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Manassas City School Board Meeting - February 25, 2025

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[00:00:29] Would you please stand for a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance?

[00:00:47] Mrs. Garza, would you please call the roll?

[00:01:10] Yes, ma'am. Chair Sieber, here. Vice Chair Spall, here. Mrs. Stevens, here. Mrs. Brescia, here. Ms. Miles, here. Ms. Brown, Dr. Jones, Ms. Blaine, Ms. Breeden, thank you.

[00:01:32] Madam Chair, we have a quorum. Thank you. Dr. Newman, do we have any additions or deletions to the agenda this evening? No, ma'am. Thank you. Next on our agenda is approval of the public meeting agenda. Chair, I move that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the public meeting agenda as presented.

[00:01:52] Second. I have a motion by Mrs. Stevens, seconded by Mrs. Brescia, that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the public meeting agenda as presented. Is there any discussion? All in favor? Aye. Any opposed? Motion carries 7-0.

[00:02:10] Superintendent's announcements and spotlights. It's nice to have a full crowd here tonight. Mrs. Radford, will you please lead us? Thank you Chair Seberg and yes we are very excited to have so many with us tonight as we share information about our superintendent's announcements and spotlights before I begin I would like to say I would like to share one announcement or a reminder that the Manassas City Public Schools communications audit is out the survey is out now and it is open until March 5th so we want to encourage everyone that has received that link to please go out

[00:02:48] and respond to that because it will definitely help us with our efforts here in the school division. All right so tonight we are pleased to present our Apple, Pear, and Super Substitute Awards from around the division. Apple Award winners represent members of our instructional staff in the division and each person was nominated by one of their peers. Our Pear Award winners are employees who support the teaching and learning environment in many other ways often behind the scenes like the Apple Award they too are nominated by one of their peers additionally we will recognize the super sub award recipients

[00:03:28] this recognition celebrates the invaluable contributions of substitutes in various roles across the division including custodians instructional assistants clerical staff bus drivers attendance school food service personnel teachers, counselors, and nurses. So we will begin with our Apple Awards. From Baldwin Elementary, Katrina Morgan. Ms. Morgan is a dedicated second grade teacher who creates a structured and engaging learning environment while building strong relationships with her students. As the Project Lead the Way

[00:04:08] lead for her grade level, she brings enthusiasm and expertise fostering innovation in her classroom. Her professionalism, passion, and leadership make her an invaluable asset to Baldwin. Thank you and congratulations. From Hayden Elementary School, Diana Garcia.

[00:04:27] Ms. Garcia is an inspiring fourth grade teacher who creates a dynamic, engaging classroom where students thrive. As a bilingual educator, she ensures all students feel supported and understood.

[00:04:45] She goes beyond academics by leading a dance club and participating in after-school programs. Her passion for teaching, commitment to student success, and involvement in the school community make her an outstanding educator congratulations. From Round Elementary Diana Richardson. Miss Richardson is a dedicated fourth grade teacher who sets high expectations for her students and inspires them to reach their full potential. Beyond the classroom she plays a key role in organizing school events

[00:05:24] and fundraisers making a lasting impact on the school community. Her support for colleagues and commitment to student success make her an invaluable leader at Round Elementary. Congratulations. And from Weems Elementary, Dana Slaughter. Ms. Slaughter is a devoted fourth grade teacher who deeply understands and connects with her students, supporting both their academic and social growth. As a team lead, she sets high standards while providing guidance,

[00:06:03] encouragement, and unwavering support to her colleagues. Her commitment to excellence makes a lasting impact at Weems. Congratulations to you, Ms. Slaughter. And now from Baldwin Intermediate, Heather James.

[00:06:24] Ms. James is an exceptional instructional facilitator who fosters a positive and productive work environment at Baldwin Intermediate. She empowers staff through one-on-one coaching, helping them grow in their craft and build confidence. Her leadership strengthens the school community, ensuring a collaborative and supportive team.

[00:06:44] Congratulations, Ms. James. Mayfield Intermediate, Shantae Slaughter.

[00:07:00] Ms. Slaughter is an exceptional special education teacher who goes above and beyond to support her students academically and emotionally. She tailors her instruction to meet individual needs, ensuring every student experiences success. Her passion, dedication, and genuine care create a positive and engaging learning environment where students thrive.

[00:07:20] Congratulations, Ms. Lauder. Mets Middle School, Claudia Rodriguez.

[00:07:38] Ms. Rodriguez is an extraordinary math teacher who shows compassion for her students, both academically and emotionally. As a bilingual educator, she builds trust with students and mentors new staff, fostering a positive school community. Her innovative use of technology and instruction and her dedication to professional development inspire both students and her colleagues.

[00:08:00] Congratulations to you. And from Osborne High School, Maggie Connors. Ms. Connors couldn't be here tonight, so congratulations to all of our Apple Award recipients for tonight.

[00:08:20] Thank you so much for all you do. Join us for a photo opportunity over here, please. Thank you.

[00:08:30] It's time for our Pear Award recipients.

[00:09:31] We'll begin with Baldwin Elementary School, Asiyah Hafid. Her first year at Baldwin Elementary, Ms. Hafid has already demonstrated exceptional dedication and versatility as a structured special education instructional assistant.

[00:09:52] She provides vital support to students in both special education and general education settings while fostering positive relationships with colleagues and students alike. Her optimism, willingness to help, and commitment to student success makes her a valued member of the Baldwin community.

[00:10:10] Congratulations, Ms. Hafid. From Jenny Dean Elementary, Rosanna Katala. I think Ms. Katala couldn't be here tonight.

[00:10:26] Congratulations in her absence. From Hayden Elementary School, Virginia Howard. Ms. Howard is a compassionate kindergarten instructional assistant who fosters a nurturing and supportive environment for students.

[00:10:45] Her patience, kindness, and deep understanding child development allow her to connect with students in meaningful ways. She goes above and beyond actively participating in school events and programs, making her an invaluable part of Hayden Elementary. Congratulations. Thank you. From Round Elementary School, Alyssa Carroll.

[00:11:09] Ms. Carroll is a kind and creative instructional assistant who goes above and beyond to support students, especially those with special needs. Her artistic talents bring joy to the classroom and her willingness to jump in wherever needed makes her an essential part of the team.

[00:11:32] Her dedication and enthusiasm make a meaningful difference in the lives of both students and staff. Thank you Ms. Carroll. And now from Weems Elementary, Gloria Membrino.

[00:11:48] Ms. Membrino is a dependable special education instructional assistant who exceeds expectations when it comes to supporting students and staff.

[00:12:04] Her calm demeanor, positive energy, and dedication ensure students receive the care guidance they need to succeed she is a true team player who always puts students first congratulations from Baldwin intermediate Christopher Montanez he couldn't be here tonight okay congratulations in his absence from

[00:12:34] Mayfield intermediate Don Porter miss Porter is the backbone of Mayfield intermediate seamlessly managing administrative tasks substitute coverage and building maintenance while keeping

staff morale high her problem-solving skills and willingness to assist make her an invaluable asset to the to the school. She plays a key role in ensuring daily operations run smoothly for both

[00:13:05] staff and students. Congratulations Ms. Porter. METS middle school Ileana Lopez. Ms. Lopez is a wonderful interpreter who ensures language barriers do not hinder communication between the school and Spanish-speaking families. She She consistently goes above and beyond by attending school events, meeting with parents,

[00:13:42] and providing support outside regular hours. Ms. Lopez's professionalism and commitment to fostering an inclusive environment strengthened the bond between families and the school.

Congratulations, Ms. Lopez. From Osborne High School, Joceline Raines.

[00:14:05] Ms. Raines has demonstrated exceptional skill and initiative since joining Osborne High School in September 2024.

[00:14:21] quickly mastering her duties, it's all good, mastering her duties and enhancing the school's operations. She is highly knowledgeable in school technology and has streamlined complex systems, improving efficiency for administrators.

[00:14:36] Ms. Rain's attention to detail, problem-solving ability, and positive attitude have made a tremendous impact on the school's front office and overall school environment. Congratulations.

[00:14:56] And from transportation, we have Tom Robinson. We love Mr. Robinson.

[00:15:14] That's right. Mr. Robinson is an exceptional bus driver, in case you didn't already catch that, bus driver who exceeds expectations when ensuring the safety and well-being of his students. His strong relationships with students create a positive and respectful environment, fostering trust and comfort on his bus.

[00:15:35] Mr. Robinson's dependability, professionalism, and willingness to assist others make him an invaluable member of the team, constantly and consistently putting the needs of the students first. Congratulations, Mr. Robinson. Thank you. Congratulations to all of our para-award winners, and if you all could join us to the side here for a photo.

[00:16:01] The recipients of the Super Sub Award are individuals who fulfill their substitute duties seamlessly and engage positively with staff and students.

[00:17:28] This recognition aims to appreciate their dedication and excellence in creating a positive educational environment. Each person was nominated by a location they have served. Tonight we will begin from Hayden Elementary, Tiffany Denman. Ms. Denman is a positive and dependable substitute teacher who builds great relationships with both students and staff.

[00:18:00] She handles challenges with grace and humor, ensuring a welcoming and supportive learning environment. Her dedication and professionalism make her an essential part of the Hayden Elementary team. Congratulations and thank you. Round Elementary said they wanted to recognize Diana Otero.

[00:18:30] From Baldwin Intermediate, Cynthia Klein. We love when our teachers come back. Ms. Klein is a devoted and motivational substitute who inspires students by providing incentives for good behavior and effort.

[00:18:51] She fosters a collaborative and supportive environment among colleagues while creating a classroom filled with encouragement and care. Her determination and kindness make her a valued member of our school community. Congratulations. Mayfield Intermediate William Jones.

[00:19:17] Mr. Jones is a dedicated and compassionate substitute who steps into challenging classrooms with a positive attitude. He meets the demands of students with patience and care, always willing to help wherever needed.

[00:19:32] His commitment to student success and well-being make a lasting impact. Congratulations and thank you. From Mets Middle School, Dana Oasis-Pack.

[00:19:59] Ms. Pack is a reliable and adaptable substitute who brings consistency and care to classrooms at Mets Middle School. She quickly builds strong relationships with students and staff, maintaining a positive, fair, and humorous environment. Ms. Pack is always punctual, prepared, and ensures that classrooms continue to run smoothly even during extended absences.

[00:20:22] Congratulations to you. And from Osborne High School, Marlene Sepulveda Gonzalez. Ms. Gonzalez has proven to be an outstanding substitute teacher, going above and beyond not only engaging students, but also ensuring that assignments were completed and turned in.

[00:20:54] She organized the classroom and sub plans for the next day, showing initiative and dedication. Her ability to manage a busy classroom and provide excellent support to both students and teachers makes her a standout recipient of the Super Sub Award. Congratulations.

[00:21:10] Thank you to all of our substitutes. And I just want to, as a side note, say how invaluable they really are to our programming and the consistency for our students. We couldn't do what we do without our substitutes.

[00:21:26] So thank you all so very much.

[00:21:28] Thank you all.

[00:22:22] Congratulations.

[00:22:34] I just wanted to mention some, we're not done with spotlights, but I did want to mention that MEA leadership or Manassas Education Association leadership is here today.

[00:23:09] Thank you. Ginny Higginbotham, Anna Demeria, Brandon Fincham, Tammy Potts, and Shaniqua Williams. Thank you. Thank you. All right. Let's wait until it got a little bit quieter.

[00:23:26] Okay, here we go. The Virginia School Boards Association, or VSBA, has designated the month of February as School Board Appreciation Month. to salute the service of over 800 school board members in the state of Virginia.

[00:23:41] This year's theme is Champions of Opportunity: Advocates for Excellence, which highlights the efforts made by school board members to create pathways for student achievement and for innovation. Tonight, we have two presentations offered by our schools to show appreciation to our local school board.

[00:24:02] First, our elementary school principals are here to share a few words about what you're about to see from their students as an expression of their gratitude.

