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Hanover County School Board Meeting, Tuesday, March 10, 2026

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[00:00:06] yeah i mean i'm getting on a school board meeting right now good evening welcome um today is uh

[00:00:48] march tuesday march 10th um for our march school board meeting and um i'd like to call us um to order um and we do have a participant online with us um in a court and i'm gonna just read this uh in accordance with policy 1-6.9 electronic participation in meetings from remote locations mr ryan martin will be participating by phone this evening from his residence due to a personal illness um so thank you very much and welcome ryan um and so now i'm going to need an approval

[00:01:26] of the agenda a motion for approval of the agenda i move to approve the agenda thank Thank you, Dr. Schroff. I have a motion. Do I have a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. Seifert. Is there any discussion?

[00:01:42] Okay, seeing none. All those in favor, please say aye. Aye. All those opposed? All right, motion passes. And now we're going to go into closed session, but I'm going to give the floor to Ms. Hahn. Thank you. Madam Chair, my understanding is that Ms. Lynn, and please correct me if I'm wrong, will not be participating in all of the portions of the closed session this evening.

[00:02:08] As such, when we return from closed session to do the certification, Ms. Lynn's vote regarding certification will not apply to the disciplinary matter that is on the agenda. And she will be abstaining

from the vote on that matter when we return.

[00:02:25] Thank you very much, Ms. Hahn. Thank you. Okay, Mr. Coleman, please. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that we head into closed meeting per Code of Virginia section 2.2-3711A1 personnel.

[00:02:44] Review recommendations of the superintendent for resignations, appointments, transfers, assignments, promotions, terminations, salary adjustments, and leaves of absence for teachers and other employees. Section 2.2-3711A2 student disciplinary matters and consideration of requests for religious exemption from compulsory school attendance.

[00:03:06] Okay, thank you for the motion. Is there a second second? Thank you. Dr. Shrove Is there any discussion seeing none all those in favor say aye all those opposed? Okay motion passes

[00:03:20] We are now in closed session

[01:29:40] Good evening Welcome, it's 7:00 p.m. And we're gonna go ahead and and come into our open session Do I have a motion? I move to return to open session. Thank you. Miss Lynn. Do I have a second second?

[01:30:17] Thank you. Mr. Coleman. Is there any discussion seeing none all those in favor say aye all those opposed? Okay, we are now in open session So we have Mr Martin is participating with us by phone. So I need to read this in accordance with policy one - six point nine

[01:30:42] Electronic participation in meetings from remote locations. Mr. Ryan Martin will participate by phone this evening from his residence due to a personal illness. Welcome, Mr. Martin. Okay, do Mr. Coleman, can you please certify the close or give us a motion for certification of the closed meeting? Yes, Madam Chair, I move to certify the closed meeting. The board will certify the following. Whereas the Hanover County School Board has convened closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmation recorded voted and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of

[01:31:19] Information Act and whereas section 2.2-3712d of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the school board that such executive meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law now therefore be it resolved that the Hanover County School Board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the executive meeting to which this certification applies and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion

[01:31:53] convening the executive meeting were heard, discussed, or considered. Thank you, Mr. Coleman. I have a motion. Do I have a second? Second. Thank you, Dr. Schelp. Is there any discussion? Okay, seeing none, all those in favor say aye. Aye. All those opposed? Motion passes.

[01:32:14] Now we have our invocation by Dr. Shrove, and then we will do our Pledge of Allegiance, and we have four Hanover High School students that are going to lead us, and that is Callan Cotton, Colin Eliason, Charlie Welsh, and Briggs Ziggelock.

[01:32:35] So if we can all stand, if able, and Dr. Shrove will give the invocation, And then, boys, you can come forward and start the pledge for us. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we come before your humble hearts as we gather for this meeting.

[01:32:51] We thank you for the opportunity to serve our community, our schools, and especially the children who depend on the decisions made here. Lord, we ask for your wisdom and guidance tonight.

Grant clarity to our minds, patience in our discussions, and unity in our purpose. Help us remember that every decision we make affects the lives of students, families, teachers, and staff.

[01:33:12] In a time when our world faces uncertainty and conflict, including tensions and violence in places like Iran and other parts of the world, we ask for your peace to prevail. Comfort those who live in fear and guide the hearts of the leaders to pursue wisdom, restraint, and peace. We also lift up the men and women of the military around the world who stand watch and place themselves in harm's way. Protect them wherever they serve. Strengthen them with courage, guard their hearts and minds, and bring them safely home to their families.

[01:33:43] We be especially near to those who are in danger tonight. Here in our community, God is to act with integrity, humility, and respect for one another. Help us set aside differences and focus on what is best for our students and the future they will inherit.

[01:33:59] Bless our schools, our teachers, our staff, and every child entrusted to our care. May the work we do tonight reflect wisdom, compassion, and a commitment to the common good. We ask these things in your holy name. Amen. Thank you, Dr. Shrove. If y'all will come forward and start us and lead us in the pledge.

[01:34:19] To the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, liberty and justice for all.

[01:34:41] Thank y'all very much. So now I need to get a motion for approval of the minutes. Madam Chair, I move to approve minutes for the recently held meetings.

