37:03] Colonel Jones. There you are. Thank you so much for being with us tonight. As a reminder to all board members in accordance with our vote on September 28th, all sponsors of proclamations will have two minutes to provide comments while all other board members will have one minute each.

[00:37:24] We will employ this practice moving forward. After reading tonight's proclamations, the board would like to invite those in support of the proclamation to join us for a photo. Our first proclamation, 2.05 Cedar Lane School Gym Renaming.

[00:37:41] I call in Ms. Marin for a proclamation. Whereas Thomas Lundy passionately and faithfully served Cedar Lane School students, staff, families, and community members for 10 years as the school's principal, And whereas Mr. Lundy has demonstrated unwavering dedication to the academic, social, emotional well-being of Cedar Lane students, and whereas Mr. Lundy provided staff with honest and transparent leadership and moral support, and whereas Mr. Lundy served as an inspiration to each Cedar Lane student to reach their full potential, and whereas his legacy at Cedar Lane School spanned over 20 years, starting as an intern and returning to lead the school through the

[00:38:21] pandemic as its principal. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the gymnasium at Cedar Lane School be renamed the Tom Lundy Gym in honor of this inspirational leader, colleague, and friend. Thank you. Is there a second? Mr. Frisch. Ms. Mariner, would you like to speak to your

[00:38:57] proclamation? I'll just say I'll keep this brief because I know Mr. Lundy is quite a humble man, And I'm sure even having this much attention is is tough, but I'm glad that we are able to honor you and your staff has been looking forward to this for quite some time.

[00:39:12] And I'm really honored to be able to commemorate your work in this way in the building with the with the people who are are doing the work that you believe in so much. Thank you for all your service. Mr. Frisch, would you like to speak?

[00:39:36] I think the applause says almost everything we need to know. So, the mission of Cedar Lane School is pretty specific. To provide small, structured, and nurturing environment that supports the academic, social, emotional, vocational, and behavioral growth of every student.

[00:39:55] The mission of Cedar Lane is grounded in excellence, equity, and opportunity. By grounding our mission in excellence, equity, and opportunity, we can create a school where all students can thrive. I think if you speak to staff at Cedar Lane, if you speak to families whose students have gone to Cedar Lane they will tell you that Mr. Lundy has excelled at carrying forward that mission and I'm proud to second this motion. Thank you. Ms. Cohen would you like to speak? Ms. Cohen. Thank you so much. I had the opportunity to get

[00:40:32] to visit Cedar Lane a couple of times including the incredible winter talent show and also had the opportunity to get to see to get to see some kiddos that I I knew from my time at Burke School and get

to see how successful that they were in the setting and recognize that Cedar Lane is such a magical place in large part because of such an amazing staff and such incredible leadership but as you go through it you immediately are embraced by the

[00:41:07] feeling that those people believe in you and that they will not give up on you until they can find that one thing that makes you feel successful, even if it's playing the drums or guitar or shooting hoops. It is just remarkable, and it's a remarkable place to be. And so naming the gym is just a very small way of saying thank you, but everybody who you've sent through the doors over the last years, the last 20 years, is your legacy and such a testament to kids who've had

[00:41:40] a lot of things not go their way until they find Cedar Lane. And to be able to leave and have wonderful, successful lives afterwards is because of all of you. So thank you so much and thanks to Dr. Lundy. Thank you. Seeing no other board members that would like to speak, I just would like to make one comment. I was very fortunate to meet Mr. Lundy. I don't even want to think

[00:42:15] about how many years ago, 10, 12 years ago at least, on a Chesapeake Bay Foundation training program for principals, and I won't go into any further details, but I think that just illustrates his willingness to bring innovative and different types of opportunities to the students at Cedar Lang. They developed quite a sustainability program at their school under our

[00:42:48] STPS Get to Green program. And it's just one example of some great work. And I'm thrilled to have called you a colleague for so many years. Thank you. Ms. Amesh. Yeah, thank you so much.

[00:43:07] I know it's always a challenge with my colleagues picking which resolutions to speak to, but I can't let this wonderful audience go without further recognition really I mean the work that's done at Cedar Lane in and of itself is tremendous in being able to build a bridge for our young people and it takes a lot of heart and I think back at when visiting the the the gym at Cedar Lane which you know to my colleagues point is so timely and fitting that Dr. Lundy you'd be the name that gets to sit on it of the joy the giggles the the hope the passion that was shared in that space, especially in celebrating our young people in their graduations, celebrating

[00:43:47] the successes of the skills they've been able to earn, and I hope that you can sit here and take in all the pride, the celebration of you today for everything that you've been able to offer and building it to be what it is today for these kids and to help them along their journeys.

[00:44:03] I mean, at this point, it's generations that have come through your leadership and your service at our school and are better for it in being able to live their lives in more independent ways and in ways that allow them to maximize their potential even further.

[00:44:19] So just really grateful for you, Dr. Lundy. We're so blessed in FCPS to have people like you. And this is a small token of our recognition of all that you've offered the community. All right.

[00:44:36] With that, I will call for the vote. those in favor. Ms. Carbert Sanders, Dr. Anderson, Ms. McLaughlin, Ms. Bukarski, myself, Mr. Frisch, Karen Kieskamara, Ms. Marin, Ms. Omeish, and Laura-Jane Cowan. And we have Racha Sizemore

[00:44:55] Heiser also voting virtually. So that is unanimous. Congratulations. All right. Agenda item 2.06, Six, School Counselors, Social Workers, Nurses, and Psychologists Month proclamation.

[00:45:25] I call on Dr. Anderson for a proclamation. Thank you. Whereas the celebration of School Counselors, Social Workers, Nurses, and Psychologists Month honors the elementary, middle, and high school professionals, I'm sorry, and high school professional services staff who ensure the physical and mental health needs of our students and that their safety needs are met in and out of school.

[00:45:55] And whereas FCPS employs close to 700 school counseling professionals, including school counselors, directors of student services, and college and career specialists who are committed to preparing students to become lifelong learners and productive members of a global society with a focus on social-emotional wellness, academic success, and college and career readiness. And whereas school social workers maintain expertise in many areas including mental health, human

[00:46:29] development, behavior, trauma, and family systems, FCPS social workers use their training, experience, and skills to provide services to children, families, and school staff members to remove personal environmental obstacles in the support of student academic performance. And whereas, school nurses create safe and supporting learning environments as the first responders at schools, promoting wellness and improving health outcomes for students. They collaborate with school staff, families, communities, and other health care providers to ensure

[00:47:08] the safety and well-being of students and whereas school psychologists are qualified members of the school team who apply their expertise in mental health learning and behavior to help students develop the social and emotional and life skills necessary to realize personal achievement and growth and to build resilience and a sense of belonging and whereas these school counselors social workers nurses and psychologists are highly skilled professionals committed to helping every

[00:47:42] child achieve ensuring equitable access and opportunity building relationships to strengthen student and family engagement and supporting mental health wellness to help students to succeed in school and in life now therefore be it resolved that the fairfax county school board recognizes November 2023 as school counselors, social workers, nurses, and psychologists month in the importance of our students being cared for emotionally, socially, and physically in order

[00:48:15] to thrive in school, at home, and in life. Oh, I'm supposed to say more. Thank you. Is there a second? Wait, Dr. Anderson, do you want to finish it first? I do. I should, except there's nothing there.

[00:48:34] You want do you want me to say it? I have it. I don't know. Oh, I know they're for you got it I said it. Let it be resolved. I'll say it again. Um, I will second that little too excited Very excited Thank you for your second miss Cohen. Dr. Anderson, would you like to speak to your proclamation? Yes I'm very excited about this proclamation as everybody can tell but seriously school psychologists nurses counselors and social workers i believe they are all first responders in our system

[00:49:12] in times of crisis we call on them to provide aid to our students their families and to our staff we thank you deeply for all of your work while we know that your plates are full you never turn away anyone in their time of need we still have work to do in order to provide these individuals these highly skilled professionals with more reasonable workloads in order for them to engage more deeply with our students but we are very grateful for all of the support that you provide to our students in addition to handing out band-aids evaluating concussions testing providing mental

[00:49:50] health supports our counselors our social workers our nurses are a vital part of our school systems So happy school psychologists, counselors, nurses, and social workers month.

[00:50:12] Would you like to speak to your second? I would, thank you. I will absolutely ditto what my colleague said. I don't think I could say it any better than that. But as the mom of a kid who is now a thriving college freshman, I will unequivocally say that they would not have made it through school without you guys, 100%.

[00:50:36] The number of phone calls that I got from counselors and school psychologists and just the support that my kiddo felt as they tried to navigate a tough, tough experience in school. There is no way that they would have walked across that stage if it were not for all of you.

[00:50:56] So thank you so much from all of us and everything that you do, seen and unseen, for all of our kids. We so appreciate you. Ms. McLaughlin. Well, this is bittersweet for me because this will be my last opportunity after 12 years as a social worker on the school board to speak with my deepest appreciation to all of our social workers.

[00:51:31] It's an honor to represent you here on the board, as well as our incredible health and behavioral health specialists. For anyone who's watched my words over the last 12 years, I have fought passionately that we needed school nurses, that they were so essential for truly supporting and ensuring that our students were healthy and able to thrive in order to learn, and that I've continued to be a champion long before COVID, that we needed more social workers, psychologists, and counselors to, again, ensure that our kids are supported and ready to learn.

[00:52:07] So tonight really, truly is about all of you who help partner with our families, help support our children, and help ensure that each and every child, regardless of background and circumstance, has the opportunity to thrive in Fairfax County Public Schools.

[00:52:23] So I am honored to be part of the board, celebrating all of you and the important roles you play in our schools. Bless you so much, and I've just been grateful to all that you do for our school system. Thanks. - Thank you, Ms. Keys-Gamara.

[00:52:44] - I too really want to say thank you because I believe by providing our whole teams, the social workers, the psychologists, the nurses, we are teaching our young people, we are teaching our community to take care of the whole person.

[00:53:01] And when we do that, we help to remove the stigma that can sometimes follow the need to take care of our emotional wellbeing. And we help to teach that when we feel well, we can be well, we can do well, and our students can truly access education to the fullest extent and become their very best.

[00:53:22] So I think I'm grateful that you're a part of our team, and I just want to say thank you. Thank you. Ms. Amesh. I do want to thank our school counselors, social workers, nurses, psychologists.

[00:53:39] We've lumped them all in in one, but it's really to emphasize that there are academic blockers that kids show up to school with, and they're not able to show up for learning without the kind of support that these wonderful staff are able to provide. I'd be remiss not to point out, of course, their role during COVID and over the past few years, and now as well, rebuilding after the pandemic and the traumas it's left our children with, to be able to show up ready to learn.

[00:54:04] You know, in the midst of intense global conflict today, we understand that students need these services more than ever, and collaboration and communication between parents, students, teachers, and

staff is key to building and shaping the resilient minds that we're also attempting to educate. I also wanna point out two things.

[00:54:21] One, that many of our staff, our social workers and our psychologists I know in particular, have associations and they went out of their way during the pandemic and the crisis that was unfolding to advocate and to speak up for their students outside of the work hours that they put in, which are already well over a normal work week for their kids, but to really highlight the importance of continuing to support these positions and to expand.

[00:54:48] And I know, I think Ms. McLaughlin was the one to mention, but my gosh, we're still so far behind on the ratios. And I've been saying this since I've started here, and Dr. Reed, I want to flag this for you over and over again. We've done the budget question year after year to show the tremendous disparity, and I know you all have been imploring us year after year to expand funding for those resources.

[00:55:09] I know we've, you know, you were adamant supporters of the telemental health supports that are that do exist for our kids now but even beyond that we need the people in the buildings who are able to meet our kids where they're at and help them show up for learning and be ready for that. So I hope Dr. Reed that will be one of our continued priorities in the years ahead but just so grateful for you all and I hope all our families recognize just just how essential you are in our schools beyond the academic piece.

[00:55:36] We're really educating that whole child. Thank you. And with that I will call for the vote. THOSE IN FAVOR, MS. CORBET SANDERS, DR. ANDERSON, MS. MCLACHLAN, MS. MCKARSKY, MYSELF, MR. FRISH, MS. KEES-GIMARA, MS. MARIN, MS. OMEISH, AND MS. COHEN AND ROCHNA SIZEMORE-HEISER IS WITH US VIRTUALLY.

[00:56:04] THAT IS UNANIMOUS. THANK YOU. ALL RIGHT. I CALL ON MS. CORBET. THIS IS AGENDA ITEM 2.07 VETERANS' DAY PROCLAMATION. I CALL ON MS. CORBET SANDERS FOR A PROCLAMATION. THANK YOU,

[00:56:30] Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. Whereas Veterans Day is observed annually on November 11th in the United States in honor of all those living and deceased who served with the U.S. armed forces to protect the freedoms that are so important to our nation's democracy, and whereas Veterans Day, formerly known as Armistice Day, is the anniversary of the signing of the armistice by the Allies and Germans in 1918, ending World War I, Armistice Day officially received its name in the United States.

[00:57:07] States in 1926 and became an official national holiday in 1938 through congressional resolutions. In 1954, President Eisenhower signed a congressional bill that changed the holiday's name to Veterans Day.

[00:57:23] And whereas, Americans owe a great debt to the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who serve and defend our freedom in war and in peace and their families and community that support them. And whereas Fairfax County Public Schools has strong ties to our veterans as our division serves over 14,000 military connected students and their families, FCPS also proudly employs many veterans who now serve as teachers, administrators, and support staff to our schools and division

[00:57:57] departments. Now therefore be it resolved that the Fairfax County School Board does hereby celebrate Veterans Day on November 11th, 2023 and urge all students, employees and community members to join in appropriate activities to pay tribute to the members of our military and to stress the

importance of service to our country as a core value in our democracy. Thank you. Is there a second? Yes, I will second that. Ms. Corbett Sanders, would you like to speak to your proclamation?