[00:24:24] Good evening. Good evening. Hi. It's so great to see you. Chair Seberg. Vice Chair Spall. Dr. Newman. Members of the board. It is our pleasure, it is our privilege to be principals and represent the beginning of educational opportunity in Manassas City Schools for our citizens.

[00:24:48] I'm Dr. Laura Goldsing. I'm the principal of Hayden. Dave Rupert, principal of Baldwin Elementary. Hi, Andrew Wilson, Round Elementary. I'm Michelle Huttman, the principal of Weems Elementary. Yes, so we thank you all for the work that you do.

[00:25:04] And just know that, just not this month, but it's every month that we appreciate the hard work that you do. Every year we stand up here and know that you have tireless meetings multiple times, I don't know, a week, a month. Lots of meetings and lots of time and passion that you pour into our kids.

[00:25:21] You truly are community leaders, and you set the vision for us and work with us, and we're here to carry that out as elementary principals. We serve over 3,000 of our students here with this crew right here. And we have a great crew, but most of all, we have great kids.

[00:25:39] And the focus that we've been focused on this year is cohesion, and all students are our students. So we would be up here presenting each of our schools, which is great because we'd love to highlight our schools. But as a collective group, we're proud to put something together with our group and our ITTSs so you get to see all of our kids.

[00:26:01] Ultimately, they're going to be funneling up through our way to Osborne, and they're going to be one graduating class. So you get to see them that way tonight in this short video. So thank you all for having us. And also, just lastly, I just want to share a little bit about the project.

[00:26:18] It's called Book Creator, and it's something that our students actually use. They use to build things about their stories, author's purpose, kind of going through a story. So our students actually use this software. Our ITTS has worked with us, our technology team, and just kind of over a couple of weeks, talking to some students and sharing with them to see what do they appreciate.

[00:26:39] And it's pretty cool that when we're asking them questions, that they realize that, yes, we do have bosses too, right? So, yeah, and you guys are the ones that are setting the vision for us and all the cool things that they get to do so we get to explain that. And we do invite you in to kind of present and do some things for some community leader events that we have.

[00:27:00] So, having said that, have anything else, Dean? Okay, so let's turn it over to the video. Thank you. Yep. Studies for excellence a day in the life of MCPS elementary students.

[00:27:26] We are ready to start and start with opportunities and excellence. In a white group, I can be excellent by telling other people to work or do the right thing as a heart patrol.

[00:27:42] I get on the bus with my friends that look super close to me. I'd be able to see my friends on the show about what feels low on your bus ride.

[00:27:58] Because along the way to school, I get to saying hello to Frick from each bus stop. I'd be able to take care of my teachers for that big circle. I'm viable. I can be excellent by not being crazy.

[00:28:20] Morning, morning, I'm going to get ready for the big broadcast in very long. So, like, basically, when we get to school, we're going to get our records and all that. Then when we go to our classroom, we'll walk to the bonding classroom.

[00:28:37] There's so many jobs to do. You can talk, you can school, you can talk, you can do the countdown. It's so much fun. It's just a way you can let people know what's going on, like the mercy.

[00:28:59] And it's really fun. Today will be a cold and rainy day, but the sun will come out tomorrow.

[00:29:28] Today's high is 55 degrees Fahrenheit. Tomorrow's high will be 55 degrees Fahrenheit. Mr. Coleman and Ms. Huntley would like to thank all the teachers and staff for coming to work. Mr. Coleman, Ms. Coleman, and it starts to truly appreciate all your hard work every day.

[00:29:48] That is all from JDDB, Ellen Emmer. We must give a change from a wish to see. Have a dandy dolphin day and keep swimming. For one of your hosts, we're watching live from New York Spots.

[00:30:03] I'm Raya. We love having the opportunity to be excellent in the reading language. are social studies and science.

[00:30:23] I'm good at math because I can't make my fingers until I have this guts. The opportunities that math is weird, that I can do problems that are still fun, and I can still learn a lot from them.

[00:30:44] An opportunity means giving a gift or a special time, or it can be another chance to do something. So in math class, I would have been moving in a vision, so the instructor was like, hey, let's try to do a division worksheet at home.

[00:31:13] And then I was like, okay. And then I realized when I got home, oh, this is actually kind of easy. It's kind of like multiplication, but like splitting that into parts. And then I had it all down packed, and now I finished my whole journal of tests in that.

[00:31:35] Reading has taught me a lot. I have learned English because of reading. I learned emphasis, influences, reading faster and correctly. Reading is hard, but you get the hang of it. Encore gives us opportunities to be excellent in art, music, PE, and library.

[00:31:59] It gives me the opportunity to paint and draw.

[00:32:05] Art gives me the opportunity

[00:32:41] to learn our skills and have fun. During music, I had a chance to edit to our parents on the school board. Every day, we are getting the opportunity for an introduced lunch.

[00:33:02] I love to eat ramen at lunch. The opportunity that loves to choose us, that we can have fun and we can do stuff Just like, talk to people and like eat, but at the same time, but what is?

[00:33:27] Oh, number one, you get to sit next to my friends and talk to wife. Number two, this rule is perfect for us and for learning.

[00:33:44] We had lunch and pizza and, um, strawberry and cheese. And some people.

[00:34:00] And then, we just, we cooked. So, I put them at lunch. Then, I, we, we, uh. So, we were at lunch after we were on television.

[00:34:21] within a very different topic and we were getting back to the class. I will tell you what so is important to me.

[00:34:37] It's an episode of Friday. They are the best. I wish I could stay here forever, but I cannot affect it or one. It's a little bit to enjoy the food voucher at recess.

[00:34:55] I love the doctor. I love the arm that is low and low ground. The excellent at recess. I love the arm and the light of the day.

[00:35:14] I'm so careful for someone who is taking care of me for having a hard degree. Like, at the time of business, my house was doing my work for me on his knees. Not to push people off a slave and not push people and fall and make them fall.

[00:35:43] Recess makes me to be more physical and makes me make new friends. Bring me back. Later. There's a part of me because I think I can work and I'm new.

[00:36:02] Gracias. Chukro laca. Because I can work perfectly well. Because you have to work. Because I'm a part of my head.

[00:36:27] Spasiba. Baby, you are on to date! What work is when you ask us when we need to remember to give me the best chance to speak, to speak, and have the best life.

[00:36:44] I like everything to learn a school board. I like school because I like to learn. School is important to me because it helps me learn new things every day. There's also a place where I can hang out with my friend, baby, and myself.

[00:37:02] One of the things about school, one of them is reading because the teacher reads for us and then we do it with partners and then we do it after that we do the school single reading.

[00:37:32] The next one I like is Recess because we play with my friends and everyone else plays in the park. Even when we do Recess, we play ABCR sometimes. The last one I like is Math because we do math on Math Notebooks, and I'll tell you about the Math Notebooks.

[00:37:56] Like, so you first take it out, up into 270 every page, your book is done, you get a new one. And that's it. Thank you for your school board.

[00:38:13] Thank you for your work for the opportunity company. Thank you for being advocates for excellence. I think it was difficult to show it tonight with the captioning on it, so I'll make sure that I provide that to you through YouTube so you can see exactly what each of the students were saying.

[00:38:51] But I think the great thing is you should be able to see that the theme and what our principals was trying to help our students see is the connection between opportunities and excellence and I know that that was the theme for the month for VSBA but as young as these students are to be able to understand that encore and lunch and all of these things are provided to them as opportunities for growth and to be well-rounded students and to see the connection with that with our school board making those opportunities for them so thank you to our elementary principals for working with our students and our ITTS is for that presentation

[00:39:30] next we will have our secondary principals who will do the same offering their reflections before we showcase their collective video message good evening school board again school board appreciation is a great time to recognize all the support you've given and one of the great things about

[00:40:07] Manassas is we're nine schools and as you saw it got kick-started with mr. Rupert suggesting the elementary schools get together then Miss Finnegan sends a quick email saying let's go together a secondary and just the collaboration and then dr. Chapman able to get miss Jackson and I looped in that happens because the school board facilitates that you've made us a community because of you give us the opportunities to excel and when you look at the nine schools we work together because we're under the

umbrella of the school board so we really appreciate everything you've given to us everything you continue to support we

[00:40:46] don't only see you here tonight but we see you at school events we see you as parents in the community and you're you're in the classrooms you're in the buildings our teachers know who you are our students know who you are so that is something that I appreciate being a principal working in a school division that has a school board that supports us so what we did we put together a video and what I think is great about this video is it's student driven because it's developed by the high school students. One day they came, they visited all four schools, and they were able to talk to students in our school and just ask them questions and get their

[00:41:23] candid feedback. But here's our video, and again, thank you for everything.

[00:41:38] My name is Williams, and I'm here to interview some Bayfield students.

[00:42:05] My name is Paola Mendarez. If you were a school board member for a day, what would you change? What I would change is that, like, do, like, what stuff that, like, what kids want and, like, but also respect the rules and stuff.

[00:42:22] Thank you. Hi, my name's Soya Ellis, and I'm here when? Gianna. And if you were a school board member for a day, what would you change? The time we go in and the time we get out of school. Thank you. If I was a school board member for a day, I'd try to get the time between classes to be a bit longer.

[00:42:42] I would give the kids more freedom, like, you know, like, they would get to use their phones and stuff, and they would, like, be able to see their friends more, and, like, when you walk and they, like, change classes, they'd get more time. Bullying with everyone except the school system.

[00:42:59] I would try to make the rules more equal in school because they try to limit more the girls in the bathroom than the boys. I changed that we could use our phones during lunch so we could, like, talk to our families. The bathroom policy. It's the bathroom. You own two people a day. It's kind of annoying.

[00:43:17] Thank you. If I were a school board member for a day, I would change students being allowed to leave school for lunch and letting them go, like, leave for lunch and come back. If I was a school board for a day, I would change ten extra minutes of recess and less work.

[00:43:35] The students. Four nights for one day in school. I would bring back early release. So you can use your phones? I want to make student parking free. Absolutely nothing. I love Osport. And I wouldn't change a thing.

[00:43:54] Hello, I'm Kira, and I'm here with METS students to ask questions for the school board. So, who am I here with? Quinson. What is your favorite thing about Manassas City Public Schools? Just the staff and, like, the overall, like, school.

[00:44:11] I'm here with Baldwin Intermediate Students. Who am I here with? Liam. What is your favorite thing about Manassas City Public Schools? I like how everything is just local. You can see your friends, they're like right across the street. It's really all about how they teach us and how they explain how to do it.

[00:44:32] My favorite thing about MCPS is how they try their best to cater to all the kids' wants while still following the rules. The sports that they have here that we're able to attend, like soccer or football. Same, I have to say sports because it gets you active and stuff.

[00:44:48] Having my friends here. Me getting encouraged to do fun things. My favorite thing about Manassas City Public Schools is that everyone here is so nice and everyone here is so respectful. And the new rules is brilliant.

[00:45:04] I would say the teachers. My favorite thing about MCPS is how the teachers are involved with the students' education. That I could be with my friends and with the teachers. We get food.

[00:45:20] My favorite thing about Manassas City Public Schools is the freedom that they give to the children and all the students that actually help out in the public schools and all the teachers as well. My favorite thing is the diversity we have in school.

[00:45:36] Their schedules because we don't have to wake up at like 3 o'clock to go to school. My favorite thing would probably be the teachers encouraging us to learn and have a good time. My favorite thing about Manassas City Public Schools is probably our leadership program at OHS.

[00:45:54] I guess I would say the people. The people are so full of energy, and they're super nice. How fun the teachers are. I really love the food. They really just serve some pretty good food sometimes, and it makes my day.

[00:46:10] We have fun, and there's a lot of activities we do in science, and we enjoy doing a lot of things. That's all. It's just pretty good. You know, I'll cheer. I'll cheer.

[00:46:30] Thank you. You are Vanessa's team. Thank you. We appreciate your team. Thank you.

[00:46:57] Thank you. Thank you for all you're doing. - Thank you.

[00:47:15] - Thank you school board. - Thank you. - I appreciate two weeks to the Manassas City School Board.

[00:47:38] - Thank you.

