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# Henrico County School Board Work Session, Thursday, August 8, 2024

Date Thursday, August 8, 2024  
Place Henrico County School Board, Virginia  
Length 59m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ruxns1OUTwM>
- Official meeting portal (Henrico County Public Schools, Diligent Community): <https://henricoschools.community.diligentoneplatform.com/Portal/MeetingTypeList.aspx>

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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 afternoon. Today is August 8th, 2024, and we will begin our school board work session. Board members, as we approach the start of a school year, brimming with promise and potential, I've thought about our journey so far this year.

[00:00:21] We stand just 10 days away from officially welcoming students, staff, and families to the 24/25 school year. Colleagues, Dr. Cashwell, our attorney, Mrs. Watson, our school board clerk, Ms. Burton, I want you to know that I am deeply grateful for your dedication, and I'm very proud of the work that we have accomplished together so far. I want you to know that your expertise, your commitment

[00:00:55] to what you believe is right, the sacrifices that you make, the time that you invest, and the collaborative spirit you bring to represent your districts really are the driving forces behind our shared pursuit of excellence. Together, we are the positive difference that will shape this school year and beyond. So simply put with two words, I just want to say thank you to each of you. So at this time, I want to note Mrs. Kinsella's physical absence from today's work session mrs kinsella previously notified board members of her request to participate

[00:01:34] electronically from a remote location due to a personal reason that prevents her physical attendance our school board policy p2-04-006 electronic participation in meetings from remote locations

require a majority vote of the board members present at the primary or central meeting location to allow a board member to participate in a meeting from a remote location per the school board policy is there a motion i move that the school board approve miss kinsella's participation

[00:02:12] from a remote location is there a second second we will move forward with a roll call vote mrs shea aye mr irving aye mr young aye mrs kinsella aye and i vote aye mrs kinsella's request has been approved this meeting is being live streamed on the hcps website we'll begin our meeting with an attendance roll call please say present when you respond when i call your name

[00:02:50] mrs kinsella present mr irving present mrs shea present mr young present and i am present as well thank you everyone. Please let the record reflect that a quorum of the board is physically present and Mrs. Kinsella is participating electronically. I ask Mrs. Kinsella to verbally note if she needs to leave the meeting and subsequently verbally note when she returns. Next item on our agenda

[00:03:24] is the approval of the agenda. Is there a motion? I move that the school board approve the agenda for today's meeting. Is there a second? Second. Thank you. Roll call vote. Mr. Young. Aye. Mrs.

[00:03:40] Kinsella. Aye. Mr. Irving. Aye. Mrs. Shea. Aye. And I vote aye. The ayes have it. The agenda is approved. The next item on the agenda is closed session. Is there a motion to go into closed session? I move that the school board go into closed session for the discussion of matters covered under items A1 of section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia 1950 as amended pertaining to the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining,

[00:04:15] or resignation of specific school board employees, including a personnel hearing for employee case number 24-25-E-1. Thank you. Is there a second? Second.

[00:04:30] Roll call vote. Mr. Irving? Aye. Mrs. Shea. Mr. Young. And I vote aye. The ayes have it. We will now go into closed session. We will reconvene the work session at the conclusion of our closed session.

[00:04:50] We're back. Colleagues, we will now certify closed session. Is there a motion to certify closed session? I move that the school board certify by recorded vote to the best of each school board member's knowledge.

[00:05:05] only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting. Thank you, Ms. Shea. Is there a second?

[00:05:21] Second. Thank you. We will now have a roll call vote. Ms. Shea? Aye. Mr. Young? Aye. Mr. Irving? Aye. Mrs. Kinsella? Aye. And I vote aye. The ayes have it. Closed session has been certified.

[00:05:39] Dr. Cashwell. Thank you. Good afternoon, members of the board. The superintendent is now recommending that the school board approve the petition for licensure revocation in employee case number 24-25-E1 and authorize me to forward that petition to the State Board of Education.

[00:05:59] Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. We have received the recommendation. Is there a motion? I move that the school board approve the petition for licensure revocation in employee case number 24-25-E-1 and authorize the superintendent to forward the petition to the State Board of Education.

[00:06:21] Thank you, Mr. Irving. Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Mrs. Shea. Roll call vote. Mr. Irving? Aye. Mrs. Kinsella? Aye. Mr. Young? Aye. Mrs. Shea? Aye. And I vote aye. The ayes have it.

[00:06:38] - The request is approved, Dr. Caswell. - Thank you. The next recommendation is that the school board approve the appointment of administrative personnel. - Thank you. We have received the recommendation to approve the appointment of administrative personnel. Is there a motion?

[00:06:54] - I move that the school board approve the appointment of administrative personnel. - Is there a second? - Second. - Roll call vote. Mrs. Kinsella? - Aye. - Mrs. Shea? - Aye. - Mr. Young? - Aye. - Mr. Irving? - Aye.