[01:34:58] Thank you, Mr. Seifert. I have a motion on the floor. Do I have a second? Second. Thank you, Dr. Schelp. Is there any discussion? seeing none all those in favor say aye aye all those opposed motion passes now it looks like it's the chris whitley show well thank you madam chair members of the board it is always a privilege to bring forth the great news and accomplishments of our students and staff our first recognitions of

[01:35:32] the night go to our individual and relay team state champions in swimming first up are our individual state champs from atlee high school sophomore sierra durette won the 200 yard

[01:35:46] individual medley. Congratulations, Sierra. Next, also from Atlee High School, junior Chandler Rose

[01:36:42] won the boys 50-yard freestyle. Congratulations, Chandler. Finally, from Hanover High School,

[01:37:18] senior Colin Eliason won the boys 100-yard backstroke. Congratulations, Colin. Next up are state champion relay teams. First from Atlee High School, boys who won the 400-yard freestyle relay.

[01:37:54] Congratulations go to team members William Cope, Nolan Fainer, Chandler Rose, and Michael Sabo. Congratulations.

[01:38:19] And last but certainly not least, the Hanover High School boys won the 200-yard freestyle relay.

[01:39:00] Congratulations go to team members Callan Cotton, Colin Eliason, Charlie Welsh, and Briggs Zyglock. Congratulations.

[01:39:08] Final recognitions of the night go to where there are two individual state champions in wrestling, both from Hanover High School.

[01:40:02] First up, Senior Carter Perry won the 144-pound weight class. Congratulations, Carter. Finally, Senior Emmons Tewalt won the 120-pound weight class. Congratulations, Emmons.

[01:40:37] Thank y'all for coming. I know some of y'all might want to exit stage last.

[01:41:28] If you would like to, you may do so now. Y'all, congratulations. We'll take a minute just to let everybody exit.

[01:42:06] I should have said this before they all left, but I got the opportunity to watch the state swim championships and that it was some pretty fast swimming.

[01:42:36] It was really exciting to see. So love swimming. I tell you, it's a very gritty sport and you have to be real dedicated. These coaches are extremely dedicated as well. So appreciate all the dedication, hard work out there.

[01:42:53] So we are going to go into board announcements. And do we have any announcements? Okay, Miss Lynn. All right. So Patrick Henry High School hosted the Spring Career Expo at the end of February. The event allowed students to meet with representatives from more than 40 employees across the region.

[01:43:13] And I'm going to keep it in the Western Corridor for a second. I wanted to give a shout out to Dr. K at Patrick Henry High School. Thank you for recognizing that all students deserve access to quality SAT prep classes regardless of economic status. Thank you for volunteering your time and infinite talents to the students at Patrick Henry High School. Thank you for fostering a supportive environment that encourages student growth and engagement. Thank you very much. My daughter enjoys those classes a lot. And I want to take it over to Ashland Elementary School. I'm going to give a shout out to Lauren Churchill and Megan

[01:43:49] Stanlick. They put on the annual Amazing Shake at Ashland Elementary. Mastering introduction skills, helps kids learn to initiate conversations, make friends, and navigate social situations. I've been able to participate in this program since the beginning. I have watched this program grow and could see years of practice in the fifth graders when they showed up. They walked in that gym with confidence, shoulders back, smile on their faces, and they knocked it out of the park.

[01:44:22] It is an absolutely amazing event. Job well done to everybody over at Ashland Elementary. Thank you, Ms. Lynn. Mr. Seifert? I do have a few things. Thank you. I'd like to mention the kindness basketball game that recently took place.

[01:44:41] As part of our kindness efforts this school year, Atlee High School, the Mechanicsville High School, came together recently for the kindness is the ultimate assist basketball game. At halftime of the game, four students and one staff member from each school were recognized for their kindness. So that's just a great program there and hope that continues.

[01:45:00] I'd also like to mention Hanover High School Cross Country. And Ms. Reese, thank you for being here and allowing such a great program to produce athletes like this. But River Smith, a student at Hanover High School, has been named this year's All-Metro Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year.

[01:45:17] So that's the best runner in the Richmond area, greater Richmond area, and just a freshman. And she was the Region 4B cross-country champion. So just an amazing accomplishment, an amazing job by the coaches, the staff there, again, to have a program like this.

[01:45:32] And it's super exciting also to have middle school cross-country coming, and we're going to have our kids even healthier and more competitive with that coming. So hopefully she inspired a lot of middle schoolers out there to do that cross-country in middle school.

[01:45:48] And I'd also like to reiterate what a great job the Amazing Shake program is at Ashland Elementary School. It was my first time seeing it, and just a super program there, and just well run, and the kids were awesome and inspiring, and I just appreciate it.

[01:46:04] So, thank you. Thank you, Mr. Seifert. Does anybody else have any announcements? Yeah. Okay. I have a couple. Dr. Shrope? Just I want to shout out to Ms. Evelyn Martin, who works over at Mechanicsville High School. She's a cafeteria employee.

[01:46:19] I actually went over and met her. She's something. She turned 99 on February 26th, and so still goes to work every day. So we want to thank her for all of her years of service. If you ever get a chance, go talk to her. She's really funny, actually. And then last week, we were able to celebrate.

[01:46:35] Some of you may have seen on our Instagram, on Instagram, the Hanover Education Foundation and the Hanover County 250 Commission unveiled a new love sign, and the name of the sign is Mater. And the sign showcases the work of our art students and our students and our teachers, art teachers, and more than 800 people contributed to the project.