[00:48:02] - Yes, thank you to our school board. We hope these presentations serve as a heartfelt reminder of the impact that you have on our students, just to see their smiling faces. I love that last one with them jumping around like that. I mean, because they should have a good time at school. They should enjoy being with one another, and the opportunity for reflections, to see the connections between what the school board does for them, I think was an excellent option for them this year.

[00:48:28] So thank you for your leadership and your dedication. do have certificates of appreciation here for you so I'm going to ask you to please join us down front for an opportunity to take a picture with our

[00:48:38] principals board members I know you received some cards that were passed out

[00:49:52] but that you also have a chair there from METS maybe we can put it in the boardroom or something but yeah but that that's compliments of METS middle

[00:50:02] school okay our final spotlight school board clerk appreciation week February

[00:51:28] 17th through the 21st has been designated as school board clerk appreciation week by the Virginia School Boards Association board meetings and activities just don't happen there are countless hours put in to make board operations run smoothly and our school board clerk makes it look seamless at this time miss Brescia will come forward with a special presentation all right so

[00:52:04] I was the point person this year to commemorate and celebrate Miss Alba Garza and Miss Muffin Wilkowski, who's not here right now, and all of the hard work that you do for us to support us in our work as school board members. I know you love to be the center of attention, so I'm going to talk a really long time. One of my gifts to you is that I'm going to keep this brief. Some of our other gifts to you is a card full of our heartfelt thanks and also a Target gift card and some nice lovely tulips for the lovely person that you are. So thank you so much from all of us, from us to

[00:52:38] you. Thank you for keeping us on time, on track, and out of trouble. I know, that's right. But in honor of Clerk Appreciation Week, the VSBA has issued the following proclamation, and I'm going to irritate her just a little longer. Whereas school board clerks in each locality throughout

[00:53:14] our great Commonwealth are appointed by law to fulfill their duties and responsibilities and whereas school board clerks are responsible for keeping accurate records of meetings and proceedings of the school board a record of all receipts and disbursements and a record of all official acts and whereas school board clerks perform such other duties in connection with the school business of his or her county or city as may be required by the the school board and where a school board clerks maintain frequent contact with the public including parents employees and the media on behalf of the

[00:53:51] school board and superintendent and where a school board clerks in the performance of their duties are often required to work extra hours extent attending board meetings and where a school board clerks join with school boards to help ensure that students achieve to their highest potential and And whereas school board clerks provide an invaluable service for school board members and superintendents, the VSBA Board of Directors does hereby recognize the third week of February as School Board Clerk Appreciation Week in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[00:54:27] Thank you, Ms. Garza, and to Ms. Wilkowski for her assistance.

[00:55:01] Clues our spotlights for tonight. Thank you.

[00:55:22] Thank you, Mrs. Radford. And now on our agenda, we have board committee reports. And I'll go to Mrs. Brescia for her reports on two personnel committee meetings. Yes, yes. Good evening, board members, members of the public.

[00:55:39] The personnel committee, soon to be renamed the board development committee, has met twice since our last regular meeting, once on February 4th and again on February 19th. The committee has been busy and is making recommendations in the following areas. First, the committee is recommending updates to our statement of ethics and good governance.

[00:55:56] One of these recommendations is to rename it to the code of ethics. The revised document will be available for full board discussion at our next regular meeting on March 11th. Next, the committee is also working on recommending updates to our operating protocols, although work on this continues.

[00:56:13] The goal is to complete these suggested updates in the coming weeks for full board discussion by the end of March. And finally, the committee considered whether to recommend updates to school board member stipends and benefits. The committee considered, first, whether to recommend making school board members eligible for health insurance.

[00:56:30] Manassas City School Board members are not currently eligible for division health insurance, which makes us somewhat of an outlier both in our region and here within the city. However, due to the

high potential costs associated with this, the committee is not recommending that the board move forward with board member health insurance eligibility at this time.

[00:56:47] The committee does, however, recommend that the board consider updates to its member stipends, including the stipend for chair. School board member stipends have not been adjusted since 2015, 10 years ago. This recommendation will be discussed by the full board at our next budget work session on Thursday, February 27th.

[00:57:05] Reminder that the recommendation is not binding. It's recommended for discussion only. Only the full board has the authority to make any adjustments. That's it. - Thank you, Mrs. Brescia. Next up is citizens' comments. Do we have anyone signed up to speak?

[00:57:20] All right. At this time, we welcome citizens who wish to speak about services, policies, and affairs of the City of Manassas Public Schools. Because we have an agenda we need to complete, we ask that comments be limited to three minutes we appreciate the time you have taken to be here we treat citizens comments as a public hearing and we do not engage in conversation with speakers the lack of an immediate response to your comments should not be taken as a lack of interest or concern please be

[00:57:50] respectful when presenting your comments miss cook good evening my name is Sarah cook and my husband and I are both proud residents of Manassas City as well as teachers here in our schools we love this city and want the best for its residents and most importantly its children this evening after months of work our superintendent dr. Newman will present his proposed budget for fiscal year 26 this budget will as do all budgets tell of our school divisions priorities as it relates to our schools its students and the staff that makes up

[00:58:26] mcps I've been following monasticity public schools budget very closely for the last three fiscal years as well as the the budgets of the nine surrounding school divisions specifically I've examined closely the salary scales of teachers support staff and administrative personnel at certain tenure points and with certain degree credentials I've also tracked medium median income limits as put forth by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development more commonly known as HUD these are the income limits by which households are classified as low-income very low income and extremely low income for the past three school years the salaries for our administrators specifically our

[00:59:05] principals and assistant principals have remained extremely competitive and within 5% of market. Our market, as defined by Korn Ferry, who recently conducted a compensation study for MCPS, consists of Fairfax, Loudoun, Manassas Park, Prince William, and Alexandria City. This is fitting company as Manassas City, according to HUD, boasts the same median family income as those jurisdictions. Unfortunately, the salaries of other categories of personnel are not nearly as competitive. As I've been following the money, so to speak, one thing is clear. Manassas City eagerly wants to get educators in the door and

[00:59:40] this is a great thing. This is evidenced by our beginning salary sale, our beginning salary rates for teachers that are competitive with all in our market. Still though, much else on the teacher scale is lacking. As experience and expertise increases, the chasm increases between our compensation and the compensation of surrounding divisions. A licensed educator with a bachelor's degree and 10 years of experience in MCPS would still be classified as low income according to hud's 2024 limits lacking also are the salaries for our support positions with which at the time of the corn ferry study were on average eight percent below market if you were to look at our

[01:00:18] support scales even after 30 years of service to manassas city the majority of our support workers can be classified as low income or even very low income according to hud our economy is not a kind one and the research is clear on the link between equitable teacher compensation the success of students when my husband and i two degree professionals who have a combined 21 years of educational service most of Manassas City still have not attained the median household income it signals a problem when we are attempted to leave for purely financial reasons to be able to afford a house in this city not because we want to this signals an issue what we need in Manassas City are great teachers and support staff we need teachers who come to Manassas and stay

[01:00:57] people who are dedicated over time to our children it is true that there are other things that may keep keep one here but you cannot deny the importance of people's livelihood. When there are those on salary scales within market and those far from it, I hope that as you work and rework the budget this season, equity is at front of mind and not equality, as the distinction is incredibly important. Just as we strive to give each student what they need in our buildings, I hope you too will strive to differentiate the allocation of funds so

[01:01:34] that all of our staff are paid what they deserve. After all, hiring and retaining high-quality staff is the only thing that will move our schools in the direction they must go. Thank you. Thank you. Is there anyone else that wishes to speak? Anyone at all? Ms. Cook could you send us, can you email that to us? Thank you. Okay moving along on our agenda this evening. Can I get a motion for the consent agenda? Chair I move that the School Board of the City of Manassas

[01:02:06] approve the consent agenda as modified. I have a motion by Mrs. Stevens second by Vice-Chair Spall that the School Board of the City of Manassas approve the consent agenda as modified. Is there any discussion? All in favor?

[01:02:22] - Aye. - Any opposed? The motion carries seven zero. Tonight on the discussion agenda, our first item of business is the superintendent's FY 2526 proposed budget.

[01:02:39] And I welcome to the podium, Dr. Cassata. - Okay. Good evening Chair Seberg, Vice Chair Spall, School Board members and Dr. Newman. Tonight, Mr. Taft Kelly, our director of finance, will present the superintendent's proposed budget for FY26.

[01:02:54] Before we start, I'd like to express my appreciation to Mr. Kelly and to Lee Miller, budget supervisor, for their work on the budget. I want to take a moment to thank Lee one more time for her tireless work on the MCPS budgets and for her support in transitioning me into the budget world since this is her final budget as she's retiring at the end of the school year.

[01:03:12] Thank you, Lee. There are many moving pieces and unknowns involved in the development of the budget, but they have navigated them all and have put this budget and story together for you tonight. Mr. Kelly will walk through the budget timeline at the end of the presentation.

[01:03:29] I'm gonna set the stage and help us connect this budget to our strategic plan since the budget is the way we live out our vision, mission, and beliefs. As you know, our strategic vision is that each MCPS graduate will be prepared to maximize their potential as a member of the global community.

[01:03:45] That vision is supported by our mission that challenges us all to be architects of student achievement, which requires us to provide learning environments that support and empower our

students. Our ultimate goals are to have students graduate on time multiple opportunities but also be prepared to be active citizens.

[01:04:01] As I mentioned earlier, our budget is the way we bring our strategic vision, mission and beliefs to life. MCPS has identified a set of belief statements that are critical bedrocks on which our strategic plan is built. You will see in our proposed budget that these belief statements played a critical role in the choices made. First, I want to call your attention to the following belief statement: We believe in fiscally supporting intentional systems for success in an environment conducive to learning.

[01:04:24] This proposed budget represents intentional choices to support student success. And next, I want to call your attention to this belief statement: All Manassas City Public Schools employees are educators. This statement is a belief that all employees, regardless of role, play a critical role in the support for achievement and success of all of our students.

[01:04:41] These two belief statements in particular are embodied in our budget decisions and priorities. Now typically when we discuss the strategic plan, we start with this image. But tonight, however, it was important to lay the groundwork with the vision and beliefs. The budget represents the way we provide the aligned foundational supports and necessary infrastructure to support the four pillars of the strategic plan that help us promote student academic success.

[01:05:05] Speaking of the pillars, this slide reminds us of the objectives and strategic priorities for each one. The common thread within each priority is quality staff to implement them in a coherent way. It is not my privilege to turn the remainder of the presentation over to Mr. Kelly who will walk you through the proposed budget itself.

[01:05:26] Thank you, Dr. Quesada. I'd like to start by giving some background as to why we're all here today. The Code of Virginia mandates that every school division and every superintendent prepare a balanced budget annually. That budget must then be presented to the school board for approval and adoption and furthermore presented to and approved by the local governing body, in this case, the city of Manassas.

[01:05:52] I now want to talk about some legislative updates. As you all know, the governor unveiled his proposed budget in January of 2025. Our budget process has remained the same in which we utilize the governor's proposed budget in order to prepare the superintendent's budget. The governor's budget did include state funding for a 3% salary increase, but it's important to note that that increase is only for SOQ positions, which are standard of quality positions.

[01:06:20] The Virginia House and Senate released their budget revisions on February 6th, but the final adoption will likely not occur until late March, if we're lucky. Both budgets keep the 3% salary increase that I mentioned before, but would also include additional funding of up to \$2.1 million from Vanessa City Public Schools.

[01:06:41] Next, I want to talk about some facts about our school division. We have approximately 7,689 students, of which 71% are Hispanic, 55% of those being English learners. I also think it's important to point out that all 7,600 or so students have access to free lunch and breakfast here at MCPS.

