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Hanover County Board of Supervisors Meeting, Wednesday, September 9, 2026

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[00:00:45] Good afternoon and welcome to the September 9, 2026 Hanover County Board of Supervisors meeting.

[00:03:24] As is customary, we'll open with an invocation led by Vice Chair Stoneman and the Pledge of Allegiance led by Ms. Floyd. Mr. Stoneman. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Will you join me as we go to Lord in prayer? Dear Heavenly Father, Lord, we thank you so much for this wonderful day that you've given us. Father, we humbly come before you to seek your guidance, to seek your favor, and to ask your blessings on this meeting today.

[00:03:46] Father, I pray that all we do and say would be pleasing in your sight, that it be profitable for the citizens of Hanover County. And Father, Lord, we just want to glorify you and honor you with the gifts that you've given us. So I ask, Lord, that you bless our time together. It's in Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

[00:04:02] Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[00:04:23] Thank you, Mr. Stoneman. Thank you, Ms. Floyd. Next item on the agenda, item number three is consideration of amendments to the agenda. Chair recognized, Vice Chair Stoneman. Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this time, I'd like to make a motion to add the following closed session discussion as agenda item 9B under the following authority, Virginia Code 2.2-3711A1, Discussion of Impact of Retirement of County Attorney on Filling an Upcoming Vacancy in the County Attorney's Office.

[00:04:54] Second. We have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All those in favor, please indicate by saying aye. Aye. Any opposed? Motion carries. I'd like to welcome Sheriff Sick, Sheriff of Hanover County. Thank you for joining us, Sheriff. I also see Treasurer Tim Boshan. Mr. Boshan, thank you, sir.

[00:05:10] Thank you both for being at the ribbon cutting. I see our school board chair. Chair Welsh is here. Thank you, ma'am. And, of course, Mr. Bob Seifert with the school board. And our superintendent, thank you so much for being here. And, Chief, thank you for being here. I didn't see that you came in. I think you're at the ribbon cuttings because Mr. Badeski schedules all of these when it's above 85 degrees and puts all the chairs in the sun.

[00:05:32] So I've always said you're there in case you've got to pop some IVs in case we catch fire. So thank you. And I see members of the sheriff's office here. Thank you. Lieutenant Gardner, thank you for being here. I know you get to work about 2 o'clock, so thank you for making time to join us today, sir.

[00:05:49] Nothing like having friends. Next item on the agenda, item number four, is board member comments. chair has no comments are there board members starting on my right anyone down here vice chair stoneman thank you mr. chair i would like to uh give a huge shout out uh to our partners at the hanover sheriff's department uh fire and ems and parks and rec uh we had our multiplayer days parade um this past saturday um and uh it was a huge turnout a very big success a lot of fun had by all but none of it could be possible without the partnerships that we have uh with hanover fire and

[00:06:28] EMS, Hanover Sheriff's Department, and our parks and recs. So thank you all for the hard work that you put in. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Stoneman. Echo those comments. Anything else from board members? Seeing none, Mr. County Administrator. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a few updates today.

[00:06:43] First, I just wanted to recognize today one of our presentations will be from our register. We just celebrated the opening of our new registrar's office and early election center. Look forward to beginning to serve the public as soon as the 18th with early voting starting there in the new space So I'm glad to be able to provide a safe secure space. Mr. Mideski. I apologize. Mr. Registrar I did not see you in the audience. I thank you for joining us. Ms. Lavender with the electoral board Thank you for being with us. My apologies. I did not see you out there. Thank you, Mr. Mideski. Thank you, sir I do want to recognize our Public Works Department

[00:07:19] They were recognized as the winner of the Virginia Transportation Construction Alliance Award for the 360 widening project for projects greater than twenty million dollar design build bid build that project our citizens were very patient while we worked through that project but hopefully they believe it's award-winning as well as we bring that to completion and congratulate the Public Works team remind the community that this Friday is 9/11 certainly we want to pause and recognize the events of that day 25 years later as we've begun a tradition here multiple years ago we will recognize

[00:07:57] that day through service to our community and with our community and proud to be able to do that with a number of not-for-profits in our community with county employees in our community coming

together to recognize that important day in our history. It's also important that we recognize that we have Hanover citizens that were residents of New York or participants in one of the many fire EMS companies those days that now live here in Hanover we want to make sure that they know our gratitude for their service but also recognize their sacrifice. I do want to recognize that on