[00:07:09] I vote aye. The ayes have it. The administrative appointment has been approved. Thank you. The board has approved Leah Weidenhoft, Principal, Pocahontas Middle School, and Marcellus Bland, Principal, James River, Juvenile Detention Center. Next, I'm recommending that the school board approve a resolution to participate in proposed settlements of opioid-related claims against Kroger and related corporate entities.

[00:07:33] Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. Is there a motion? I move that the school board approve a resolution to participate in proposed settlements of opioid-related claims against Kroger and related corporate entities. Thank you, Mr. Young. Is there a second?

[00:07:49] Second. Roll call vote. Mr. Irving? Aye. Mrs. Kinsella? Aye. Mrs. Shea? Aye. Mr. Young? Aye. And I vote aye. The ayes have it. The request is approved. Thank you. The following items are all policy-related, and there are 18 policies on the agenda for your review, only one of which, 5.01, is proposed for review and approval today.

[00:08:17] The remaining policies will return for your second review at the September 12th work session. Item 5.01 revises P10-02-001, one of the research-related policies the Board reviewed in June, and is recommended for both review and approval today.

[00:08:36] The policy language adopted at the June meeting was inadvertently duplicative of P10-02-002. By approving the language in item 5.01, P10-02-001, will be revised as intended as part of that package of policies reviewed by the board in June.

[00:08:57] Thank you, Dr. Cash, for all colleagues. If there are any questions before moving forward with approval, would you please yield the floor now? Hearing none, I'll move forward with a motion. Is there a motion?

[00:09:12] I move that the school board waive the 30-day review period and approve the proposed revisions to policy P10-02-001, Organizational Research and Evaluation. Thank you, Mr. Irving. Is there a second? Second.

[00:09:28] Thank you, Mrs. Shea. Roll call vote. Mrs. Shea. Mr. Young. Aye. Mr. Irving. Aye. Mrs. Kinsella. Aye. And I vote aye. The ayes have it. The policy has been approved.

[00:09:44] Thank you. The next items, 5.02 through 5.07, are a package of student information systems related policies undergoing regular review. The proposed revisions deduplicate, consolidate, and clarify the policies. A summary of the package and proposed changes for these is attached to the items.

[00:10:04] Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. Colleagues, as shared, this is a review for 5.02 through 7. If you have any questions, comments that you would like to share for this group of policies for review, please yield the floor and share your remarks. Hearing none, we'll move forward. Dr. Cashwell.

[00:10:29] Thank you. Items 5.08 through 5.14 constitute a package of family and community engagement policies. The revisions in policy P11-10 are significant and substantively update the policy to reflect the current overarching HCPS family and community engagement approach.

[00:10:49] New regulations are also proposed for P11-10, and the remaining updates to the package consolidate and clarify current practice. And again, just reviewing at this point, seeking approval in September for changes. Thank you, Dr. Cashwell.

[00:11:05] To ensure that I have the accurate numbers 5.08 through 5.14, is that correct? That's correct. Thank you so much. Colleague, if you have any comments, remarks, questions, please yield the floor at this time and share. Chair Atkins?

[00:11:22] Yes, the floor is yours. Thank you so much. I have a comment for consideration to 5.08, which is policy 11-10.

[00:11:39] This did not get captured in policy, so I want to capture it before the board approves it. We've left out unintentionally a very important stakeholder group, which is Henrico Citizens. I believe we've captured every other group in this policy except for our citizens that really, they don't have students.

[00:12:02] They're not parents, they're not guardians, but they're Henrico citizens and deserve to be captured in this policy. Thank you for noting that. We're taking note of that. We'll consider that in a revision. Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Kinsella. Did you have any other marks to share?

[00:12:23] I did not. Thank you. You're welcome. Any other comments at this time? All right, Dr. Cashwell. Thank you. The next item, 5.15, is a proposed new educational equity policy and regulation, which was created in response to requests from the board.

[00:12:42] This proposal reflects the current HCPS strategic plan, policies, positions, and practices, and provides a singular overarching policy related to educational equity. Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. As before, if you have comments, questions regarding this particular policy up for review, please yield the floor and the floor will be yours.

[00:13:08] - Chair Atkins? - The floor is yours, Mrs. Shea. - I just wanted to thank Chair Atkins for her leadership bringing this forward as well as the policy team has dug into it Ms. Lewis's leadership in developing this and really the thoughtful way that the educational equity policy really mirrors a lot in our FACE policy in terms of reflecting the work that is already happening in our division and codifying it in policy.

[00:13:33] And so there's a lot of parallels there to show the work that we're already engaging in. - Thank you, Ms. Shea. Are there any other comments or remarks at this time? All right, Dr. Cashwell. - Thank you.

[00:13:48] The next item, 5.16, is a proposed new policy regarding the prohibition of firearms and other weapons on school property. This policy reflects current state and federal prohibition of firearms on school grounds in buildings and on buses. Additionally, it would designate HCPS owned or leased buildings other than schools as gun-free zones.

[00:14:09] Further, the regulation establishes clear and consistent practices related to the authorization process for individuals permitted under state law to carry firearms and other weapons in school and on HCPS property. - Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. At this time, if you have a remark, question, comments, please yield the floor and the floor is yours.

