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Henrico County School Board Monthly Meeting, Thursday, October 24, 2024

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[00:00:00] Good evening. Today is October 24th, 2024. Welcome to the Henrico County School Board monthly meeting. Also, this meeting is being live streamed on the HCPS website. The first item on our agenda is the approval of the agenda. Is there a motion to approve the agenda? I move that the school board approve the agenda for tonight's meeting. Is there a second? Second. All in

[00:00:31] favor say aye aye aye any opposed the ayes have it the agenda is approved on behalf of the school board we warmly welcome all of our visitors and express our sincere gratitude for your presence today your involvement is invaluable to the progress of our schools and the broader community dr cashwell thank you chair atkins members of the board and to our visitors good evening the first item on our agenda will be the pledge of allegiance which will be followed by a moment of silence and we are so pleased this evening to have students from glenly elementary school here

[00:01:10] who will lead us in the pledge and their associate principal rachel payne will come forth with the students and she'll introduce them and then we'll prepare to say the pledge if they would please come forward at this time good evening my name is rachel payne i'm the associate principal of glenly elementary school and with me i have the following students miss deja miles mr jikai warwick

[00:01:44] and mrs miss jayani louse jones if you would please stand for the pledge of allegiance allegiance to the flag of the united states of america

[00:02:10] and if you would please remain standing as you're able for the moment of silence that concludes our moment of silence you may be seated and how about a round of applause for our students from glenly elementary school and as the students are making their way back to their seats the board and i are going to make our way to the audience so that we can enjoy the musical

[00:02:38] highlight all right good evening madam chair members of the board dr cashwell colleagues and guests my name is christopher mosley i am the education specialist for performing arts it is my pleasure to introduce for our performance highlight this evening the center for the arts

[00:03:15] musical theater class under the direction of Mr. Billy Dye. Mr. Dye teaches musical theater at Henrico CFA where he received his 15-year pin this year. He's a graduate of Shenandoah Conservatory and Virginia Commonwealth University. In the professional theater world, Mr. Dye provided musical direction for the Firehouse Theater's world premiere of the award-winning musical Gabriel. Before yielding to his educator calling, thank you, Mr. Dye was the vocal supervisor for Busch Gardens in Williamsburg. He's a member of the MTEA, that's the Musical

[00:03:55] Theater Educators Alliance, Phi Mu Alpha, Symphonia, Music Fraternity, and Alpha Psi Omega national theater honor society tonight we have in attendance their proud principal miss karen castillo rose and the center for the arts director dr stephanie poxson please stand so we can recognize you at this time and actually i'm gonna bring up my friend

[00:04:25] cy nathan to come and introduce the piece for you all for centuries women have been told what they can and cannot do they have been confined by expectations pushed into roles that do not defined them and silenced by those who fear their power. Yet despite these barriers, they persisted.

[00:04:59] Women had led revolutions, fought for justice, and break in barriers that were once considered unbreakable. And we'd like to dedicate this performance to the women who came before us, the suffragists who fought for a right in our democracy. We'll be presenting to you a piece from shana taub's musical sufs this piece is called keep marching we'd like to dedicate this to the women who fought for equality and the countless unsung heroines who ensure

[00:05:35] who work to ensure a better future for their daughters every day thank you good evening madam

[00:10:21] chair school board members and dr cashwell will now move on to our recognition portion of the meeting. Tonight, we're pleased to recognize the 22 HCPS programs that were honored this year in the 2024 National Association of Counties Achievement Awards. The annual NACO Awards recognized groundbreaking county government programs across the nation. Across all departments and agencies, Henrico County earned 52 achievement awards. Henrico's total award, I'm sorry, Henrico's award total is the most of any county in Virginia for the 19th consecutive year and tied

[00:10:59] for the seventh most in the nation. Henrico shares the top 10 with much much larger localities such as Los Angeles and Miami-Dade counties. We are proud to share that 22 of Henrico's 52 achievement awards include Henrico Schools programs. Tonight we will recognize the schools, teams, and offices that make those award-winning programs a reality in some cases the honorees cannot be with us this evening however we will continue to celebrate those programs by reading a brief description

[00:11:33] and now the hcps 2024 naco award winners glenn lee telehealth clinic department of family and community engagement glenn lee elementary school by creating an in-school consultation space using telehealth technology, educators and community health providers collaborate to support students' health and wellness with medical and dental services that allow children to remain in school when possible. Becoming Kings, Department of Equity, Diversity, and Opportunity. This rite of passage program provides hands-on opportunities for black male high school students to develop

[00:12:12] leadership skills and confidence, visit employers and colleges, and help create a growing culture of Positivity and Empowerment. This program also earned an Achievement Award from the Virginia Association of Counties. Don't go far, we have another plaque for you all.