[01:07:03] That is a phenomenal benefit to our students. And one less thing for them to worry about as they navigate our school day, it is something that a lot of divisions can't offer and I can tell you for a fact that more kids are utilizing this and getting lunches ended before it's sort of very important now I want to

take a look at our enrollment which drives a lot of our funding first we'll look at enrollment by level and so this shows our moment over the last 19 years each column represents enrollment levels by elementary intermediate middle and high school students as you can see from the chart our enrollment has remained relatively flat especially over the last

[01:07:43] five years. The change has been within I would say 50 students so it's been very flat enrollment. This next chart shows our English learner enrollment over time and broken down by active versus former EL students. For those wondering an active EL student would be a student that is currently receiving services and is classified as level 1 through 4. As you can see from the number of active EL students continues to increase and is currently at its highest level. This last chart shows how we compare regionally with other districts in terms of cost per pupil which is per the Washington Area Board of Education

[01:08:21] guide or what we call the way we got the cost per people refers to the amount of money a school division spends on each student on an annual basis and as you can see by the chart NASA City Schools spends about \$18,076 per student of the eight respondents to the way we got that places us sixth on on that list with our local regionally other schools now let's get into the numbers but before we do that we're going to talk about the budget development process and how we got to this point. It starts by principals and directors reviewing their FY25 budget allocations

[01:09:00] and determining if that allocation was enough and if they have any additional needs for the FY26 budget year. If there are any new needs or requests, they are submitted to the Executive Cabinet along with a justification as to how it aligns with our strategic plan.

[01:09:18] At that point, the Cabinet members review and decide what moves forward based on the available funding and identified priorities. Finally, the budget team compiles all information and prepares the balanced budget for the superintendent. Now let's look at the numbers.

[01:09:34] So this slide provides a summary of the FY26 proposed operating budget, as well as the grant and debt service funds. Overall, the revenue in the operating fund is increasing by 3.3%, with the largest increase coming from state aid, and that's going to be about \$83.8 million. The city also provides a large portion of our revenue, as you can see from the slide, and they will be contributing roughly \$61 million in revenue to support our operating budget in FY26.

[01:10:01] It's important to note that the total contribution from the city totals about \$63.8 million. However, a portion of that funding goes towards supporting our CIP, or our Capital Improvement Plan, as well as our debt service payments. You'll notice our federal funding is slated to decrease slightly in FY26, and that's primarily due to the expiration of funding for various programs that were created during the COVID years.

[01:10:24] Finally, our expenditures total \$151 million across the operating grant and debt service funds, and most importantly, they balance to our funding sources. The illustrations on this slide will detail how our revenue and expenditures are broken down percentage-wise in the operating budget.

[01:10:45] Please note that this does not include the grant fund nor the debt service fund, which is why you don't see any federal funding here on the funded side. As we just discussed, the state aid makes up the largest funding source, which is about 50% of our total funding, followed closely by the city appropriation, which is 42% of our funding.

[01:11:03] Sales tax, which is technically a part of state aid as well, but large enough to break out, is also a part of the state aid. And then the other funding sources are miscellaneous revenues and charges for services, which is a smaller amount. In terms of how we utilize the funding, you can see that the largest expenditure by far are for instruction, and that's 75%.

[01:11:23] We then have expenditures for operations and maintenance, as well as admin, attendance, and health around 7% each. That's followed by technology expenditures of 5.7%, people transportation at 4.2%, and then facilities at 0.6%.

[01:11:39] Over the next two years, you'll see that facilities are starting to increase as we start to build and get further along in the Dean building and more expenditures get expended there. Now some operating highlights. \$4.7 million increase in total revenue for our operating budget.

[01:11:58] With that comes \$5.2 million in compensation increases and \$212,000 in additional strategic investments beyond compensation. The expenditure highlights, so the primary focus remains enhancing employee compensation and making salaries more regionally competitive.

[01:12:15] and this is overall salaries for all employees, as well as what we consider a longevity step, and that's something that's new for our salary scales, and I'll talk a little more about that in a later slide. Additionally, there are some health insurance rate increases that go along with that.

[01:12:33] Compensation over the years. I thought it would be a good idea as I was learning and getting up to speed on what we've done here in Madison City Schools and me being new to kind of highlight what we've done for our staff over the last several years in terms of compensation. And what you'll see in this slide is over the last five years, all staff have received an increase of about 28.59% over the last five years and that includes a proposed 5.5% increase in FY26.

[01:12:59] That is a phenomenal number and there's a lot of work that we've done to help get our staff and our teachers up to speed and caught up with some of the neighboring districts. With that being said, I do want to point out that there's still work to do as the number you see here which is to help us get caught up and to get some of our staff caught up that other districts are still adding more salary expenses to their school districts.

[01:13:24] And so I think it's important that we continue to focus on compensation and make that a priority moving forward. This year's strategic investments, or this year's budget, focuses primarily on two strategic investments. One is quality workforce.

[01:13:41] Again, we've talked about salaries a couple times now, but we are proposing a minimum of 5.5% increase for all eligible staff, which will be effective on July 1. The longevity step, which is an added step to the salary scale for instructional and support staff and will allow us to show our more experienced staff that even though the ending step isn't moving up, we do feel that they are providing great work and we want to show them that by giving a little more than the average COLA percentage that we normally give.

[01:14:11] We then took a look at our certified nursing assistants and realized that those assistants are certainly below average for what we consider to be industry standard. And as such, we have decided to reclassify those nursing assistants to make sure they are up to industry standard.

[01:14:28] Then inclusive and collaborative learning environment, we are adding some additional ESOL certified teachers as well as additional funding to schools for benchmark and other instructional materials. Now, it's not all sunshine and rainbows. There are some reductions in order for us to balance the budget.

[01:14:46] As you saw a few slides ago, we increased our revenue by \$4.7 million. However, our compensation increases went up by \$5.2 million. So the math, as you would say, is not really math-ing that well. How we got to balance our budget is by doing a few things.

[01:15:02] One of them is called a salary lapse. And basically what a salary lapse is, is when you have older and more experienced staff that are retiring, have tons of experience, typically on the higher end of the scale. Those staff members are then replaced typically by younger or less experienced staff.

[01:15:19] who typically come in at a lower point on the scale. Those savings have allowed us to reduce or to have savings of about \$974,000 in FY26. Additionally, we had to make some other cuts. And what we chose to cut was the intervention services.

[01:15:38] And so we had to reduce our allocation for intervention services by \$1 million. With that comes some critical unfunded needs. As I just mentioned, we had to make some reductions in order to balance the budget. And so with that, we would like to request or we'd like to add some things that we feel are critical for us.

[01:15:59] However, we do not have the funds today to fund these initiatives. An additional 1.5% salary increase. As I mentioned, while we have made some strides in our salaries, we would like to continue to make those strides and be more competitive with our neighbors. And so we would like to increase by 1.5% or an additional \$1.7 million.

[01:16:18] The alternative education program, which we've talked about multiple times here in this room as well, which is going to be \$2 million to start up, and then there are some recurring costs that go along with that to keep the program running. Even without the education or the alt-ed program, even adding an alternative ed coordinator currently would help with our program and help us get on the right foot moving towards implementing a new program or adding to that program.

[01:16:44] Additional ESOL teachers. As I mentioned before, our number of active EL students is going up. I think it increased 4% this year over last year, and so adding additional ESOL teachers will definitely help in that endeavor. Intervention services, as I just mentioned we cut a million dollars in intervention services and so we would like to get that funding back in order to implement those services.

[01:17:04] Essential registration and then diesel school bus to add to the fleet and some potential unknowns. You all may have heard or read that there is some uncertainty regarding federal funding right now that is going on.

[01:17:19] And so we are monitoring that closely to see if that's going to have any impact on us here at Manassas City Schools. Collective bargaining, there's also some rumbling about collective bargaining and so that is something that's also on the horizon for us. State and local funding. Right now, the state and local funding, as I said, there are some amendments to the governor's budget that is currently pending, and we are waiting to see what is going to be finally approved, and hopefully we get the additional \$2.1 million that I mentioned earlier.

[01:17:48] And then paid parental leave. That's a benefit that I've heard from several staff members would be something that they are interested in, and so we added that to our list of things to take a look at for future implementation. Now we'll talk about the remaining budget timeline.

[01:18:06] We are presenting the superintendent's proposed budget today on the 25th. We will have a work session on February 27th, then a public hearing on the 11th of March, another budget work session on March 18th, school board, hopefully we'll adopt a budget on March 25th, and then quick turnaround, we present the school board budget to city council on March 26th.

[01:18:30] And with that, I will take any questions you may have. Questions from board members, looking to my right, Mrs. Stephens. Thank you, Mr. Kelly. Quick question. Where you were on the slide that talks about funding from the state, 3% salary increase for standards of quality positions on the governor's budget, and then an additional 3% from the general assembly. That 3% from the general assembly, is that SSU funded positions also, or is that all positions?

[01:19:02] That's a great question and thank you for clarifying that because it is not an additional 3%. It's just they kept the 3% that was already approved in the governor's budget. Sometimes what could happen is they could back it out in their amendments and so in this case they kept that in there and it is just for us.

[01:19:19] Okay, so it doesn't end up equaling 6%. I wish it would. It does not. Because sometimes the way it sounds a little bit is like maybe 6% and that kind of got me excited for a second. So, and of course, you know, there is no state funding for non-SOQ positions.

[01:19:37] That is correct. And from previous conversations with others who used to be in the division, those non-SOQ positions count for like a third of the who and what we need to run our schools. That is correct.

[01:19:53] So I think we always need to keep that in mind that when we hear the General Assembly say, we're doing this, we're doing that, we're funding this, we're funding that, you have to read the fine print. And that's the fine print. And then I just had another question. Intervention services, can you explain exactly what they are?

[01:20:11] Sure. So you all may remember that we entered into an agreement with university instructors in this current fiscal year. So university instructors is providing those intervention services for us currently. We currently had \$1.2 million allocated for those services in FY26.

[01:20:27] However, in order for us to ensure that we could provide a competitive increase for all of our staff without cutting any positions, we wanted to ensure that we could do that without cutting positions. And so, in our mind, keeping that funding in-house and not letting people go was a more important decision to make.

[01:20:47] And so we had to cut the funding for university instructors in FY26, at least one million dollars of it. And so that ends up impacting our students potentially in a negative way? It does. cut could potentially impact our ability to provide after school programs but the flip side is we would have to end positions if we chose not to do this correct correct thank you thank you for your presentation it was greatly appreciated thank you dr jones do it again it was on it's on okay thank you for your presentation i have a question you talked about the longevity step what teachers does

[01:21:26] that uh go for i mean what years of service so so so right now if you're at step 30 we're adding a step 31 which is called the longevity step and the average increase for instructional staff is three and a half percent it does not apply to the admin scale it's for support and instructional staff. Mrs. Brescia. No problem. Since

[01:21:59] January 3rd I don't know so thank you for this presentation I I have a bunch of questions to ask but I haven't decided what order I'm going to ask them in so If this is a little disorganized, please forgive me. That's all right. So I did notice on slide.

[01:22:18] So one of the, this is a lean budget. I want to observe that the same way we've all observed this. This is the least favorable budget cycle I have been through as a board member in my years, my two years that I've been a part of this.

[01:22:34] I did notice that we had an investment in additional ESOL certified teachers. And if I'm not mistaken, the ratio of ESOL, you know, L learners to ESOL teachers has changed. And so this is, we are, we're meeting a need here that our students need, but also we're required to make that change, right?

[01:22:55] Yes. So this is part two of a two-year phase-in of new ratios, right, for the ESOL staff. So because our numbers are growing, we put in positions to help us get where we need to go, but we also want to be mindful of that growth, which is why you saw it in two places.

[01:23:12] You saw it in the budget, but then also in the unfunded needs. So we would wanna prioritize that because of our population and make sure that we continue to meet those ratios. - Okay, I understand. I just wanted to get that on the record, thank you. The other thing I wanted to discuss, I wanna just discuss a little bit, I have a feeling we're gonna be talking about this a lot, when you use the word reductions, right?

[01:23:37] Like this is a word that makes a lot of people nervous. It makes me nervous, but I want to make sure that we're understanding what our limitations are and how we got here. In the state of Virginia, are we the school board? Are we permitted to levy a tax? We are not permitted to levy a tax.