[00:08:32] our website we'll be promoting Hanover farm tours on October 10th and really want to thank the farming community throughout Hanover for coming together. There's a number of agritourism opportunities for families to go out and visit Hanover farms on October 10th. It's a great opportunity to see a major economic driver for Hanover County, the life of our agricultural community on October 10th. I want to thank the farmers that have agreed to welcome our community in that day. And the last I have today is just a reminder to our community that October 8th through 11th in Hanover County at the Federal Club, the PGA will be hosting the Corn Ferry Tournament in partnership

[00:09:12] with Richmond region in Hanover County. This tournament is the final stop on the PGA Tour for folks to earn their PGA card. So there will be all the stars of the future of the PGA I encourage our citizens to turn out for that event and they're still looking for volunteers if you have an interest in serving as one of those volunteers there's more information available on our website with that mr. chairman that's all I have today thank you mr. county administrator next item on the agenda is a presentation recertification for the Henneep County Sheriff's Office from CJA which is criminal justice Academy mr.

[00:09:49] Doyle I didn't know mr. Doyle's here hey mr. Doyle how are you sir good to see Mr. Doyle is the field services coordinator for the Department of Criminal Justice Services. So nice to see you again. Good afternoon everyone. Good afternoon.

[00:10:16] I'm here on behalf of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services to present the Hanover County Sheriff's Office Criminal Justice Academy with their recertification as a result of the recent audit. A DCDS recertification audit is an on-site evaluation conducted by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services to ensure a certified criminal justice training academy continues to meet all regulatory and certification requirements before it can offer mandated training. During this year's past audit, the Hanover County Sheriff's Office Academy not only met the requirements but exceeded them in several core areas to include their basic training programs. So on behalf of the Department of Criminal Justice Services, I'd like to present Sheriff Six and his staff with

[00:10:56] recertification here chair six floor is yours sir thank you thank you mr chair members of the board mr badesky mr walters uh it's my pleasure to stand before you here today for the record i'm greg six i'm the sheriff of hanover county uh this is a great accomplishment that we do every couple of years where we recertify our academy through the department of criminal justice service i'd like to publicly not acknowledge lieutenant matt gardner although he is a air force veteran

[00:11:35] which we don't hold against them. I kind of do, but go ahead. Lieutenant Gardner and his staff. Lieutenant Gardner worked for me for many years, but his staff was Sergeant Spruill, Deputy Stevens, Deputy Phillips, Deputy Russell, and Scott Town, and Lisa Hancock.

[00:11:57] And there's, I've rehearsed this a hundred times, but all of them are the ones that make this go around. They are the ones that are kept in compliance with all the standards that we have to meet. And it's not just us. We're the Academy of Record for the Pamunkey Jail, as well as the Public Safety Emergency Communications Department.

[00:12:16] So on behalf of the Sheriff's Office, thank you, Mr. Doyle, for coming out today. You're a great partner with us. Keep us in line with all of our standards. And again, I want to publicly thank Lieutenant Gardner for all of his work. And if you're not aware, Lieutenant Butterworth is the newly assigned lieutenant of training.

[00:12:32] So Lieutenant Butterworth does not have any military service. So, you know, he's starting on the same par with Lieutenant Gardner, you know. But Matt, keep the bar set high, keep us in check, and thank you guys very much.

[00:12:50] Thank you, Sheriff, and Matt, thank you for being here as well. And to Lieutenant Gardner, all joking aside, you have run a phenomenal academy for many years. We've seen it by what's produced out of the academy. I've seen the standards that you hold not only yourself to, but the academy to, and it is a work to behold.

[00:13:09] That is a phenomenal academy. I've had many conversations throughout the state and even on some national visits where I've had to talk to folks, and I've talked about you and the academy that you've run for Colonel Hines and now with Sheriff Six, and it's just unbelievable.

[00:13:26] So you've done a fantastic job, and I'm just proud to know that all that comes out of your academy is because of your dedication to that program. So I know Lieutenant Butterworth, high bar, but you're a phenomenal cop as well. So you're a great leader, and we look forward to a lot of great results. So thank you, Sheriff.

[00:13:42] Thank you. Sure.

[00:14:35] The next item on the agenda is Citizens' Time.