[01:46:59] It's really a fantastic sign. You can follow the sign. It's going to be moving throughout the county. I think it's on a schedule. It's at mater, the trailer, underscore, Hanover VA. So if you want to follow it on Instagram. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Dr. Shroff.

[01:47:16] Do we have any other announcements? Okay, Dr. Shroff. Okay, start over. The SCA at Mechanicsville High School hosted a wonderful breakfast to thank our first responders including the Hanover County Sheriff's Department and Hanover County Fire and EMS Department all for their efforts in keeping our schools and our communities safe.

[01:47:43] Thank you, Dr. Schelp. Do we have any other announcements? Okay, I have a few. I was called a couple days ago by a long-time friend from my previous career and he has been to bell creek middle school's lion king jr performance he has a grandchild that has been i think he has a grandchild that was in it six years ago and a grandchild that's that was in it this year and he said it was fabulous he was like it should it should go

[01:48:23] on broadway so um i thought that was really a great you know it was a great conversation and And I think our theater arts teachers are doing a great job with these performances. So I wanted to give kudos to Bell Creek Middle School and the performers of the Lion King Jr.

[01:48:43] I also wanted to talk about the Amazing Shake. That was, it was literally amazing. It was you we had third, fourth and fifth graders and you could see you could see the difference and every in there as they grow and as they, you know, age up, how strong their handshake gets, how they really make focus on the eye contact and, you know, really interact with you as fifth graders from the third grade.

[01:49:17] You know, it was, it was super impressive. So I was very glad to be a part of that. Um, and the, uh, Virginia 250, the love sign Mater is going to be traveling around. It is unbelievable. And I think there was over 800, um, people working on it from staff to students. Um, so I hope everyone gets a chance to see that and get pictures of it. It is, it is fabulous.

[01:49:48] so We that will conclude our board member announcements. So Next I'm looking for a motion for the consent of approval of the consent agenda I move to approve the consent agenda as presented. Thank you. Miss Lynn. Do we have a second again?

[01:50:09] Thank you, dr. Shope. Do we have any discussion on the consent agenda? Okay, seeing none all those in favor say aye all those opposed motion passes And now we're going to have our instructional highlight.

[01:50:25] Welcome.

[01:50:43] All right. Good evening, Mrs. Chairman, members of the board, Dr. Pennyguff, and senior staff. I would like to introduce all of the folks with me tonight. I'd like to start off with Meredith Morton. She's getting our demonstration set up. She's one of our adapted physical education teachers in Hanover County and was the coordinator for the Big Feet Meet from 2013 until 2023.

[01:51:05] We have Jonathan Frame, our marketing teacher and DECA sponsor at Atlee High School and the coordinator of the Big Feet Meet since 2024. We have our two student event directors from Atlee, Senior Tegan Gihuly and Junior Stacey Edelblut.

[01:51:22] We also have Jennifer Dickerson, lead therapist for occupational therapy, physical therapy, adapted PE and assistive technology. And as you know, I'm Brittany Moore. I'm the specialist for health, PE, driver's ed, family life, athletics, and athletic training.

[01:51:40] Thank you for the awesome opportunity tonight to showcase one of our favorite events of the entire year, the Big Feet Meet. Tonight, we'll review the event's history, showcase our students' work from the 2026 Big Feet Meet, discuss the collaboration across departments to create a successful experience for our students.

[01:52:02] The Feet Meet began with a partnership between Special Olympics Virginia and Hanover County Public Schools. We held our first event, the Little Feet Meet, in April of 2013 at Hanover High School. This event included approximately 250 preschool and elementary students with and without disabilities in a field day style event.

[01:52:25] In 2015, when we relocated to Atlee High School, we began including our middle school athletes and partners. During that year, we had approximately 325 preschool, elementary, and middle school age students, and we had to rename our event to the Big Feet Meet.

[01:52:43] During the pandemic, we felt the need to continue this opportunity for our students, and in 2021, we recorded videos of events giving guidance to parents on how to run an at-home Big Feet Meet. These videos included directions on how to DIY physical education equipment that can be made from common household items.

[01:53:07] In 2022, while we couldn't be together as a division for our event, each school organized a school-based Big Feet Meet following the CDC protocol. Parents and teachers did an amazing job keeping the spirit of the Big Feet Meet alive during those two years.

[01:53:23] In 2026, we were estimated about 670 athletes and buddies will be in attendance as well, so we were well over 700 at that point. As well as Atlee High School student volunteers have increased from 110 when I took over to now over 230 applicants with about 180 volunteers stepping in at that point.

[01:53:47] Our student volunteers are chosen through a rigorous application process. These opportunities include student ambassadors, station leaders, media team, Olympic Village, tilt buddies, and event monitors. this application process requires students to answer three scenarios to help understand kind of the needs of our students as well as helping staff on the day of the event each year we modify the event to best suit the needs of our students and district last year we added the steve thompson award for belonging for those who may not know steve thompson was one of our health and physical education teachers a coach and an adapted physical education teacher for many years who passed away

[01:54:22] in 2023 steve's goal was to be a friend to all and a mentor to many always being upbeat having a positive impact on many lives and bringing excitement to the job that they do and we will honor that award again this year. New to this year is a theme that we and we're going to have a yearly theme as well is art of inclusion. We are providing students with the opportunity to take a rest from their field events to work on different art projects at the event. We are also proud to announce that a spirit week around this theme was also approved that we will do at the district level which I don't know if anything like that's been done before and then we plan to showcase these