[01:23:53] We are not permitted to levy a tax, correct. I mean, I knew the answer to that. I just wanted to get that out there. So when we have lean budgets that come out of Richmond, which is 50% of our funding, that's it for us. We can't levy a tax to make up the difference.

[01:24:12] And the 40% of our budget that comes from our local funding body, or 44%, whatever that is, 42%, that's up to the city council. We make a compelling case every single year, but it is ultimately up to them.

[01:24:29] That is correct. That is correct. For the last several years, it's been about 3% increase year over year over the last year's allocation. Right. And so this is a distinction from some of our neighboring jurisdictions. For example, I'm aware of Prince William County, which has a revenue share agreement.

[01:24:45] can you tell us a little bit about what a revenue share agreement is sure um so a revenue sharing agreement i happen to work for a county that recently that has one or had one i should say is an agreement that you have with your local governing body and typically it is stipulated that certain revenues certain typically tax revenues related to real estate or other things are split with the school division at a certain percentage that's agreed upon with the school division the school board and the county board of

supervisors or the city council so basically If the city if the if you're a locality wants to buy a fire truck every dollar they raise towards that fire truck

[01:25:23] You know a certain percentage automatically goes to your local school system if you have a revenue share agreement Right do we have a revenue share agreement? We do not currently have a revenue share agreement clarifying that so this means that we have to Rearrange the deck chairs on our own on our own ship here if we want to continue to serve our students and do it the best that we can We can't go we can't make the ship any bigger. I would say we we like to work with our folks over at the city and present our case to what our needs are and

[01:26:01] Hope that they provide us with an allocation that that helps us support what our goals are they and For anyone who was watching the City Council meeting yesterday They did include in their list of things they will be considering in their work session a possible funding infusion To get our raises up to 7% that is something they're going to talk about. Yes I did see that and that is something that I have heard. Yes, so they're gonna talk about it. That's great We're gonna talk about it with them, but it's ultimately up to them, right? It is It's ultimately up to them and how it fits in their budget for FBAR 26

[01:26:36] All right, so to crystallize this a little bit the limitations that we have you know, we can't levy a tax We don't have a steady revenue share revenue coming in like they have in the county We have our Richmond budget that we do our best with, we have our local funding that we do our best with and that we work our best with with our partners over on the city side, but ultimately they have lots of other priorities as well.

[01:27:03] So that's where that pool of money comes from. So when we talk about uncertainties, you know, for example, losing the possibility of a reduction in federal funding. If we have a reduction in federal funding, we are not going to be able to, you know, the only remedy we would be able to pursue if we lost that funding would be to either cut some kind of services like we're doing for the interventions for students or cut staff positions.

[01:27:35] Those are the only two places those can come from right now. Again, it would depend on, obviously, the extent of the cuts, but if we were to receive some cuts at this particular point in time, in order to keep our budget balanced, we would have to consider potential cuts to positions or programs.

[01:27:50] That is fair. And it's my understanding that divisions that have adopted collective bargaining resolutions, that there is headcount associated with that, that usually divisions have to add administrative personnel to administer to the collective bargaining process.

[01:28:08] this something that and I don't anticipate that you have the answer to this tonight but is this something that we are going to be exploring what the fiscal impact of that might potentially be so that we can make an informed decision when that time comes it is certainly something that we would look to explore and to have more information around I can say from working at a division that did have a CBA in place there are additional costs associated with implementing a collective bargaining agreement and so we would have to take a look at that if that were to come to fruition and any cost at this point in time with this budget would mean either students lose their services or people lose their jobs I would say we would have to make some tough decisions

[01:28:46] in the current budget to fit that in there that's all thank you any other questions down this way mrs. Spall yes I'm not looking to be adversarial if by any means but I just do want to break it down in a

different way or you know to back up what miss Brescia saying in my estimation teachers are rock stars and they deserve to be compensated as such and we have decided as a board that you know all educators all of our employees are educators we have no taxing

[01:29:24] authority we have no means by which we can generate any revenue so I would ask you all in the kindest way possible you know that it's time to speak up and tell especially if you're a resident of Manassas tell City Council what's important to you I believe that it has happened a number of times in a number of surveys that people say they want education to be a priority you know a lot of other people I believe in you know public safety fire rescue you know at some point it's our turn and I would like to encourage you to ask to have our

[01:30:04] turn you know and our needs be met I think that all of this is important all that is important when we started schools in 1977 all dead was part of the plan you know our forefathers knew that alt-ed was important so I would just encourage you in the nicest way possible to state you know your priorities as citizens as well we are trying to fight the fight and you know even using the word fight isn't fair because our City Council I believe cares you know they've got a lot of a lot of decisions to make as well but I do believe it's our turn

[01:30:43] and I do believe that it's up to us as a community to stand up for what we believe in. That's all. Thank you Mrs. Paul. Anyone else? Okay well I thank you for your presentation Mr. Kelly. We look forward to the next few weeks of talking about this. Thank you all. Thank you. Okay next up on our agenda is the attendance update. Dr. Cassata, Executive Director of Accountability and Finance

[01:31:15] and Dr. Mandy Zietz. Are you speaking too? Yeah. And principals. It's Ms. Finnegan and Dr. Chapman. There you are. You're going to share your school level approaches to improving student attendance. So thank you. All right. Good evening again, Chair Sieberg, Vice Chair Spall, School Board members, and Dr. Newman. Tonight we have a collaborative update for you about attendance and absenteeism at the midpoint of this school year. Back in October, Dr. Zietz, newly in charge of attendance management for this school year outlined our attendance processes and protocols

[01:31:52] for the 2024-25 school year the goal for tonight is to provide an update as well as examples of how attendance and absenteeism are being addressed at metz and osborne which were the two schools with the highest percentages of students identified as chronically absent during the 2023-2024 school year here are the topics we're going to be covering this evening first i'm going to review the roles related to attendance and then i will discuss a snapshot of attendance data and how we monitor and utilize those data both how we utilize them and how state and federal accountability utilize them next dr zayetz will review the mcps attendance protocols and the structures in place for supporting schools with addressing attendance challenges and finally miss finnegan

[01:32:30] and dr chapman will each discuss how they are addressing attendance and absenteeism at their schools as we discussed in the budget presentation all mcps employees are educators and thus everyone plays a role in supporting students with their learning it truly does take a village within the In the attendance world, the positions on this slide represent that village.

[01:32:48] Dr. Zayetz, a supervisor of student data reporting and attendance management, is newly responsible this year for overseeing attendance officers, developing and managing division processes and protocols, and analyzing reporting attendance data. At each school, principals and assistant principals are

the ones responsible for leading their teams and implementing school expectations that are consistent with these division protocols.

[01:33:11] Within the school, counselors provide support and outreach to students and families, both proactively and in response to absences. And teachers are, of course, the people who are with the students every day. They are responsible for accurately capturing and reporting daily and period attendance, and they are the first line of outreach to families when the students miss school.

[01:33:29] It's critical that we accurately capture attendance data in our student information system. As such, our administrative associates who work with attendance, review attendance and absence reports, and reconcile coding and reporting when necessary. Students officers serve a compliance role, but they also support school attendance teams.

[01:33:46] In their compliance roles, they're the ones who intervene with families in cases of truancy. Speaking of truancy, it's important for us to quickly review some distinctions in the language around absenteeism. Truancy is when students begin to accrue significant numbers of absences without explanation.

[01:34:04] The protocol that Dr. Zayetz will discuss includes actions at key numbers of absences so that schools can exhaust efforts before attendance officers get involved with the court system. Now chronic absenteeism, which is what we're really going to be focusing on, is the broader umbrella term from when students are missing significant numbers of school days for any reason, which includes illness, travel, suspension, for example. Missed school days equate to missed instruction and when students start missing significant amounts of instruction it obviously has an impact on their learning. That impact is why chronic absenteeism rates have been included in state and federal accountability systems. At this point we're going to discuss some absenteeism data and how mid-year data can and are are utilized to intervene with students

[01:34:44] who are at risk of becoming chronically absent. By way of reminder, chronic absenteeism is defined as when students miss 10% or more of their membership days. Okay, the easiest way to think about this is for a full year, pretend there's no snow, we're just gonna, on a full year, right, of 180 days, students who miss 18 or more days would be considered chronically absent.

[01:35:05] These calculations in both state and federal accountability include all absences, both excused and unexcused, because when the students are missing, whatever reason they are missing instruction. So throughout the school year division school leaders monitor absenteeism data to identify those students who are at risk of becoming chronically absent. One way to do this is to look at the percent of students missing 10% or more of the school days at different points in the year. It's important to note that students who have missed 10% of the days in February will not all be identified as chronically absent at the end of the year. Intervention and support for students who are at risk is critical to help prevent them from accruing more absences. In

[01:35:41] process data analyses should thus be viewed as watch lists or at risk lists by school attendance teams all right so this slide is going to show us one of those snapshot comparisons it shows us the percent of students by school who have missed 10 percent or more of the school days as of february 13th both in 2024 25 and 23 24. these monthly analysis analyses will see fluctuations as the 10 is based on the number of school days thus far as we move through the school year the number of of days needed to reach that 10% threshold gross.

[01:36:12] In addition, for our smaller schools, it's important to note that small numbers of students can influence percentages pretty easily. When you look at the chart, you see some different patterns. At the elementary school level, the data for Hayden and Round seem to show significant improvements at this point in the year compared to 23-24.

[01:36:29] Baldwin, Dean, and Weems are all relatively level with minor fluctuations up and down. As an example, the percentage of students with 10% or more absences at Dean is higher in 24-25, but it's actually the exact same number of students, since the enrollment at Dean is a little bit smaller this year.

[01:36:44] At the intermediate level, Mayfield shows a slight decrease, but Baldwin currently has a higher percentage of students missing 10% of the days than in 23-24, as of February 13th. Now given the small number of students enrolled at Baldwin, you can hope that the percentage can drop quickly if the school intervenes with those students to keep them from accruing more absences, right?

[01:37:02] Even 10 students would drop that number significantly. At the secondary level, METS is showing a significant improvement as compared to last year, and Osborne is relatively level thus far. Both of those principles will speak to their efforts and the challenges that they're experiencing. All right, this is the fun slide.

[01:37:19] So chronic absenteeism data are included in both federal and state accountability, as I mentioned before. In the past, in the state accreditation system, chronic absenteeism was its own indicator, meaning a school could be level one, two, or three in chronic absenteeism, and that indicator alone could determine accreditation status.

[01:37:35] Moving forward, in the new state accountability system that is going to be launching with the data at the end of this year, chronic absenteeism is also included, but it will be included as one of many components of a weighted index. For the actual calculations used for accountability purposes, it is not as simple as the number of students absent 10% or more of the days divided by the total number of students.

[01:37:56] Adjustments are made to account for some of those situations in which significant absences cannot be avoided. Examples. Students who are enrolled at school for less than half of the year are not included in the calculation. And also, students who participated in homebound instruction, which is most often due to extended medical illness, are excluded from the calculation as well.

[01:38:16] And students who receive home-based services for a portion of the year are excluded during the time they receive those services. Don't worry, you don't have to remember all of those things. But just to show you that this is not a calculation that can be done every day because these things don't come in place until the end of the year. The state also recognizes that the most critical impact of absenteeism is on learning due to missed instruction.

[01:38:36] As a result, the state allows schools to provide what they deem flexible instructional time that occurs outside of the school day as a way for students to make up that missed instruction and receive credit for that time toward those chronic absenteeism calculations. After school and weekend instructional experience must meet specific requirements and provide direct instruction by a licensed teacher in order to be utilized as make up time.

[01:39:00] You'll hear more about what this looks like at the high school level when Dr. Chapman shares later in this presentation. It's important to note that the actual absences are maintained in our student

information system and that these adjustments are made in the calculation for students who participated in this flexible instructional time on the back end at the end as we report to the state.

[01:39:19] At this point, I'm gonna turn the presentation over to Dr. Zayetz, who's gonna review our attendance protocols and the ways that MCPS and our schools are supporting attendance and addressing absenteeism. Thank you.