[00:15:05] Citizens' Time is a time where anyone who wishes to address the board on any matter within the board's authority is welcome to come forward. You will have up to five minutes, depending on the number of speakers, and we'll take account here in a moment. While you can bring handouts for the board, we do not allow audio or visual presentations is there anyone here who wishes to speak at citizens time i do have i believe it's dorothea henry is that right one okay we'll get to you in just a moment ma'am and two and three so we'll allow up to five minutes uh we do have cards you're not required to fill out a card but it does help us with follow-up and constituent services

[00:15:41] or getting uh information back to a speaker so you're not required to but if you will fill out card and you have any follow-up that you need, it does help us with that. At this time, we will open Citizens Time. Ms. Henry, please come forward. Thank you for being with us, ma'am. You have up to five minutes. We ask that you state your name in the district that you live or the entity you represent. Thank you. Hello, I'm Dorothea Henry, not related to Patrick Henry that I know of, but I'm Dorothea Henry from the Mechanicsville District, and I'm here to ask you to put a concern on your radar and potentially ask you to take action or direct citizens' concerns regarding the Amazon

[00:16:19] proposed drone delivery operations that will be happening in Hanover County. I understand Hanover County does not control the airspace, and that's the jurisdiction of the FAA. However, I'm asking you to still advocate for Hanover County and its historic natural resources before this becomes more difficult to address. Some items to note for those that weren't able to attend the Amazon drone event. Amazon's MK30 drones are quite large. They sit five feet high, have a wingspan of five and a half feet, and have six large propellers. Amazon's MK30 drones will have an operating

[00:16:57] radius of approximately seven and a half miles from the delivery hub on Richmond Henrico Turnpike. Amazon's current plan is for 1,000 flights per day, flying in an altitude of approximately 200 feet at 70 miles an hour and flying in as straight as the Crow Flies line.

[00:17:17] They stated at their recent event that they are fully ready to launch, only awaiting some final Henrico County approvals. Here's my concern. That seven and a half mile flight radius reaches the vicinity of incredibly important sensitive areas here in Hanover, including Cold Harbor Battlefield.

[00:17:37] the cemetery, and Garth Wright House. At their event, Amazon stated that it has the capabilities to program drones to avoid biologically sensitive areas, such as an eagle migration path in their Phoenix location, which limits the delivery to a specific area during a two-month period. It will just fly around where the eagles are. I specifically asked the Amazon representative if Amazon plans to likewise avoid cultural or historic sensitivities, like a battlefield or a cemetery. And I was essentially told, no, go take that up with the Hanover County board. So I am.

[00:18:14] I know that takeoff and landing of drones are prohibited in national parks, but flying over federal property is a complicated and unresolved gray area, as the internet says. But that is exactly why I'm asking the board to get involved now, while there is still an opportunity to communicate with Amazon, the FAA, the National Park Service, and request that a sensitive historic and natural areas in Hanover can be avoided. After all, they can just fly around them. And this concern isn't just about the drones we're talking about today. Amazon is expanding rapidly and Walmart and other companies are pursuing drone delivery as well. It won't be long until we well

[00:18:54] surpass 1,000 drone deliveries in a day in Hanover County. So my request is to please put this issue on your radar, no pun intended, engage with the appropriate federal agencies and Amazon, and advocate for flight paths that protect Hanover's historic battlefields parks and wildlife and the character of these places before the skies become significantly more crowded thank you so much thank you ma'am uh Mr. Hudson uh and Mr. Walter uh and Mr. Badesky uh maybe we could look at our schedules I'd like for all four of us to get together and have a discussion and then at some

[00:19:34] point bring in folks from community development but I'd just like to get some more information Thank you, ma'am. Next speaker, please. Hello, Ashley Covington, Cold Harbor. I love Hanover. That's why I'm here today, and that is why I've been coming to every meeting this year.

[00:19:52] When my only child duties called me back from L.A. to be a help to my mom, all my friends there were like, oh my gosh, you have to move back to your hometown? And my answer was, heck yeah, I'm from Hanover. It's the best place in the country. I'm happy to go home. I was happy to move back to a place where people actually care about community and our way of life.

[00:20:13] I've worked all over the world, and I can say with confidence, Hanover is the best. And that is why I have been here month after month, fighting so hard to keep Hanover, Hanover. Because that can be lost really quickly.

[00:20:31] I went to JMU, and a lot of my friends there came from Northern Virginia. And I laugh now thinking about how much we used to tease them about being from the big city. Because they're really far from being from the big city and industrial back then.

[00:20:47] And I remember visiting their homes and the rolling fields and the farms that surrounded them. I recently reconnected with a friend who still lives in Loudoun. The story she has told me about

what the landscape looks, sounds, and feels like chills me to the bone.

[00:21:04] She is planning her exit. She said that living there now is detrimental to her well-being. And I don't want that for us in 10 to 20 years. I want to still be sitting on my porch listening to the wind through the trees and the frogs croak at night.

[00:21:21] I want to drive the winding roads and see the crops growing from the bountiful farms. I want my neighbors to share venison with me during hunting season. That's like the best part of coming home. That and Hanover tomatoes. I want Hanover to retain what makes it the best place to live.