[00:14:33] Hearing none, Dr. Cashwell, please proceed. - All right, and the final items, 5.17 and 5.18, deduplicate and revise existing policies. - Thank you so much. The floor is open, please yield the floor if you have any questions, comments or remarks at this time.

[00:14:54] Hearing none, we'll move forward, Dr. Cashwell. - All right, that concludes the policy items and we are moving forward with our back to school presentation and I just want to note that the first day of school is just less than two weeks away and we are eager to welcome our new students back. Staff have been hard at work preparing buildings and taking part in professional learning so that we can hit the ground running on August 19th and this Monday we welcomed approximately 500 teachers who are either new to the profession or who are long-time educators choosing to make Henrico schools their home for the first time.

[00:15:33] participants at the new teacher academy learned about hcps resources and technology programs and curriculum human resources and classroom management among other topics let's take a snapshot at new teacher academy the library kind of goes from like small personalized to bigger up here on the top again back to clutter you want to go to brush window so again you can make any

[00:16:11] Project that you have on here, a video is something that the students can use and you can use yourself. I want to thank the profound presentation for the first time that you have a lesson.

[00:16:29] Yeah, there you go. Like a mushroom. When you're going through your book creator, remember that if we just get there, that's the same. Our returning teachers will be back in their classrooms next week.

[00:16:51] But as we all know, summertime is a busy time in HCPS. So Dr. Grant, Dr. Hughes, and Mr. Pritchard are joining us at the podium for a back-to-school readiness presentation. Dr. Grant. Good afternoon, Madam Chair, members of the board, Dr. Cashwell.

[00:17:07] Today, Dr. Hughes, Mr. Pritchard, and I will provide an update on school readiness as we prepare to welcome students back to school on Monday, August 19th. This presentation will focus on the following areas, summer engagement, staffing, operation and safety learning support and engagement while most people think the summertime is slow paced in the school division we all know better summer academy and virtual virginia programs

[00:17:39] offer remediation and enrichment learning for 7469 hcps students in kindergarten through 12th grades in addition face and mckinney feet vento staff partner with schools and community organizations to provide summer resources meals and support to students and families also the face team received its new and improved mobile resource van at the end of the summer watch for it coming to your neighborhood near you here's a look at some of the fun

[00:18:16] and fulfilling work that happened over the summer as staff continue to support students and engage

[00:18:23] with families determined by your soul with your dreams in your heart to lead the way you can

[00:20:24] conquer any goal congratulations graduates of henrico while the summer activities were taking place hr teams and supervisors across hdps were busy recruiting new employees to join the henrico family. We're proud to report that every classroom will be staffed with a caring and dedicated adult on day one of school. I am happy to tell you that your generous support of a salary increase for our

[00:21:01] bus drivers has paid off. We have hired enough drivers to eliminate scheduled double runs and bus routes that were scheduled to arrive at schools after the start of the instructional day. Finally, on the staffing front, we continue to hire new school safety officers. These 46 employees will be an added layer of security at elementary schools and assist with weapon scanning during student arrival beginning on the first day of school. Our facilities, custodians, and school-based teams have been hard at work this summer preparing buildings. Staff completed projects in all of our

[00:21:37] schools including HVAC, roofing, flooring, parking lot paving, routine maintenance needs, and deep cleaning of classrooms and common spaces. We have been watching HVAC systems closely and actually reset buildings to occupied mode earlier than usual to give us more time to troubleshoot any potential problems. So far, so good, but as you can know, these are incredibly large and complex systems. I mentioned transportation a moment ago. I should note that bus assignment routes will be available to families beginning on August 12th in power schools. Families can also download

[00:22:12] a real-time bus app from the Apple or Android mobile store, Apple store, or app store, sorry. Another communication outreach led by transportation is the distribution of multilingual flash cards to all bus drivers. These cards use pictures and language translation for common phrases used by our drivers.

[00:22:33] The safety and security of students and staff and visitors remain our top priority at all of our schools and offices. I mentioned the new SSOs at elementary schools. We are also implementing weapon scanning at the elementary level for daily student arrival on the first day of school.

[00:22:49] As the final phase of the rollout, this means that scanners will be actively used at all schools across the division. And new this year, we are launching a division-wide student ID system. This is yet another layer of our multi-tiered safety plan, and it will improve efficiency in some daily operations for transportation, checking out library materials, paying for meals in the cafeteria, as well as technology.

[00:23:15] We have an extensive FAQ on the school division website. The most important thing for families to know is that students will receive their IDs at no cost to the families on the first day of school. Students will wear their IDs while on campus and will use them throughout the day for various technology logins and daily operations.

[00:23:35] At this time, I will hand the presentation over to Dr. Hughes for an update on learning. Thank you, Mr. Pritchard. Good afternoon. Today, I'm going to provide the board with information about the Virginia Literacy Act, the Henrico Learner Profile, Henrico Cares, and how the division is supporting a cell phone-free learning environment.