[01:39:37] evening and thank you for allowing me the opportunity to come before you again to share division attendance process and protocol. To begin my portion presentation this evening I would like to begin with a summarization of the MCPS attendance protocols that I shared in more detail with you in the fall. Our MCPS attendance protocol adheres Dakota Virginia in regard to compulsory attendance while also tailoring our approach in an effort to meet students and families where they are with the goal of working together to improve attendance. Our attendance protocol evokes a collaborative approach in which the investment of all stakeholders is vital and where at the core our students

[01:40:16] are supported by their school family in a process that incorporates additional supports at each step. As you can see here our teachers first reach out with a personal contact when students are out for several days. Next our professional school counselors become part of the process then our attendance officers and deans at Osborne and once we get to a point of ten or more absences then our Our attendance officers, together with the entire Student Support Team, or SST, will take the lead if the SST has determined that all Manassas City Public School efforts have been exhausted and yet the absences continue.

[01:40:52] At each level, supports offered and given are logged as part of the student data story in our student data system. The parent/guardian is involved and letters are sent home for family records. As I shared with you in October in my new role managing attendance for the division, forefront of my work has been to work with all stakeholders to develop and maintain division systems and processes. In order to be most effective and accurate it has been my goal to analyze and report attendance data with particular attendance to identify trends in our data and to continued focused conversations at division and building levels to directly impact attendance

[01:41:31] needs and create specific and targeted approaches to improvement. Our data analysis while ongoing has enabled me to determine some key areas of focus in which we are actively engaging at this time and of which will be focal points in our attendance steering committee that's beginning next month. Here at mid-year here's what we know: consistency and application of processes across the division every building is important and founded within our MCPS regulations and policies of which the attendance steering committee will work to shape and present to you for your thoughts and for your approval. Shifts in our attendance officer schedules was needed to provide each building with an

[01:42:10] attendance compliance officer adept in their knowledge and understanding of attendance needs at each level and to ensure an attendance officer is in the building each day during building work hours with students who work with students families and building colleagues to facilitate a strengthened support system for our students that need it most also identified the need for an attendance landing page on Monassah City Public Schools page and building pages with the express goal of informing students and families of the importance of good attendance while also providing resources supports and specific personnel to answer questions and concerns the page is the draft is

[01:42:50] built by the way with an anticipated launch date very soon we've also identified trends in our data concerning those students with excessive absences this year we've noticed that predominantly those with excessive absences are due to illness and to travel at the high school level there's There's an additional evidence piece or component that absences impact achievement.

[01:43:12] You'll hear more about that in a few minutes with Dr. Chapman's presentation. And we also identified areas in our student data system in which we can be more efficient and more accurate. Work has already begun to redefine our attendance data processes to increase accuracy in data in real time and reducing the burden of the process and errors in the process as well.

[01:43:33] Our analysis has also enabled us to define proactive and reactive approaches to improving student attendance that we have in place right now but also continue to build upon by increasing our network of partners across the community and across other divisions. Colleagues at all levels across the building work hand-in-hand to inform students and families about the importance of good attendance. Our family liaisons, our professional school counselors, our administrative teams, our teachers, our attendance officers, they all work together to educate families about the importance of good attendance. You will hear in a few minutes about incentives for students and to be in every class every day at Metz and Osborne.

[01:44:13] Our continued attendance data analysis has enabled us to define our attendance protocol and identify key needs at each step on which to focus. This work is ongoing not just in numbers and spreadsheets but also in our bi-weekly attendance officer meetings in which we staff cases together and we talk about what's really happening and challenges and barriers. Presenting cases for additional community support by partner with the Manassas City Community Council or MCCC, we do that once monthly, through regular attendance meetings at each building.

[01:44:46] And the list goes on and on, but the core remains true in each component. Relationships between school, community, students and families, number one. Providing school level and community level interventions that are designed specifically for each student is our goal.

[01:45:04] With that, I would, I'm very happy to introduce Mrs. Juliet Finnegan, principal of METS Middle School, to share with you the work that she her Mustang family are doing in regard to improved student attendance at METS. Good evening. I am Juliet Finnegan, the proud principal of METS Middle School and I am excited to share our dedication to enhancing student attendance through the METS way. Our recent attendance data reveals a significant achievement. We have successfully reduced chronic absenteeism from 24% to 16%, a reduction

[01:45:43] by 8% from this time last school year and this is due to the strategies that we've employed. I firmly believe that supporting student success is a collaborative effort. We cannot achieve this critical mission without the active support and engagement of our families. Our partnership with our parents is vital to fostering academic excellence. We engage families proactively through consistent communication of the profound impact regular attendance has on student learning, and that is through our bi-weekly parent newsletter, the Mustang Express, which serves as a

[01:46:19] vital communication tool, and we also reinforce this message at every event and every meeting we have with families. We genuinely need our family's involvement. Now for empowering through our master schedule. Our master schedule is designed with a focus on maximizing opportunities for all students. Beyond essential core classes, our elective programs play a crucial role in enriching our

Mustang's educational experience. By ensuring students have access to these courses, we empower them to develop valuable skill sets and cultivate their interests, laying the foundation for future success. In addition,

[01:46:58] we have implemented a 23-minute homeroom block in our daily schedule to provide continuity and support for students, and they attend homeroom every day, both G and B days. This commitment to consistency fosters positive relationships between students and homeroom teachers, ensuring a nurturing environment with the favorable 1:17 ratio for teacher to students. Within this block check-ins and engaging counseling lessons take place. Now moving on to cultivating a climate of caring and belonging. Building a sense of belonging within our school is essential for our students emotional well-being and

[01:47:37] academic success. When students feel valued, connected, and supported, they thrive. We take intentional steps to greet students every morning with enthusiasm and sometimes with singing, with cheerful greetings, high fives, and fist bumps, and we often use their first name. Our strategic decision to open two separate entrances for our arrival process has allowed us to notice and recognize even more students, ensuring they feel welcomed from the moment they arrive counselors are actively present during arrival making connections with students and conducting quick check-ins with our dedicated staff out in the

[01:48:16] hallways we also provide students with a sense of security and opportunity to connect with any adult whenever they need support moving on to celebrating student achievements in a large school it's easy for students to feel lost or unnoticed when we recognize their efforts and achievements they feel valued and acknowledged during our interdisciplinary team meetings teachers select star students bi-weekly those who exemplify exemplary behaviors even when no one is looking these outstanding students are celebrated through announcements certificates and a dedicated star student bulletin board

[01:48:53] showcasing their accomplishments administrators also seek out our Mustang young leaders students who demonstrate exceptional leadership qualities among their peers we proudly recognize these students for their character and positive choices moving on to our proactive attendance monitoring our attendance team is composed of administration counselors our registrar and interpreters and they are dedicated to ensuring that attendance is a priority we analyze data data weekly to establish an early warning system that identifies students at risk of chronic absenteeism we take proactive measures

[01:49:31] by conducting one-on-one check-ins meetings tailored to students numbers of of absences and reasons for missed days. Together, we create personalized attendance plans that outline specific interventions designed to enhance their commitment to school, fostering connections through after-school activities.

[01:49:50] Finally, beyond academics, we offer a wide variety of after-school clubs and sports that allow our students to bond and feel connected to our school building. From cookie club and ukulele club, to dance club, and to Arabic and Muslim club, we provide numerous opportunities for our students to discover their passion and build lasting friendships.

[01:50:11] We are deeply grateful for our dedicated staff who support these initiatives, reinforcing students' connection to our school and promoting engagement. At Metz Middle School, we believe in defining early and refining often. We are incredibly grateful for the refining process, which has contributed to our increase in student attendance and decrease in chronic absenteeism.

[01:50:34] It takes everyone in this room to work together to make the changes we've made so far at Metz Middle School. So thank you for your partnership and commitment to our Mustangs. And now please welcome Dr. Chapman, principal of Osborne High School, who will also share the strategies that they are using to increase student attendance.

[01:50:53] - Thank you, Ms. Finnegan. - Thank you. - Hello, thanks for having me back. It's exciting up here. So I'm here today to talk a little bit about what we've been doing at Osborne High School this year.

[01:51:12] It has definitely been a year of learning, a year of identifying what processes we have in place, monitoring the effectiveness in the moment with those, but also looking at long-term movement with those processes and then constantly adapting and evolving as we go with some immediate adaptations and some planned for the future ones.

[01:51:32] So I'm gonna focus on the two different lenses that we put on our attendance systems at Osborne High School. So our first one, which is gonna mirror a lot of the things that you've heard Ms. Finnegan share, is starting with proactive approaches. Because if we can use proactive approaches to have students attend regularly to begin with, there's actually not a need for reactive approaches at that point.

[01:51:54] So some of the things we look at about there, and what we've put a heavy focus into this year, is education about attendance. And that education spans from our staff in understanding the importance of taking attendance, keeping it updated, keeping it accurate, making adjustments when there are varying types of attendance for instance completely absent late to class at class but may have had a period of that class where we're not entirely sure you know where we were for a moment and then came back and the addition of some attendance codes which has helped us monitor

[01:52:30] specific student behaviors that we see to again help us identify what are the patterns and what does require an intervention we have also worked on educating our students on the importance of attendance so one of the big connections we look at at the high school is we are constantly building that connection to post high school success our students are at a point where the future is very very imminent for them whether they have figured that out yet or not but what we want to talk about is how does not only the content you learn in high school impact your future but how do the habits and skills that you

[01:53:05] learn in high school impact your future so if you ask any Osborne students we We have a consistent focus on tardiness and how that can impact you in the workforce and the reason that we practice in high school habits that are going to help us carry through in life.

[01:53:22] Consistently with that, we build upon the importance of full day attendance for our students and the ability to show up to every class and face difficult situations and work through them and be able to still come back and face that. We made some intentional choices at the beginning of the year to get face time with every single student in the school in a small group setting so our administrative team broke up we went through every single English class at the school as that is a subject that we knew all students would be enrolled in and had small group presentations not only on student behavioral expectations but a heavy

[01:53:58] focus on attendance and the importance of attending school and talked about some of the actual data and statistics with the students because we're trying to educate so they're realizing this isn't just some old lady standing up there telling me I got to go to school because she's the principal I'm showing them actual Osborne data achievement data of students that show up regularly versus those who are

absent regularly and what type of grades those students are earning with that we then also move that education to our community so our parents can still can help understand that impact as well we have a focus in every one of our newsletters that goes out I will do kind of quarterly a very

[01:54:38] large educational newsletter, but my parent liaison works on getting one out every single two weeks, but we make sure even with that going out two weeks, there is some type of learning component in it to kick it off on the theme of what's coming up, and quite frankly, most of them have a connection to attendance.

[01:54:54] That is also a time that I am able to share with our parents the actual achievement data of students in certain attendance-based zones at Osborne to help parents understand that if you want your student to achieve academically, really, they just, statistically speaking, have to show up to class, right?

[01:55:13] We will carry them through. Kids who come to class, we're providing them the supports, the intervention and the instruction that are helping them achieve in the classes. And I think by telling our parents, this isn't national data, this is Osborne data, these are Osborne students, this is our first semester data, that has been helpful with that.

[01:55:31] We actually have added four times throughout the year, so I've had two of them so far, chats with Chapman's. We vary the time of day to try to be able to hit parents that have availability at different times of day, but we open them up to our entire community, and then we specifically target and send personalized invites to students or parents in a particular band.

[01:55:51] Our most recent one, we invited parents of chronically absent students who had two or more Fs as of the semester data, and by getting that personal invite, we had 54 people show up. We actually only had space for 30, so we adjusted.

[01:56:06] But we're never going to turn anyone away who wants to come and engage with us. And that was a great opportunity for parents to share with me their experience, their access to data, their access to communications, and what their needs might be moving on and is helping us adjust our habits too to make sure they understand what they can do as a parent most, right, is just getting them here and then where we can take over from there.