[00:21:40] Now, I know that the next data center proposal before you sits on land-zoned light industrial. But here's the thing: this time last year, I didn't know the difference between traditional and hyperscale data centers. I thought they were one in the same, which is exactly what the tech billionaires and the developers want everyone to think. They want to get their claws into our landscape and change it forever. These two vastly different industries need to be treated as such. Hyperscalers should not receive tax breaks or be able to

[00:22:18] sneak into communities as a buy right. They're playing a game to win at zoning and they should not be zoned light industrial. I am so very grateful to this board for committing to studying this industry. I've spoken before you many times on the differences between hyperscalers and traditional, so I really know that I don't need to anymore. You are studying. You are learning. And I believe you all really do want what is best for Hanover and that you took these positions because you care. So what I'm asking

[00:22:54] you is let the study finish before there are any more approvals. If hyperscalers prove to be what we suspect, a different industry with a different impact, then don't allow them in light industrial.

[00:23:11] End by right zoning. Require a public hearing. Require a vote. Put the decision in front of the people you serve. Your planning commission let us down when they voted to approve Iron Horse. They basically said, we know you're studying data centers. We just don't care. My belief is that this board, our elected officials, met what y'all said when you said you wanted to study the effects and I hope that you will vote no when the time comes. Thank you very much. I really appreciate

[00:23:48] what you're doing. Thank you ma'am. Next speaker please. Hi good afternoon. I'm Jane Kirchner from the South Anna District and first I want to thank you very much for the opportunity to address you today concerning issues that I really care about for Hanover County. I also I want you to remove data centers as a permitted or by right use in any zoning district in Hanover County right now as I'm sure you're aware data centers are listed as permitted use in several districts and the terms data center or data processing

[00:24:25] or ISPs search portals and related services are listed as permitted uses in some in those districts I'm asking you to initiate the process to remove that so that data centers are not by right in any district in Hanover County I'm also requesting that you revise your data center ordinance work plan a little bit that I know is on track that you're starting with staff and paid consultants to look at prioritizing and expediting changes to the sections in the ordinance that relate to safeguarding our water resources and wells our health our air

[00:25:04] and I from the other I was thinking but didn't think about air but you can look at air in different ways but our noise ordinance and safeguarding our natural environmental resources from pollution or destruction and I'm asking you this because this way you can implement safeguards that are across the

board so if you it's not just specific to a data center ordinance or something in a specific ordinance but it's across the board so when you get applications we know those safeguards are in there for us and whether the application says data center or a technology park or whatever it is you're gonna be able to better I

[00:25:44] think serve the citizens of Hanover County so I'm urging you to take a look at doing that lastly I sent you an email earlier today I'm sure you haven't read it you actually sent it about two hours ago I pasted in there an article from September 2nd about a data center in Sterling Virginia and it was a by right data center I've been there I've seen it I've witnessed the impacts it's having on the residents and the community there and it's having some significant impacts that are continuous and ongoing they have gas turbines at

[00:26:17] this data center they have generators that are going often and they're not able to find a solution the last if you read this article it says that they potentially could maybe do something by 2040 so the residents are gonna have to wait until then but they might be able to do anything and there's an awful lot of energy being right now directed towards trying to solve these problems a lot of time spent on it a lot of angst and really unfortunate situation for the people that are experiencing it firsthand so I'm asking you to think

[00:26:55] about that read that and Institute as soon as you can an amendment to remove data centers as by right in all of our zoning districts so that something like That doesn't happen to the residents here. So thank you again for the time. Thank you, ma'am. Anyone further very well We will close citizens time next item or any agenda is a consent agenda If all board members had an opportunity to review the consent agenda are there any items to be withdrawn from the consent agenda?

[00:27:25] Is there a motion to approve some of mr. Chair? We have a motion is there a second second? We have a motion in a second Any discussion hearing none all those in favor, please indicate by saying aye aye any opposed motion carries agenda item 8 is a presentation from the voter registrar or from the registrar um director of general elections mr david nichols on voter registrar update thank you for being with us mr registrar the ribbon cutting ceremony and for your attendance

[00:28:01] there i really appreciate that um we're proud of the new space and can't wait to be able to use it to serve our voters because i'm new to most of you and i you've got to meet some of you over there and some of you, you know, only met in passing. I want to give you a little background on my elections experience prior to coming to Hanover County. In 2009, I began working as the state election director in West Virginia for Secretary of State Natalie Tennant. I did that job for four years and then moved to be the legislative director there for another four years until a new secretary of state was elected who decided they didn't need my services anymore,