[00:12:31] Proximos Pasos, Next Steps: Department of Equity, Diversity, and Opportunity. This lively festival, created with dozens of school and community partners, highlights post-high school opportunities for Hispanic students in employment, post-secondary enrollment, and enlistment the military but wait there's more black history month poetry slam the department of equity diversity and opportunity by empowering students to share their voices and perspectives the program at the oak avenue complex addressed the critical need for inclusive educational practices that celebrate

[00:13:11] diverse cultural backgrounds department of equity diversity and opportunity educational excursion Aviation Day. HCPS students visited Richmond International Airport to talk with its board, ask questions, and explore possible career paths they may not have known about. Congratulations

[00:13:31] to the Department of Equity, Diversity, and Opportunity. Up next, Generative AI: Preparing for a New Digital Age Division of Learning. In the rapidly evolving digital age, this proactive approach integrates generative AI in the division's educational framework, helping equip students

[00:14:09] for tomorrow while prioritizing digital safety and ethical standards. This program also earned an achievement award from the Virginia Council of Counties. Micro-credential program, Division of Learning, Professional Learning and Leadership. HCPS educators get rigorous, on-demand, tailored professional development opportunities in this program that advances academic excellence and helps recruit, retain, and recognize educators. Congratulations!

[00:14:48] Division of Learning Student Government Day Program. Each year, county high school students get a firsthand look at the operations of Henrico's government school system and courts by working for months alongside key decision-makers. The The experience culminates in a day where students share feedback, present solutions to problems, and participate in simulated government meetings.

[00:15:18] Congratulations! Teacher Licensure Cohort Program, Division of Learning, Professional Learning and Leadership. This innovative program was recognized by the Virginia Department of Education for its success in helping provisionally licensed teachers achieve full licensure by combining in-person learning and online coursework through iTeach.

[00:15:46] Congratulations. Expanded ESL Summer Academy, Division of Learning.

[00:16:07] In response to a rapidly rising population of English learners and the effects of COVID-19 learning loss, HCPS launched a new summer program for newcomer English learners in all grades. Participating students showed great improvement in both English development and readiness for schools in the US.

[00:16:26] Congratulations to the members of the team for the expanded ESL Summer Academy. Division of Learning: Combating Absenteeism Before It Starts: McKinney-Vento Team Summer Cookouts.

[00:16:46] HCPS used a federal grant and worked with other area organizations and agencies to increase early identification of students experiencing homelessness and prepare them for school.

[00:17:02] The three summer engagement events at Henrico Hotels not only identified more McKinney-Vento eligible students and connected them to services, but attendance by this population surged following the following fall. Congratulations. Language instruction education program micro credential courses. Our friends from the division of learning. Two micro credential courses help teachers better support the unique needs of English learning students while also helping

[00:17:36] HCPS address teaching shortages by growing its ESL teaching staff from within. Congratulations once again. This is a shock. Division of Learning. Professional Learning and Leadership. Teacher Fellows Program. This pioneering element of HCPS's career ladder places highly effective classroom teachers in dual roles as experienced educators and as mentors who work with teachers and support professionals learning at their schools. Congratulations to everyone from the Division

[00:18:16] of Learning. All right. Now to recognize several teams from the Department of Workforce and Career Development. Building Tomorrow's Teacher Pipeline, Department of Workforce and Career Development,

[00:18:46] the two-year dual enrollment teacher apprenticeship program at the ACE Center at Hermitage High School enables high school students to learn teaching fundamentals and explore the education profession while earning college credit. Congratulations. Mr. Baton, don't go too far.

[00:19:16] Preparing Life-Ready Students in Elementary School, Department of Workforce and Career Development. Greenwood Elementary School's Prime Time RVA hosts groups of students from across the Richmond region for competitions that test their creativity and teamwork as they showcase solutions to real-life problems.

[00:19:45] Congratulations to the Department of Workforce and Career Development and Greenwood Elementary School. Students build a race car at Richmond Raceway. Department of Workforce and Career Development.

[00:20:06] You all needed to sit closer to the front. HCPS students teamed up with Richmond Raceway and West Coast Customs to build a street-legal Toyota Camry from the ground up before a high-visibility NASCAR race.