[00:58:30] yes thank you vice chair and i will be brief because i know we have another item that we want to get to but i want to personally thank every one of our staff family members and community members who have signed up for the ultimate call to duty which is to serve our country in the military it is an amazing gift i am humbled by what our military

[00:59:01] members are willing to offer and to sacrifice not only in the traditional wartime but most often it's in peacetime and it's in a peacetime in which people serve a whole range of professions within the military and so i am forever grateful i even have a colleague sitting next to me who is a veteran, so thank you very much.

[00:59:30] We should add to next year's proclamation that school board members are also. But actually, when you look at what our service men and women do is after they leave the service, they continue to serve. They serve as teachers.

[00:59:46] They serve as first responders. They serve in elected office. They serve in all different forms because somebody who is willing to sign up to serve in our military services is usually also committed to everything that is our democratic values.

[01:00:06] So thank you so much for all that you do. Ms. Tolan, would you like to speak to your second? Yes. Thank you. All of us across FCPS and all Americans honor and express our deepest gratitude to the brave men and women who serve selflessly and defend our country today on Veterans Day, November 11th, and every day. We can never say enough to share our gratitude as our service members and their

[01:00:39] families have faced many challenges as a contributor in our nation's history. Many military-connected families come to our area for their next job or assignment. In fact, I met several veterans at the polls earlier this week that told me stories about their families moving here for the school system. FCPS is honored to support over 14,000 military-connected students from both the U.S.

[01:01:06] military and foreign militaries. By being in school on or around Veterans Day, our schools share with our students and staff the meaning of this day and an understanding of the sacrifices made by our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and the Space Force guardians and their families. Thank you for your service. I am really looking forward to celebrating Veterans Day at Colvin Run Elementary

[01:01:32] School tomorrow. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Tolan. I see Ms. Kees-Gamara. Well, I couldn't miss this opportunity to give my last, have my last opportunity to say thank you to so many who have served. I truly am grateful for your dedication. As the daughter of a military veteran and the

[01:02:06] mother of a son that is currently serving, I am truly, truly proud when I look at our nation and I think about so many people who just are willing to go forward for others. It is truly a gift and I just wanted to say thank you and I'm so grateful to be at least in the family of those who are working together to take care of our nation. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Kieskamara. Ms. Amesh?

[01:02:43] Yeah, thank you. I want to start by echoing gratitude to those in our community who've ultimately put the greatest thing on the line, their lives, in addition to, of course, the struggles their families have to go through, the financial costs of war and of having to put themselves in that, and then, of course, the silent struggles of what folks go through when they come back.

[01:03:05] And it's worth noting, Fairfax County right here in our community, we have 65,000 veterans that are our neighbors, that are perhaps our teachers. And of course, I give a nod to my colleague, Dr. Anderson, as well as several of my colleagues who have family who are veterans or perhaps are serving, as Ms. Kizgamara pointed out.

[01:03:24] And of course, as the resolution stated, 14,000 families who are military connected here in our school system. You know whether in the audience today or those at home and that with their families and loved ones We thank you for that service and recognize too that war zones and places of conflict are incredibly unstable And we can only imagine the fear of people who live and work in such areas where lives are at risk every day There's no guarantee of safety. So in conclusion rather than platitudes perhaps a call to action For the dignity that our veterans deserve To make sure that we do support them and show that support when they do come at home and provide the right supports and

[01:04:03] The right access to a VA system that's robust and whatnot to make sure that we show through our actions Not just our words our appreciation for the ultimate sacrifice they've been given giving. Thank you, Miss Amesh Miss McLaughlin. I too want to just share my deep appreciation My family in roots were that my great-grandfather served in World War I.

[01:04:33] My grandfather fought in World War II and Korea. My father, his brothers, many of my uncles, including four who served with the Canadian Royal Military and were killed in World War II, our family has known what military service means and the ultimate sacrifice that comes with it.

[01:04:55] And so I also want to add and lift up the fact that my family didn't come from money. It didn't have opportunity. So everyone I just listed, they were all enlisted men. And anyone who knows what our enlisted families go through, it is an additional sacrifice.

[01:05:14] The pay is poor. My mom and her mother were on food stamps and starving during World War II. so it's not easy so I guess what I want to say is that not only do we want to be honoring our veterans not only do you want to do what Ms. O'Mesh said that when they come home they feel valued appreciated and supported through the VA and all other ways that we as a society show our care and support for their service and sacrifice I just want to say with humility thank you to each and

[01:05:49] every family and service men and women who have given to our nation. We are so deeply blessed by the service for generations before and the generations to come. And I am one American who's deeply grateful for that. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. McLaughlin. I will call for a vote. All those in favor, Ms. Corbett Sanders, Dr. Anderson, Ms. McLaughlin, Ms. Pekarski, Ms. Tolan,

[01:06:21] Ms. Keyes-Gumara, Ms. Marin, Ms. Omeish, Ms. Cohen, Ms. Seizmerheiser, and myself. That's unanimous.

[01:06:38] I would like to invite those here in support of the Cedar Lane School Gym Renaming Proclamation to please join the board for a photo.

[01:06:55] After the photo, a guest and staff will depart the dais area, and Mr. Jackson will announce the subsequent photos.

[01:08:19] I would like to invite those here

[01:09:10] in support of the school, social workers, counselors, nurses, and psychologists proclamation, including Miss Mary Jo Davis, Miss Stephanie Gray, Miss Kimberly Smith, Mr. Brian Hochstrasser,

[01:09:24] and Miss Donna Dishonors to please join the board for a photo.

[01:11:28] I would like to invite those here in support of the Veterans Day proclamation

[01:11:45] to please join the board for a photo.

[01:14:00] Business time.

[01:14:52] All right, 2.08 Purple Star Schools recognition. I call on Ms. Corbett Sanders for the recognition. Thank you, Madam Chair. Virginia is home to over 75,000 military-connected school-age students, more than any other state in the nation.

[01:15:16] All our Fairfax County public schools proudly welcome and support the over 14,500 military-connected youth and their families who are part of our school community. Tonight, we are honoring 18 of our schools who have been awarded the Purple Star designation.

[01:15:36] At this time, I would like to recognize the Fort Belvoir garrison commander, Colonel Joseph Messina. In 2018, the Virginia Department of Education established the Purple Star designation to be awarded to military-friendly schools that have demonstrated a major commitment to students and families connected to our nation's military.

[01:16:08] Criteria established for the award were designed to increase educator awareness of military-connected youth and help schools structure their support to and for military-connected youth and their families. In the inaugural year, 14 Fairfax County public schools received the Purple Star recognition.

[01:16:31] Schools that earned this prestigious designation received a special Purple Star recognition to display at their school. The Purple Star award serves to set each of these schools apart for the hard work of the faculty, students, parents, and community partners who stand together to ensure that our military-connected students are supported academically, behaviorally, and emotionally during their transitions.

[01:16:58] We thank the FCPS school staff and students from these 18 schools earning the recognition this year for the warm welcome to their military-connected students and we thank our military families for keeping our nation strong and safe.

[01:17:13] Families, students, and community members in the audience are invited to stand in support of their schools as their school is announced. I'd like to start with Bellevue Elementary School. Bonnie Bray Elementary School.

[01:17:42] Canterbury Woods Elementary School. Centerville Elementary School. Chesterbrook Elementary School.

[01:18:02] Herndon Elementary School. Catherine Johnson Middle School. Kings Park Elementary School.

[01:18:19] Lake Braddock Secondary School, Lemon Road Elementary School, Lynnbrook Elementary School, Rolling Valley Elementary School,

[01:18:52] Rose Hill Elementary School, South County Middle School, South County High School, Wakefield Forest Elementary School, Westfield High School, West Springfield Elementary School.

[01:19:32] Among the FCPS schools recognized this year, West Springfield Elementary School has the unique distinction of being honored for a second time in recognition of their ongoing commitment to

welcoming military students and families. Now I would like to invite Colonel Joseph Messina, the Fort Belvoir Garrison Commander, to the community participation podium to say a few words to our Purple Star Schools.

[01:20:01] Welcome Colonel Messina. Thank you, ma'am. Madam Chair, board, school board members, thank you for having me here today. I really just really quickly just wanted to say thank you. One, thank you for making our military families a priority. Thank you to all of the schools, the 18 new schools here today and the 70 schools throughout the area and in Fairfax County that are Purple Star schools. I've got a long speech here, but I'm not going to go through that. What I'm going to tell you is that my son, who's 16 now has been to six different schools in six different states and what that means is that

[01:20:38] every time a family moves it's not just going from one school to the next with your friends that are going up a grade like you do and i did when i was in high school and in pelham new hampshire it's a new set of schools a new set of friends a new set of teachers and everything is new and this program it's not just a purple star. What it is is it's a smiling face. It's a friend. It's an ambassador that meets the children at the school and welcomes them and provides them with information, points of contact, and key information to make them feel welcome as they move. So I just wanted

[01:21:16] to thank you. Thank the principals, the superintendent. Thank you very much, ma'am. And thank all of the teachers that are taking care of our children. And thank you for making our military connected families a priority. Thank you. Thank you, Colonel Messina. We would also like to recognize members of the Fairfax County Public Schools Military Connected Youth Process Action Team. This team's charge is to identify unique academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs

[01:21:51] of military connected youth and their families and ensure faculty and staff are informed and prepared to meet the needs the identified needs partnering with stakeholders as appropriate at this time i would like to ask my colleagues colonel messina our superintendent dr reed and our chief of schools dr ponce members of the military connected youth process action team and the fort belvoir school liaison officer marie bailey to make your way to the dais to recognize these schools and be part

[01:22:25] of a group photo. Mr. Deputy Clerk please call up each school by region to join us at the dais with their region leadership staff to receive their recognition and take a group photo. Region

[01:22:49] 1 Herndon Elementary. Region 2 Chesterbrook Elementary. Region 3 Bellevue Elementary and Rose

[01:25:38] Hill Elementary. Since region 4 has eight schools we'll call up four schools at a time so that we

[01:26:32] can fit everyone in the photo. For the first region 4 group photo with the following schools please come up to the dais to be recognized and take a group photo Bonnie Bray Elementary Centerville Elementary South County Middle School and South

[01:26:46] County High School staff for the second region for a group photo with the

[01:28:09] following schools please come up to the dais to be recognized and take a group photo Kings Park Elementary Lake Braddock Secondary Rolling Valley

[01:28:17] Elementary and West Springfield Elementary region five photos will also

[01:29:28] be taken in two groups at this time we'd like to invite the following to the dais city of Fairfax school board chair miss pitches city of Fairfax school

[01:29:37] board member Miss Kelsey and the staff of Katherine Johnson middle school for the

[01:30:39] second region five group photo staff from Canterbury woods elementary lemon road elementary Wakefield forest elementary and Westfield high please

[01:30:48] come to the dais for region six staff from Lindbrook elementary madam chair

[01:33:17] that was the last of our purple scar schools recognition 3.01 community

[01:34:24] participation. The next order of business is community participation. We welcome all community members who are here and those who signed up to speak this evening. Community members can sign up to provide comments at school board regular business meetings and public hearings on the school board's websites. At regular business meetings, speakers may address any school-related issue except those that have been scheduled for public hearings such as the capital improvement

[01:34:59] program budget and boundaries comments targeting criticizing or attacking individual students are not permitted during public meetings complaints regarding school-based employees should be directed to the appropriate school principal or other school officials speakers should not use personally identifiable information in connection with an individual student or school-based employee additionally speakers should be respectful and observe proper decorum in their statements avoiding profanity inappropriate gestures shouting and comments that run counter to the spirit

[01:35:36] and letter of the school division's non-discrimination policy which protects students and staff from discrimination based on age race color sex sexual orientation gender identity religion national origin marital status or disability speakers must limit their remarks to no more than two minutes, direct their comments to the school board, and should remain at the podium until concluding their remarks. Additionally, only the speaker may stand at the podium. They may not be joined by others. Speaker substitutions are not permitted. A

[01:36:14] speaker may not yield their time to another individual. At the conclusion of two minutes, the microphone or video will be turned off. School board members will be listening but not responding we ask audience members to be respectful of one another shouting and outbursts will not be tolerated audience members should hold their applause until the conclusion of a speaker's remarks and remain at their seats including when video recording or taking photos we are grateful to those who have come to speak to us today and thank you for your cooperation madam deputy clerk

[01:36:51] please call our first speaker david browning karen kogan there are two sides to an issue and I know I'm not privy to all the information. What I know for a fact is the warehouse does not have a

[01:37:29] buyer to purchase warehouse supplies. FCPS warehouse is out of stock on toilet paper and paper hand towels. In June of this year, the warehouse was informed of our transition from procurement to facilities. Leadership had clearly communicated that all personnel would transfer along with their respective departments. This, however, didn't happen for the warehouse. A few weeks before July 1, the Director of Procurement submitted paperwork to transfer the warehouse buyer back to procurement rather than keeping them with the facilities i was told the reason behind this move was that procurement needed an additional buyer the warehouse was not allocated a head count to replace this role and as a result we now face find ourselves without a warehouse buyer

[01:38:06] the warehouse buyer is a unique position within the school system and other buyers are unable to support this significant workload this buyer is responsible for purchasing approximately four million dollars worth of supplies which is vital to ensuring that schools and centers have the necessary materials the fcps business controls specifically defined for the warehouse buyer are not compatible with the controls for any other fcps buyer due to separation of duties this control feature prevents the authorization of any buyer to also procure for the warehouse i understand facilities leadership made an offer to procurement they could have a headcount from facilities in exchange for allowing the warehouse buyer to return to the warehouse this offer was declined

[01:38:43] by the cfo and the director of procurement services the solution devised by procurement services was for the warehouse buyer to create all purchase orders in advance for the remainder of fy24 this proposed solution is unrealistic and condescending to the nature of this function this process does not project emergencies or unforeseeable needs which have already occurred to add to the challenge facilities leadership and i discovered on monday that this unique profile profile for the warehouse buyer was removed from the only individual capable of performing this function this leaves no one in the division capable of placing orders for warehouse supplies consequently we now face our find ourselves facing shortages of toilet paper and paper towels

[01:39:21] i feel you should know why since this is likely the first symptom of a larger problem i take immense pride in wearing this badge every day as it's truly an honor to be a part of fcps i also fear speaking up in this manner carries the risk of potentially ending my career or there may be repercussions and overt retaliation my core values revolve around fair play and doing its right even when it requires speaking out. I believe you share these values as well. This is not my preferred method for handling difficult situations, but I felt it was my only option.