[01:54:54] amazing pieces of artwork at both Atlee and Central Office if possible. As the student event directors, the Big Feet Meet has a huge impact not only on the student-athletes, but also us. The responsibilities that come from the event are preparing us for real-world opportunities and building great experiences for students who have the desire to work in a career in the special education field. We arrive early to the event to assist in setup, but also to meet with volunteers for the morning check-in and review assignments to answer their questions. Our student

[01:55:31] leadership team creates a space for student empowerment and voice in the process. We have four additional team members who support the event. One main focus of our leadership team is for focusing on the art of inclusion. A partnership with Liberty Middle, Chickahominy Mill, and Atlee Students was created as a form of fundraising to help support the Big Feet Me event. This fundraiser focuses on the art aspect of this year's theme, Students Designed Art of Inclusion Merchandise, which features that different artwork from our students in addition we have added an opportunity for students in the olympic village to rest for their event to work on different craft activities

[01:56:10] the student leadership team worked with katie wilde at the parent resource center and tiffany johnson a member of the pre-k team who led training through i'm determined program we are having three opportunities to meet with our classes for us to help build relationships with our students we will be working with during the event to support our students and ensuring a successful instructional environment and event we collaborate with many departments across the county our ots occupational therapists our pts physical therapists our speech and language

[01:56:47] pathologists work alongside our adapted pe teachers as well as our general education pe teachers to make sure that we have the right assistive technology so that all of our students can participate last year we adapted eight of the big feet meet stations as several of students were still encountering some physical barriers and could not physically participate in the activities by using assistive technology the student could press a switch to activate a leaf blower that would propel the object in a forward motion so this would allow our students to engage in soccer bowling scarf toss and other ball activities and we're going to do a little demonstration

[01:57:26] for you this is a switch and we have a interface which allows it so right now the leaf blower is on the on position but it only will turn on when the student will access the switch and they will do so with either their hand they could use their cheek they could use their head they could use their arm in any manner that works best for them and suits them for their strengths so we'll give you a demonstration so that's just a little bit of it we also adapt the javelin throw by using a weighted ball and I don't know if your kids or your grandkids ever

[01:58:03] had like one of those old-fashioned stomp rockets where you you know stomp on it we would drop a weighted ball onto that and it would shoot the drop the javelin so that was kind of like an alternative low-tech option for that and we also used a t-ball stand with a slingshot so that we could pull the the slingshot back and the student all they had to do was open their hand to release the the javelin to forward motion to have some forward motion so that's why all of our students were able to participate just a few modifications a few additional pieces um and again it was it was very successful we take this collaborative

[01:58:39] teaming um not only for the big feet meet but we also take it out there to talk about inclusion ways to get all of our students at all of the schools in and um participating at field day events or festivals or anything else that goes on so it's definitely a a county-wide teaming collaborative event so other support throughout our division and region helps make our large event such a huge success. Our health and physical education teachers meet with special ed teachers, students, and buddies to practice the events that they'll be participating in at the Big Feet Meet.

[01:59:16] We have Hanover Fire EMS and the Sheriff's Office to provide support and to carry the torch for our opening ceremonies. Our athletic trainer and school health services provide on-site care for our students and staff as needed. Lastly, the instructional leadership support team and the special education department along with other central office staff assists with the planning organizing and the day of coordination of our event this truly is a day of inclusion and excitement and we hope that you are able to join us on april 21st at atlee high school i know i speak for us up here but for most of our folks that are involved with the big feet meet it truly is

[01:59:53] that one one of many days that we are very excited to be a part and work a little extra to make such a great event for our kids so thank you for the opportunity to share tonight we look forward to any questions that you may have thank you miss Moore y'all did a fabulous job presenting to us thank you very much do we have any questions and before we go to questions is the have we had a date change is it the 23rd okay and I can help answer that so pending tonight's action item we

[02:00:28] have not announced the the change until you approve it but we do have an alternative date later that same week and we hope to announce that tonight if you're able to approve the action item that you'll be considering Thank You Dr. Penicuff sorry I was jumping ahead okay do we have any questions okay so so what day do we anticipate it being so we have a make up date up to the 23rd

[02:01:03] if something happens on the 21st how about that if you are we always have a Tuesday for our event and we always plan a rain date on that Thursday thank you because I think everyone heard that the event incorporates about 700 people and so you can see how that could be a difficulty for us on the 21st yes okay Thank you. Thank you very much. Y'all did a fabulous job. Thank you And the team was notified in advance that this was a possibility tonight. Yes

[02:01:42] Thank you. Stay tuned stay tuned for that action item. Okay No, there was no questions or anything. Okay. All right And next we are gonna thank you for the demonstration. That was that was very

impressive so now we're going into information and discussion and And we have the right at school update.

[02:02:12] Oh, hi. Thank you, Dr. Reams. Good evening, Madam Chair, members of the board, Dr. Penny, Cuff, and senior staff. I am just here to give a very brief update about our right at school after school program for our elementary schools in Hanover County. Very excited to report that we started the program this week, on Monday, in fact, at four of our elementary schools, Laurel Meadow, Ashland, Pearson's Corner, and Rural Point.

[02:02:39] I've had an opportunity to stop by two of those schools just to see how everything was running. The principals are reporting great partnership with the company, and the kids are having a great time, and it's only been two days. So very happy that we were able to get that up and running and started, so we're excited to see the weeks ahead.