[00:23:56] Thanks to your forward thinking, plans to reduce cell phone distractions in the classroom were well underway in the spring, even before the governor announced his desire for a cell phone-free education for every student in the Commonwealth.

[00:24:12] To help ensure consistent implementation of the Student Code of Conduct, the division worked with schools to secure cell phone storage devices. Guidance and training were provided to administrators and that training will extend to teachers once they return to school next week.

[00:24:29] Expectations and related consequences are spelled out in the Student Code of Conduct and are being shared by principals at each school through ParentSquare. The start of the 24/25 school year ushers in an enhanced Henrico Learner profile, which by the way, includes citizenship, including digital

citizenship, a durable skill. Last school year, staff began refining and enhancing the existing framework to ensure it is relevant and effective in preparing students for the complexities of

[00:25:03] the modern life and future careers. The updated HLP continues to emphasize the development of key knowledge and durable skills, aligning the broader goals to the profile of a Virginia graduate. Our efforts have focused on creating a learner-centered flexible and inclusive profile that supports every student's growth and success in a rapidly changing world. The knowledge component is now prominently positioned in the core. This change reflects feedback emphasizing

[00:25:37] the need for direct and explicit acknowledgement of academic and technical competencies. The The redefined durable skills categories, now termed character and citizenship, better align with industry standards, ensuring students acquire the cognitive and ethical attributes highly valued in the workplace.

[00:25:58] The outer ring symbolizes the community of stakeholders, educators, families, and community leaders who come together to support and enhance the HLP work. This updated model highlights the essential collaboration required to integrate knowledge and skills, preparing students for success in both learning and life, ensuring they are well equipped to thrive in a rapidly evolving global economy.

[00:26:25] You will see on the left side of the screen that literacy is the first area listed in the knowledge section. As we know, literacy and the ability to read and understand text is the foundation for all learning. Which brings us to the Virginia Literacy Act. This is a statewide framework for literacy instruction at all schools across Virginia. The act mandates adjustments to curriculum in grades K through 8 and allows us to build upon our already existing high quality HCPS literacy plan. You have received information previously about the division's

[00:27:03] implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act, but as a reminder, in addition to curriculum updates there are requirements for reading intervention employee professional development and staffing this year hcps is adding a cadre of reading specialists with your support which means that every elementary and middle schools will have a reading specialist on staff while literacy is an area of focus we are committed to academic growth across all content areas for each and every one of our students in all grade levels and we know that student health and wellness are essential

[00:27:40] for their success. To that end, we are proud to partner with county agencies and local health care providers for Henrico Cares, which is transforming the mental health and wellness landscape in Henrico, aimed at ensuring every HCPS student has access to a full continuum of mental health care services and supports when and where they need them. Beginning this school year, all students in grades 9 through 12 will have access to free in-home teletherapy services from a licensed mental health provider via Hazel Health.

[00:28:18] And all HCPS students, families, and staff, regardless of insurance status, have access to Care Solace, a dedicated mental health care concierge service that includes live care team members available to provide multilingual support at no cost to help navigate the complex mental health system on their behalf.

[00:28:44] Additionally, HCPS has 37 school-based mental health staff who are now nationally certified mental health first aid instructors and 11 new nationally certified ACE interface instructors to increase mental health literacy building and five new tiered intervention school counselors to help address substance abuse and violence prevention and intervention.

[00:29:10] Henrico Cares is an exciting endeavor that will serve our students with a coordinated, multi-pronged approach to mental health services. At this time, I'll ask Dr. Grant to come back to the podium. Thank you, Dr. Hughes. Board members, as you have heard, there is a lot happening in Henrico Schools.

[00:29:29] As we prepare to welcome students back on August 19th, Parents, guardians, and staff members are encouraged to download the ParentSquare mobile app to stay up to date on important information. As a reminder, families can elect to receive news and updates in their preferred language and can communicate with teachers through the embedded translation program in ParentSquare.

[00:29:57] But before the school year even begins, We want to invite students, families, HCPS staff out to the annual Bouncing Back to School kickoff tomorrow afternoon. There will be a three-on-three basketball tournament and resource fair.

[00:30:14] It is sure to be a great time. We hope to see lots of families and school board members there. Madam Chair, this concludes our report this afternoon. We're happy to take any questions at this time. Thank you so much for the presentation, Dr. Grant, Mr. Pritchard, and Dr. Hughes.

[00:30:34] I saw you over there. And so we're very appreciative. I'll begin with remarks to my left with Mr. Irving. Thank you for the presentation, folks. This is great to just give everybody an idea of what's coming down the pike and what we're already doing, so I appreciate that.

[00:30:53] I just have some comments. I think that the bus driver vacancies being filled is obviously tremendous. When you pay a people a great wage, I don't think we should be surprised that suddenly all the vacancies go away. It's kind of funny how that works. Student IDs, I think, are tremendous.

[00:31:11] It's just like any job that you would have. I, as a teacher, have a badge that I have to use to get into the building and, you know, just for safety concerns. And I think it kind of reminds me of when I was at Virginia Tech and I had my Hokie passport and it kind of gave you access to everything. I think it'll be a good, worthwhile thing, and I wish that something like that existed when I was in school.