[01:39:53] I followed. Thank you. Richard Clayton. Good evening. I'm Rick Clayton on behalf of For Public Education. I don't need to be a fortune teller to interpret the results of this week's election.

[01:40:23] I can read the tea leaves. Chaos, transphobia, anti-CRT, and lack of civility were trounced by by the voters, by parents, in favor of inclusivity, support for teachers, excellence, hand in hand, and equity for all.

[01:40:39] This board has stood up to crude, personal, vile attacks in order to protect our students and our public school culture for four years. For some of you, this will be the last time you listen to me at this podium. And on behalf of For Public Education, I want to say thank you.

[01:40:56] Through this storm, Fairfax has remained at the forefront of excellence in education. And of course, we do have work still to do. But I hope those of you, those who have been most critical of your work, will be true to their word of wanting to, quote, listen to parents, as parents have spoken loudly and clearly.

[01:41:14] Parents want all kinds of books in our libraries. They told you this on Tuesday. Parents want all kinds of truthful history taught. They told you this on Tuesday. They want trans kids protected and listened to. They want teachers supported mentally, I'm sorry, emotionally and financially.

[01:41:33] They told you this on Tuesday. and they want civility when we do disagree, not performative politics. They told you this on Tuesday. They have sent, parents, have sent a clear message, and I hope

everyone now will listen to them. And as one school board candidate said in another county, make school board meetings boring again.

[01:41:54] So I and the rest of the four public education group look forward to working with the new board next year. Thank you. - Steve Tunley.

[01:42:19] - I'm the father of a South Lakes 2022 graduate. My daughter's now at the University of Virginia, And my son, who's a junior, at Herndon High School. I just have to start with a rhetorical question. Is it a great week to be a progressive Democrat in the state of Virginia and Fairfax County specifically?

[01:42:38] Yes, it is. Ms. Merrin, 72% of the vote. Mr. Frisch, 66% of the vote. Ms. Anderson, 63% of the vote. Congratulations on your overwhelming re-elections. Ms. Bukarski, Ms. Keyes-Gamara, and Ms. Cohen, congratulations on moving on to higher office, statewide office.

[01:42:57] For those of you who are leaving, thank you. This is the finest school district in the state of Virginia and maybe the country. This school district has more national merit scholars than the rest of the state of Virginia combined. Thank you for tolerating the fringe characters who come here and call you, and I watch the videos of this, call you groomers, pedophiles, communists, socialists, cultural Marxists who create false narratives the national merit scholarship who want to turn our schools into christian madrasas who want to ban books and who want to jam the lgbtq community back in the closet previous generations these

[01:43:34] people would be considered gadflies but in the age of social media and conservative trash media like fox news newsmax oan sean tucker and laura sadly they have power must be hard for you to have to deal with your names and reputations dragged through the mud thanks for tolerating that sadly our governor and attorney general seem to take their marching orders from these people maybe they'll rethink their approach after tuesday night now you face your greatest challenge perhaps the craziest people of all people who think boys should play volleyball i mean come on seriously

[01:44:08] are you kidding me i lived in california for 10 years all the boys play high school volleyball please find some funding for these guys so they can play volleyball thank you sandra roberts the introduction isn't it thank you board for letting me speak tonight my name is Sandy Roberts and I am one of the team parents for the West Springfield Spartans boys volleyball team I do

[01:44:47] have some of the members of the team from this last year as well as one of the other team parents this is my first son's my son's first year participating as a freshman with this team and our first our first foray into volleyball as a family I wanted to relay the impact that this team in this sport has already had on my child and what i've seen among them teammates and why i think it's important to foster and to bring in the to the fold of the varsity sports first for personal impact my son as i said is a freshman this year and for moving from middle irving middle

[01:45:21] school over to west springfield with over 2700 students it's it's overwhelming volleyball has given him an outlet and a chance to get to know other students in the area and it's it fosters friendships. It fosters collaborative efforts and a sense of belonging. And I've seen this growth in him even this year. Watching the team from the sidelines, I've seen opportunities for teamwork and leadership. I've watched some of the older, more experienced players, such as the gentleman over there, take roles upon themselves to run practices to help coach the players and the plays.

[01:46:00] It gives those players an opportunity to grow skills that will benefit them throughout their entire lives. Teamwork is a crucial part of this sport. If you've ever watched volleyball, it can't happen without really good teamwork. And it helps develop the working relationships between the players.

[01:46:18] And that's another skill that can contribute to all these players as they grow into contributing community members. Finally, bringing the sport into the fold of varsity sports makes sense. This fall, we had a majority of the school sign interest forms, 20 out of 25, and we're currently working on making sure that all of them do get those signed.

[01:46:37] And we're also actively working.

[01:46:50] Thank you. Thank you. Robert Rigby, Jr.

[01:47:09] I am Robert Rigby, speaking on behalf of FCPS Pride.

[01:47:31] It's been a rough few years. Now is the time to heal. Now is not the time to compromise with the politics of picking on vulnerable children. The community must determine what are the truly crucial actions for our children, employees, caregivers, and parents to thrive and learn.

[01:47:53] The voters rejected the politics of excluding and banning those less powerful. The election results tell us that transphobia, racism, and disrespect of disabled people are not Fairfax or Virginia values.

[01:48:11] Let's listen, work, and heal. But let's not appease. particular tonight. There's no need to compromise on the names of segregation. Thank you for listening. Kelly Singer. Healing for our communities and our children can't begin until we and they feel safe. A quote from Bessel A.

[01:48:50] Van Der Kolk, author of The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma. Being able to feel safe with other people is probably the single most important aspect of mental health. Safe connections are fundamental to meaningful and satisfying lives FCPS must foster those safe connections for all of our children the school board and general assembly elections just passed have shown us and shown you that together we have a mandate and responsibility to act to adopt known and evidence-based measures that will help foster those safe connections for children all of our children deserve

[01:49:29] mental health all of our children deserve to feel safe and connected religious students secular students students from every country race and ethnicity straight students gay students students and trans students binary students non-binary students non-disabled students disabled students students from wealthy families and students from economically disadvantaged families we all belong here when our public schools welcome include all of our children we safeguard not just their mental health but also our democracy we He insists that every child be able to access a safe, diverse and inclusive public education at Fairfax County Public Schools.

[01:50:08] I look forward to seeing the ways that FCPS uses this new and reaffirmed mandate to champion inclusion to foster safe connections and mental health for all FCPS students. It's what's right for our children and our communities, and it's the law.

[01:50:25] Thank you. George Becerra.

[01:50:45] Good evening, chairwoman Tolan, Dr. Reed and school board members. I'm here tonight to talk about middle school sports. First one, thank Dr. Reed for her vision for starting this headway into

middle school sports out of the five superintendents that have been here that I've been involved in this county for my children.

[01:51:05] During your first work session of your tenure, ma'am, I learned two things about you. First thing is setting the tone with your equity policy. The second is in welcoming my daughter to a work session. And you talked about your love of girls basketball and middle school sports. At the same time, you relate that to equity, mental health, and also school climate.

[01:51:26] As you're entering now Middle School Sports 2.0, a couple suggestions during a tough budget year. Not going to ask for anything new, but expand the items that you already have. For example, boys and girls basketball. One thing that could be done, as I mentioned to Dr. Ponce, is the creation of maybe a tournament for middle school in each region, six regional tournaments that can be done in one day.

[01:51:51] But at the same time, let's do a home and away so we can build school pride. the kids can come out that you've been to liberty you've been here luther jackson with myself seeing the tournament in the enthusiasm that's here and at the same time as you and miss mclaughlin meet with the athletic council this month please include dr anderson who will be transitioning over to that role at the same time please consider forming your own parent group from scps because athletic council has built up the board of supervisor appointees two different worlds

[01:52:26] two different mindsets two different owners not saying they're not good people but their associations different politics between board of supervisor appointees and fcps representatives let's see and create a new group but reach out to the quadra of folks appearance that you have already and thank you very much madam chair the individual who signed up for a video testimony did not submit their video madam chair that was our last public speaker thank you um i would like

[01:53:02] to just take a moment and we have a another special guest with us a former school board member and newly elected at-large school board member Mr. Moon. Okay we will move on to agenda item 3.02 academic matters. I will now call on

[01:53:25] Dr. Reed to share academic matters. So it's a really exciting topic this evening attendance and engagement. So we know that attendance is critically important and we're monitoring that it's become increasingly more important across our nation we can maybe go full screen it might be a that would be helpful

[01:54:03] research has shown that regular attendance is a significant factor in student success that should be no surprise unfortunately the rates for absenteeism have really increased across the Commonwealth during the 21 22 and 22 23 school years and supporting regular attendance has actually become a really important factor and it's a key foundation to our strategic plan so this evening I want to share just a few of the overall steps we're taking here in Fairfax County to be responsive to this work chronic absenteeism is defined as

[01:54:41] missing 10% or more of school for any reason and I think there's a little confusion out there right that to have chronic absenteeism this is really about truant truancies but it's really not it's about the combination of excused absences for a variety of reasons and truancies as well as potential discipline that might be exclusive to classroom why this is important to be clear about our definition is that chronic absenteeism as you know is associated with low academic progress and what's interesting is that if you miss just two days of school per month it actually can equate to chronic

[01:55:21] absenteeism by the end of the year so I'm going to take a look at our longitudinal data I know you as a board this is something that's important and what I can say is that prior to the pandemic our absentee rate in Fairfax County has consistently been below 10 percent however when students returned in-person schooling following the height of the pandemic the chronic absenteeism has spiked dramatically now some of the spike is due to actual illness our students have come back to school and in many cases we have had

[01:55:57] students be ill and then they are missing more days as a result of that either to quarantine in early days probably in 2021 and 22 but also honestly I think just getting back together and sharing new and unique opportunities for getting sick has also contributed so this again at 20% in 2022 and then in 19% in 2023 we're tracking our percentage this year and working on interventions that can support better attendance either way as you notice the

[01:56:36] dark blue is Fairfax County and the light blue is Virginia as a whole so we are maintaining stronger attendance than the rest of the Commonwealth but still less than what we would hope for. I want to share just a few statistics honestly that continue to create concern for us because the early grades are particularly important. We know that children in the early grades are particularly susceptible to falling behind in fundamental reading skills and again that has a snowball effect as children move through those elementary years we know how important

[01:57:13] that is and by sixth grade honestly those patterns can get set and we really there is a great deal of research that talks about leading indicators in terms of dropout rates for students with poor attendance and chronic absenteeism by sixth grade I want to share our plan here in the county for our multi-tiered system of support for attendance and we have interventions similar to those we have for academics the tier one or universal prevention would be those things that we do to encourage great attendance for all students and we

[01:57:53] really think that hopefully that that takes care of most of our concerns however we do have some students that miss about 10 to 19 percent of school which we then provide early interventions such as success plans, check-in, check-out, more individualized student success conferences and conversations, and often an adult champion that works with our students on improving attendance. There are then still students who are missing 20% or more, which puts them that tier three intensive intervention. It's at the top of the pyramid because that's the

[01:58:31] fewest number of students also though those are the students who are most susceptible to having negative educational outcomes as a result of their attendance it's very important that we work and partner with our families we know that our parents and families are essential partners in promoting good attendance when children are young they're especially dependent on their older family members or older siblings to help get them to school and it's really important that we continue the strong partnerships with our families it's after-school clubs all the types of things we do to build connections Mr.

[01:59:08] Becerra just talked a little about middle school sports it's really important when students know that it's going to be noticed when they don't show up it really contributes to that feeling of connectedness and engagement which increases attendance so we're really continuing to find ways to support our students in a variety of ways in fact even today we talked with elementary principals about the after-school programming particularly science Olympiad and math Olympiad but making sure that there are some things available at every elementary school after school for our young students and sometimes it's

[01:59:44] those activities that students bound out of bed for most eagerly first thing in the morning so that's our report on attendance and that's academic matters FOR THIS EVENING AND I'M HAPPY TO TAKE ANY QUESTIONS MADAM CHAIR THANK YOU DR. REED DR.

