



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Henrico County School Board Town Hall, Tuesday, January 30, 2024

Date Tuesday, January 30, 2024
Place Henrico County School Board, Virginia
Length 25m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hAaOgrKGz4E>
- Official meeting portal (Henrico County Public Schools, Diligent Community): <https://henricoschools.community.diligentoneplatform.com/Portal/MeetingTypeList.aspx>

Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-26. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:00] good evening and we will go ahead and get started and i want to start by thanking each of you for being here we also have some special guests with us we have members from the board of supervisors we have miss whitehead and mr roguish here with us as well and all of our staff well most of our staff on the leadership team and of course we have your school board here with us and i will start

[00:00:31] with the fantastic mrs shea representing the tuckahoe district moving on to mrs kinsella representing the brooklyn district mr ryan young representing fairfield and mr madison irving representing three child. I'd also like it if we could give a round of applause to our Henrico

[00:01:08] County School Board Superintendent Dr. Amy Caswell along with her staff who are again with us today if we can give them a round of applause as well. So we're going to kick the evening off with five things you need to know about Henrico County Public Schools and you can turn your attention

[00:01:37] to the screen. Number one, we are student-centered. We put students first. Our mission statement reflects this commitment to and for all students. I'd like for you to join me as we turn to the screen to watch a lovely video. Enrico County Public Schools. Madara Zadaulati, Chahrezona, Enrico. Satama Maderas, Enrico County. An innovative leader. An educational excellence.

[00:02:17] - Innovational leader. - In excellence educative. - Will actively engage our students. - Estudiantes. - SAD. - Alunos. - In diverse educational, social, and civic learning experiences. - In diversas experiencias educativas. - That inspire. - In inspiran.

[00:02:32] - Alhambachidan. - Inspire. - And empower them. - And empoderan. - One horrible right at Bilshidan. - To become contributing citizens. - Ciudadan's contributions. - Hatsya cha tanyin g gomzan damgap. citizens. You know it's a blessing and it's wonderful to be able to witness the diversity in Henrico County Public Schools and the students that you see here speaking in different languages. We have one of the most diverse systems in

[00:03:10] Virginia and again all served within Henrico County Public Schools. What you see before you is our Henrico learner profile. You will see that teaching and learning experiences are developed to ensure student outcomes and success are central.

[00:03:29] The knowledge, skills, and attributes necessary for a life-ready education are also spelled out. And our teachers and staff do an amazing job of creating multiple pathways for our students to be successful.

[00:03:48] And that brings me to number two: HCPS is a sound return on your investment. We know that Henrico County is a great place to live and to work and to learn and play.

[00:04:04] And often families and businesses move to Henrico because of our outstanding schools. Every HCPS school is accredited by the Virginia Department of Education.

[00:04:21] And now I am going to turn the floor over to Mrs. Shea to share a little bit more about the on time graduation rate for the class of 2023 was 90.7% and 61% of June graduates earned an advanced studies or IB diploma.

[00:04:44] Hemrico career and technical education programs continue to be cutting edge, offering students industry certifications and licenses in dozens of trades and specialties. This school year we welcome students to the newly renovated ACE Center at Highland Springs High School and earlier this month classes began at the new ACE building at Hermitage High School.

[00:05:09] With completion of these construction projects we have additional space for 800 CTE students. Expanding on the exciting and challenging learning opportunities available to all Hermica students, we are creating two new middle school centers of innovation where students can unleash their creativity, engage in hands-on projects, and explore exciting career paths in business and STEM, science, technology, engineering, and math. The Centers for Innovation

[00:05:45] will open first at John Roth Middle School in the 24-25 school year and then at Cuyacuson Middle School in the 26-27 school year. Students from all over the county have the chance to apply to one of the centers based on their zoned middle school. Thanks to special collaboration with VCU's Da Vinci Center, as well as various businesses and community groups, students will learn directly from experts in the field. They will also build the skills and passion they need for STEM careers

[00:06:21] in areas like creating content, starting their own businesses, working with data, keeping information secure, engineering AI, and providing health care services among many other possibilities.