[02:02:59] I wanted to talk a little bit about the upcoming and future camp opportunities, which I know everyone is anxious to hear about, especially our community. I've fielded numerous phone calls from families, so very excited to share that we will be offering a summer camp at Rural Point Elementary School.

[02:03:15] And then following that, additional camp opportunities will begin this Thanksgiving break, winter break, spring break, and then continue into summer 2027, and then just continue on that cycle. So we'll work closely with Right at School to determine those locations and what part of those breaks we'll be able to provide child care for our Hanover families.

[02:03:38] And then looking into fall of 2026, Right at School will be offered at 12 of our 14 elementary schools, except for Kersey Creek and Mechanicsville. And that is just because they already have an on-site partner that is already up and running in those buildings.

[02:03:54] So after that, we will have an opportunity to have on-site after-school care in all 14 of our elementary schools. We are working closely with Right at School on possible preschool opportunities. These will be offered at select locations. The preschool portion is completely separate from K-5 just due to licensing.

[02:04:13] And because they're little kids, similar to how our preschool program runs here, there's just an additional layer to their care. and families can learn more at the next virtual parent forum scheduled for march 17th march 17th is also the day that we will be opening up enrollment for summer camp and for the fall parents were very anxious to find out when can they register for the fall because a lot of times they are already committed to their daycare for the remainder of this year so we're excited to see what numbers we're able to to get and how many families we can support in the fall so march

[02:04:48] 17th is that date to remember a virtual parent forum anybody can ask questions we had a great turnout at our other one a few months back so we're expecting the same kind of turnout that is our update i'm happy to answer any questions that you may have um i do have a quick question and i'm sure that um we have some questions up here the roll point summer camp can any of the students at all the other elementary schools can they um you know sign up to do that Correct. So any elementary students in Hanover County can sign up. That will be the site.

[02:05:24] And since this is a slow rollout, eventually, if that becomes a greater need, we will look into opening additional sites in the summers to come. Okay. Thank you. And where can our parents go to find

additional information? Because I think we're getting a lot of emails, too.

[02:05:40] They're going to go right to the Write at School website. And in addition to that, our communication team is going to be sending out communication to every elementary school with the website linked, the information about March 17th, and everything they need to know, they can also reach out directly to me.

[02:05:58] I'm happy to talk them through anything they may need help with. Thank you. So will that be like a ParentSquare notification? Yes. Perfect. Thank you. Okay. Any other questions? Okay. Go ahead, Karen. Oh, me? Okay, great. Go ahead, Ms. Lynn. Do you happen to know off the top of your head the hours for the summer camp?

[02:06:15] Like, will it be an extended day? Yes, it is a full workday. And for students that are participating in summer school, Rural Point happens to be a summer school site. They can do a wraparound where they can come to summer school and then stay at summer camp until 6 p.m.

[02:06:32] So it's a full workday. Yes, great question. Just curious here, how many students about per school are taking advantage of the program? For right now, we have, amongst the four schools, we have about 55 students, with our largest school being Rural Point with 17 students.

[02:06:53] So again, I think those numbers, they reflect the fact that the timing of the year, and a lot of parents said, I would have signed up had we not already signed a contract with another company, and we're excited for the fall. But we've got about 55. Okay. And how many teachers did the company end up hiring versus people from the community as the workers?

[02:07:12] I do not know the breakdown between HTTPS employees versus people from the community, but I know that they made an offering to any of our employees that would want to stay first before they went outside of the Hanover community. Okay. Super. Thanks.

[02:07:28] Okay, Mr. Coleman. Did I see that correctly? All 14 elementary schools this fall? all 14 elementary schools will will have an on-site program so two of them are already have that will be a non right at school but we will offer them at the additional 12 so well done I think we need to add based on parent participation so it will be offered at all 12 of the remaining schools but we will have to have enough parents sign up at each but we do not think it's going to be a problem we think we will have the interest creating that access as quick as

[02:08:04] y'all did that's awesome thank you yes thank you yes nice job thank you very much we appreciate it thank you and so do all of our parents thank you okay it is public comment time and I believe we have six is it six yes six people signed up and mr coleman if you will read the statement thank you madam chair procedures for public comment the school board conducts the public comment segment of its meetings to receive

[02:08:43] information from the general public on matters related to hanover county public schools per board policy the total time allotted for public comment will not exceed 60 minutes speakers who wish to address the school board are requested to follow these guidelines as each speaker is recognized by the chairperson the speaker is asked to clearly state the speaker's name magisterial district and the subject of the speaker's remarks speakers are asked to address their comments to the board and not to the audience the board requests that the audience refrain from responding to speakers comments with applause or other audible expressions of approval or disapproval speakers are allotted

[02:09:22] three minutes to address the board each speaker's elapsed time will appear on the screen speakers will also receive notification from the chairperson when time has expired. Although the board does not permit the use of slideshows or other projected materials during this segment, speakers are invited to provide printed copies of such materials to the board. The board requests any person with a complaint about a school division employee to first address the concern to the division superintendent in accordance with board policy. Comments targeting, criticizing, or attacking individual students are not permitted during this segment and speakers should refrain from using

[02:09:58] personally identifiable information in connection with an individual student speakers should be aware that while the board allows speakers to address any matter within the board's purview speakers may be held legally responsible if they make statements that violate the legal rights of others including threatening or defamatory statements made against staff members students or parents the board expresses its appreciation for the public's input and cooperation during this segment of the meeting uh first up is miss maureen grady and then forgive me on deck is

[02:10:36] area corlew i have a daughter well two children at pole green elementary school and i don't know which magisterial district that is but you can help me and tell me okay all right you get a solid c plus for that answer but more importantly um first and foremost i was kind of heartened to see that there was a discussion in the closed portion of the meeting concerning reassignment

[02:11:11] of individual personnel at individual schools, because that's the subject of my comments this evening. On February 18th, we found out that our daughter's instructional assistant, who also assists other students in her class, was reassigned from Polarino Elementary School to, I believe, Pearson's Corner Elementary School.