[00:20:26] Congratulations to the Department of Workforce and Career Development. Winter Wonderland, Department of Workforce and Career Development. This annual student-led holiday event at Belmont Recreation Center offers connection and involvement for students with disabilities.

[00:20:51] Congratulations. Trade skills applied to memorialize veterans and first responders, Department of Workforce and Career Development and J.R. Tucker High School. Students in the division's masonry, horticulture, and landscaping programs applied their skills as part of a community effort to create a Veterans Memorial at J.R. Tucker High School. Congratulations. Re-envisioning hallways, Department of Workforce and Career Development,

[00:21:28] HCPS Summer Building Trades Program students renovated a hallway space at the repurposed Oak Avenue complex, creating a unique bookcase and charging stations within the school. - Congratulations to this outstanding team from the Department of Workforce and Career Development.

[00:21:56] Behavioral Health Interpreter Training Program, Department of Workforce and Career Development.

[00:22:13] Behavioral Health Interpreter Training Program. The new program trains adult English language learners to become professional behavioral health interpreters in a clinical setting, helping participants gain entry-level job skills while filling a community need.

[00:22:37] Congratulations. Sparking interest in fire prevention careers, Department of Workforce and Career Development. The Department of Workforce and Career Development worked with the Virginia chapter of the American Fire Sprinkler Association to host an interactive career fair for high school students creating awareness of careers in fire prevention.

[00:23:11] Congratulations. Preschool sign, Department of Workforce and Career Development and the ACE Center at Highland Springs. ACE Center at Highland Springs Summer Building Trades Program students used their new masonry skills to replace an aging Springer Preschool Academy sign, giving the program more visibility

[00:23:50] with a crisp new profile. Congratulations to the Department of Workforce and Career Development and ACE Center at Highland Springs. And finally, we have one additional HCPS program that earned a 2025 Achievement Award from the Virginia Association of Counties. Hyper-local student-led service learning, Department of Workforce and Career Development, and Douglas Freeman High

[00:24:26] School. The student-led Freeman Project Program at Douglas Freeman High School raised \$12,000, secured a grant, recruited community partners, and devoted hours of sweat equity to construct an outdoor classroom. Students in the program learn leadership skills and collaboration while tackling large and small projects that improve the school for everyone. Congratulations to the

[00:25:02] Department of Workforce and Career Development and the students and staff of Douglas Freeman

[00:25:07] High School. Madam Chair, that ends our VACO and NACO award recognitions. Good evening, Madam Chair, - Dear board members, Dr. Cashwell and visitors,

[00:25:47] it is my privilege tonight to recognize five Henrico County schools that have been honored by the Virginia Board of Education for their outstanding achievements as part of VDOE's Exemplar Performance Awards. These schools have demonstrated excellence in either exceeding state standards or achieving continuous improvement in key academic and school quality areas.

[00:26:14] Let's begin by recognizing Echo Lake Elementary School, which is among an elite group of 92 schools in Virginia to receive the highest achievement award based on the 23-24 school year data.

[00:26:30] Echo Lake exceeded state benchmarks in reading, math, and science. but what's particularly impressive is that each of its students' demographic groups, whether defined by ethnicity, economic status, language proficiency, or disability, performed at a similar high levels across all areas.

[00:26:56] Additionally, Echo Lake maintained a chronic absenteeism rate of 3.5%, far below the 15% threshold set for the award. Joining us tonight is Ms. Ellen Gonzalez, principal of Echo Lake Elementary

School.

[00:27:33] Next, we have Henrico, Hermitage, Verena, and Douglas S. Freeman High School, which have earned the Continuous Improvement Award. This recognition highlights the hard work these schools have put into advancing student achievement.

[00:27:52] Henrico, Hermitage, and Verrina High Schools have made significant strides in improving math and reading pass rates for specific student groups, with increases of more than 10 percentage points since 2018-2019 school year.

[00:28:12] Freeman High School was recognized for its achievement in increasing the graduation rate and reducing the dropout rate, both on a yearly basis and with a total improvement since 2018, 2019. Joining us tonight is Ms. Castilla Rose, Principal Henrico High School.

[00:28:32] Dr. Michael Jackson, Principal Hermitage High School. Ms. Kara Jean O'Neal, Associate Principal, is standing in today for Dr. John Marshall, Principal of Freeman High School. These awards are a testament to the dedicated, Verina High School, Sherita Sears, thank you.