[00:06:37] And that brings us to HTTPS is committed to safety and wellness. The third big thing to know is that we are dedicated to meaning secure and welcoming school environments for our students staff

families and community each school has a multi-layered plan in place this year we also added safety personnel including school safety officers at all elementary schools and introduced weapon scanners at our

[00:07:15] middle and high schools over the last two years the school division has spent nearly 18 million on school safety. In addition to the physical safety measures in place, we also focus on the social-emotional wellness, awareness, identifying mental health concerns, and supporting our struggling students. We recognize that people and relationships are paramount in maintaining our safe school environments. And now for Henrico HCPS being a great place to work,

[00:07:51] Welcome to the podium, my colleague, Mr. Young. Thank you. HCPS is a great place to work. And people are focused on our fourth key message, which is HBCS is an exceptional workplace.

[00:08:07] Forbes Magazine recently distinguished Enrico County Public Schools as one of America's best in-state employers, based on criteria such as salary, work conditions, diversity in both industry and staff recommendations. Our school division proudly employs 10,000 dedicated staff members, including 600 teachers who joined HCPS workforce this school year.

[00:08:30] The division also launched a new Opportunity Schools Initiative that provides personalized professional learning for teachers and other targeted resources at schools with the highest vacancy rates and the greatest number of provisionally licensed staff.

[00:08:46] HCPS is also the first school division in Virginia to offer a career ladder with opportunities for teachers to earn micro-cadentials and specializations and advance professionally without leaving the classroom. In Henrico Schools, we value and appreciate our employees for their professional expertise and the love and care they provide our students. And that brings us to the fifth thing you need to know about HCPS. Your school board is here for you. Each of the five

[00:09:22] school board members are dedicated personally and professionally to ensuring our students have the resources and skills they need to be life ready. We are also committed to safety, wellness, and appropriate compensation for our staff. Finally, we value our partnership with you, our families and community members. We strive to set policy and make decisions that are student centered but which also allow for meaningful family and community engagement within our schools.

[00:09:49] So at your seats are copies of the school board's legislative priorities. I'll give you a moment to grab those out of your chair i will not read all of them but i do want to highlight just a few points for you in the area of academic achievement the board supports revisions to the accreditation system to acknowledge students ongoing academic growth over time and a system that includes

[00:10:28] different types of assessments in other words not just standardized tests also you will see that we support expanded learning opportunities such as dual enrollment and more resources, particularly English language learners. Underfunding, I'll pause because it's that simple. We need more funding for K-12 education to hire and retain staff who are the best of the best and to continue offering

[00:11:02] innovative and future-ready instructional programs. And finally, safety and wellness. in this particular section there's a number of necessary items we should all everyone school board members families employees and neighbors be advocating for laws and funding to protect the physical and emotional safety of students and adults who love them who love us we should love

[00:11:36] each other and serve each other well i encourage you to read this document carefully and think about how you can help. You can advocate for our students and for our schools. Do not be afraid to reach out to your lawmakers whether it's by email or phone or if you want to visit in person you can do that too by contacting their legislative aide. If your child is important to you as they are to us

[00:12:12] I encourage you to help us because we need it. Advocate. So now I move on. We know that many of our legislative priorities and our daily work is tied to funding world-class schools need world-class financial support the board and dr cashwell are working together right now developing the operational budget for next school year in fact the board received the superintendent's recommendation on budget just last thursday at our school board meeting and you're going to learn

[00:12:49] a little bit more i welcome dr amy cashwell to the podium to share more and you can turn into the screen to see additional information. Thank you. Good evening. So pleased to have such a great turnout this evening and for you to give of your time to be with us. And I tell you what, it is just such a joy and an honor to be able to serve Henrico County Public Schools as superintendent now in my sixth year and really enjoyed the highlights of five things to know about Henrico County Public Schools. And we could probably hold you in here all night because I can