[00:31:31] Cell phones, obviously, I think it's tremendous. I've spoken about this enough. I just want staff, administrators, teachers, everybody to know that we have your back on this and that you will be supported in ensuring that our students have a great learning environment.

[00:31:48] And then I think Henrico Cares is obviously a transformational offering, and I'm just incredibly proud that we're doing it. It's a worthwhile investment that all of our stakeholders can access, and it really removes financial barriers and access barriers that many in our community have, and I'm just remarkably proud that we're doing it.

[00:32:06] Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Irving. Mr. Young. Thank you for the presentation today. I have a couple questions, a couple comments. First, I want to give a shout-out to the FACE team and EDAC for meeting families where they are.

[00:32:23] I only was able to attend one, which was at St. Luke's. It was amazing. So Ms. Tiffany Lewis, Ms. Adrienne Cole, great job. The staff was friendly. It was inviting. Children showed up. It was during the day. It was amazing. I had a great time. So just continue to do that good work in the communities and meeting families where they are.

[00:32:43] And then next staffing, I'm extremely glad that we have filled the bus vacancies. I kind of echo Madison sentiments that when you're paying a great wage and you're leading the region in that, that, you

know, we have bus drivers. So thank you guys there. I wanted to move on to IDs because I've been getting a lot of comments.

[00:33:04] So just had some questions that I wanted clarity on. If a student is unable to pay the replacement fee of five dollars, what mechanisms are in place to help those students? Well, that's one of the things we will continue as a school division to work with students constantly.

[00:33:21] I mean, we realize that sometimes that these financial burdens could be just out of burden and an obstacle. But we will work with students and make sure that every student, when an ID is lost, hopefully not, but we will work with them to get them replaced. Okay. I also want to make sure it's not punitive in nature. That is correct, right?

[00:33:39] Yes. Okay. Awesome. Other questions. Are we going to provide any alternatives other than lanyards for our students? Not at this time. We have not done that. I mean, we're not looking at that, but I mean, it's something down the road that we can investigate moving forward. If there's an individual need, as always, we would work with individuals who would have any special accommodation or need for something different.

[00:33:59] All right. And I do love the fact that it's one card for everything. So let me be very clear on that. I think that streamlines everything that we're doing in the county. So that's amazing. And then I guess my final question, when it came to IDs, are we going to put now that it's mandatory, will it go into our code of conduct?

[00:34:19] - Because it's not, at this point, a punitive in nature kind of thing, there wouldn't really be consequences associated with it, but we're hoping to put it into daily practice, just as we have library cards and the cards our elementary schoolers get to log into Clever.

[00:34:34] It's bringing all those services into one, and it's really, it's just a school expectation that they be leveraged and used and worn, both for security purposes and for ease of accessing day-to-day school operations. - Okay, and speaking of security, how many guns were found on campus this past school year?

[00:34:53] - Absolutely zero. - Thank you. I wanted you to say that. I did know the answer to it, but I wanted to hear it again. So the security measures are in place, are working, and it's keeping our community safe. Under cell phone practices, I did have a question. The division provided device storage containers.

[00:35:11] What do they look like? Is it just a box? - A few options, depending on the school. - Yeah, the school were given two options. One where they can like stick them in pockets. The other device is where it's a lock box where there's a corresponding number to each student when they place their cell phone in the little slot.

[00:35:32] Okay. Awesome. And are we going to provide any sort of mechanism for feedback from our teachers on what they're experiencing in the classrooms with being in the cell phones now and them not being available? Certainly our building leaders will be working directly to get feedback from their school teams.

[00:35:49] But at the division level, we often seek feedback on any changes related to security, operations, instruction. And we'll definitely be leaning in on this matter through our advisory groups to hear directly from students, staff, as well as our administrators on this topic.

[00:36:08] All right. Thank you all. I appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Young. Ms. Shea. Thank you so much. Echo most of my colleagues' comments before, the excitement about staffing transportation, all sorts of things. I'm really excited about these student IDs. I know that's something I've been advocating for, and I've had student advocacy as well, particularly from Freeman High School with their Project Maverick.

[00:36:34] Some of the seniors each year have said what a game changer that would be in terms of safety, but also ease of access places. So I was excited to be able to share back with them, you know, the implementation and moving forward. One of my elementary schoolers was part of the pilot program at the end of the year and had her own to swipe in and off buses.

[00:36:56] but also the fact that we needed to log into Clever one day from a home device and we could just scan the QR code and all of that would pop up and logged her in immediately. It was really seamless, really easy. And so I'm hoping not only an additional layer of security, but also just, like we said, making everything easier, right? Working smarter, not harder for all of our students and staff. Mr. Pritchard, as elementary weapon scanners come online this year, should students expect those the first day when they come off the bus? Yes, ma'am. And so are we going to be

[00:37:32] pushing out some communication to our elementary school parents? I know they should know that they're coming, but just reminders of the things that should be out of the backpack as they walk through the door. I know with our, even our middle school students, it was a lot of reminders there for the first couple weeks getting used to them. Yes, ma'am. And one of the things that we'll do is the communication that comes from us that will be shared with principals. And I know that And the communications department and stuff has done a great job of providing stuff that will go out to the community.