[00:28:54] These awards are a testament to the dedication and tireless efforts of these schools, staff, students, and families, and we could not be more proud of their accomplishments. Please join me in congratulating the staff, students, and leadership of Echo Lake Elementary School, Henrico, Hermitage, Verina, and Douglas Freeman High Schools

[00:29:15] on their exemplar performance, thank you.

[00:29:58] - Congratulations again to all our award winners and what a tremendous way to start our meeting with student performers and then recognizing the tremendous talent of our staff teams all across Henrico County. We're now gonna continue recognitions and I'll turn it over to you, Chair Atkins.

[00:30:17] - Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. We'll keep the celebrations going with more recognitions And the first one we'll start with is for National School Bus Safety Week and School Bus Transportation Employees Appreciation Day. For this recognition, I yield the floor to Mr. Young.

[00:30:38] Thank you, Chair Atkins. National School Bus Safety Week and School Bus Transportation Employees Appreciation Day, whereas many children are transported daily on school buses by professional school bus drivers who prioritize the safety and well-being of those students, And whereas school bus drivers must complete a rigorous training program of classroom instruction, student management, behind the wheel driving without students, and driving with students, a comprehensive physical and law enforcement background check and drug testing.

[00:31:08] And whereas school buses are manufactured with many safety features such as the federally recognized school bus, yellow color, inside and outside cameras, eight light traffic control systems and crossing stop arms and whereas the yellow school bus is a highly recognized means of transporting children to and from school and it is imperative that the monitoring the motoring public obey traffic laws and stop for buses that are boarding or discharging students and whereas school bus manufacturers construct buses under a set of guidelines mandated by federal

[00:31:43] and state laws and whereas public school transportation ensures that students from across the Commonwealth of Virginia travel to and from school in a punctual and safe manner, and whereas school

bus transportation employees are recognized for their diligence and safety transporting the school children of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[00:32:04] Now, therefore, be it proclaimed that the school board of Henrico County Public School recognizes October 21st through the 25th, 2024, as National School Bus Safety Week and October 23rd, 2024 as School Bus Transportation Employees Appreciation Day, recognized by the School Board of Enrico County Public Schools this 24th day of October 2024.

[00:32:27] Thank you so much, Mr. Young. We're going to keep it going. I see one round of applause. We can do the entire crowd. All right. Next, we will recognize National Retirement Security Month.

[00:32:45] Mr. Irving, would you please do the honors? Whereas National Retirement Security Month is a national effort to raise public awareness about the importance of saving for retirement and whereas all workers, including local and state government employees, private sector employees, employees of tax-exempt organizations, and self-employed individuals can benefit from increased awareness of the need to save for retirement and whereas many employees may not be taking advantage of workplace-defined contribution plans at all or to the full extent allowed by the plans or under federal law, and whereas, encouraging employees to bring their future into focus during

[00:33:25] National Retirement Security Month and throughout their career can help them better prepare for retirement, and whereas, all Henrico County Public Schools employees can benefit from increased awareness of the need to save for retirement and the availability of tax-advantaged retirement savings vehicles to assist them in saving for their retirement. Now, therefore, be it proclaimed The school board of Henrico County Public Schools recognizes October 2024 as National Retirement Security Month, recognized by the school board of Henrico County Public Schools this 24th day of October 2024.

[00:34:01] Thank you, Mr. Irving. Yes, we're going to clap after each one. We're not done yet. Mrs. Shea, would you please read the proclamation for National Native American Heritage Month?

[00:34:17] Whereas the Native American and indigenous community stands as a diverse representation of the countless known and untold historic and cultural contributions with local, national, and global impacts spanning millennia. And whereas vital contributions to the fields of environmental science and agriculture, education, business, politics, the arts, sports and entertainment, and civil service have been made possible by Native Americans and indigenous peoples.

[00:34:45] And whereas citizens are encouraged to participate in activities that recognize, appreciate, and celebrate the distinct cultural, tribal, and linguistic diversity and dignity, as well as the compelling contributions made by Native Americans.

[00:35:02] And whereas Henrico County Public Schools and Henrico community recognize and embrace our enduring Native American and indigenous community that continues to have an indelible impact on shaping the history and culture of our schools, our county, our country, and our world.

[00:35:19] Therefore, now be it proclaimed that the School Board of Henrico County Public Schools recognizes November 2024 as National Native American Heritage Month and encourages observance and celebration to the attention of our citizens.