[02:11:38] This was done without substantial notification to parents. Apparently, it was done-- we did meet with the principal of the school, as well as the head of the special education division. We met with Mrs. Molyneux and with Christy Bryant the next morning, because we had had no notification.

[02:11:59] And as many people should be aware on this committee, Children who have special needs, especially emotional needs and behavioral needs, as our children do, need running time to understand the transition. I did also speak with Diane Brown concerning the same and did receive a response in writing from her.

[02:12:22] But I believe that, and this is, I do not fault the school for this. I just find that it was done without a lot of consideration for the students. The tone at the school for the three days, the day that this was announced and the day after, which was the instructional assistance last day, put the entire school into such low morale that my daughter's homeroom gen ed teacher had to shut the lights off in the room to make sure that the children did not see her crying about this. So this

[02:12:58] affected not only our daughter but her entire class as well as most if not all of the personnel at Pull Green Elementary. The other thing too is that Dr. excuse me that Ms. Brown advised that this was done regard because of the need at the other school. I see my I understand but I think that if the board should be aware that next year if you have a hundred more students coming back to the school you're going to need instructional assistance. This is why it shouldn't have been done at that point of the year and we request that this instructional assistant be moved back to Paul

[02:13:37] Green for the morale of the students and of the school. Thank you. Thank you. Did I say that correctly? Is it Aria? Aria? Aria. Thank you. Good evening. My name is Aria Chorlian and I'm an eighth grade at Oakno Middle School. Recently almost all female students at a school dance at Oakno middle school were asked to cover up or put on more clothes due to wearing straps less than two inches wide. They were told to wait outside the dance until their parents could provide them with a sweater even though they had already paid for the event prior to it. It took away from their

[02:14:14] time at the dance and left many students feeling self-conscious and upset. Students were crying and some had to leave because their parents and guardians couldn't bring them a sweater. The students that had to leave also had already paid for the dance and didn't get their money back. There wasn't any kind of notice sent out before the dance about how strictly this rule would be enforced. I don't think shoulders should be seen as a distraction to anyone, especially at a special event like this. The HCPS student dress code states, principals can make exceptions to the student dress code at their discretion to account for age appropriateness and special events.

[02:14:44] However, many girls were stopped at the entrance for imperfectly appropriate dresses that covered private areas of midriff and did not display any vulgar language or obscene and disparaging statements and images. The only issue is the width of the straps. Telling young girls they are very irresponsible for wearing dresses with smaller straps is not okay, and I saw this conversation happen multiple times between my school's administration and students and parents.

[02:15:07] When purchasing formal wear for events like these, it is very difficult to find dresses and garments that have straps with a width greater than two inches. This eliminates a lot of options for dresses, and not every family has the time and money to specifically find a dress with thick straps. During school hours and after school events, I have seen many boys wearing pants that reveal undergarments, which is also against the dress good, but I have never seen them be told to cover up. As the dress code states, pants and shorts must be worn and secured to prevent the student's undergarments from being exposed, to prevent the waistband from sagging below the student's hips, and to prevent the garment from dragging on the floor. While I understand that the two-inch strap rule as well as other rules of the dress code are in place for safety reasons,

[02:15:46] it seems unfair that mainly girls are targeted when it comes to the guidelines of how they're required to dress. I was raised to believe everyone is equal and should be treated as such. Respectfully, please take into consideration amending the HCPS student dress code to allow for straps less than two inches wide to be worn, while taking into account a quality of the dress code for all genders.

[02:16:04] Thank you for your time. Thank you. Next up is Andrea Decoder. Andrea? There we are. Thank you. After Andrea is Kristen Holti. Good evening, Chair Welsh and members of the board.

[02:16:27] My name is Dr. Andrea Decoder, and I am a resident of Hanover County. As you just heard from my daughter Aria, recently Oak Knoll Middle School held a dance where a number of girls were told their dresses violated Hanover County Public Schools dress code. Nearly all of them were advised it was because the straps on their dresses did not meet the two-inch standards specified in the policy.

[02:16:49] The unfortunate reality is that each of these young ladies experience the disproportionate discrimination that falls, in this case quite literally, on the shoulders of girls and women, requiring them to cover their bodies lest they distract the young men around them. As the National Education Association notes, many school dress codes adopt gendered language that teaches girls their bodies are a distraction to

males and to the general learning environment, and teaches boys that they lack the self-control to witness a girl wearing spaghetti straps or a miniskirt.