[00:28:39] which is fine. From there I moved to Virginia and started working as the Election Services Manager in the Virginia Department of Elections. I did that job for six and a half years. So a lot of the documentation and and things that come from the state to to Hanover County Registrar's Office or any other locality in the state, I was in charge of those documents at one point. So if there are errors in them I've been gone for two years so they're not my errors anymore. But after I left the Department of Elections, I went to work for a voting machine

[00:29:14] vendor called Clear Ballot. Worked for them for a little over a year and a half and saw this opportunity to come to Hanover County. My family and I, we've moved up here to Ashland from Richmond and we're very much enjoying being Hanover County residents so far. Churchill is a little noisy being right

in in town and So we're very happy to be in a little quieter setting And and be amongst the citizens up here and I appreciate the electoral board taking the chance to hire Someone like me to be the general registrar. Do I do have the clicker?

[00:29:53] I'd like to start by kind of just going over the last the three elections that we've had in the year since the previous registrar Terry Smithson presented to you all. We'll go a little bit of information about the November 2025 election and then the April and August of 2026 elections. In November 2026, we had 90,000 and 60 registered voters.

[00:30:14] 60,500 so showed up. That was a 67.2 percent turnout in an off-year general election. It was a gubernatorial election, so we do normally expect to see a little higher turnout. We came in third behind Goochland and Powhatan for total voter turnout percentage in that election.

[00:30:34] That's a really good number amongst the 133 localities statewide. Then we get to the April election, non-election. We had 90,089 registered voters. 56,000 plus showed up for a 62.2% voter turnout.

[00:30:53] That's an exceptional number for a special election. We were well above 48.6% statewide turnout for that election. And to give you some context on what you just saw with the Wickham building and the new early voting center, in that election in April, we had 19,000 plus voters come through early voting.

[00:31:17] We're expecting a higher turnout for this election. And so we're expecting to serve about 21,000 to come through early voting for this November election. So you can see how much that space is going to benefit the voters right off the bat.

[00:31:32] It's going to be a huge benefit to them. And I do want to be transparent because the legislature did provide some funding to help reimburse localities for the cost of the special election. We certified costs of \$114,603.

[00:31:48] The state reimbursed us \$70,543. That left us with right around \$44,000 that the county had to absorb to put that election on. There was a total of \$5 million allocated for that election. Then, of course, in August, we had two primaries on one day, right?

[00:32:09] We had the Republican primary that had just over 6,500 voters turnout for a little over 7% turnout. We had 5,200 show up for the Democratic primary for almost 6% turnout. So our total turnout for the primary was almost 11,800 for 13%.

[00:32:28] that's honestly really good for a primary, especially for a dual primary. Those are pretty good numbers. I want to move away from elections themselves now and talk more a little bit about voter registration in the county. These numbers are all from August 31st of the year indicated.

[00:32:48] So in 2016, 10 years ago, we had 75,600 or 562 registered voters. By 2025, last year, that it increased by 18.4% to 89,487, and in the last year alone, we've added another 1,100 plus voters, making a decade change of almost 20% increase in registered voters. This slide shows how voter registration has changed in each district over the last year. For example, in Ashland in

[00:33:26] 2025, there are 11,505. You can see the number there of 11,696 for 2026, so Ashland increased by 191. The key here, I think, in these numbers is that in every single district, we've increased voter registration. And our office is always looking for additional ways to get eligible voters onto voter rolls. As

we look toward Election Day in November, we are looking for and hoping to get more officers of election or poll workers. Our target is for 310. We currently have about

[00:34:02] 200, so we need 110 still, so we're at 65% of our target. The goal is to have at least eight poll workers in every single precinct on election day. We think that based on the number of people we expect for turnout, that'll be a good number to serve those voters. So we'll be working with communications and community outreach and some other groups to make sure that we can try to get as many officers of election as we can for election day.

[00:34:32] And of course, we always need some spares, right? We always have some extras and we can always use more people. To give you some key dates heading into the November election, on September 14th, we're going to do our logic and accuracy testing for our early voting equipment and our absentee voting equipment.

[00:34:53] On September 18th, as Mr. Badesky said, early voting starts. October 9th, we'll do our logic and accuracy testing for all of our Election Day equipment. And I can tell you that part of that process is that we take a test deck that has basically every single possibility of how a ballot could be voted, and we run it through the machine.

[00:35:14] The test deck for this election is 400 pages long. So it's going to take us some time to feed those in and make sure that the counts all come out as we expect. And that way we can lock those machines down, certify that they're ready for the election, and put them away until they get delivered to the polling places.