[02:00:01] ANDERSON UM THANK YOU THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT REPORT THAT I DON'T THINK WE CAN OVERSTATE TO OUR FAMILIES HOW MUCH THIS NEEDS TO BE PAID ATTENTION TO JUST KIND OF GOING THROUGH THIS A LITTLE BIT ON PAGE FIVE I THINK YOU OUTLINE SOME OF THE STRATEGIES ARE THESE NEW STRATEGIES JUST IMPLEMENTED THIS YEAR OR ARE THESE PRACTICES THAT HAVE BEEN IN THE DIVISION FOR A BIT I THINK it's a mix some of them are new some of them are more consistently being applied some of them have

[02:00:34] not needed to be applied in some context but now are so it's I think it's a bit of both at this point thank you the reason why I ask is in looking at the data that you shared on page three in 22 it was 15 percent and in 23 the attendance rose to 17 percent so we're not going in the right direction that would be correct okay the other thing that I definitely want to make sure that I raise because I have had this be brought to me as a concern from parents of special needs students particularly special needs students

[02:01:06] were medically fragile who are who have a higher level of absences and there's a pressure on them and I don't think they see it as outreach necessarily they see as a pressure where their children are out for real significant and sometimes very very um um difficult circumstances and sometimes the outreach from the school feels more like pressure when they're already dealing with a very um difficult situation i wonder how can we strike that balance so that we can still state the importance of attendance without providing that additional

[02:01:45] attention to parents going through a lot i think you're raising a good point because when people are doing the best they can and their child really is ill it does feel I think at times like insensitive perhaps and not compassionate in the way we want that to be so I think that's good counsel and I'll make sure I take that back to staff thank you the other question that I had hold on I lost my page on page three where you had some of the data I would love to see this be broken down by some additional demographics where are we seeing the

[02:02:22] greatest needs? Are they in high schools? Are they in middle schools? Are they in one particular region? Are they with this subgroup of students? Where can that be made available? I think you were expecting that question. I was actually it's on my Monday morning data dashboard. It's one of our data bytes. And I can make sure I do a what we would call I can do a snapshot of that in the Friday letter for you. What what exists in your data dashboard? We're charting by region. And when you click on the region can go to pyramid into school and it's the unexcused absences excused absences and those chronic beginning the chronic absences at this

[02:03:01] point does it also give you a view in terms of which students present in these categories in terms so you'll have a breakout of special needs students ELL students black students Asian students I believe we are a very granular level of of information I think that's something we would want to I would want to maybe sit down and explore with you because it's all interactive and hyperlinked I don't know that I'll have to think about how I can get that part to you but the staff have that view and that ability to look at that thank

[02:03:37] you I appreciate that that's it for me I will also add in late breaking positive news quarter one in school year 23 we had 15.17 percent absent chronic absent our absentee rate for chronic absenteeism and

this year as of November 1 at the end of quarter one we're at 13.9 percent so we are trending in the correct direction at least this fall first quarter okay that's good to hear and I I did miss one thing I I'm very excited about the science and math Olympiad as I've shared with

[02:04:13] you before it shouldn't be the responsibility of PTO's and PTA's to not just fund them but to also staff them otherwise they do not exist at those schools so I'm really looking forward to see that blossom more in our schools particularly that do not have that infrastructure yes ma'am thank you Mr. Kizakamara thank you I really do appreciate this report I have two categories of questions I'll start with the overall requirements of the state.

[02:04:46] I was looking through this report and it's my understanding that the state is now looking at absenteeism and tying that to accreditation. Is that correct? That's correct. Okay. And at what point does that become a concern?

[02:05:03] I just think it would be helpful for parents to understand that. Well, it was a concern last spring for us. In fact, our intervention last spring involved even doing double back bus routes and transportation solutions for students who missed an early bus. There were a variety of phone calls, our attendance staff and staff at the schools.

[02:05:24] It's an all hands on deck to really focus on making sure that we're connecting with families and making sure students are attending. It is critically important. So but how is the state judging us with respect to the absenteeism is is what I was trying to clarify my apologies Dr. Presidio do you have a more specific answer to the I think it's 10% or more is there Like when students it's the number the percentage of students who miss 10% or more I think is what the issue is But yeah, that's correct. And that that's why in this presentation We were looking at that 10% threshold for chronic absenteeism

[02:06:00] Which could just be two days a month, honestly, which is not difficult to rack up. Okay, and so how are we monitoring that in the sense that when we see a certain pattern, when do our interventions kick in?

[02:06:16] I believe it's after two days our interventions are kicking in. And we're tracking five days, and that first month of school was a real high flag. We actually had a number of staff even who had their own children miss a lot of school in that very first month because students often become sick as we all gather back together in the fall.

[02:06:39] So we're hopeful that we're going to kind of ride a healthier second quarter into winter. But those are flagged right now. And as I shared with Dr. Anderson, we have a dashboard that we actually look at at every senior leadership team meeting at the very beginning that has attendance by region.

[02:06:55] And I believe we are at 4000 students right now that are at that threshold across the entire division of chronic absenteeism. That's correct. OK. And since the state, this may be a rhetorical question, but I have to ask it anyway. Since the state has made this a focus, have they also by any chance given any funding to address the problem?

[02:07:18] No, ma'am, they have not. I was I was just curious. just curious. No they have not but they have provided some guidance around around the accreditation rules and also I think what we're getting we're receiving more information to encourage families to send their kids to school even if they feel a little not well right as long as they don't have a fever and so forth so I the guidance has looked very interesting. So I want to bring this other

[02:07:55] issue up just because of my other life as an advocate for children and having received reports in the past where perhaps there may, a child's ability to attend may be indicative of a larger problem at home. And I will tell you, I handled a case years ago where a child missed, let's say, 30 days out of two months, and we actually found out that that child was caring for a dying parent.

[02:08:24] so in what what procedures do we have to try to intervene this was in a different jurisdiction they utilize some processes that I have advocated for here in Fairfax and we don't use the chins and so how would we handle a situation like that because I can't with a system as large as ours I can't imagine that we are don't come across some problems like that I'm sure we have situations that mirror the situation you've described and I really am proud of our educators

[02:09:01] at the school level in terms of their diligence they know these students by name that are in this high absentee arena the over 10% and even under 10% and I know as we visit schools they're able to articulate what's going on with each student in that situation and our regional assistant superintendents and that team are working with our principals to identify any areas where we can provide supports and resources and partner with our county.

[02:09:30] It would be great if I think we had more resources because I think we also at times have language barriers as we work with families and try to make sure that we understand exactly how to support their students. So it would be fabulous I think if we had a few more resources to support that.

[02:09:49] I'm really proud of the work our staff are doing right now and addressing this real challenge. I continue to advocate because at times even though a family may need that intervention they may not accept it right and so there may come a time where we have no choice so I continue to hit the same nail I've been hitting for several years but thank you. Yeah thank you and I also want to point out that there is growing a growing body of research that food insecurity is a a contributor to attendance issues and I think the opportunity the recent announcement around the

[02:10:24] threshold shifting for comprehensive school qualification for school lunch is a fabulous step and possibly addressing that and it would just be you know great if we also had the funding that came along with that for us as I've shared with you it's just over 12 million dollars annually TO SUPPORT THAT FOR ANOTHER 40 OF OUR SCHOOLS, BUT I DO BELIEVE THAT WE'RE GOING TO SEE MORE AND MORE RESEARCH THAT TIES FOOD INSECURITY AND THE ABILITY TO EAT AS ONE OF THE CONTRIBUTORS

[02:10:56] TO ATTENDANCE. THANK YOU, MS. MCLACHLAN. DR. REED, THANK YOU SO MUCH. AND I DO BELIEVE OUR BOARD RECOGNIZES THAT THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST CRUCIAL WAYS IN WHICH WE REALLY DO ensure our students stay in school and have an opportunity to succeed you know just seeing from our schools on this one it is such a complicated issue that a one-size-fits-all is never going to work we've got to make sure and partner with our social workers in the schools

[02:11:34] and with our our sosa's and all the other staff the principals in the building looking at what's going on in their attendance issue cases, but I will also say that if we don't speak with the families, we don't know maybe what's going on. I have a family member who's a senior in high school out in California, and he's been truant now for more than 18 days in one of his classes because he's underweight, he's thin, and going to conditioning class is deeply embarrassing for him, and so he didn't know how to communicate otherwise he was just not going but we

[02:12:13] have to identify those things and step in I just use that as an example of there's so many different reasons on why a student's going to have absenteeism and when we don't recognize that behavior is communicating the emotional challenges of what a kid's going through then punishment and threats and all that stuff doesn't work. On the flip side, I will also say that when FCPS turned to notifying families, wanting to kind of raise the issue, we weren't doing the math right. So I also had another

[02:12:49] family member here in this school division who, the young man was in high school, got sick with the flu, was out for five days. But because it was in the first month of school, then they were doing the you've been out for 10% of the school year kind of thing, and it was a rather stern letter that came to the family and happened to be my twin sister who immediately came to me and said, what is this? So I, just for a little bit of levity here, just I think that we have to always

[02:13:23] be mindful that in really tackling something that is so crucial for student success, We also have to make sure that we understand the ways that systematizing things can suddenly send letters to families where a kid was just sick and we're sending a scolding email about being absent and attendance is so important and it can cause families to say, what are you doing here?

[02:13:51] So, you know, I just I do think that but it also might be helpful to work with our social work department and find out are they overwhelmed with their other job duties and where does this sit?

[02:14:07] But I do know and say with confidence that I believe our principals and our school leaders very much understand that we've got to wrap around arms around this and and do the best we can for kids and families. Thank you.

[02:14:22] Thank you. I have Ms. Karen Corbett-Sanders and then we see your hand. You'll follow Ms. Corbett-Sanders. Thank you, Dr. Reed. I appreciate this report.

[02:14:39] We've been talking about chronic absenteeism, I feel like, for the better part of two years. And it is not limited to Fairfax County or the state of Virginia. It's frankly a national crisis. And we know that our kids that are not attending school are not attending it for a whole series of different reasons from the, you know, food insecurity to something's happening with their family or child care or missing a bus.

[02:15:08] And so it's really a tough situation because you actually have to unpack each individual. It's not like there is one solution for everything. So I appreciate that. But one of the things that I do understand is that if you miss more than, I think it's five days in the month of September, you have an exponentially higher chance of being chronically absent.

[02:15:38] So can you, you know, I appreciated the charts, but I didn't see one that said in the month of September, what was our chronic absentee or how many people had missed more than five days? You know, we were doing really well for a while. I think, like I said, our data byte is dynamic, so I didn't capture, like, weekly static reports.

[02:16:03] September has got them here. Sloan, I'm going to say 1,000-ish. I'm just, that's a, like, I don't think I have that on the top of my head. You don't have to answer it tonight, but the reason I'm asking. Sloan doesn't either, yeah. The reason I'm asking is it's a data point that we know can be predictive, and so it's a way of identifying those kids that are most at risk and being very intentional in reaching out to those kids in particular.

[02:16:33] So I would just hope that going forward, you would get a report at the end of every September that would detail how many kids have missed more than five days, are there clusters of these kids at certain schools, or is there, you know, unpack the data and then be intentional with it.

[02:17:00] So that's my first suggestion. My second suggestion, and I am very concerned that students with underlying conditions have a higher risk of meeting that chronic absenteeism threshold.

[02:17:22] It seems to me that since this is a new metric that was put in at a state level, and people may not have understood the full impact of that metric, that we might need to have some adjustments at the state level to address those students that have chronic conditions.

[02:17:44] And I don't know. I know a few people that might be able to help us in Richmond, and I'm just going to, maybe we can whisper in their ears and ask for their assistance. Agreed. Thank you. Thank you I appreciate it and to my volume up and I don't want to repeat what my colleagues have said I agree with many of the points being made I wanted to bring up one more thing Dr. Reed to free to think about I know I recently sent

[02:18:17] you some information to you Dr. King and Dr. Edmunds heard about pervasive or pathological demand avoidance right and some of the research coming out of that really coming out of england and our neurodiversity specialist kristin hayner knows quite a bit about this as well but there's a lot of crossover between students who may have pda and chronic absenteeism and so i think it would be really helpful to have the team that's really reaching to support these students for whom you know are absent more especially our counselors our psychologists our social workers to really have an understanding of pda and how that might impact

[02:18:55] absenteeism and how they can help support the students because in some ways the more demands we put i think one of my colleagues mentioned i think it's ms mclaughlin about you know the harsher we sound the more it triggers pda right so how do we ensure absenteeism in a way that's going to encourage students to come so that's the first thing i wanted to bring up and the second was in your slide you mentioned um about encouraging teens to join a club or an activity because that sense of belonging connection is linked um to you know showing up to school and i would encourage you to also to mention that for elementary school right i know you mentioned science

[02:19:31] and the ed which is fantastic but a lot of times for some students when they get to high school they haven't had the opportunities to build the requisite skills to be able to participate in some of the programs at the high school level for example in the arts or certain sports so really i think providing those opportunities in elementary school not just helps our students get connected to those activities and excited about them but also then builds the skills so they can then participate in high school so I really think it's important and the last thing I mentioned we'll say about training for those who are providing these extracurricular and co-curricular activities to make sure that they are really inclusive of everybody to help build that community so those are a few

[02:20:11] things I wanted to mention thank you mr. mesh yeah thank you and dr. Reed thank you for choosing to highlight this critical piece that's emerged as a a chronic problem. I guess, you know, in trying to be thoughtful here and reflecting some of what we've discussed in our own conversations, illness has always been kind of a factor, right? I know with COVID that was particularly poignant, but I think it's one of those variables that because it's a constant may not be worth leaning into as a reason for the numbers we're seeing. And no doubt

[02:20:50] there are unique reasons my colleagues spoke to some of them but I think I want us to really I guess admit or like be honest with ourselves that there are systemic reasons and and it's worth going into the root cause and problem solving to find the ways that we're not meeting kids where they're at given the unique circumstances that they're facing I mean especially post-COVID we know the economic situation in our community has changed and so I try to put myself in the minds of you know a kid who has to provide for their family or has to provide to for

[02:21:24] themselves to survive who has to work who has hours that are not standard maybe a kid whose family isn't reached with the language that they speak at home and there and I can look to more than one direction within our system where we're still not addressing those needs to the sufficient need level language being just an obvious one but also flexibility with our structure you know so I think of maybe is there a way to have kids make money in school or get credit for experiential learning that could be happening outside of school through partnerships but can we expand virtual options that give them more you know

[02:22:03] leniency and being able to complete their credits I've often I felt that in you know in working with our schools it tends to be well we need to get them to school we need to find a way to bring them and I don't know that you know we're going to try the same thing a million times. It's been a challenge. So I think of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, like kids, you know, kids who don't want to be in school or aren't showing through their behavior. And I appreciated the point of Ms. McLaughlin, right? Behavior is communication, that they're there. I don't know that a kid who has all their basic needs met wouldn't want to be in school or who has, you know, the adults in their lives that help them

[02:22:40] imagine a future and see what the benefits of taking advantage of that education is wouldn't be in school, right? So then we have to ask ourselves, well, what are the blockers for them to be in that position? And I think it's really worth kind of, I don't know if it would require a team or, I mean, you have some wonderful ideas of how we're moving forward even about organizing our structure and thinking of how we handle the instructional academic side of things.