[00:38:01] And we'll share that with principals so they can include that into their daily, weekly messages that will go out. Wonderful. I know if we look at the adjustment for our secondary schools, the adjustment at middle school was smoother than the high school. And so we're hoping the adjustment at elementary school will be even smoother.

[00:38:19] But, you know, pack your patience the first couple, you know, the first couple of weeks is things get adjusted. then it seemed to go very smoothly. Moving on, just code of conduct. So the board members have the benefit of getting a paper copy today. But as I was looking through it, you know, I always think of the code of conduct as this really like meaty, thick document. But I spent time to read before our meeting. And really, the expectations are outlined on just a couple of pages that are very readable for most of our upper elementary school, middle school, and high school

[00:38:58] students. And then the rest of it outlines the consequences. And so when we're looking at our students starting the new year, I just, as a parent, but also to our community, just really encourage our parents and our students to sit down and truly read those couple of pages as to what the expectations are with the dress code, with cell phones. It baffles me every year that a lot of people don't actually know what the dress code is. They just remember kind of historically what the dress code was and kind of word for word understand what the expectations are again for dress code

[00:39:35] and cell phones and that sort of thing. So kudos to everybody involved in Henrico Cares and removing barriers to mental health access for our students. I know some of our schools last year were going to pilot some of this, the ability to access mental health services beyond school counseling in the

schools. And they ran, they did, our school-based staff did a lot of the legwork, identifying students, getting everything cleared, and then the providers didn't have the capacity to be able to do that.

[00:40:08] What have we done to be kind of proactive there so that we'll be able to follow through with our services this year? Right, thank you for that question, Mrs. Shea. So that piece of the puzzle of HenricoCare was our therapeutic day treatment, and that is a program that we partner with, and it is a Medicaid-funded program. And so we contracted with a provider, you know, a very stellar provider. One of the barriers that we found was that the provider waited for us to get cadre of students and then they tried to staff for us and so just like all of us that are experiencing shortage and staffing sometimes we would have the

[00:40:47] students and then they weren't able to find the staff or sometimes they would find the staff and then we wouldn't have the students and so it really had to be quite the intricate partnership so Liz Parker and I spent a lot of time this summer working with that partner and they have already hired staff for each of our five schools that we're starting with this school year so that once we identify the students the staff is ready to go in addition they looked at some compensation for the staff that they were hiring and have enticed that a little bit so we're hoping that they will have better luck you know hiring and

[00:41:23] retaining but as of right this minute every school has a provider for that service the therapeutic day treatment so we're crossing our fingers we are we have a weekly meeting with them with the goal of trying to get more schools on board at the second semester. I am very excited to hear this. I think it's going to be a game changer for some of our students and our families who aren't able to access that outside of school for a whole variety of reasons, whether it be financial or the wait lists being long or, you know, any of those other

[00:42:00] pieces. So I'm looking forward to hearing really good things and really good outcomes there. Thank you. Two more questions. You talked about every elementary school and middle school having a literacy coach on staff. I know we've got our kind of eight small schools that tend to split staff. Are those eight elementary schools, are they going to be splitting a coach or do they each have a designated coach?

[00:42:26] They each have a designated coach. That's terrific. Thank you. And then last question is, well, comment, ParentSquare from a parent perspective. Excellent. Love it. When can we expect StudentSquare to roll out? Are we moving forward with that this year or are we in a holding pattern?

[00:42:45] - We're looking to communicate. - I hope so. - Hello. Yes, Student Square is rolling out at the start of the school year. We want to give students a chance to become acclimated with their routine for the new year.

[00:43:01] And then at the middle and high school level, we will be sending some training modules to teachers so that they have the opportunity to become more familiar with Student Square. and just as a reminder this allows teachers, sponsors, coaches to safely communicate with students without having to use their private cell phone number or a student's keeping a bank of student numbers they can access it through parent square. There will be an opportunity for parents to indicate whether or not they want their child to participate in that so we're not going to have

[00:43:39] staff communicating directly with students through student square without a parents acknowledgement and that will start probably at the end of september wonderful i think that'll be very helpful particularly for the sponsors and coaches aspect teachers have a lot of i hope it helps teachers as

well but they have a lot already have a lot of ways to reach out to students through Schoology and other things. So, but having that coaches and sponsors ability to have a listserv to communicate with, I'm hoping, like you said, we'll keep things on a platform that we can monitor

[00:44:19] without exchanging personal information. Correct. And it also allows us to keep a log of messages so that if a parent or a student misses a message, they can go back and see it at a time that's convenient for them, or they can go back from year to year and look at, you know, some of the resources that were needed in it at any given time. So we're really excited about it. Parent Square has a similar feature by creating groups, but this is just streamlines that process and the feedback that we've had from a couple of people that have tested it for us. It's been very successful. Awesome. Thank you so much. Thank you for making it easy for parents and students

[00:44:58] and staff to all stay connected and engaged always. That's all for me. Thanks. Thank you, Mrs. Shea. And now we'll yield the floor to Mrs. Gonzaga. Thank you so much, Chair Atkins.