[02:17:21] In fact, it is ultimately the dress code itself that distracts from the learning environment when administrators and faculty must spend their time monitoring student clothing and responding to infractions? And what is the end result? Students who internalize a message of shame, parents who are irritated because ultimately it is the parents who probably spent the money to buy the clothing in the first place, and faculty burdened with the uncomfortable task of evaluating what constitutes appropriate attire. So tonight I respectfully ask the board to consider what happens if we update the school policy to incorporate gender-neutral language that removes

[02:17:58] mention of strap width or hemline length or the type of garment worn, such as dresses, skirts, and leggings. This would go a long way to promoting the inclusive learning environment that I know all of us are striving for. Tonight, I'm asking that we give our teachers and administrators the opportunity to focus on measuring student reading and math scores instead of their hemlines and straps. Thank you. Thank you. Kristen Holti. Following Kristen is Ms. Patricia Hunter-Jordan.

[02:18:30] Good evening, Chair Welch, Vice Chair Coleman, School Board, Dr. Pennycuff, Administration, and Public. I am Kristen Holti of the Cold Harbor District, which I am very proud of.

[02:18:52] I lived in Henrico County a year, and then I've lived in Hanover County the last 22 years, and I'm very proud to be living in Hanover County because it is a very special and unique county where people are friendly and wave to your neighbors.

[02:19:08] I would like to address, there has to be a dress code of some kind, because where I work at, I mean, I see some kids come in with inappropriate clothing, and there has to be, I mean, they're boys and then they're girls.

[02:19:32] There's not an in-between. So I believe girls should respect themselves and respect the dress code and cover up a little bit more. There are the boys and then the girls. Boys should not be allowed in girls' sports, neither should they be allowed in girls' restrooms, and vice versa.

[02:19:58] I also would like to talk about, as far as punishments for children in school, it should be equal, no matter what race they are, white, black, whatever color, the punishment needs to be the same.

[02:20:20] It should be equality for all, and as far as discipline goes. But I'm very proud to be living in Hanover County, and I just, I love living here. the uniqueness, the friendliness. And I just want to keep it special because there's so many unsafe areas, other counties that are very soft on crime. And I really do not want Hanover County to become soft on crime because if kids get away with things when they're in school,

[02:21:00] then when they get older, it will just get worse. They think they're above the law and elitist and they can do whatever they want so I'm just saying punishment needs to be equal for all students no matter what race because when they get older it will only get worse thank you for your time thank you Ms. Jordan is Tala Brookson you're you're after Ms. Pat Hunter Jordan good evening my name

[02:21:35] is Patricia Hunter Jordan and I am from the Cold Harbor District I am happy to be here this evening and I am very appreciative of the last two programs that we heard about being in our schools because I think that the recreation park will be of assistance to families.

[02:21:56] And I was also very happy to hear about the Big Feet program because I think that, again, is recreation for our students in need. But what I'd like to focus on this evening is, again, the mental health. We're doing great with the physical park.

[02:22:13] I'm looking for us to make sure we cover the mental health part. Frederick Douglass said that it's easier to build strong children than it is to fix a broken man. And so for me, if we put mental health programs in schools now, we are achieving something that will make sure we don't have as many discipline problems as we currently do have.

[02:22:43] And they still exist. The racism in Hanover still exists, and I continually get those kids on buses not being reported that they assault our kids of color.

[02:23:00] And so we need to make certain that we have something in place to make certain that these kids, the ones who are subjected to this, have some type of treatment as well as those who perform these acts.

[02:23:15] They need to have some help in understanding why what they did was wrong. So we are still requesting that you reinstate, bring back mental health counselors. We didn't even have them in all of our schools, but I tell you, they are needed.

[02:23:36] They are needed in this world that we live in today, because all that we see in this world, it is being internalized in our children, and we need to help them. so that they will become those strong men when they grow up.

[02:23:53] Attack it now. Help them now. Put the resources into our schools now so that we won't have to worry about crime in the later stages of life. Thank you for your time.

[02:24:09] Thank you. Ms. Talia Brooks? Did I say that first name correct? Is that good? Talia. I think they did a little typo. My name is Talia Brooks.

[02:24:25] I am a parent of students at both Full Green and Oak Knoll. i am in the henry district am i terrible at public speaking so please bear with me i would like to take a moment to discuss an incident that recently occurred at the winter dance at oakland middle school my daughter along with many of her friends and classmates i'm sorry were dress coded at the door and weren't allowed it while i have several concerns regarding how the situation was handled by administration i've already addressed those with them via email and would be happy to forward that to you as well if needed my goal in speaking with you tonight is to advocate for dress code policy change the dress that my daughter chose to wear was perfectly modest of a decent length and did not show anything even remotely inappropriate.

[02:25:06] I honestly was shocked to hear that her attire wasn't suitable for the dance as I would be fine with her wearing this dress to church or any other event without hesitation. However, the assistant principal supervising the dance was concerned that her shoulders were showing. The administrator told my daughter that she could not let her into the dance because she might attract unwanted attention. Ironically, having her wait outside attracted much more attention than she ever would have she been allowed in. The tradition of females having their shoulders covered to show modesty dates back to ancient times. It is commonly associated with the Catholic Church as a sign of respect, but it has also been used throughout history as a way to blame women for the attention of men. Not only is this incredibly demeaning for both parties involved, but it is also dangerous.