[00:35:34] On October 23rd is our voter registration deadline and the deadline to request an absentee ballot by mail. Starting with October 19th will be our first day of Sunday voting for this election. It's now required by law.

[00:35:50] We'll have two straight weeks of voting from October 19th through October 31st. That's a Saturday. Those will be two straight weeks of voting at our new Early Voting Center. And, of course, November 3rd is Election Day.

[00:36:09] I want to thank you for the opportunity to come and speak with you all and give you this information, and I'm happy to answer any questions you might have. Are there any questions for Mr. Nichols? I have a question. Ms. Deville. Mr. Nichols, could you go back to the slide with regard to the reimbursement for election costs?

[00:36:30] And could you tell us how that \$70,000 is calculated? Yeah, so the state has a formula that they use in the cases where there are special elections that they're reimbursing for. They factor in the number of registered voters.

[00:36:46] They factor in the actual cost because in some places it costs a certain amount of money to hold an election regardless of how many how many voters you have right so they they're balancing some of those things and And then they distribute it out as evenly as they can amongst the 133 localities. We're at We're you know, we had to eat about 38 percent of the total Some larger localities had significantly higher totals. They had to they had to fund themselves

[00:37:18] If I could please have a follow-up question, and has that formula changed since we started the 45-day early voting? From my time at the Department of Elections for those six and a half years, it stayed

the same.

[00:37:35] We also, in fact, we also, we did, the first one that I had, the first special election that I dealt with was during, after early voting started. So the first one we reimbursed, and I knew what that formula was, included the early voting period, the 45 days.

[00:37:56] Thank you. Great info. Anything further? Mr. Redishar, thank you for being with us, sir. We appreciate that. I'd like to welcome Dr. Lisa Penica, Superintendent of Hanuman County Public Schools, for the 2026-27 school opening update.

[00:38:12] Thank you for being with us, Doctor. Thank you. And good afternoon, Chairman Davis and Vice Chairman Stoneman, members of the Board of Supervisors, Mr. Badeski, Mrs. McGee, and Mr. Walter. Each September, I have the opportunity to come to see you and provide an update for the school board and the board of supervisors on the opening of the new school year. I am pleased to share that we have had a strong and successful start marked by optimism, positive energy, and a deep commitment to the success of every student. From the return

[00:38:50] of our teachers and staff to convocation and the ribbon cuttings to welcoming our students back to their classrooms, there has been a wonderful sense of excitement and happiness across Hanover County Public Schools. This afternoon, I will share some important data and information about the opening of school with you. The first few weeks have been filled with moments that remind us why we do this work. Students making new friends, teachers inspiring curiosity and a love of learning, and even our high school students returning to their elementary schools to welcome younger

[00:39:27] students on the first days of school. Those moments reflect something that is at the heart of our school division. It is care. We care deeply about our students, our families, and one another, and the community that we are privileged to be able to serve. I am incredibly proud of what I have seen already this school year and grateful to everyone who helped make our opening so smooth, successful, and joyful. With that, let's take a look at our successful start and the strong

[00:40:01] foundation that it provides for the school year ahead. We are honored to welcome and serve approximately 16,540 students from preschool through 12th grade. Each of these students represents a unique story, and it is our privilege to be able to help them learn, grow, and to reach their full potential. These students have access to a high-quality education here in Hanover. Our elementary schools provide more than 1,700 minutes of instruction every week, and our middle school

[00:40:37] students attend more than 15,500 combined blocks every day. Finally, our high school teachers instruct more than 2,000 classes. Behind each of these numbers are countless opportunities every day for our students to learn, discover new interests, ignite new passions, and to begin to prepare for their futures. Of course, a successful day extends well beyond the classroom. In the first week of school, our school nutrition team served approximately 30,760 meals. In the school division,

[00:41:17] we like to say that we are the largest restaurant in Hanover County. Our amazing bus drivers travel 9,500 miles every day. That's nearly the equivalent of driving from Hanover to Los Angeles and back twice each day. On social media, the smiles that mark the joy of returning to school have been viewed more than 3.6 million times during our back-to-school season. And our division's primary communication platform, ParentSquare, is reaching nearly all of our families automatically.

[00:41:52] Finally, I am very proud to share that we are currently recruiting for only one teacher vacancy. This is a tremendous accomplishment and a reflection of our continued efforts to retain, support, and recruit exceptional educators. It is also a testament to the incredible work done by human resources department in conjunction with our building administrators to fully staff our classrooms at a time when school divisions across the commonwealth and country continue to face staffing challenges we are incredibly grateful to have talented teachers

[00:42:29] in place across all of our schools where they are ready to serve our students each and every day as you know hanover county is a very special place to be and it's because of the amazing people who give so much of themselves to our students to our schools and to our community thank you to our faculty our staff our families and our community partners for all that they do to make hanover a place where our students flourish it is because of this hard work and dedication that our sol

[00:43:03] achievement outcomes again demonstrate the strength of our schools this year our students outperform the state pass rates in reading, math, science, and history. Their performance on the standards of learning tests place us among the highest performing school divisions in the Commonwealth.