[01:56:31] also what's an option to them once their students have missed a lot of school are now facing not only an attendance behavioral habit but also an academic concern because we have to recover from it so it gave me a chance to make sure those parents knew immediately how to get support what we can start doing tomorrow with your student to get them back on track we also really want to highlight and use our positive role models at the school as positive examples for students. With that student education, in personal meetings, we'll often talk to students about where their habits fall on the bell curve of Osborne, right? Like you have such and such

[01:57:10] tardy. So every time a student comes to a tardy sweep, they get to know their number of tardys for each quarter where they're at, if they've had positive trends, negative trends. We talk about what's impacted that. And hey, where do you think you stack up, right? We have 2,200 students here. you think you're in the you know the worst 10 percent the bottom 10 percent and a lot of times what we realize from students is they think almost all of them think they're middle 50 percent I'm doing about what other students are doing and some of them are surprised to find out like you have like the fifth worst amount of

you know attendance issues but if they're surrounded by students engaging in the same behaviors as them and that's what's their immediate perception

[01:57:49] they assume with that so again we focus on that education of letting them know where they actually fall, helping them come up with structures to recover from there and then practice that and give them an achievable goal to say, like, let's try next quarter to be, you know, in the 25% range and not the bottom 10% range, right?

[01:58:11] Like, let's make growth and let's work on that. So we do also celebrate our students who have both made growth and our students who have hit certain metrics. We had a donut party to celebrate those in the first quarter who met it. We're planning our pizza party right now to celebrate those who during the second quarter set of data met those metrics and or made growth from first quarter and showed improvement because both of them are important to celebrate.

[01:58:37] We have also looked at what is student impact. We surveyed our students to see what makes you want to come to school. And one of the pieces of input they had is, well, when I have other things to do other than just school, right? So if we're involved in an athletic or an activity, we're more likely to attend school when we're an in-season athlete, per se, or if our club's going that day and we wanna have part of that.

[01:59:01] So we get a lot of student input on what clubs would you like to have that we don't have right now. We've actually increased our clubs by three new ones this year that were based on students coming forward saying, hey, can we have someone that does this?

[01:59:16] And we work with the students to get a sponsor so they're able to engage in that too. and we're looking at an increase in our student athletics i just got the numbers from mr ellenberger this morning spring sports tryout started yesterday and we have some huge numbers coming out for our team so that was very exciting to hear that that many students want to be involved in our athletics at the school we additionally we have had some staff absences in some critical roles in the attendance realm one of our parent liaisons new mother so we know we're going to be out on maternity leave for that we had some other critical roles where staffs

[01:59:51] were out for attended absences which did cause a slowdown in some of our reactive approaches which we'll talk about soon however we were able to bring in some retired administrative support that has started recently lit with us they have been amazing rock stars drive diving in bringing a lot of education from systems they have seen that were positive practices at other schools so they have all dived into our attendance team as well as our administrative team to help even as consultants and implementers to help us continue to refine our practices even mid-year. So on top

[02:00:30] of our proactive approaches we realize we do have many students as you see that have met a chronically absent rate at this point. So we have to have reactive approaches for those students because we don't just want to even those who are chronically absent they're over 18 we're not going to get them there, our ultimate goal is still getting these students an on-time graduation and making sure they're connected to support. So we want to make sure students in every single category have an appropriate intervention. We have a bi-weekly attendance intervention team that meets. That team is comprised of teachers, technology staff, counselors, parent liaisons, some of our

[02:01:09] administrative principal staff, our deans, our administrative assistants who involved with it our attendance officers we really try to include every somebody from every single group that is going to have a hand in the attendance process to come together as a large group and talk about where our data is at what are our greatest areas of needs what is our next upcoming focus if we have an event coming up we have to look at versus we have students in a certain category that's high and we need to pull additional staff and shift in to approach that and then we do have sub attendance meetings with smaller groups

[02:01:44] within that focusing on their specific focus areas from that group we have also been doing a program review of our attendance documentation processes at the school so I came in I'm new to power school so had to sort of learn what were some of our processes in how we denote different types of absences the difference versus a meeting absence and a full day absence and the impact and rollover of that one of the most important things to me is to make sure if we're when we're taking that time we get all the critical parties together to have that intervention meeting that we're providing the right intervention

[02:02:22] right because how weird would it be if we invite you to a meeting about this and it turns out the problem is actually this over here so I have been reviewing our data looking at things that may need to have adjustments and how it's documented in there and may have been to make it easier to identify early on specifically which intervention group students need to be a part of so we can get those interventions going for them sooner versus waiting for them to hit a different threshold. We also have a pretty strict implementation of our unexcused absence intervention process. Excused absences also need their own

[02:03:00] specific type of intervention but the positive with an excused absence is it means you've already had what occur? A parent contact, right? You've already heard from the parent you know what the causes of the absence normally because you already know what's causing it you know what the appropriate support is to connect the family with to we get that going a lot quicker with an unexcused absence we have that extra layer of finding out what's the cause right what is preventing us from coming to school and what's the appropriate intervention we have to get in place to get you to come to school to then help support with

[02:03:37] the academic recoveries also. So with our unexcused absent process, we do have individual one-on-one or one-on-family, right, student meetings so we can get to what that root cause is. We also cycle in follow-up communication. So as Dr. Zayets pointed out, at five, we are starting that one-on-one process, right? We want to find out early on what is going on.

[02:04:03] counselors perform the miniature version of a root cause analysis so they do it with the student going through a series of questions exploring different areas to try to find out what is that immediate issue that's causing the attendance so we can get students connected to the support and then from five to seven if we get to seven we haven't seen a change right whether it's just knowing how to report it whether it's an ongoing issue we bring in the entire student support team at which point we have the parent come in for a meeting also and we work together as a team to get them connected with supports.

[02:04:37] We have also significantly been able to increase this year the amount of academic support programs that we can provide for actually all of our students. We don't exclude our non chronically absent students from getting them but we do specifically target our chronically absent students. So we have have Saturday learning seminar which we have had for the last couple of years. That's three hours approximately every other Saturday we have staff we have breakfast there and we purposely invite

students and reach out to their parents to let them know how they can recover certain classes we will have their teachers

[02:05:16] actually provide them a personal invite and we have students report that to us when they get to Saturday learning seminar so we know which of our staffs being really proactive about inviting their struggling learners there and and which staff we need to have more of a communication with to teach them how they could utilize that process and increase engagement in it.

[02:05:36] We have also added this year Learning Labs, which is a referral program for after-school academic support. And the reason we shifted to a referral program is we realized that all of our other academic support programs were, for the most part, contingent upon the student choosing to engage in them, right?

[02:06:01] We have it. We offer it. We put it out there. You don't come. You don't come. We wanted to take a heavier layer of encouragement, we'll say, for students to come and recover some of that needed academic time when they have missed a significant amount of time in class to help them get steadier on their feet in the class, which then usually promotes more attendance to that class because they don't feel as out of the loop when they come in there.

[02:06:25] We have also used that to create a very small group environment to provide support. So they're not coming into it and saying, I'm here, but there might be 10 kids here all for the same help and the teachers popping around. We staff that based upon the number of referrals each week.

[02:06:41] So if we have a large amount of referrals in a certain subject area, we add teachers to maintain that small ratio for students. So they can really get an individualized support there to help them recover and get back up on their feet pretty quickly. With the use of our university tutors program, we have also been able to expand that to not just the referral program with our teachers, but to also offer an after-school drop-in tutoring program.

[02:07:06] So if there's a student who wanted to stay with their teacher, their teacher's not available, they know they can always go to the same location, and we will have somebody in each of the four core areas there until our final late bus at 5.30 that can provide drop-in support. So those are some of the programs that we are able to utilize that will also count towards some of our attendance recovery programs depending upon the amount of time students engaged in them.

[02:07:33] And we are utilizing our data on our chronically absent students to specifically target, invite, provide incentives and motivations for our students to attend them, not just to recover the time, but what we said, the important thing is to recover the academics so they feel that it's easier to connect with school, easier to get back into school without thinking this is going to be overwhelming when I finally show up because I don't know where I'm at in it, okay? So a lot that we are doing with that, we continue to use our data. We pull data weekly. Well, we actually pull data if you get down to it daily. We have a daily, a weekly, and a monthly pull that we look

[02:08:10] at within our teams to help us constantly figuring out where each subset of students are and we use that to specifically identify students who have a high likelihood of adjusting their chronic absenteeism rate so as you guys know chronic absenteeism rate is a percentage so as the school year progresses right your percentage can change once you hit it you're not necessarily stuck there if you have a bout of the flu

first quarter and the chronic absenteeism number in first quarter is four and a half days so right five days you're

[02:08:48] chronically absent you're chronically absent in first quarter but when we get those early interventions with the students at that point when we're under a certain metric of days like a solid number of days we are able to help educate the families and realizing just because we missed a lot here doesn't mean we can't recover it when we make that denominator bigger across a long period of time so we have a lot of students our chronic absenteeism rate varies daily as that denominator and that numerator is constantly changing and we are making sure we are staying very on top of also our students who are in that bubble zone of bouncing in bouncing out to make sure their denominators

[02:09:26] increasing without their numerator going with it thank you guys for having me back and I can punt it to the team for any questions that you might have questions or comments from the board I do have a question specifically for Osborne, I have several questions, but last year you were at 30% in chronic absenteeism.

[02:09:50] This year you are at the same level. Do you have a goal, like a school-wide goal of reduction? Yes, our school-wide goal that we have this year as part of our continuous improvement plan is to get to, by the end of the year, 25% or lower.

[02:10:06] So while our ultimate goal is 15%, we also realize we have a bit of a journey to go to get there and identifying what are all of our groups that we have to shift practices in. So this year we want to make sure that we are under that 25% by the end of the year. And I know that there were a lot of mentions of very tangible programs and effective programs like the positive role models, the chats with you, which are personal.

[02:10:34] Thank you for doing that because I know that takes a lot of time. And also hiring or contracting the retire administrator who probably has a lot of tricks. But what do you think is missing? Because we're still at the same place.

[02:10:51] I really think that we have some systems in place that we need to make some large scale shifts to. One thing that I've noticed data-wise, right, we look at, so there's a variety of different data we look at, but here's an example of one. So we were looking at daily attendance. average how many students are full day absent and we realized in looking at our January month review we had three days that were significantly higher right than other days our average day of daily attendance is somewhere in the low 200s these days we're hitting sitting at high threes and four so what did my team do we went back and what's going on at school that day was it weather was it

[02:11:30] what it was our modified testing schedule so in order to test our students on their WIDA test we have three days of a late arrival first the students who do not have to take WIDA and our students who do have to take WIDA arrive at the beginning of the day so we're able to administer that test we have a significant number of English learners the number of proctors we need in order to have that test in the space made it more available to do that when we didn't have the other students in classes going on however we have now seen an impact to our students absenteeism rate realizing that some of our students are more likely to not attend

[02:12:07] a full day of school if it is not a scheduled full day of school so we're looking at shifts in our schedule going forward our next big testing window is the march writing and i've tasked my testing team

with exploring a model that does not include a reduced schedule and looking at how can we still implement that with the resources at our school in order to encourage more student attendance on that because when it's three days that a student then takes off for all three days well when we're only halfway through the school year that could be the three days that's pushing that student over the threshold over also okay thank you I have several other questions but I'm gonna there for other

[02:12:44] permits and for the other people but I don't know if anybody has questions for yes I know that we talked about for the elementary schools that illness and travel was their absentee reasons, but it wasn't stated as the average or what you're finding is the reason why students are chronically absent. Do you have like a ballpark or? Well, so we're at with, I don't have my figures in front of me, but we could very easily pull, just take a little bit of time to pull the number of absences that were reported due to an excused illness. We have also

[02:13:23] explored working with Dr. Zayetz on our coding of absences which would potentially allow us we're looking this would probably potentially be a next year to code excused absences not just as excused but potentially a medical a pre-arranged something like that which would make it really easy to pull those numbers versus having to use the comment function in addition to the attendance code to actually get the metrics on what were the causes on them can we pull it yes takes a little bit longer here with our unexcused absences a lot of I will say a lot of the feedback that we have found

[02:13:59] from students is really a lack of understanding of the importance and the need to be there right so when we have those conversations not necessarily realizing like the long-term impact of starting a habit especially when they're in the early stages of a habit right where we see that giant shift with them is once we're kind of already in over our head academically and now we're getting grades and we're like oh oh but when it starts early on and you're not saying getting a report card grade to show you okay what what now is the consequence of it so which is why

[02:14:37] we've really looked at what is our education processes for students and families right in trying to help encourage that and and doubling down on that and one of the things that I think we still have to improve at Osborne is our communication processes we have a new communication platform that our families and the school staff and me being new are shifting to and adjusting to and learning and we learn more about how we can access that every day but we also need to look at some research on what are the best ways to get that education out to our families to connect with them early on so that understanding is there to begin with versus sharing that understanding with

[02:15:14] them once we're already on the reactive side of it. I think that it's important to start in the beginning of the year definitely with that education I love the presentation so thank you so much for your hard work for presenting it to us and I look forward to seeing more in how it progresses as you implement all these things so thank you. Any other questions for Dr. Chapman? I do. I just wanted to ask e-hall pass is new this year right how is that we were kind of led to believe last year at METS it was helpful is it being as well received at

[02:15:52] Osborne I am gonna be honest I am leaning towards not renewing next year okay so we're looking at the data that we have at Osborne we have about 50% in consistent engagement of it with our teachers and we have encountered a number of technical difficulties consistently with students being locked out of being able to get a pass because it's hitting past limits and some of that is with

implementation is that passes aren't being ended one of the ways that that I've seen that work a little bit better at schools is when there's a

[02:16:25] kiosk system versus the variance between student making a pass teacher approving it on one but we don't right now have each classroom resourced with an extra laptop I I've heard that can happen in the future with our turnover in order to set that system over to keep that more consistent with it so the variance in classrooms and implementation is different and I'm noticing I don't think we have as many people using it as is critical.