[00:45:14] I won't repeat what my colleagues have said except for so many exciting initiatives that have been some been a long time coming. Let me just highlight, I will say this to be repetitive transportation. Thank you, thank you, thank you, colleagues.

[00:45:32] and everyone involved to bring about the ability to be able to have enough drivers to get our students to school to learn. So thank you for that. And thank you for being responsive.

[00:45:47] Dr. Cashwell, your team, board colleagues, to being responsive to advocacy specifically from bus drivers regarding multilingual signs on the buses that will aid in communication and in safety for our students and our drivers.

[00:46:06] Other responsiveness, just thank you. We've made some adjustments in response to advocacy and I just wanna highlight the extended responsibilities. We received advocacy there. Thank you to everyone that worked over the summer to support some changes there and in evaluating where we were and what we could do in terms of increases.

[00:46:33] I know this work is ongoing. We work on the budget 12 months a year. So thank you to the team for that. What is the Parents' Square participation? Are all of our parents participating in Parents' Square? And how do we know? Thank you so much for asking that question.

[00:46:55] We have contactability with 99.6% of HCPS families. That is either through the mobile app, through text messaging or through email. And I will just tell you that based on comparisons with some other school divisions our size, that's an incredibly high number.

[00:47:18] So big thanks to our schools for making sure that records are kept up to date in the student information system and also from our technology department for their assistance in making sure that the syncing of that information happens correctly and efficiently every single night.

[00:47:39] And then as far as use, as regarding the mobile app and other methods, we actually are going to be coming back to you all in September. I'm sorry, the next meeting in August and providing you with an entire presentation on that.

[00:47:58] Fantastic. Thank you for that. And if I may, while you're at the podium, thank you for your support and communication. As a parent and as a board member really dialed in to ParentSquare, I've

received some outstanding communication, both as a mom and as a board member from the division and from my schools.

[00:48:21] So just to really thank you and the communication team for supporting our leaders across the division and starting that communication early. And really, it is our teachers and our administrators at the school level who took a new platform last year and really embraced it and used it as an effective tool to just continue to build those relationships.

[00:48:46] Well, thank you so much for that. And ninety nine point six percent participation is strong. I like that. Now turning to some other numbers that I've seen recently, which is our vacancy report and seeing that some of our instructional vacancies and some of our non-instructional vacancies, would somebody please speak to our plan to fill them?

[00:49:14] We continue hiring. Mrs. Bolden is coming forward if you have specific questions. But just on her way to the podium, I want to let you know we continue our hiring fairs and efforts and onboarding. And, of course, in cases where you might see a vacancy, as in the past, that doesn't mean there isn't a qualified caring adult in there on the first day.

[00:49:35] Many a times these are our board subs or individuals who are taking on the role temporarily. Is there anything to add, Mrs. Bolden? Well, if I may, if I may, since you've covered instructional vacancies, I'd like to ask about our custodial vacancies and also some of our instructional assistant vacancies, as well as some of our maintenance staff vacancies.

[00:50:05] Similarly, we continue recruitment efforts in those areas specifically, and some of those are school-based positions and others may be central. So in cases where they're school-based, we're working with the school teams on that hiring and helping them recruit.

[00:50:22] Mr. Pritchard, did you have anything to add there? No, other than the fact, I'm sorry, other than the fact that I know that we were given 12 positions to work with our maintenance supervising team that we are actively recruiting for and trying to get those positions filled as well. That would help primarily at our elementary school levels, which are in need from that standpoint.

[00:50:42] Yeah, in case, oh, sorry. No, I was just going to say thank you. For me, the vacancy report, I just wanted an update, if anything had changed, as to what we're looking at doing to fill some of the positions that we need filled.

[00:51:00] Yeah, I think that that's a really good question. And while we've got tremendous strides made, particularly in the area of transportation, our instructional vacancies, and we've seen in past years, you know, we continue to experience some challenges when it comes to recruiting individuals and retaining them in a number of positions. You noted several of those. And the team has done a great job with recruitment and thinking differently about how to hire folks and getting that right match and in those support structures we have in place. So we've got some structural changes, as Mr. Pritchard mentioned, with the maintenance supervisor positions and so on to hopefully lend

[00:51:36] better support to the teams we do have in place. Thank you so much for that. And then outside of that, I received some feedback over the summer specifically to our CEP schools in my district, to Moody Middle School. And I know that the team works on that based on specific criteria.

[00:51:58] I'd just like to ask for possibly some communication to go out to the community as I received quite a bit of advocacy around that at school and through July, and even today in the written public comments. And then that's all I have, Chair Atkins.

[00:52:18] Dr. Caswell, I heard you make a sound. I just want to say, yes, we've noted that request related to CEP schools and providing additional communication to the community. We can do that. Thank you, Mrs. Kinsella.