[00:13:23] think of five or ten more but the budget is the priority piece before we get into our small groups and hear from you and wanted just to share with you some highlights of the recommended budget so the budget process is long and goes on through the spring when our board will finally approve our final budget working again together as a group and in conjunction with our Board of Supervisors counterparts in general government so really pleased again to share first steps and thoughts related to our budget and want you to know we have a strategic plan with four big cornerstones and everything we do

[00:14:01] related to our budget matches these priorities or commitments to our cornerstones that are outlined in destination 2025 so that's our commitment of course to academic excellence safety and wellness recruitment and retention of exemplary educators and staff so our budget proposal includes a significant investment in instructional resources for our students, expanded programming in our ACE centers, staffing and curriculum for further implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act, so these are more materials that lead into the science of reading as well as support staff, and

[00:14:37] funding for the human and curricular resources that will support the new Centers for Innovation at the middle schools, starting with Rolfe Middle and and establishing Highland Springs Elementary School as an opportunity school. And when it comes to student and staff safety, you'll see an ongoing commitment to make sure that we're funding school security officers in our schools as well as equipment for safety.

[00:15:03] We're also adding more attendance officers to help address chronic absenteeism and maintenance assistants who will be on site to help better serve our elementary school sites. so we also are planning for the expiration of some one-time federal pandemic relief funds and shifting some of the personnel costs that we had been covering with those onto our general budget so again those had previously been supported and this is a really strategic move that's going to allow us to continue to support and maintain staffing at current levels

[00:15:38] also leaving a reserve balance for future use in addition to the recommended budget which does total a bit over six hundred and seventy seven million dollars this does reflect by the way a 27 million dollar increase or 4.2 percent compared to the current year and includes in essential investments in areas

such as additional english as a second language instructional staffing so it's about 20 positions there career ladder expansion which will recognize advanced professional learning

[00:16:12] achievements for our staff expanded a center programming and henrico education foundation support for our work around community learning centers so those are some of those extended wraparounds we offer at a number of our sites and funds to increase or to cover rather the increasing costs of health care premiums for our employees so that the employees will not see any health care increase costs in calendar year 24 so you'll note that what I haven't mentioned so far is anything about employee raises that does not mean that that is not a top consideration for us

[00:16:50] it's because the school division and county work together in developing plans for that raise as part of our unified pay plan and so we'll consider that um later in the budget development and we'll of course keep our community apprised with those developments but I hope it's clear that our goal is to provide much deserved compensation increases for all of our incredible henrico county public school staff that really reflects the expertise and professionalism and commitment of our incredible henrico county public schools workforce the school division's commitment to employee compensation

[00:17:26] is one of the reasons forbes named henrico county public schools one of the best in state employers so as i said we'll continue to keep staff and the community updated throughout the budget process so a bit of a timeline for you um maybe there we go okay a little timeline for you on the process i said we still have some miles to travel as we approach april but are really proud of the strong start we have with the budget and collaboration and identifying ongoing funding for priority areas that i've mentioned so far so on february 8th our school board will hold a public hearing on

[00:18:05] our recommended spending plan and the school board is scheduled then to approve that budget with any amendments at its regular meeting on february 22nd then on april 18th after the board of supervisors adopts the overall budget including funds for salary increases the school board will then adopt our final school's budget so in case you want some late night reading or really reading anytime online you can find our full budget document for fiscal year 2025 and that's on our school division website and of course we look forward to continuing to hear from you as we approach our

[00:18:42] public hearing on february 8th and throughout the process and so that's a brief budget overview and and now I will turn it over to Chair Atkins for the remainder of the presentation. Thank you, Dr. Cashwell, for the presentation.

[00:19:02] Well, friends, we have shared a lot of information with you this evening, and now we want the opportunity for you to give us feedback. Volunteer facilitators are going to lead each group through an exercise where you can share your thoughts and suggestions.