[00:35:37] Recognized by the School Board of Henrico County Public Schools this 24th day of October 2024. And our last recognition for this meeting, but certainly not forever, will be our National Veterans and

Military Families Proclamation.

[00:35:59] Mrs. Kinsella, would you please do the honors of reading it? Whereas, Henrico County Public Schools serves approximately 664 military-connected students and their families, including active duty service members, reservists, and members of the Virginia National Guard.

[00:36:16] And, whereas, HCPS recognizes and honors all veterans and military families who serve alongside the members of our armed forces. And, whereas, HCPS respects and acknowledges the daily sacrifices of veterans and military families and the extraordinary contributions they make to the nation, to the Commonwealth, and to the Henrico community.

[00:36:40] and whereas HCPS is committed to providing steadfast support for its veterans and military families during the month of November and beyond. Now, therefore, let it be proclaimed that the School Board of Enrico County Public Schools recognizes November 2024 as National Veterans and Military Families Month, recognized by the School Board of Enrico County Public Schools this 24th day of October, 2024.

[00:37:10] Dr. Cashwell. Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the board. The next item on the agenda is the Henrico Highlights, a time when we call attention to the incredible teaching, learning, and innovation happening across Henrico schools.

[00:37:28] Tonight, we visit the HCPS Chess and Strategy Game Expo, where attributes of the Henrico Learner Profile, such as critical thinking and creativity are also on full display.

[00:37:44] Check, or should I say checkmate, this out. - At Hef, we've been fortunate to be able to partner with Gifted Programming to help fund events like the Rubik's Cube Competition and the Chess Expo.

[00:38:02] And this is something that at Hef, we really are excited to be a part of because we know that offering students these extracurricular opportunities has a multitude of benefits. Here's your chess set. Thank you so much.

[00:38:18] Here's the booklet. Enjoy. We also know that they're building skills through these academic competitions. So it's helping them be a stronger, creative, and critical thinker. And so it has the dual benefit of making sure that they feel like they're really an important part of their school community, while also building these skills that they'll be able to use for life.

[00:38:38] So we turn them in chess with blades first. - Always, always. - This event is amazing. I love to see all these smiling faces here, but I think it also shows us how needed this type of thing is.

[00:38:55] Our students really get excited about stuff like this, and that's why you know that it's important. When our students are excited about the things that they're doing, they're gonna be excited to come to school every day, and they're gonna just be excited to be a member of their school community.

[00:39:17] - What a great turnout for the first HCPS Chess and Strategy Game Expo. the event was coordinated by the HCPS FACE and gifted program teams in partnership with the Henrico Education Foundation. I would like to note that Damon Jiggetts with the foundation is with us and we can't thank you enough for the tremendous partnership.

[00:39:39] Up next is our Heart of Henrico recognition, although tonight it should be called El Corazon de Henrico, as we celebrate the 30th anniversary the center for spanish language and global citizenship at jr

tucker high school take a look we appreciate our custodians because they are the suspense will build as we get the right video

[00:40:18] well as you will see in this video we're going to come back when we get it students enrolled in the center are exposed to different cultures perspectives and languages all of which contribute to their mastery of knowledge and skills outlined in our henrico learner profile they're becoming adaptable, socially aware, multilingual communicators, and critical thinkers.

[00:40:58] In other words, they are life-ready learners, and hopefully we'll get to highlight that in video in just a moment.

[00:41:14] I told you the suspense would build, and I don't know enough Spanish to entertain the group with anymore. We're now going to move on to the mission statement while we await that video.

[00:41:47] Chair Atkins. Henrico County Public Schools, an innovative leader in educational excellence, will actively engage our students in diverse educational, social, and civic learning experiences that inspire and empower them to become contributing citizens.

[00:42:15] I purposely enunciated... I think we're going to continue on until we get the signal that it's ready. all right well we will move on to the next agenda item which is the public forum this is this is the time when citizens are invited to address the school board on any matter of concern about the school division citizens have signed up in advance and will be given three minutes to address the school board speakers will be called to speak in the order in which they signed up and may not

[00:42:51] relinquish their spot to someone else. We ask that each speaker come to the microphone and clearly state your name and school affiliation, if applicable, and the subject of your remarks before speaking.