[00:43:23] We again lead the metro Richmond region in all content areas and our pass rate of 82 percent in math is tied for the highest among Virginia's 15 largest school divisions. By exceeding the state pass rates by at least five percentage points in each area. We are continuing to demonstrate that our schools achieve at the highest levels academically, and as I shared during this year's convocation, this high achievement is part of the Hanover story, and it is written by all who support our amazing students. Our teachers who ignite a love of learning in our children,

[00:44:02] our bus drivers who are often the first smile that our students see each morning, our cafeteria teams who serve with kindness and our custodians who take great pride in caring for our schools, our administrators who lead with intention and purpose, and our support staff whose dedication helps every child and every school be able to succeed. Every member of the Hanover County Public Schools team plays an important role in this life-changing work.

[00:44:32] While we celebrate the successes, we also readily acknowledge that our work is never done. I want to assure you that our principals and their school teams, along with central office instructional leadership, are already working to conduct a thorough analysis of our student performance data to identify strengths and areas of opportunity for growth that will further inform our schools and divisions' continuous improvement planning.

[00:44:59] We await the release of our accreditation ratings and the class of 2026 graduation rate, which we expect to come out in early October. We will share a comprehensive presentation at a school board meeting later this fall. Our kindness and anti-bullying efforts in the 25-26 school year highlighted the fact that we know that kindness creates the foundation for safe, supportive, and thriving schools.

[00:45:28] While academic growth and academic achievement remain at the heart of our mission, we are excited to continue this important work that is making a profound impact in the lives of many. As we continue this important work of preparing every student for success, we will remain thoughtful and intentional about how we support instruction and how high-quality technology can best be used to enhance the learning experience.

[00:45:55] We also recognize that navigating an increasingly digital world extends beyond the classroom. And we look forward to providing additional resources and support to help our parents and our families reinforce healthy, responsible, and safe digital habits that extend beyond our school walls.

[00:46:18] Finally, this is an exciting time for school construction in our county, with the opening of new schools and many new projects underway. Specifically, construction of the replacement of Washington Henry Elementary School continues, and the school remains on track and on budget to open for the 27-28 school year.

[00:46:39] Also set to open next year is the expansion of the Hanover Center for Trades and Technology, which will grow our current cosmetology program while adding diesel, equipment, technology, and welding to the Hanover Center for Trades and Technology's highly regarded offerings.

[00:46:56] Thank you for your continued support and partnership in making these buildings a reality for the children of Hanover County. We began this year by celebrating two major milestones in the continued investment of our schools, including the ribbon-cutting and opening of the new Battlefield Park Elementary School and the new Beaverdam Elementary School.

[00:47:19] At both schools, we joyfully cut the ribbon along with you and hundreds of families and students, faculty and staff, members of our school board, our state legislators, community members, county and school division officials, and other distinguished guests.

[00:47:37] As those of you who were present can attest, it was a great joy to see the happiness from all who were present, including the students and staff, as they both got to cut the ribbon and tour the new building. For those of you who haven't had a chance to visit us yet, we look forward to showing you the state-of-the-art facilities this fall during our school tours.

[00:48:00] The opening of Battlefield Park and Beaverdam are two wonderful examples of the excitement that is present across our county with the start of this new school year. We are very proud of how our schools have welcomed our students and families back with enthusiasm, warmth, and with joy.

[00:48:19] To further illustrate this, please enjoy this brief look at the start of what we know will be another outstanding year for Hanover County Public Schools.

[00:48:30] The 2026-2027 story starts now.

[00:49:30] You wish to see it in the world.

[00:49:49] Back to the school year. We are so grateful to our students, our families, faculty, staff, and the community for the joy and positive energy that they bring to our schools each and every day.

[00:50:27] It has been a great and energetic start to this school year, and we are looking forward to much continued success. And finally, we would like to thank you for being such an important part of Team Hanover. We appreciate each one of you.

[00:50:42] Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Penningup. Any comments or questions from the board? Ms. Hartsburg. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much for your presentation. I did have a question about the chess tournament that we had in April.

[00:51:00] And I attended that. I thought it was very well attended. It was a new experience for me. I think it was the first one we had in Hanover County Public Schools. And so my question is, do you know if we're

going to have another one of those next year?