[00:52:34] I also echo the sentiments and gratefulness from my colleagues. It's certainly pleasing to enhance safety and streamline all the parts of the school day for students and staff and families. I also, over the past years, I know there's been advocacy from all different areas.

[00:52:55] I do want to give a great shout out and express my gratitude to Jeremiah Barley. It may have been over a year and a half or so when I sat here, not in this seat, but sat here on the board and shared Jeremiah's idea.

[00:53:12] And, you know, he was very, very adamant about student IDs and pushing me to speak on it at a school board meeting, and I did. And so, to Jeremiah, your thoughtful and inspiring contributions on how we can better serve the students, staff, and families in Henrico County has made a lasting impact.

[00:53:35] once a springer always a springer and continue to advocate for communities not just the ones you live in but the ones that surround you too it's appreciated i know that also last year we had a successful bus pilot and test runs for ids and all of us are looking forward to implementation of this and understand that as challenges come we're going to solve them and continue to improve also for families know that the card is encrypted and can only be accessed by our systems that that's important just to say and so that

[00:54:13] you hear and understand just the confidentiality around the student ID cards and of course the lanyards are breakaway lanyards from a health and wellness perspective so if it you know for younger ones and maybe some of our middle school and high school students that if it gets tugged it will break away and won't potentially choke anyone. So again thank you so much for all that you do. We're very excited about this school year. Dr. Cashwell. That concludes our back to school presentation. As I said we are so eager to welcome the remainder of staff who will return on Monday and of course our young people

[00:54:51] pre-k through 12 on august 19th the first day of school and hope to see a great turnout at tomorrow's back to school event which is indoors which is wonderful given the wet forecast so really looking forward to that the next items i have are consent items and so they can be taken as a block thank you dr cashwell colleagues we will vote on the consent agenda items in a block is there a motion? I move that the school board accept, adopt, prove, and or award items 7.01

[00:55:25] through 7.06 on the consent agenda as presented. Thank you, Mr. Irving. Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. Young. We'll move forward with a roll call vote. Mrs. Kinsella? Aye. Mr. Irving? Aye. Ms. Shea?

[00:55:42] Oh, aye. Mr. Young? Aye. And I vote aye. The ayes have it. Item 7.01-7.06 on the consent agenda are approved. The next item on the agenda is our public forum, which are written comments.

[00:56:05] Citizens had the opportunity to submit written comments through an online form in advance of the meeting. Those comments were shared with school board members before the meeting and posted in their entirety in board docs. Moving along to unfinished business colleagues, I invite you to address any

[00:56:27] outstanding matters at this time. Feel free to yield the floor and share your remarks. All right, hearing none, we'll move on to new business. Starting with an amendment to the superintendent's contract. Is there a motion? I move that the school board approve the seventh amendment to the superintendent's employment agreement and authorize the board chair to execute the

[00:57:01] agreement, the amendment to the agreement. Is there a second? Second. Roll call vote. Mr. Young? Aye. Mr. Irving? Aye. Mrs. Kinsella? Aye. And Mrs. Shea? Aye. And I vote aye. The ayes have it. The amendment to the superintendent's contract has been approved. The next item is approval of school board meeting dates for the 2025 calendar year. Is there a motion? I move that the school board

[00:57:35] approve the meeting schedule for the 2025 calendar year as presented. Is there a second? Second. Roll call vote. Mrs. Kinsella? Aye. Mr. Irving? Aye. Mrs. Shea? Aye. Mr. Young? Aye.

[00:57:53] And I vote aye. The ayes have it. The school board meeting dates have been approved. Next on our agenda is selection of delegate and alternate delegate for the VSBA. At this time, I'd like to nominate Mrs. Marcy Shea for delegate. Is there a nomination? Well, do you accept, I guess? I would love to accept your nomination. Thank you, Ms. Atkins. All right. Is there a nomination for alternate delegate?

[00:58:23] I nominate Ms. Atkins as our alternate delegate for VSBA. Would you like to accept? I will accept. Sounds great. All right. Is there a motion? I move that the school board select Marcy Shea and Alicia Atkins to serve as delegate and alternative delegate respectively at the VSBA delegate assembly and regional meeting during the VSBA annual convention.

[00:58:47] Awesome. Is there a second? Second. Second. All right, Mrs. Kinsella, you got the second. We'll move forward with a roll call vote. Mrs. Kinsella. Aye. Mrs. Shea.

[00:59:03] Aye. Mr. Young. Aye. Mr. Irving. Aye. And I vote aye. The ayes have it. I, Alicia Adkins, will serve as alternate, and Mrs. Shea will serve as delegate. Also, we'll move forward to see if there's any new additional business.

[00:59:24] Colleagues, do you have any new business to present at this time? Hearing none, we'll proceed to the last agenda item, which is the announcement of meeting dates. The school board next meeting is Thursday, August 22, 2024, at 3 p.m. in the New Bridge Auditorium.

[00:59:47] This meeting is adjourned.



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