[00:43:10] After stating your name, please place the number you are given in the cart near the podium. Speakers must present their remarks to the school board, not the audience, and may provide copies of their comments to the school board clerk. The use of obscenity or defamation is strictly prohibited and will be ruled out of order. To assist you in tracking your time, there is a timekeeping system displaying the elapsed time on the screen. Speakers will also receive a notice

[00:43:42] from me when the time has expired. The school board is here today to hear from you. We will not be responding to speakers concerns or questions during the public forum. However, a Henrico staff member will follow up with speakers. Stakeholders have also had the opportunity to provide written comments through an online forum in advance of the meeting. Those comments are shared with the school board members prior to the meeting and posted in board docs. Equal consideration and

[00:44:20] attention will be given to both written and in-person comments. To the contributors of written commentary and speakers assembled here today, thank you in advance for your participation, your presence, your expertise, concerns, acknowledgement of progress, and engagement enhances our understanding of our community's diverse perspectives. Once again, thank you.

[00:44:49] i'll pause just to see if we are ready with video or no we'll continue with speakers okay all right speaker number one would you please approach the podium speaker number two good evening as i get used to the sound system for a moment um madam chair members of the school board

[00:45:25] and dr cashwell my name is matt bushnell and i'm the parent of a student who was enrolled in the norico county school district from 2013 to 2024 we have struggled to find him a home in the district that could meet his needs but could not he is currently being homeschooled the purpose of my submission and talk to the school board today is to report on the extreme bullying and apathy while he was at the virginia randolph education center from 2017 to 2019. you may be wondering why it took so long for us to speak my son was medicated and had other coping strategies

[00:45:59] before, during, and since his incarceration at that facility. He recently had some puncture events that released repressed memories of his stay, including severe trauma and PTSD that he experienced. We are currently seeking additional help for this new reality for him. When I report on these experiences, I wanted to express my sincere belief that these events occurred, not because I'm a parent, but because I was with him daily when I picked him up from the facility as he told me what had gone on and I could see the effect. For instance, other children at the facility constantly took advantage of the younger students through physical means as well as emotional beratement.

[00:46:39] One of the worst episodes of this was when he told me that a student put his knee on his neck where he could not breathe. Please note this is years before George Floyd and any influence on that story. He felt very vulnerable. I could not protect him. Reporting this could mean retribution from all sides. My son at the time also reported that teachers let the students watch videos, play video games, and did not intervene to the above-mentioned events, education, or holding place during rehabilitation. Recently, to process these memories, my son contacted VREC to talk to

[00:47:15] them about what had occurred and to simply find out of the culture it changed and no other children would ever be subject to what he had to go through. He was identified himself as a former bullied student the person who answered immediately transferred him and the person who took the call stated i don't know why you're calling and that was and that was a bad time to talk before we could ask if we could call back we were hung up on this is totally and unequivocally unprofessional and unacceptable interestingly enough my son and i went to v-rec to visit and he took video to prove

[00:47:51] to himself that the old building had been raised he was what he had watched he has watched that video frequently to reassure him that maybe it had changed. Let these voices be heard. Let us work together to see what can be done to make sure the culture has vastly improved. Now he has a

[00:48:09] voice. Thank you for your time. Thank you. Speaker number three. Good evening, everyone, Madam Chair, School Board. My name is Samita Simpson. I am a parent of a seventh grader at John Roth Middle

[00:48:43] school um bear with me a bit this is a first so i i'm not um but i have to piggyback on the last gentleman because the nature of my comments is about the extreme bullying that my son is currently experiencing at um john roth middle school my question to the school board is what is a parent to do if you are in communication with the staff if you went and sat down beforehand and your child

[00:49:16] has endured this for the last two and a half years to this year. My child attempted and researched taking his life behind bullying. He's here with me today. I wasn't going to share that piece because that's really, really touchy for him. But we had an incident that has blown up recently and my child was forced into a position and a posture of defending himself. And instead of the school collectively using resources to prevent this before it even got to that point. Now he's being

[00:49:53] villainized for defending himself. But my question again to the board is, what are we to do? If we're going through the channels of communicating, we're reaching out. He has a doctor. We have gotten the doctor to communicate with the school. And the only recourse is now he's on a 10-day suspension for defending himself. And the child who assaulted him first, his suspension was simply off the bus.