[02:23:06] So it's worth, you know, a task force or something that really tries to look at creative, innovative you know you your thing is schools of our future right like what does that look like and I know a lot of our principals have tried things but I go back to that problem it's systemic they can continue to put band-aids out and try to do you know the case by case but if we don't do something intentionally I don't know that we're gonna see those numbers change or at the very least we're gonna be ignoring a large subset that just continue even if it's like you know goes down will still exist for our failure and not theirs

[02:23:42] but I appreciate you considering. Thank you, Dr. Reed. Thank you. Thank you. Agenda item 3.03, student representative matters. I'm happy to call on Ms. Kareem.

[02:24:00] Thank you, Madam Chair. Good evening, everyone, and happy second quarter. It always arrives before we know it, serving as a simple reminder to live in the moment and cherish the memories you hold in high school and beyond. As for updates, I have news about technology youth Empowerment, also known as TYE, which is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that originated from the SEALs, promoting STEM education to the youth. TAI has recently gained its newest student representative at Justice High School, along with a large team of over 10 volunteers from their STEM club and Computer Science Honor Society. In the upcoming summer, some of their team members will also be

[02:24:40] working in Northern Africa, specifically in Mauritania, and it's commendable that students and FCPS are expanding their work beyond our county. Ty has planned a STEM camp in December at the Fairfax Regional Library and a spring camp at Kings Park Library.

[02:24:56] And additionally they will be teaching at Brookfield Elementary in the spring. Currently they are hosting a camp at the McLean Islamic Center and they are also in the process of working with Title I schools in the Justice Pyramid. This includes Glasgow Middle School, Glen Forest Elementary, and Belvedere Elementary, where plan to teach computer science and electrical engineering. As a reminder for students who are interested in serving on the TYE team, please reach out to your career specialist for the application. As for the community eligibility provisions, I'm collaborating with different students and teachers across the county to provide free meals for all students. Mr. Gabe Siegel

[02:25:33] from Herndon High School is working with George Mason University and we are trying to set up a fundraising program while creating long-term partnerships. We also have a fundraising link with Educate Fairfax to erase student lunch debt, which will soon be available on BoardDocs, and any support can make a difference. I'd like to link this initiative with the issue of food waste, which is a common nationwide concern for schools that have CEPs. While it's crucial to provide students with nutrition for effective learning, we must find a way to reduce this waste. A study from the World Wildlife found that food waste in school cafeterias amount to

[02:26:07] around 530,000 tons each year equivalent to about 1.9 million metric tons of CO2 greenhouse gases being released into the atmosphere and contributing to global warming. It is crucial that we find a way to reduce this waste possibly through technology like smart cafeteria management systems. These systems should use technologies such as radio frequency identification or barcodes to track student meals selections thereby reducing waste by allowing students to choose their meals in advance. These systems provide real-time data that enable cafeteria staff and school and admin to make more informed decisions

[02:26:45] monitoring popular food items and reducing waste. Regarding the Whitson renaming, I want to express my gratitude to the board and FCPS leadership for their commitment in making this change possible. During the time of segregation African Americans faced many hardships and it would be of utmost respect to rename the school after someone who represents this group well, such as Carter G. Woodson, also known as the father of Black History Month. He was a pioneer in the field of African-American history, dedicating his career to elevating the study of African-American contributions and history. His efforts led to the establishment of Black History Month,

[02:27:23] a nationwide institution. Born in New Canton, Virginia, Woodson overcame adversity and limited educational opportunities to earn a PhD from Harvard University, becoming only the second African American to achieve this honor. Along with many other students it is a common theme that we are in support of the school to be renamed after Dr.

[02:27:43] Carter G. Woodson to grow a welcoming environment where all students feel a sense of belonging. Lastly I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation to Dr. Anderson and Mr. Frisch who are among the notable speakers at our graduate presentation of learning Pogpol Career Day hosted by Woodson. We also owe Oh, a big shout out to the approximately 50 community speakers, our administrative team for their unwavering support of this initiative, and Dr. DeSalvo, Mr. Stransky, and Ms. Christy Day, who are all a part of the PogPol Committee.

[02:28:16] This event was made possible through the collaborative efforts of Central Tech, our dedicated teachers, parents, and enthusiastic students. I also want to extend our gratitude to the Region 5 team for their support of this important school innovation and improvement plan. On the last day of the quarter, students had the valuable opportunity to explore a wide array of career options, ranging from cybersecurity and the FBI to entrepreneurship and government service.

[02:28:42] The career day provided a wealth of information, and students gained insights into various career experiences, even discovering internship opportunities tailored for high school students. This unique event at Woodson serves as an excellent platform to understand how PogPol can benefit not only in school, but also in your life beyond.

[02:29:01] I strongly endorse expanding such initiatives that help students make informed career decisions. Finally, the integration of our year-long plans into advisory lessons is crucial for ensuring that our goals align throughout the school year. We are grateful to those that continue to support our spirit programs, further enriching the student experience.

[02:29:21] Thank you for listening. Thank you. Let's end to item 3.04, Superintendent Matters. I call in Dr. Reed. Thank you, Ms. Tolan. I just want to remind our community that November is National Family Engagement Month and as we know our parents and families are children's first and most important teachers, advocates and nurturers, and we really recognize how strong family support is to our students well-being and success.

[02:29:53] I also want to spotlight our Family Resource Center which provides tremendous webinars, family liaisons, a lending library, and support for our students and families. And I encourage all families to take advantage of these resources. The Purple Star Schools and Military Family Appreciation Month this month is a fabulous opportunity as we did this evening to recognize our Purple Star Schools.

[02:30:17] And also remember that November is Military Family Appreciation Month. So that again I want to highlight the work of our FCPS Office of Family and School Partnerships who provide resources and support for our military families transitioning to or from Fairfax County.

[02:30:33] A big thank you to our Fairfax County community for supporting this year's school bond referendum. The projects in this bond package are gonna enable us to break ground on three new schools and renovate 25 others through 2028.

[02:30:48] So thank you, Fairfax County community. On behalf of our students and staff, we're thrilled with the support. Also wanna extend my congratulations to our 628 students who were named National Merit Commended Scholars by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

[02:31:08] And we're just so excited that they come from nearly every high school and secondary school across Fairfax County. And we're very proud of all of our students and these students who achieved the commended status. We also received a CODUP $2 million grant for STEAM and computer science.

[02:31:26] It's our second year from the Department of Defense for a CODUP 2.0. And it's going to directly support programming in 14 of our schools in South County and West Springfield Pyramids, all of which have 10% or more military-connected youth.

[02:31:42] So we're thrilled with the opportunity to expand our STEM options. So just a quick capture of school visits and activities. I've had a chance to attend football games at South Lakes and Lake Braddock,

both fabulous schemes and you had an opportunity to thank our community partners and boosters at Southlakes and I think one of the trademarks of Fairfax County is how supportive our families and businesses are. It really makes our student experience something special. Last Saturday I had a chance to join Panther Orchestra Day. I still have my orange panther ears which I forgot or I would

[02:32:19] have worn them this evening. Carson and Hughes middle schools were playing and it it was a fabulous musical morning. I will say the musical at West Potomac High School that I attended, Carrie, I'd forgotten just how difficult that story was, and I'm hopeful to see a more sort of fun-loving musical or theater production soon. Lord of the Flies more recently was also, anyhow, had an opportunity to attend the regional debate tournament at Westfield High School with

[02:32:54] more than 500 students and just a fabulous program. The Health Equity and Resource Fair that was organized by two of our seniors at Justice High School was equally inspiring. And tomorrow, in honor of Veterans Day, I'll be participating in events to honor those who served at Silver Brook Elementary School community celebration.

[02:33:16] And we will be marking the 248th birthday of the United States Marine Corps at Gatehouse in a celebration. So as the mother of a Marine, I'm looking forward to celebrating that Marine Corps birthday. So thank you, Ms. Tolan. Thank you, Dr.

[02:33:34] Reed. Board members, without objection, we are moving up our action item to item four. And after we take care of this, we will move on to our executive expectation and performance measure.

[02:33:51] So four point zero one, our action item renaming of W.T. Woodson High School. I call on Dr. Reed for a presentation. Thank you, Ms. Tolan.

[02:34:17] Before I make the presentation, I really want to give a shout out to the staff and in particular our deputy clerks who spent a great deal of time supporting the putting together of this presentation as well as staff. So this is as up to date and current with the data fresh today.

[02:34:39] So tonight the school board is going to take action to officially rename W.T. Woodson High School. And I want to note that this connects to policy eight one seven zero point seven, which is the naming of school facilities and our regulation eight one seven oh point eight.

[02:34:58] This process is governed by school board policy and the school board may consider a change in the name of an existing school or facility to ensure an inclusive, respectful learning environment as outlined in our adopted one Fairfax policy or when the board deems it appropriate I want to remind our community about our process and timeline as you recall the process began in September with the request to consider a name change being presented to the school board posted as a new business we then began collecting feedback from the community about

[02:35:34] whether or not to rename WT Woodson high school using an online feedback form holding a community meeting at Woodson and then a public hearing. After this period of public engagement the school board voted to change the name of the school. I, the superintendent, recommended two names for board consideration: Woodson High School and Carter G. Woodson High School and encouraged continued public feedback during phase two. The phase one feedback summary is on

[02:36:07] the screen, public engagement was robust. There were 1,415 responses collected on the online feedback form, and you can see a snapshot of the results on the slide. This feedback, along with comments

at the community meeting and public hearing, was shared with the board and FCPS staff to help inform the decision-making. The second phase of the renaming process focuses on selecting the new name for the school. As with phase one, we collected public feedback through an online feedback form a community meeting and a public hearing the online feedback

[02:36:46] form was open from october 13th through noon today november 9th there were 655 responses approximately 30 individuals attended the october 23 community meeting and four speakers participated in the october 23rd public hearing tonight the board will take final action to officially rename the school. The phase two feedback can be represented here in graph form and again a reminder that of the 655 responses to the second phase

[02:37:22] feedback form the majority 307 is 307 self-identified as parents or caregivers 172 alumni shared feedback and we're proud that 79 students participated in the process by completing the form the summary of the phase 2 feedback 159 respondents selected Carter G Woodson high school as their first choice for the school's name you can see in this chart the breakdown

[02:37:54] of those that selected Carter G Woodson high school by group 368 respondents selected Woodson high school as their first choice for the school's name and again we can see a breakdown of those responses by group the feedback form allowed for write-in suggestions for the new name and 223 participants responded

[02:38:29] to this question 82 of those responses did not pertain to the question well um 44 responses wanted to keep the name WT Woodson high school 16 responses suggested the other name option meaning if they initially selected Woodson high school they then wrote in CG Woodson as a suggestion and vice versa 13 responses recommended a number high school number five for example or a general naming concept such as freedom high school the remaining name suggestions were not

[02:39:06] repeated 10 or more times this concludes my presentation thank you Dr. Reed at this time and now invite board members to ask any clarifying questions or PROVIDE COMMENTS? MS. COVER SANDERS? DR. ANDERSON? YES. I ACTUALLY DO WANT TO SPEAK TO THIS.

[02:39:40] BUT BEFORE I GET STARTED, I DO WANT TO SAY THANK YOU TO MS. MCLACHLAN. I THINK SHE'S MADE SOME REAL EFFORT TO WALK THROUGH THIS PROCESS WITH DIGNITY, WITH INCLUSION OF ALL THE STAKEHOLDERS. IT'S BEEN VERY THOUGHTFUL. YOU'VE BEEN VERY PATIENT IN ENSURING THAT WE HAD OPTIMAL TIMES on our calendar where we could devote the time that this requires.

[02:40:04] And it's just been really, it's just been nice to see how this process is rolling out in a much smoother way than previous name changes. Having said that, I would love for you or Dr. Reed, I'm not sure to whom this question needs to go, to talk about, especially probably you, Ms. McLaughlin, because you've been present at all of the community meetings.

[02:40:26] When I take a look at some of the options that were provided for names during the first phase, in the second phase, I see that there's definitely been more collective support for the Carter G. Woodson name. Is this the sense that you're also getting in the community?

[02:40:41] Because I don't spend as much time there as you, so I'd like to know that, and that's one. Secondly, I do know that the regulation or the policy that speaks to renaming, while we have this process,

it doesn't necessarily mean it has to be one of the names that comes out of that, that comes out of the feedback.

[02:41:02] So if you could also speak to that as well, I would appreciate it. Thank you, Dr. Anderson. You are correct that when we look at both the feedback we received from phase one, where 1,400 people responded, and then phase two, where we had closer to 600 responses.

[02:41:22] In combining the feedback for both of those, well over 600, we're supportive of Carter G. Woodson is the name, and approximately 400 or so were supportive of just naming the school Woodson and removing the former superintendent's name officially from the building. When you talk about the community, and I will actually talk about this more in my remarks, so I will just quickly say that yes, the motion I'm bringing forward tonight I do believe

[02:41:55] is reflective of the broad consensus of the community and I'll go a little more that during the motion itself then I will wait to hear it then I also want to point out that a few years ago when this issue was raised by some of the students I believe they emailed yourself mr. Frisch miss cope miss Cohen and myself because I have a small part of Woodson the student community really wanted to move towards the Carter G Woodson name and during your remarks if you could speak to whether or not that has changed happy to speak to that as

[02:42:35] well thank you seeing no other borough miss Cohen I just I also wanted to thank miss McLaughlin but also say that in getting to have the opportunity to spend a lot of time knocking on a lot of doors in the Woodson community these last several months.