[00:19:17] Based on the information that we received this evening, We'll be utilizing that information, so feel comfortable telling us what you like, what we may be missing, what you wish to know more about.

[00:19:33] We are here to listen and advocate for you. My school board colleagues and I will be visiting each group to listen in to conversations as well as gather insights. We will also receive copies of the participant cards that either they're in your chair, and if you don't have one, we'll make sure you get one.

[00:19:53] And so please take your time in sharing discussions in your groups. I'll also introduce this evening's facilitators from the Aspiring Leaders Academy cohort, five, six, and seven.

[00:20:10] So if you would please stand as I say your name, Sharon Middleton. Sharon is a fifth grade teacher at Holliday Elementary School. Kaveta Anderson. Covetta is Coordinator of Remediation and Assessment at Cuiacuson Middle School.

[00:20:31] Melissa Abon, Student Support Teacher at Ratcliffe Elementary School. Stacey Dobb, Fourth Grade Teacher, Colonial Trail Elementary School. You're right here at home. Annie Goldman, Fifth Grade Teacher, Colonial Trail Elementary School, and you're at home.

[00:20:53] Teachers, thank you for committing your time to this process this evening. We're going to take the next 25 to 30 minutes for this group exercise. Also, you're going to receive a time when we're going to be sort of shutting down.

[00:21:10] So listen out for that as well. At this time, we will begin. At age, I hope that you had the opportunity to share your thoughts. I'm sure as others were speaking, other thoughts came into your mind, and hopefully you shared them.

[00:21:27] are captured through the school board and superintendent will receive them and will review them a few times because there's so much here and that's what we need we need to work collaboratively to advance our school to have those kitchen table topics discussed in a way that brings along and they are our future and so at this point i want to offer an opportunity for each of my

[00:22:01] colleagues speak and then I'm going to close out with thanking everyone again because you could have been anywhere else but you chose, you chose to be a part of the process. And so I will ask the mic for any closing remarks my colleagues would like to leave and start with the service.

[00:22:26] Thank you folks for coming out here because you could be doing literally anything right now. So I think that I just want to thank you for coming out and participating in this. I think For the big things, I believe, all that we have is ourselves, and this is how government actually works.

[00:22:44] People participate in it, who want it to work, and coming out here and taking the time, thoughtfully offering things that you think we're doing well, things that you think we could be improving upon. I think that's how we create a system that works for everybody, especially our children, and I'm just extremely thankful for the turnout at that time.

[00:23:05] Thank you guys for coming out tonight. I would go with the pin that night. I like/love the diversity that I've seen in the room today. I think everybody's thoughts were captured. Everybody's thoughts were a little different, so I definitely love that.

[00:23:21] And then, I wonder what this would look like if we had more people when we came here to do so. But the ones that did show up, it's important because we need to hear from you. I know that goes into everything that's wanted to listen to the celebration. Thank you all for coming out tonight.

[00:23:37] I'll just echo this sentence to my colleagues here this evening. And then I'll highlight something over here on the light ground. They like the accessibility of their school board members. Thank you for that. And even when you leave, thank you for your attendance, sharing your voice.

[00:23:56] It does matter. If we don't know, we cannot advocate. So thank you for being here when you leave tonight. We are still accessible by phone, in person, public comment. Next week at the budget public hearing, February 8th, 5:30 in Newbridge Auditorium.

[00:24:14] We are accessible to you, but just thank you. Thank you so much for showing up tonight. Anything to share back, please do, when you get home by email or however you wish to share back.

[00:24:30] Just thank you, Chair Atkins. All right, and in closing, I want to do a very special thank you to our aspiring leader volunteers. Give them a round of applause for their efforts here tonight.

[00:24:55] Let's give them a round of applause for their hands right now. It's not that I always have well being at top of the line.

[00:25:33] There are many restaurants. I'll ask that you make sure you wash your hands and drink plenty of water. And if you're going to get plenty of rest. Have a wonderful night.



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com