[00:50:25] I don't know what all the policies should dictate, but I know that something has to be done. It's not just here. It's a national issue. But my concern is what's affecting my son in this moment right now. There has not been any communicating circles, any intervention from the school to help this child cope but more than anything prevent not just this child but all kids maybe even a group sit down or something where they're talking it through peer-to-peer something has to

[00:51:01] be done more staff training on how to interact and resolve these issues but I'm just imploring the school board for assistance because I've found none and like I said I'm okay with I'm not okay with where he is currently, but I'm okay with being his advocate as far as I need to go because I won't lose my son behind someone else's parents not training theirs correctly. So I just need to know how do we as parents, what do we do? What do we do? So that's the reason why I'm reaching out

[00:51:38] to the school board today because I have taken the steps as a parent and I still am in the same position I was in before I reached out and I need help you guys we need help the county needs to do

[00:51:51] better thank you thank you speaker number four speaker number five good evening my name is Marlene

[00:52:32] Sherlock and our family lives in the Fairfield district at your work session two weeks ago you received an update on the division's accreditation status in the elementary schools actual achievement levels seem respectable, with only one school having a below standard rating in English and none in math, and all nine in-person high schools had at or above standards for English and math.

[00:52:55] It's in the middle schools where things seem to have gone off the rails. Thankfully, you have stopped the nightmare that was supposed to be the achievable dream, but that still leaves three middle schools below standards in English, math, and science, and that graphic was littered with orange and red that scream a warning. And there's an additional disconnect. And looking at the scores for our child's high school, an additional, excuse me, 80% of the students met the standards for reading and a similar amount for math. And I'm normally a fan of that 80-20 rule, but here I'm

[00:53:28] not convinced that's good enough. It gets worse. In science, the percentage drops to 70%, and for history, it falls to an invisible number lower than 40%. How do any of those, even the 80%, add up to being accredited or next year's on track? At the last meeting, there was some discussion of an equity audit, but isn't that more of the same? Seeking the whys and differences rather than solutions for all. A child who can't read, can't read. And that's an unacceptable

[00:54:04] statistic regardless of their demographic identity. When firefighters arrive at a house, at the scene of a house engulfed in flames, they're the ones who rush in to do what they've been trained for and know how to do, save the residents and put the fire out. I reluctantly question if we know what we're doing or what we have been doing. Have we been using generations of kids as test cases, floundering from one latest educational trend to another? As part of your legislative initiatives that you discussed earlier today, I urge you to push the state to get

[00:54:43] rid of requirements that have little to no scientifically proven effect on basic educational progress. And let me offer several common sense suggestions that you already have direct control over. Stop making teachers do things that admins and support staff should be doing, like calling families about absenteeism and manning security stations. Teachers need time to plan and teach. Find a different way to deal with behavioral issues. Whatever you're doing isn't working. And finally, refocus on academics. While well-intentioned, many of the other services

[00:55:20] become tangents rather than supports and take money, energy, and effort away from the primary task at hand, which is teaching our children. We may not know it. We may be in denial. But ladies and gentlemen, our house, especially our middle school house, is smoldering. Thank you. Thank you.

[00:55:39] And thank you to all who shared comments this evening. Our video is now ready, and we will move forward with the presentation of the video. We celebrated 30 years of the Center for Spanish Language and Global Citizenship, formerly known as the Center for World Languages.

[00:56:09] And we had former students, graduates, teachers, and directors from all of those years show up to celebrate 30 years of the Center. My present students in the program, about 95 of them, participated in welcoming, doing tours of the new building, because many people have not seen the new Tucker building.

[00:56:30] This is the main, like, stairway where everybody comes when, you know. I went back 30 years. I found pictures from files. I found articles over the 30 years, as well as every graduating class had a class picture that we framed and displayed for those graduates, teachers, and directors to come back and see themselves. We have graduates that lead this program, and they are literally all over the world. We have someone in the Amazon that's studying animals and plants, using his language in the Amazon.

[00:57:02] We also have a Pulitzer Prize winner for the New York Times, Michael Schmidt, graduate of 2002, as well as Abigail Spanberger. She is a representative congresswoman of the state of Virginia, and she was in the first graduating class here in the Center for World Languages.

[00:57:19] Chef Daniel Domingo, who is from Valencia in Spain, he cooked for us six different paellas, And, of course, presented those in a beautiful style. One paella pan fed 50 people. So he cooked those right here on site in our court guard at Tucker High School.

[00:57:36] The Center for Spanish Language and Global Citizenship is a four-year high school program for students that want to engage and leave high school bilingual and biliterate.

[00:57:53] So we offer these classes here where students can take geometry in Spanish, history in Spanish, other electives in Spanish where they can increase not only their language and their learning but their development of being a global citizen.

[00:58:10] We also offer several things that are very unique to our center. We offer an amazing class called Field Experience. The first semester our students go to our elementary schools in Henrico County teaching elementary students Spanish.