[02:43:01] Overwhelmingly, I would say, in particular every time we were at a household of a student, a current student at Woodson, and even some grads of Woodson who were overwhelmingly supportive of the idea of changing the name, liked the idea of Carter G because they felt like it maintained the sense of what the Woodson community has become but also did a half decent job at trying to write um rewrite the story of the school and so um they were all they've all been overwhelmingly supportive

[02:43:41] so just wanted to throw that in thank you mr frisch thank you very much i think i might have the second most number of students as a magisterial member obviously the at-largest have everybody um i want to thank our staff for conducting a process that was thorough and involved the community deeply i also want to thank uh miss mclaughlin for working with all of our colleagues to bring this forward and bring it along as our student representative mentioned i was at woodson

[02:44:17] last week as was dr anderson for career day and as i wrapped up my portion of career day i said do you guys have any questions for me and the first question was about the name change and it seemed pretty clear from the consensus in the room that the students are pretty solid behind carter g and with good reason i think it's inspiring and i think it has an opportunity you know i've heard some people say we don't even think about the wt well how special will it be to be able to think about the name of the school and be inspired so thank you very much for your hard

[02:44:53] work on this. Thank you, Mr. Frisch, Mr. Kieskamera. Yes, I I'd like to just take a moment to put some context here. We had a speaker earlier talk a little bit about how the school board has had to respond to some pretty well, I'll just say interesting comments and different perspectives with respect to how we should be handling education.

[02:45:23] And we also have come through a year where we literally had to defend And we made some progress, but we still have work to do with respect to being able to study accurate history, not whitewashed history or altered, comfortable history, but the actual history.

[02:45:42] And so I think it's important to put a pin in this moment to recognize that we are doing this in the midst of that, to add an exclamation point, perhaps after an election that, you know, already put a period, but maybe an exclamation point that said, and yes, we will continue onward.

[02:46:04] So I thank you, Ms. McLaughlin. Okay, I would like to call Ms. McLaughlin for a motion. Thank you, Chair Tolan.

[02:46:27] I appreciate that. Yes, I move that the Fairfax County School Board vote to rename W.T. Woodson High School to Carter G. Woodson High School. Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Ms. MacLachlan, would you like to speak to your motion?

[02:46:47] I would with humility and deep pride for our community. I do want to first quickly acknowledge our amazing interim principal who is here with us tonight, Kevin Greta, and also one of our assistant principals who has joined him here this evening as well.

[02:47:06] Thank you both for being here. So now you can then start my timer. I have a feeling I'll need to go back. I first want to say to those who may be watching at home and haven't followed this as carefully or closely, I hail from being a two-generation Woodson family.

[02:47:31] My husband is two brothers, my three sons, my two nephews, and as a result, when I started to engage with the community on this conversation, and it was happening just about the time that we were also going through a global pandemic, it became so evident that in becoming aware of Superintendent Woodson's private papers that our staff discovered in the City Public Library, that this wasn't the history of Fairfax County Schools being segregated.

[02:48:12] was not simply because our commonwealth forced it upon our school divisions. It was true. Everyone was forced to stay desegregated. Pretty much massive resistance ran from January 1956 to January 1959 when the federal courts finally came in and told Virginia, enough is enough.

[02:48:34] But the bottom line is that in seeing the private papers, To understand that the Woodson High School namesake, Wilbur Tucker Woodson, personally held the views and beliefs in segregation, it became the time and the place that in speaking with our community, with our students, speaking with our staff and community advocates, and then speaking with my fellow board members, that we all believe this was the right thing and the right time to do this.

[02:49:07] And so I do want to say to our community that what gave me the greatest sense of hope for us as even a nation and as a society is that in those community meetings where we had some alumni who carry such deep love for Woodson High School that is more than 60 years old, not trying to defend Wilbur Tucker Woodson, but just feeling a connection to the legacy of the school.

[02:49:37] To sit in a place, a community place, and people willing to listen and hear from one another, to have our amazing families, particularly our families of color, to speak up in that room and to say that while we can recognize what former Superintendent Woodson did to build this school division over 30 years, the bottom line is his name on that building, his being the namesake, knowing that he would not have welcomed them, their children, into that school.

[02:50:08] building. How could we keep his name on that building one more day? And as I listened to our PTA leaders, our athletic booster club leaders, our student leaders, our black student union members, the community meetings, the public hearings, time and time again, what I heard from our community was a deep sense of pride for what the Woodson High School name means, but also a recognition that how do we reconcile and bring healing to a very painful part of our county and

[02:50:48] our commonwealth's history. And so we think about what could be more beautiful than right here tonight to think about how to honor the man Carter G. Woodson known as the father of black history, A Virginian who came from difficult hardship working in the coal mines, having interrupted education, and going on to earn degrees and PhDs from Harvard and University of Chicago, to creating our very first journals of African American history, to leading the College of

[02:51:25] Arts and Sciences at Howard University, and currently and continuously honored by the University of Virginia for the Institute of African American and African Studies but when I think about the fact that we will be marking the 70th anniversary of Brown versus Board of Education in 2024 that tonight with an historic vote with your support that we will rededicate rename and honor Carter G Woodson with one of our most celebrated high schools here in this county

[02:51:59] in the commonwealth and in the nation i can't think of a more beautiful time to be doing this and finally i will also say that our nation is having a national debate on black history teaching black history teaching the painful aspects of our history and carter g woodson is the one who helped this nation start to capture collect and present that black history is our history and so i can't think also of a more perfect time for our county and our community to come together and say with deep pride we are Carter G. Whitson High School. So I hope

[02:52:38] you'll join me in supporting that tonight. Thank you, Ms. Amish. Would you like to speak to your second? Yeah, thank you and I'm happy to follow Ms. McLaughlin and I appreciate all the work she's put into this and the journey it's been to come to this moment. You know, I think that one of the things that screams the loudest to me in this story is not only that we have to turn the tide and correct what's been wrong, but that complicity is not okay. You know, Carter G. Woodson perhaps wasn't Robert E. Lee or Jeb

[02:53:12] Stewart, but was someone who enabled through his power and inaction having that power the wrongs of our past. And that makes us reflect, you know, I mean, what are the many ways that we continue to be complicit as a system, as individuals, in various harms unfolding in our society. And this is also a moment, you know, it's, it's, it's meaningful that Carter G. Woodson, being considered the father of black history, someone who was a contributor to the idea of an African American History Month,

[02:53:48] that that solution is through education, right, that that he and I want us to take a moment to also appreciate what that required, that resources and energies and blood, sweat, and tears were spent to not only develop, but then to push forward and try to raise year after year after year the importance of creating these narratives so that a child in school's first exposure to black people is not enslavement, right? And we still have a lot of work to do in that journey and that path towards liberation and

[02:54:24] being able to teach the truths that allow all of our children to sit within that sense of liberation and belonging that's within our broader society and has been a part of our collective human history so I'm really proud of us being in this moment I think whether it's you know teaching the realities of our indigenous history of black history of frankly you know the realities in Palestine whatever it is in the

larger decolonial struggle of teaching truth this is a moment certainly to celebrate and I'm grateful for Miss Karim's advocacy over many meetings now in helping bring students along as well and

[02:55:03] making sure that we can celebrate this moment and I'd be remiss not to say I look forward to the moment when we can fix all the you know make all the name changes happen we still have a few left so to those who are coming into the school board you know I know we still have Sangster and and Lee's Corner and and others, Springfield and Sully in particular, but it's always an ongoing work in progress.

[02:55:24] And I think, you know, Ms. McLaughlin, your leadership on this helped show that conversation and bringing everyone along while we recognize the moment that there was some dissent and difference of opinion, but that it's okay for us to all come together today in celebration of a historic and important moment that our young people led us towards.

[02:55:43] So to the young people out there, keep speaking and keep uplifting the truth because at one point, at some point, it's undeniable. Ms. Saizor Heiser.

[02:56:02] - Thank you, I appreciate the chance to be able to speak. And first I wanna thank Ms. McLaughlin for bringing this forward. And as Dr. Anderson said, you're very thoughtful and collaborative and deliberate way of bringing this forward to allow for community participation, to allow for the board to discuss the issues and to really have a great process going forward and a really calm process going forward, which is really nice to have.

[02:56:27] So I really appreciate Ms. McLaughlin. I know how much Woodson and the Woodson community and the school mean to you and your family. So I appreciate what you're doing here and the way that you've done it. And Ms. Amesh, thank you for also seconding this and being a spokesperson for this name change as well.

[02:56:43] I think, you know, it is so rare that you can have a name change that has such poetic justice involved with it and such perfect symmetry. You know, it is wonderful that we are taking off the name of a person who stood for segregation and putting on the name a person who fought for the inclusion of Black history, who fought for writing Black history, for making sure people knew Black history, for celebrating the history of African Americans in our community and in the United States.

[02:57:20] It is such poetic justice to me that students who can walk in now into a school that is named for somebody who believed that history should include the history of all of us. So I'm very proud to support this.

[02:57:35] I'm very proud to be part of the board that voted for this change. And like I was Cohen, I've had a few reasons to knock on a lot of doors in the Woodson community recently as well. and i can echo that um her sentiment as well that from many many of the people that i talked to at the doors um supported this name change who were very supportive of the carter g woodson name and especially as she said families of current students current students themselves alumni really felt strongly that this was a really great move um for the woodson community and for the school and for the students especially um i just wanted to lift up one thing i really loved about this perfect symmetry is the fact that carter g woodson not only was he a professor

[02:58:15] got his phd from harvard but he also was a school principal he was self-taught actually and didn't enter high school i believe to the age of 18 and graduated high school in two years so but he was a teacher and a principal before he went on to get his graduate degrees and um eventually as miss

mclaughlin said being the dean at howard university so it is very fitting to name the school after somebody who was a school principal so i'm honored and humbled and happy to be able TO SUPPORT THIS. THANK YOU. THANK YOU. DR. ANDERSON WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPEAK AGAIN? YES.

[02:58:51] I'LL BE BRIEF SINCE I DID ASK SOME QUESTIONS EARLIER. AND OF COURSE I'M VERY HAPPY TO SUPPORT THIS MOTION AND I'M VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE WORDS THAT YOU SHARED AS WELL AS YOU, MISS OMASH. I THINK THERE'S A POINT OF JUSTICE HERE IN TERMS OF COMING FULL CIRCLE WITH THE name Woodson the only thing that I really want to lift up into this conversation is while we have a very clear policy in terms of how names should be changed I don't think we've settled on what names should be changed to and I wanted to take a moment as Ms. Omeche pointed out we have other

[02:59:28] names to come and we know that the names that currently exist from Lee to Woodson are were in place to perpetuate discrimination racism supremacy over a very specific group of individuals and so I really want to make sure that we are when we are engaging and renaming schools that hold those values that we look to uplift the community that were the most impacted this is a very great example of that I know we've had some other opportunities that I think we have missed to uplift the communities that have been downtrodden by these names and I'm hoping moving forward we can

[03:00:08] continue the path that we are on starting today where we're being very conscientious and intentional that the very people who were held down are being lifted up in these renamings so I'm glad that you are setting the pace for us to continue along that path so thank you. Ms. McLaughlin do you have additional comments um just a quick go back from uh what dr anderson said and uh for those in the community that had advocated particularly in the phase two that why can't we just call it

[03:00:46] woodson high school and that was again part of a deep conversation in our community meetings where we really were able to have for more than two hours each time at the at the woodson cafeteria with those who came out, which was almost 100 people over those two nights.

[03:01:03] And as we would talk about the fact that, you know, just calling it Woodson High School really wasn't going to take away the hurt and bring healing for why we were doing this in the first place, because the name Woodson still would always have the origins of being that former first superintendent.

[03:01:26] And, you know, if there had never been the famous Virginian Carter G. Woodson, we would have absolutely had to be considering something entirely different. But, again, through student voice, through community voice, through fellow board member voice, you know, more than 10 years ago, someone brought Carter G. Woodson to my attention and said, wouldn't that be a beautiful name for that school?

[03:01:52] So this has been there for a while, but it's so important that every single child, every single staff member, every single family who visits that school, who is a part of the community and the campus, can now collectively together, everyone, be inspired and uplifted by Dr. Carter G. Woodson.

[03:02:17] Anyone who reads his life and his legacy and what he accomplished can't help but come away being incredibly proud of this native son of Virginia and so yeah I couldn't be just more proud of this board you you were with me every step of the way so while I appreciate the nice words I want to thank each and every one of you the co-sponsors to the forum and the unanimous support to bring this forward to the community you guys have been amazing partners

[03:02:51] And I do want to finally say, Dr. Reed, that I do appreciate that there was a lot of heavy lifting on the part of your staff to do the part of the superintendent's regulation. And I say that because it's not that the board made that happen.

[03:03:07] That's fulfilling the superintendent's work in this area. But your team was very collaborative with me through this process as well. And I want to certainly especially say thank you to Christy Scott and Donna Nelson-Snyder who really worked very closely with me on this.

[03:03:27] And again, I want to shout out to our interim principal, Kevin Grada. He's on loan from us, from Fairfax High School. And Kevin oversaw the selection of a new mascot at Fairfax High School.

[03:03:44] was there at the helm for that so Kevin your warmth and grace through our community engagement process as well I absolutely credit you and your your team for setting the tone and tenor for that too so thank you so much for all that you and your team have been doing on that so with that I I will stop talking

[03:04:10] Thank you Ms. McLaughlin yes thank you Ms. McLaughlin thank you Ms. Amash for bringing this forward to us and I do just want to say too you know I certainly know you've been working on this for months and months and getting it scheduled and you know getting all the community meetings and everything scheduled when they needed to be working very closely with our OCCR staff and with the board office to get this set up.