[02:25:44] When we choose to sexualize a woman's shoulders, we are implying that men simply cannot control themselves unless our bodies are completely covered. As a mother of five children, two boys, and three girls, I refuse to corroborate this false narrative. What are we teaching our sons by placing the responsibility of their actions onto the shoulders of their sisters? What lessons are they learning about their role in the world when we excuse inappropriate comments and behaviors because of the way that a female is dressed? How do we expect them to become strong men, leaders, and fathers when we imply that they are too weak to handle their own thoughts and urges? Perhaps instead of shaming 13-year-old girls for having the audacity to show their shoulders, we should shift our focus to teaching our boys some self-control

[02:26:22] instead. What are our daughters internalizing about themselves, on the other hand, when we call them out for the way that they are dressed and humiliate them in front of their friends. What impact does it have on their already fragile teenage self-esteem when they are made to feel ashamed by adults of the way that they look, of their shoulders, of basic human anatomy that we all share? What are we teaching them about their place in the world when we require them to carry the weight of someone else's decisions while also managing their own? I expect more of my sons and I want better for my daughters. I believe that the current dress code, specifically the portion regarding shoulders being exposed, is antiquated and could benefit from being reviewed. I would

[02:26:59] I respectfully ask the school board to consider my request and provide guidance as far as next steps that should be taken to bring the dress code up to a more current and equitable policy. Thank you for your time, and I hope you have a wonderful evening. Thank you. You did well. Madam Chair, that was the last speaker.

[02:27:19] Okay. Thank you to all of our public commenters, and I'm going to yield the floor to Dr. Shroff. We usually don't comment after public comment, but I just wanted to tell Aria that I'm very proud of her for getting up here.

[02:27:35] I used to teach 8th grade, and I was a principal of an elementary school, and it takes a lot of courage to do what you did. I just wanted to congratulate you. Thank you. Thank you. So we are going to go into our action item, and Ms. Hahn, you are up for revised policies.

[02:27:55] Thank you, Madam Chair. You may recall these policies from first read at our last meeting. No changes have been made since the last time that you saw them. I'm happy to answer any questions that you have that you've had the opportunity to review and give feedback.

[02:28:12] Thank you, Ms. Hahn. Do we have any questions on the three? It's a one regulation and two policy updates. Okay. Then do I have a motion? All right.

[02:28:41] I move to approve the proposed revised policies 5-1.6, personnel statement of ethics 5-7.9, employee absences and leave, and Regulations 5-7.9C, Guidelines for Sick Leave, as presented.

[02:29:01] Thank you, Dr. Schelp. I have a motion on the table. Do I have a second? Second. Okay, thank you, Dr. Schroff. Is there any discussion? Okay, seeing none, all those in favor say aye. Aye. All those opposed?

[02:29:17] Aye. Motion passes. Thank you, Mr. Martin. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, thank you, Hassan. Next, we have the consideration of the calendar adjustment, and Ms. Greit. Thank you, Ms. Welch, board members, Dr. Pennycuff.

[02:29:38] We bring to you today a modification for this year's calendar. As a result of the election statewide that is happening on April 21st, we have been asked to close our schools, as many of our schools are polling places, to ensure student safety and the ability for our citizens to get in and out of the polling locations safely and efficiently.

[02:30:01] We are looking at modifying our camp calendar to make the 21st a student holiday, teacher and staff workday. In order to make up for that time, we are recommending that the board change two of our early release days, the final week of school, into full teaching days.

[02:30:21] Thank you, Ms. Greif. Do we have any questions on this? Okay, seeing none, do I have a motion? I move to approve the calendar adjustment of April 21st due to the special election as presented.

[02:30:37] Thank you, Mr. Seifert. I have a motion on the table. Do I have a second? Second. Thank you, Dr. Shrove. Is there any discussion? Okay. Seeing none, all those in favor say aye. Aye. All those opposed? Aye. Okay. Motion passes. Thank you, Ms. Greif.

[02:30:53] Now we have the consideration of the recommendation for the student discipline matter that we discussed in closed session. Do I have a motion? Madam Chair, I move to uphold the discipline matter as discussed in closed session, Action Item 3.

[02:31:09] Thank you, Dr. Shrove. I have a motion on the table. Do I have a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. Coleman. Is there any discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor say aye. Aye. All those opposed, the motion passes, and we are done with the action agenda.

[02:31:26] So now you have your fiscal status report and your facility usage report in your packets, and upcoming calendar events. Thank you, Mrs. Welsh.

[02:31:41] This week on March 12th, we have the Washington Henry Elementary School groundbreaking at 3.30 on Thursday, and we'd love to invite the public to attend. We're very excited about our new school. Our next school board meeting will be on April 14th, and due to the special election, we'll move our Big Feet meet from April 21st to April 23rd.

[02:32:05] thank you thank you okay so we have our upcoming events and get topics for next board meeting for April thank you the one that we have given you tonight is the code of student conduct and depending on what happens in the General Assembly there may be a bill or two that push us into May and June if those do not go through then we may be able to look at April and May so if you all would start looking at that and then provide your feedback if there's anything that you feel that you'd like to discuss back to dr. Maltby and me thank you thank you

[02:32:44] very much dr. Penicoff and it looks like we are at the end of our meeting so do we have a motion to adjourn madam chair I move to adjourn our March 10th to 20 2026 meeting thank you very much dr. Schroff do I have a second second okay Okay, is there any discussion?

[02:33:05] Seeing none, all those in favor say aye. Aye. All those opposed, we are adjourned.



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