[00:51:15] It was actually our second annual, and this will be our third annual this year. That was something our school board wanted to add now two years ago. And so we are very excited to see it grow. And I think, like your son, we had little ones who found, well, now he's going to be in fourth grade.

[00:51:33] He's in fourth grade this year. So I think what's happened is they're telling each other, and we're seeing more children sign up and show up. So we're grateful for that. Well, you are correct. We did have to, because I remember meeting the previous champion. Jameson lost to him.

[00:51:50] Outside of that, he did very well. So that's good to hear. So that'll be our third one. Will that be in April, or do you know? Yes, at the Arts and Science Festival. Okay, very good. Well, thank you. Thank you for everything. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[00:52:10] Floyd. Vice Chair. Dr. Pahenegov, thank you for the update. I know many of us went throughout the school division. Chair Welsh and I visited a number of schools on the first days. How do you like the – which can be a tough question because I guess school board makes the determination.

[00:52:32] So how does the split day start work for the schools? Is that still pretty successful? Chair Welsh and I were talking about it. I have a view, and I've talked to folks in the community, but with your staff and folks that report to you under the authority of the school board, how does that work?

[00:52:50] They love it. It gives our children who are the youngest at each school level the opportunity to come and really be acclimated to their new environment. And it gives our students at the high school level, our athletes, our student leaders, the opportunity to come down and welcome the younger ones at each level.

[00:53:12] And I was over talking to Justin at the Trade Center, and just a lot of energy over there first day. And then, of course, went over to Georgetown. And I was surprised to hear this year that a large portion, again, this year in the enrollment in Georgetown is voluntary or requested enrollment for students who say that that might be a better learning environment for them, that that's not always mandated, while sometimes it is mandated, and provide educational opportunities for some alternative learning.

[00:53:48] And a number of those students, quite a large number, percentage-wise, are requested to be at the Georgetown School in that environment to help them with their learning path. And that was very encouraging. Any thoughts on that? Well, thank you for asking.

[00:54:04] And I think what happens is for some of our students, they fly under the radar until they're struggling. And then they find themselves getting a little off path. And when they go to the Georgetown School, the numbers are smaller student-to-teacher class ratios. And sometimes it's the first time they feel like they have a chance to be successful.

[00:54:24] And it's the first time they start to put forward the effort that they need to be able to be successful. I think sometimes it has to do with an adult, a trusted adult that they develop relationships with and being able to check in with them and say, did you get that done?

[00:54:42] How was your evening? Let's shake it off and let's start today. And I think that when you're in a small environment like that, you're able to do that with the children. and they don't always want you to do that in larger classrooms because they don't want the other children to see that they might be struggling or to hear that they're being checked on.

[00:55:06] So you have to be very careful in how you forge those relationships. Well, Brian and his team do a phenomenal job, and have for many years. I just thought that was not only interesting but certainly encouraging. And thank you for the numbers on the total number of miles.

[00:55:24] I know Superintendent Whitley put a lot of those together. I mean, that's just unbelievable. So sometimes we'll get a phone call. Somebody says, you know, my bus was late. And I said, I understand your perspective, sir, ma'am, but one bus or two buses on opposite ends of the county based on about 10,000 miles a day.

[00:55:45] So I tell folks, I mean, we're approaching 2 million miles a year. We're at like 1.7 million miles a year average. And that's school days. That's 180 days, whatever. That's not soccer teams and baseball teams and those types of things that are out there.

[00:56:03] I mean, we're well over 2 million miles a year in supporting education students and then the food and all of the other things that go along. And being operated in a secure environment, you know, having somebody can't just roll up to a loading dock and unload food at a school without a significant amount of security.

[00:56:22] it's just a lot that goes on on a daily basis and y'all often make it look easy so i want to thank the leadership of the school board uh for that as well so please send our best to your staff and thank you for being here ma'am we will and thank you very much yes ma'am we have no further presentations the board did add a closed session to the boardroom uh if the board so desires to go into closed session chair will recognize vice chair stoneman thank you mr chair at this time i'd like to make a motion that the board of supervisors move the meeting into closed session

[00:56:54] pursuant to the following authority virginia code 2.2-3711 a1 discussion of impact of retirement of county attorney on filling upcoming vacancy in the county attorney's office second we have a motion to second any discussion all those in favor please indicate by saying aye aye any opposed motion carries uh for time purposes we're going to move upstairs so we don't have to clear the room But the board will come back, and the only other thing on the board agenda is announcements, and of course that will be live stream.

[00:57:26] But at this time, this board is in closed session.



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