[03:04:43] I really appreciate it and a thank you to the community members that participated both in the filling out the forms and attending the meetings and reaching out to board members. We really appreciate your input and I do think it is time and it's the right thing to do so I will be supporting this motion and so with that I will call for the vote.

[03:05:08] All those in favor of our motion please raise your hand. We have Ms. Corbett Sanders, Dr. Anderson, Ms. McLaughlin, Ms. McCarsky, myself, Mr. Frisch, Karen Kieskamara, Ms. Maron, Ms. O'Meish, Laura Jane Cohen, and Rocha Sizemore-Hyser.

[03:05:31] That is unanimous. Congratulations. Great.

[03:05:51] With that, we will move on to agenda item 5.01, performance review. executive expectation number eight superintendent's relationship with the board yes Dr. Reed I have a request for a five-minute break so I will let you sit down for a couple of minutes and thank you to the public we'll just take

[03:06:21] a quick break board members can you please return to your seats okay board

[03:14:59] members we are well over our five minutes so can you please return to your

[03:15:05] seats okay we have seven members at the table we are now moving on to agenda item

[03:15:42] five point zero one performance review executive expectation number eight superintendent's relationship with the board dr. Reed will present her report on EE executive expectation number eight relationship with the board and board members will then be able to ask questions after the board asks questions they will be able to provide feedback through the board's next steps process or may fill out an electronic executive expectation form which will be included with the next steps the entire list of proposed next steps

[03:16:19] and any executive expectation forms will be shared with dr reid after the process is completed and posted in the library section of board docs for the public i now call on dr reid for the presentation

[03:16:33] Thank you, Ms. Toland. And as Executive Expectation 8, the superintendent's relationship with the board, one of the, I think the descriptor, and thank you, Kevin, for pulling it up on the screen, the descriptor recognizes, of course, that the school board provides oversight to the school system, and in fulfilling the requirements of the Virginia Code, the superintendent, of course, is held accountable by the board for effectively managing the operations and academic success of the system.

[03:17:02] So, the opportunity to ensure regular and positive interactions and foster effective partnerships with the board to facilitate the achievement of our strategic plan goals and overall success is critically important, I think, to the success of our division.

[03:17:20] So, one of the things that's key is that the superintendent shall ensure the board is fully informed in a timely manner about matters relating to board work and significant division concerns. And then there are a number of actually eight items that are included that are very specific.

[03:17:39] And since these are online, I know our community can read it and our board is familiar with these. So I will move to the interpretation. This interpretation requires, of course, the superintendent provide regular, thoughtful and positive interactions and communications with the board and continue fostering effective partnerships as a means to facilitate the achievement of our strategic plan goals of which we currently have five.

[03:18:07] So if I move to the evidence of compliance I'm certifying that this evening as of November 9th the information contained in the report is true. So I would the indicators I are enumerating or am enumerating include our regular Friday letter which was a Monday letter and now is a Friday letter essentially I don't think we've taken a break on that in terms of vacations breaks or other reasons because we haven't had one the superintendent of course also meets regularly with each school board member in this case we've done this by phone

[03:18:47] over the course of the last year and there is consistent two-way communication between the office of the superintendent and the school board office there is a weekly meeting with the school board chairs which set agendas and problem solve other topics certainly important issues media events and so forth we endeavor to get those out to board members prior to any more public notice and as you know we also provide email notifications in advance of personnel

[03:19:25] issues. We also address strategic plan updates, academic matters, superintendent matters, and making sure items for the consent agenda that are required by law or board approved are along with the supporting data necessary to keep the board informed are provided as dictated by board policy.

[03:19:46] The regular presentation of information to the board that could impact our financial condition as a division is provided in a timely fashion. And the regular information out to the community newsletters and staff newsletters distributed via the Office of Communications is also very important.

[03:20:04] You receive a weekly legal briefing and as appropriate legal briefings during the week when there are matters that require more urgent attention. Essentially, the school board advisory committees, ombuds committees, and school board member activities are also a part of this relationship.

[03:20:25] So at this time, that is my monitoring report for Executive Expectation 8. I'd be happy to answer any questions, Ms. Toland.

[03:20:45] We can start with questions from Ms. Sizemore-Heiser. Great. Thank you for this report, Dr. Reid. I really appreciate it, and I appreciate the detail, and your information to the board and the community has been really good, especially with the community information.

[03:21:04] A couple of pieces I wanted to mention to you. One of the things that I talked about in this was the Office of Communications working with the Public Engagement Committee to amplify strategies, topics, and timelines. And I think perhaps this is a place as we move further into this work, and I'm just speaking as the Public Engagement Committee Chair, and I think this is the second time I've chaired this committee.

[03:21:25] I think there's some space where maybe we can work on starting at the beginning of the year of sort of a strategy for the entire year of what OCCR thinks is coming down the pike and the strategy of how to incorporate some of those into our meetings so that we on the public engagement committee know of things that are coming up and what the plan is for getting that regular board feedback on these topics and timelines and i also think there's maybe some some space to work together to especially with several new board members coming on board to work on a maybe a best practices guideline around boards outreach to stakeholders i know we've

[03:22:03] talked a little bit internally about getting some feedback that public engagement committee has but you know having getting some feedback from current members about their best practices and suggestions but that would be one the other thing I wanted to lift up to you I'm sure you're not going to be surprised that I mentioned this on that last bullet about school board members being invited to attend and participate and speak at events right I think maybe there's again some space to work with OCCR and the school board office now especially we have a fully staffed office on sort of anticipating these events coming down the pike and making sure there's

[03:22:39] enough time to get those invitations out and to get those speaking opportunities out so board members can be prepared as well so just a couple of things moving forward but overall i appreciate all the information you provided here thank you dr anderson oh thank you um and thank you for presenting this information. Before I go into some of my comments, I would love to get a sense of looking at the superintendent's interpretation. How do you arrive to this language? I just want

[03:23:11] to get a sense of your kind of thinking of this component. So which language in particular? The superintendent's interpretation. I'm trying to figure out is it different than a summary because when I looked at this particular one and you know I'm a big highlighter my whole page is highlighted and it seems to be like components that were just embedded in the actual executive expectation I'm trying to get a sense of the interpretation component and I don't know if I get that it is in general a narrative summary of what looks like a bulleted checklist

[03:23:51] Okay, so it is a summary. Thank you so much for clarifying that. The one of the things that I want to raise is and I know this is an important piece. I know it's a piece that we've talked about when you first started and it continues to be a conversation. The first superintendent expectation, number one, take direction from the board as a body.

[03:24:12] I want to make sure I have clarity in terms of when there is flexibility in that. I'll give you an example. few weeks ago we were talking about the separation report and lots of members talked about it and there seemed to have been some consensus for it to be reviewed and I understand it couldn't be acted upon because it wasn't clear that the board provided direction for it to be worked on and I'm fine with that and I will follow those steps but in earlier but it in an earlier conversation today we had a similar conversation where people gave a lot of feedback and your feedback your response was I hear it that this is important to

[03:24:51] this group and I will work on it but that also was not a direct vote so I just want to be clear in terms of what is it that you're expecting and when you're expecting it when do you see the the feedback from the group as something to act on and when do you need it to be a superintendent directive or board voted upon superintendent directive so great question and where I think that THROUGH THIS EVENING I THINK WHEN WE HEAR A CONVERSATION THAT COULD BE A DIRECTION ON WORK WE'RE ALREADY DOING WHICH I THINK WAS RELATED TO THE ATTENDANCE REPORT I'M NOT

[03:25:28] SURE WHERE THE OKAY WAS EARLIER THAN THAT OKAY WHAT IF IT'S WORK WE'RE ALREADY WORKING ON OR DIRECTIONALLY DOING THEN I THINK THAT IF IT'S A TWEAKING OF THAT I THINK WE CAN TRY TO ACCOMMODATE THAT IF IT'S A NEW BODY OF WORK THAT SOMEBODY THAT I'M GOING TO HAVE to direct staff to do or assign staff that's going to take a significant amount of time or a redirect or possibly even a redo of a system that's been in place, then I really want to make sure there's a consensus before we set off on that path.

[03:26:00] Or I don't know if consensus is the right word, but that there's a direction from the body of the board to set off on that path. And if it offers clarity that when there are comments being made for it to be a directive, I'm happy to start planning for that, just to plan ahead to have language ready for the board to act upon.

[03:26:19] It was just a little bit confusing to me because we had that conversation earlier, and I just thought I would raise it. One of the other pieces that I want to share is, and I actually, I'm going to go with the easiest one, what Ms. Sizemore-Heiser shared, which is the last bullet.

[03:26:38] I do think there's a significant amount of work that can be done here because board members are often unaware of opportunities that are taking place throughout the division or not invited. I think there's a lot of space here for us to improve upon how board members are invited and included in other ways. I shared this earlier, so I'll say it again here. I think there's some space when it comes to the organizational components that impact some of the things for which the board is statulary is statuarily responsible. Statutarily,

[03:27:14] thank you, responsible. I don't think we've hit the mark on that. The communication for me has to be a little bit more intentional. The time has to be a little bit more. It has to be more of a period for some real debate and questions before the decisions are made.

[03:27:33] So I will look for that to be some of the things that you are improving upon because that will also really speak to this expectation that you are encouraging collaboration with the board. And in some aspects, it is very clear.

[03:27:50] In some other aspects, for me, it is missing. And I don't want to belabor it because I know you heard it earlier, but I wanted to make sure that I raised this in this conversation. other this is just a

clarifying question because I don't think I am clear under the this is on page three where it says facts and other information provided a mechanism for official board notification what are you referring to regarding this mechanism for official board notification

[03:28:26] and communication is that the Monday letter yes ma'am okay thank you all right well thank you for this i appreciate being able to have the conversation are there other board members that would like to speak miss omesh yeah thank you so much um and i thank you dr reed i know um you've always strived to make yourself available uh for all kinds of conversations and i've appreciated that um i guess i just wanted to ask you what you see to be um it's great to see the strengths that

[03:29:03] you've outlined i don't know if you see any uh grows if you will or potential areas of improvement in general even to streamline right because the directive isn't just here from the board but it's like the the board collect the majority of the board or like the board as one voice and whatnot so yeah I'm just curious as to your reflections on what you would do maybe differently you have an incoming board so you have a new slate you know to start with but yeah that would be helpful even in my own understanding of where we are well I think you you know the boards raised several issues this evening obviously just getting a better

[03:29:40] understanding of all the different types of events that the board is a part of and making sure those things are out there in a timely way and the how do I say orchestration or the coordination on site at the events.

[03:29:55] I think there's room for improvement obviously. And I think Dr. Anderson spoke to you know provide getting I think the timing on certain types of conversations and decisions I certainly heard that clearly this evening so I think that overall I think the clear we can all be in a collective understanding about processes then I think we will be able to manage expectations a little more effectively because I don't think either the board or in this case the superintendent have an interest in not meeting expectations I think it's the clarity that we can work on so I think that's going to

[03:30:35] important with a new board coming in in the last several months of this board. Yeah I definitely think and this this challenge rather than calling it a problem predates you in the sense that you know kind of the consistency with which every board member engages with you hears from you or or meets with you right is entirely different I feel like streamlining that could be useful some people get a lot of time some people don't get much time I mean by virtue of perhaps their outreach but I think that that ends up leading to perhaps an inequitable dynamic which could you know build resentment or tension for you even

[03:31:11] in leading our system and just mindful of that and then also curious about what can be put in place because even in the build in the lead-up to deciding on the process just the process for how we're gonna do this right and communicate with you about these executive expectations there were differences and concerns about well what if the what if a minority of the board has a perspective or what if even just one or two people on the board have feel strongly about something and it's informed by their you know constituency their community and maybe their worldview and the fact of the matter is you know the tyranny of a

[03:31:49] majority is a real thing I mean even in the founding of this country that was a concept right so I'm thought I want to be thoughtful about that too because I think in working moving forward with the board being one voice what does that mean when seven people speak for the body um and then your

ability to kind of be responsive to what may be correct but not always aligned with where the majority will land i think we've seen that more than once in our um division and i i guess i'm just sensitive to the fact that some more

[03:32:22] thought needs to be put into protocols maybe ways of um streamlining conversation and ensuring that the minority voices are heard but then ultimately you're answerable to the majority but perhaps you know it's like not just compliance right ideally it would be all moving forward together and not just like yeah we i i achieved what the majority of the board wanted right but no i was thoughtful about all the various things that have come up um so there's a lot to say here but and and i will take some of it offline actually to talk to you more directly but um i'm grateful for what it's

[03:32:58] been so far and I recognize colleagues as well that this is a this is even addressing this component is a two-way street I think as a board we can also put in place clarity and hopefully the new board will be able to establish that in their own way around what we are also expecting from you and what our engagement with you should look like so that you're not left trying to figure that out but I appreciate you sharing this. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Kees Kamara. Thank you. Dr. Reed I want to first acknowledge that I know this is a work in progress, right?

[03:33:37] And we're all trying to figure out a balance where both the board and you feel as though we've reached that sweet spot. And I know we've had some conversations over the past few weeks that suggest, you know, maybe we're still adding a little sugar to figure out where that sweet spot is.

[03:33:57] So I'd like to, I'd like to make a few suggestions. And I tried to listen in the back. I just, so forgive me. I hope none of this is repetitive. But I will say I personally struggle a little bit with keeping up with the letters.

[03:34:15] Sometimes it's I'm visiting this school or that school and this is what I've done. But then other times there's important reports in there. And so I'm going to suggest that maybe we take a look at, or you may want to take a look at identifying for the board where they can expect to find certain types of information, right?

[03:34:42] Because sometimes I think I've said, and I don't recall what it was recently that I said, well, wait, I missed that. And somebody said, oh, it was attached to the letter or whatever. And I understand that that was an attempt to communicate, but as I have said in previous weeks, it's not just communication, it's effective communication.