[00:58:26] And then every other summer, we travel, we study abroad, we go to a Spanish-speaking country so that they earn a Carnegie credit, so they live with Spanish families, go to school and do cultural activities for at least two weeks to earn this Carnegie credit. So we celebrated 30 years, first graduating class, 1997, to last year's graduating class, 2024.

[00:58:48] We are joined by Susie Hester and Stephanie Stockman, our specialist for world language, And, of course, Principal Art Tucker is here, so it was wonderful to be able to feature the program and the celebration, and we apologize for the delay.

[00:59:14] Art Raymond, I'm telling you, it's been a long day. I don't even hear what's coming out of my mouth. Okay, I apologize, but thank you for your patience and waiting for the video feature, and it was a pleasure to attend the event and be able to feature it here.

[00:59:31] And that concludes, as it should, my items for this evening. Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. I believe we have some consent agenda items on the agenda.

[00:59:49] Colleagues, do you have any questions or concerns before moving forward with a motion? Is there a motion? I move that the school board accept, adopt, approve, and or award items 9.01 through 9.07 on the consent agenda as presented.

[01:00:09] Thank you, Mrs. Kinsella. Is there a second? second all in favor say aye aye any opposed the ayes have it the next item on our agenda is unfinished business colleagues are there any follow-ups or discussion on old business items hearing none we will move forward to the next agenda item which is the naming of tucker high school baseball field mr irving the floor is yours mr raymond would you like to speak

[01:00:46] first. Mr. Raymond, the floor is yours. Sure. I was going to follow Mr. Irving. Okay. Well, Mr. Irving, the floor, whomever would like to speak, let's do so now. I was just moving things along by coming on up. Thank you, Principal Raymond. On behalf of the board, I'd like to offer a warm welcome welcome to coach atkins his family and guests and thank you for being with us this evening please accept our sincere appreciation for not only your presence at our meeting but also

[01:01:24] for your tremendous positive impact on hcps and the tucker community i'd like to ask my board colleagues to join me in supporting naming the tucker high school baseball field to be the coach Ron Atkins Field in honor of Mr. Ron Atkins, a teacher, coach, and value member of the Tucker community. Thank you. I would just like to say a few things about Coach Atkins if I could and also introduce some people first. We have Coach Ron Atkins who's here with us tonight in the orange polo there, Ron, and his wife Rose is here. Also, daughter Katie Owens and her husband Travis have

[01:02:03] joined us this evening too. We also have some fellow coaches that won state tournaments in their time. We have Coach Lowry and Coach Connors who are with us tonight. And Paul Heiser, our Tucker Activities Director, is joining us tonight. I'd also like to point out that Rob Reed, who has the distinction of playing for Coach Atkins both at Tucker and at University of Richmond, is here.

[01:02:24] He brought several of our famous baseball players to the 1984-85 era. So we're happy to have them tonight. Just a couple of things about Coach Atkins I think that makes him a remarkable person to name a field after, taught at Tucker from 1967 to 1984.

[01:02:43] A sample of some of his achievements are that he was honored as the Colonial Athletic Association Coach of the Year twice, Atlantic 10 Coach of the Year. These are things that happened when he went away from Tucker into the college coaching ranks. Before arriving at the University of Richmond in 1985, he did spend 17 years at Tucker, where his teams posted a .813 winning percentage with four district championships and four state crowns let's hear from on there and just also a couple of other things in november of 22 mr atkins was named in the to the inaugural hall of fame

[01:03:23] class of the virginia baseball coaches association he was awarded for tremendous impact on the high school and college baseball landscape across the commonwealth so this is why we felt like it was very important to do this and we thank your support and we appreciate everything you've done for our school as you saw in that video it's a beautiful place and now we've got a great name on our baseball field thank you uh chair atkins i would like to make a motion please move forward i move that the school board waive the one month notice period and approve naming the tucker high

[01:03:56] school baseball field the coach ron atkins field in honor of mr ron atkins is there a second second all right mrs ginsella all in favor say aye aye any opposed the eyes have it we have a new name

[01:04:14] congratulations colleagues the next item on the agenda is new business do you have any new business we will move to the next agenda item which is the announcement of meeting dates the school board's

[01:04:53] Next meeting will be a work session scheduled on Thursday, November 14th, 2024 at 3 p.m. right here at New Bridge Learning Center Auditorium. The meeting time may be adjusted as needed. This meeting is adjourned.



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