[03:35:06] So I know I'm not, I do want to acknowledge the process. I do acknowledge that there has been much effort. I find those letters to be sometimes just very, very long, and it's easy to lose information in there.

[03:35:24] So if maybe we can have some conversations about specific types of information, I think there have already been comments regarding, you know, when certain things happen, the board needs to receive that information in a timely fashion, when things are expected or, and we have made some improvements.

[03:35:49] So I just say, if we can continue the conversation, think we will find that that sweet spot for most of us I'm not a sweet tea person myself but some people may be and so anyway I just thought I would make these few suggestions and acknowledge that I understand that this is a work in progress appreciate

that thank you I'll work on more effective communication Ms. Marin I just wanted to make a motion to limit debate to two minutes please

[03:36:22] two minutes per school board member anybody that one's not debatable just vote on it this vote yes it requires a two-thirds to adopt it this is a vote that requires two-thirds to adopt a change at this point so the motion is to reduce speaking time to two minutes instead of three so can we

[03:36:58] please take the vote okay miss corbett sanders mr glocklin mr pokarski miss tollen mr frisch MISS MARIN AND MISS COHEN AND MISS SEISMER HEISER OKAY TAKE THE NOES TOO PARDO ME MAKE SURE TO TAKE THE NO VOTES AS WELL OKAY AND THOSE THAT

[03:37:22] DISAGREE THOSE THAT ABSTAIN IS THAT A NO MISSIMATION THAT'S A NO MISSIMATION OKAY CAN YOU CALL THE VOTE PLEASE OKAY WE HAVE DR.

[03:37:52] ANDERSON IS A NO IT WAS 9-4-1 AGAINST SO THAT MOTION WOULD CARRY OKAY DO WE NEED TO REDO THE VOTE OKAY LET'S

[03:38:10] Okay, so we need two-thirds of the vote carries. Thank you. Okay, so our next speaker, Ms. Maron, do you have additional comments? No?

[03:38:33] I don't. Ms. McLaughlin. I'm going to practice trying to be succinct because I think that's part of what we're trying to share as maybe a mutual benefit for you and for the board.

[03:38:50] I know when I send my newsletters out to my community, sometimes there's a lot of packed information in there. And so what I do right up front is I have the bullet points of I'm going to be talking about these topics right up front.

[03:39:07] And then people can then go look through the lengthy communication and decide, oh, I'm interested in that particular topic, this one and that one. And so that's maybe just one suggestion I would have. I know you and I have talked that I'm so much wanting to get to the heart of a lot of the research and best practice and the ways that we're going to help this system get stronger.

[03:39:35] And so I feel at times that some of the most important challenges facing our system are maybe in the communications, but not always.

[03:39:50] And just I know from prior superintendents where they've said, how am I supposed to read the minds of 12 different elected officials on what you want to see and what you don't want to see?

[03:40:02] And so I say this with some humility here, but in the end, to me, anything that has to do with our instructional changes, anything that has to do with our fiscal spending, organizational changes to the systems leadership, those are the things that I would like for us to kind of consistently know.

[03:40:34] That's going to be in the weekly letter because it is interesting sometimes that I feel like the things that maybe were mission critical, we weren't necessarily sure where we would find it.

[03:40:51] And again, I say this with humility because I do appreciate that without question, your goal is to enhance your communication with the board. And for that, I greatly appreciate it. Thank you.

[03:41:06] Thank you. Ms. Corbett Sanders. Thank you, and thank you, Dr. Reed. I think you're hearing a lot about the Friday letter, it used to be Monday letter, and I think part of the challenges with it is that it's really hot links to a bunch of other things.

[03:41:25] And so your suggestion of having an intro paragraph that kind of sets the stage of these are the priorities and these are the things that you should focus in, that in my mind the top five things that you should focus in on or the top five risks and then also having some celebration in there too because all of us are also sending out newsletters and if there's really good stuff that should be shared with the community that by individual board members i would suggest that i think the most critical thing though is and and i always use this

[03:42:04] as a guiding parameter for any bosses I ever had, and you have the challenge of having 12 of those, is the spirit of no surprises. And I would encourage that, you know, when you get stuff, you might want to think, hmm, I don't want any surprises.

[03:42:28] Because that's the only thing I would suggest, is really if I don't get surprised. And it's impossible not to have some surprises, but limit the surprises. it makes a very good partnership. Yes ma'am. Mr. Frisch. All right I have some good things to say about the Friday email. I think well before I get to that I think process makes perfect and if we can institute some processes around some of the communication I think everybody will be

[03:43:04] happier and everybody will be more clearly understood. In terms of the Friday letter I'm grateful that it's on Friday now because it gives me more time away from the work day to focus on it as opposed to when it was on Mondays.

[03:43:22] I appreciate the hyperlinks that are used to drop me down to the various sections of it. I appreciate the toolkits that we get from OCCR in there every week that help us find different things to spotlight it in our newsletters and in our social media posts. I appreciate that the documents that are attached to the weekly email are clearly labeled.

[03:43:45] That wasn't always the case previously. And I think what I appreciate most of all is that there are really two emails that I have to read every single week, your Friday email and the chair's email. And those things set me up for success in terms of understanding what's going on.

[03:44:03] And so I try as best I can to do that every single week. And when I am capable of doing it, I have a more informed discussion with my colleagues. So I think there are always ways to make things better in terms of format and structure, but I'm very pleased with some of the changes that have come into the Friday newsletter.

[03:44:28] And I hate to say it, but I don't read the other email that you send every week too often. I know. It's okay. But I think you should combine them into one, like a book at the end of the year, maybe. Maybe. Or maybe a quarterly journal.

[03:44:44] Maybe with recipes. I will say my partner was in it once, and he was super excited about it and got lots of emails from his friends all over the division when you stopped by Chantilly. So I appreciate that and look forward to partnering with you in the future. All right.

[03:45:03] So I'm happy to follow that because I also like the Friday letter. And it is very dense, but it has just the competitive information and what's going on in the district and what new reports are coming in.

[03:45:19] It has the contracts that we need to pay attention to. It's kind of a large smattering, if you will, of various topics. But as Mr. Frisch pointed out, things that, you know, I find as a board member is important to stay on top of.

[03:45:35] And it's all in one place. And it is, we do have, there is like an appendix at the top of it. So that is super helpful. I also just want to also compliment you on the addition of academic matters to our board meetings.

[03:45:51] You know, that was an idea that you brought to us. And I think that has also really helped me just on what are topical issues going on and getting some data and information around them, which I find really helpful as someone, you know, going out into the community. Those are the topics that a lot of times our community members are talking about.

[03:46:09] So I really do appreciate that. I was kind of thinking with some of our recent conversations, you know, I think we all went through the strategic plan process together, and there was so much communication around that. And, you know, the strategic thinking associated with it and the work sessions and things that you had with the board members, there was, you know, I really felt included in that whole planning process.

[03:46:35] And I think that now as we're going into implementing that strategic plan, maybe we just need to think a little bit more about what are these strategic things that are happening. And, you know, there was a list someone gave instruction, fiscal organizational changes.

[03:46:53] I think it was Ms. McLaughlin. I think that was a pretty good list because those are super exciting things that are happening in the division. And I know there's so much and it's all happening quickly. But those are some of the strategic things that board members really like to know about. So I'm very happy to work closely with you to try to get that information out to board members in a more timely manner.

[03:47:16] So thank you very much for the report this evening. Thank you. Okay, as a reminder to board members, you need to enter any next steps that you have out of the conversation this evening by 5 p.m. on November 14th.

[03:47:35] And then, as we are always reminded by our clerks, any vote on that, you need to go in and vote on any of those that you support by 5 p.m. on November 17th. If you are electing to use the electronic executive expectation form, please fill it out and provide it to the clerk no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, November 17th.

[03:48:00] There is a link in the script here to the Next Steps process, but we will also get that out to everyone again. Okay, agenda item number six, consent agenda.

[03:48:16] Our adopted rules of parliamentary procedure, Robert's Rules, provide for a consent agenda listing several items for approval of the board by a single motion. Many items listed have gone through board review and documentation has been provided to all board members and the public in advance.

[03:48:34] Items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any board member prior to the meeting. The consent agenda items are on the screen. Is there any objection to approving the consent agenda? Hearing and seeing no objection, the consent agenda is approved.

[03:48:58] Agenda item 7, new business. The following are new business agenda items. There will not be a vote on these items this evening, but action is scheduled at a future meeting. New business items are on the screen.

[03:49:19] Agenda item eight board committee reports. I call on Miss Keyes Gamara for a report on the CPDC committee. Thank you. The CPDC met on both October 5th and October 25th this last month.

[03:49:37] I'm grateful to my colleagues Dr. Ricardi Anderson and Miss Tamara Derenak-Koufax for participating as well as Dr. Carolyn Pitches from the City of Fairfax School Board and FPAC Chair Katie Herman. as well as our new Chief of Facilities Services and Capital Programs, Janice Seizmanski.

[03:49:57] Both meetings served as a session, an in-depth discussion to finalize the community engagement process for capital projects. I want to thank staff members from the facilities teams as well as from the Office of Communications, particularly Christy Scott, for their ongoing work on this project we began this work almost two years ago our primary goals were to establish consistency in communication and engagement for all capital projects improve communication and outreach encourage public participation in the process and building community understanding and awareness of

[03:50:35] the capital improvement process our next steps the framework will be entered as new business on November 20th we look forward to presenting our finished product to you during the work session on November 28th our committee members are available to meet with you in two by two conversations to answer any questions or gather initial feedback from you prior to this work session and from that point it is my understanding that the framework will be included on the agenda of the December 4th MEETING FOR BOARD ACTION. I WILL JUST ADD THAT I APPRECIATE A COUPLE OF BOARD MEMBERS THAT WERE ABLE

[03:51:14] TO SERVE AS OUR TRIALS. OUR CHAIR, MS. TOLAND AND DR. ANDERSON BOTH BROUGHT IN SOME OF THE PROJECTS THAT WERE IN THEIR COMMUNITY AND SO IT WAS REALLY ALLOWED US TO WORK A LITTLE BIT AS A think tank to try to figure out how to improve the process for everyone as well as to provide a more fidelity in the process so i think um that we made a lot of progress particularly with staff certainly didn't do it by ourselves but having f pack available to us as well as staff and real

[03:51:53] life problems i think will help in the long run at least that's my hope so i thank you so much AND I LOOK FORWARD TO OUR DISCUSSIONS LATER THIS MONTH. THANK YOU. I CALL IN MS. FOR A REPORT ON THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE.

[03:52:10] YES. WE WERE ABLE TO SEND FORWARD TO THE BOARD THAT WENT ON TO NEW BUSINESS TONIGHT SEVEN POLICIES THAT WILL HAVE NO CHANGES. THEY WERE ALL DEALING WITH HR, HUMAN RESOURCES, AND THE SUPERINTENDENT DID CONFIRM THAT THEY ARE PRETTY STANDARD POLICIES AND THEY DON'T HAVE COMPLICATIONS WITH FORTHCOMING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING OR OTHER PLANS GOING ON.

[03:52:31] So those are on the docket and I hope that the board will push those through in our next meeting. There were also a few other policies that had come up and all of these are on the 1031 board documents page regarding changes to a few of those policies.

[03:52:49] Some just needed minor changes and a few we're going to get some more in-depth changes and I have emailed all this in detail to the board. The biggest thing is that we want to do is. Well, we're going to try and get another another governance meeting in before the final meetings for this board for the year.

[03:53:08] So, yes, please do. Oh, and we talked actually at length about the fire escape plans for students with disabilities. And it was a really interesting conversation that resulted in Dr. Reid suggesting that she is

going to actually meet with a fire marshal to talk about, you know, what what's the you know, the view at this time.

[03:53:24] And we certainly want to be sensitive to, you know, best practices. So it was really good. So, yes, please do read what I sent you. AND THEN I'M HAPPY TO COLLECT INPUT REGARDING DRAFT CALENDAR POLICY THAT HAD BEEN SHARED SO THAT CAN BE USED IN PRACTICED SOONER THAN LATER.

[03:53:42] THANK YOU. THANK YOU. I'D LIKE TO CALL MISS HEISMER HEISER FOR A REPORT ON THE PACK COMMITTEE. GREAT. THANK YOU VERY MUCH. AND GIVEN THE LATE HOUR, I WILL TRY TO BE BRIEF. THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE MET ON REVEMBER 2ND AND WE GOT QUITE A BIT OF GOOD WORK DONE.

[03:54:00] WE TALKED ABOUT THE VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION FOR OUR ADVISORY COMMITTEES THAT WAS EMAILED out to the board and on the new business for tonight for a vote for next time to allow them to set rules for this year so they can take advantage of some of their ability to participate virtually and then we will also ask for a work session as part of our advisory committee handbook which peck has also finished to discuss going forward after this school year we also talked about our public comment procedures to make more uniformity between our video and our in-person comments and we also discussed the public hearings of frequency participation minimum participants

[03:54:38] sign up deadline to conform to the public comment deadline and this work will be coming forward to the board and then we also went to discuss the school board standing committees and obtaining feedback from members as to what committee should exist this is work that was started in the previous iteration of pec and i know dr anderson and mr frish had committed committed to gathering input and had gathered input from some board members and we'll be refreshing this input and reaching back out to you as well and our next meeting will be december 5th so that is our

[03:55:07] update from public engagement oh and happy diwali everybody thank you miss heiser heiser okay with that um i would like to again extend a big thank you to our um deputy clerks that stepped up to run our meeting today thank you so much for all of your help okay so at this point agenda item nine board matters without objection.

[03:55:47] We will skip this portion of our agenda. Okay, seeing no objection, this meeting is adjourned.