[02:16:56] And Saturday Learning Seminar, it is a big deal. Are you seeing the numbers be consistent? You gave a 50 people came to, you know, chat with Chapman, but a Saturday Learning Seminar. Saturday Learning Seminar, I have consistently been seeing that we're at over 100 students.

[02:17:13] Most Saturdays, I think there was one Saturday that it was also, there was a lot of community stuff events going on too that we saw a dip in that particular day but when we saw some of the other activities in the community it made sense to us but most Saturdays we're averaging over 100 students engaging in that. Thank you for the work. I know it's not easy and we do appreciate all that you're doing. Miss Brown did you have a question for Dr. Chapman and then we'll go to Dr. Jones.

[02:17:39] Yes those are great news that we have over 100 students on Saturdays. I heard from everyone who presented something in regards to trends and most of the trends signal to illness illnesses and travel I didn't hear from anybody the correlation between that 30% of those high rates of absenteeism and suspensions or behavior so we do have I will say most of our students who would end up being referred to a long-term suspension or a review at our hearings

[02:18:15] office are going to be chronically absent by the end of it a just because of the process and the timelines that go along with it that does get them there now overall that is a small percentage of our student population so there are some students that are going to experience that we have talked at the school again we're starting talks and identifying that as far as what type of out of school long-term educational support could we provide students with that potentially there would be an option to have an asynchronous but off-campus

[02:18:50] ability to engage in some structured curriculum versus self-guided with what's being provided the school which could give us some opportunities for those students but yeah it's an area that we need to continually to look at opportunities for it's not a huge percentage of our chronically absent students but it's students who still need probably a higher level of services actually and intervention supports not just attendance base but in other manners as well thank you so much and thank you for everything that you're doing dr. Jones so I want to thank you for all that you're doing what is your

[02:19:26] level of parent engagement and helping you make sure students get to school and helping us make sure students get to school I will say at the high school level it is far more autonomous with students we do find at our school a lot of times our students are the ones helping their younger siblings get to school we have a later start at the high school which means by the time our students get on the bus a significant amount of our parents are on the way to work already and many of our students it is on them to be able to be autonomous and able to get up and get to school on time an interesting thing that we notice

[02:20:03] when we say we look at the data what are our subgroups is if you look at our freshmen sophomores and juniors and their chronic absenteeism rates are all within 1% of each other and then

there's a very large jump and we see our seniors so our most significant amount of chronically absent students are seniors who ironically are also our highest number of students who have access to their own personal transportation it's a lot easier for them to make those autonomous decisions so that is something that has given us an information in the school is what type of education right do we need to provide those students with with great power, it comes create responsibility, right? And making them realize that though they have more

[02:20:42] access than other students do to self-guide their attendance choices each day, and while they are closer to meeting many of their graduation requirements and realizing, you know, I'm at a point where I can meet this because of, you know, performance I've put in a different area, and if I tread this line, what do they still need to do by attending school to prepare them for their post high school plans. So we use that post high school plan conversation. I'm going to tell you whether a student wants to drop a class with me, whether they are in trouble in getting a referral with me, or whether they're having a conversation about attendance with me. The question that is always going to be asked of them is, so what are our plans after high school, right? What are we looking at?

[02:21:22] What are our interests? What are different things we're thinking about? And how do we keep the doors open for all of them by making the choices that will support that while we're in high school? So it's a different education component it's making sure the parents also know what's going on there and then working together with the parents once we again reactively get a hold of the parents to realize what's going on to find out what they've had the most success with in curbing behaviors at home what we can implement potentially at school to mirror that one is an option vice chair Spall and then Bregia always trying to push the envelope here but when you're

[02:21:59] speaking of off-campus suspension options or worse if it's worse than a suspension is that something that I would call an alt-ed center I think that would be a reasonable phrase to put on it okay even outside having a center absolutely needed I mean you get you heard my spiel before you know I'm on board for it right you need me to show up with signs somewhere I'll do it but in addition to that there are some students who are in that that interim phrase right of we're not in all that yet maybe we have not gotten ourselves assigned there but there's still that waiting time and it's a significant

[02:22:36] period of time and for students who struggle that much time is something else so having a structured system even if it is some type of interim online with structure component versus trying to manage eight different teachers expectations and sending of assignments and posting them on there without necessarily a guide to help them process through that so again if we had an alternative ed coordinator that would help some component if we had an alternative ed center that would help a significant component for those students in that area and if we made a commitment as a board to never leave a student home

[02:23:12] for more than three days that would help the situation as well correct I think so I'm not entirely sure how feasible that always is going to be that's what we need a pilot program yep okay thank you thank you vice chair mrs. Brescia I'm just gonna say some kids need to be home longer than three days I think they need to be in an environment that provides a higher level of intervention support.

[02:23:40] Yes, even better. So I like all this conversation. I like all this discussion. I like what I'm hearing. I do share the concern well articulated I think by Miss Brown. It's still 30 percent. So that's I'm hoping that we're going to see the impact soon, right? Like this is as of February 13th, this data. So when can we hope

to start seeing some of these things start to click into place? I know you have a goal of 25% by the end of this school year. You know, are you, do you feel, you know, you had your staff

[02:24:19] absences that you were dealing with and now those are, those holes are plugged and now we're going to see a rapid feeling. So I will say we're still in a dig out period of those staff absences. It's like a fire hydrant, right? Or a fire hose of attendance intervention students. It is something that needs to be kept up with daily, weekly at a minimum of students who are hitting certain metrics. Because keep in mind, when you have 2,200 students, 10% of that is 220 human beings that someone needs to have multiple one-on-one interventions with.

[02:24:55] So when they hit in the same range, you have to keep up with it. And when you miss a couple of weeks because you're potentially down a staff member or two who are the ones that normally lead to do that, and you run out of time in the day to have those students in the building with you to have that meeting, you get behind, and we are in the digging out period of some of them while also trying to stay on top of the ones newly adding to different metrics.

[02:25:17] I think we're going to get out of it. I think we're going to need about another month of recovery to get caught up. Thank you for your candor in sharing that. So you mentioned that university tutors drop in after school tutoring is one of the programs that you're offering. Are these the same university instructors that were just in our budget presentation? Okay, just wanted to just wanted to make them make that connection. And I do have questions for the rest of the presentation. That's it that's all I have for you but if... Miss Miles has a

[02:25:55] question for Dr. Chapman. Yes it's super quick. I know you talked about how the The seniors are high numbers of seniors that are not coming to school. I have a senior, so I understand that. But are these students with full schedules? Because I know one thing with my senior, I'm like, no, you are going to only help one class, and the rest will be a full schedule.

[02:26:15] So has that made an impact on the reason why they're not showing up? So of our students who have reduced schedules compared to full schedules, the absenteeism is proportional. - It is, we're not seeing like a heightened amount in our students with two classes who are in our career strategies program.

[02:26:31] It's across the board, it seems to be a senior mentality. - Okay, and again, like you said, education, 'cause if they understand the repercussions of this, then maybe they will come to school. - The days where we realized that the students with the reduced schedules is if we have a changed schedule, so say a delayed opening, where now we're running classes at a different time because many of those students a job now as part of their career strategies program so that has been one area where we have had to work with with families on you know we can excuse a partial day absence because your student is actually completing their academic work by attending their job and meeting that career strategies component but

[02:27:10] that's going to count as a full day absence then another question have you thought about mentors for our students even giving a buddy in their class you know who's coming consistently and checking in to kind of like curtail the fact that you don't have enough staff who are coming, you know. So where we do have adult mentor programs, we've actually even added an adult mentor program through our CTE program right now that has community mentors come in and they are partnered with students

who were specifically identified as maybe needing that approach. We can do that. As far as the student mentoring, we do have a peer

[02:27:46] mentoring class where students learn to do that. However, there is a fine line with student confidentiality. So while I do have a lot of positive role model students at my school, I can't necessarily say, hey, Ms. Ball, I need you to really buddy with Ms. Seberg, because she just hasn't been showing up to board meetings, right? We all know that you're more than anyone else. A good example to use there, right? So instead, where I've tried to leverage that is my amazing leadership class, which Amelia can speak to, they do a lot too, is some challenges with them and with my broadcast

[02:28:22] students and we've put out the challenge of doing some PSAs on some identified targeted student behaviors that are student driven what would that look like too so we have opportunities to hear from students right what their perspective is on positive behaviors and there are multiple attendance behaviors that we have included in that list of requests for it and then they can advertise to their classmates why what it would look like things like that

[02:28:52] So we're trying to find ways to amplify the presence, right, and the awareness and, you know, our own little, like, school propaganda campaign to students on positive behaviors and make those sort of very apparent so students who may be in a friend group, right, or in a social group that are not as aware of the behaviors other students are engaging in, those positive examples can be more accessible to them.

[02:29:22] hit his. I kind of want to be, but I don't know social media well enough, like a day in the life of the principal, but pretending to be a student. Look at me going to class on time. Did you hear that bell? I like to be in my classroom before the bell. That sounds good. Any other questions for Dr. Chapman? Okay. Any other questions for Dr. Zietz or Ms. Finnegan or Ms. Brescia, who do you have a question for? Ms. Finnegan, we can go in reverse phonological order. Thank you,

[02:29:55] Dr. Chapman. So first, congratulations on the steep cliff that this number has taken between 23/24 and 24/25. I was listening to your presentation and talking about, you know, communicating and climate of caring, sense of belonging, all that other kind of, all that other kind of stuff. We've been talking about attendance at METS now for a few years. This is obviously you're going, you're finishing your first year as principal and I had heard a lot of those themes

[02:30:32] before right a culture of caring it's in our strategic plan you know communication we're talking about that all the time but something that something about the intervention specifically at METS seems to be making a very big impact so do you have any thoughts you can offer for the rest of the sem everyone assembled here as to what you think it is about how you've implemented these kind of broad strokes things that's really making it take off I would first say it's about teamwork and understanding what our vision is so if we know our vision then

[02:31:08] we can the steps that we take and what we do will work towards accomplishing our vision so that's number one alongside teamwork but the other thing that you mentioned was communication and I talked about parent involvement and their engagement so back in July when we had our meet and greet with the admin team because we have a brand new admin team we started from that point on you know talking about with our parents and honestly we had so many parents come to Metz that day to meet us it was pretty incredible it was pretty much standing room only in Commons B after all the seats were taken but we emphasize even

[02:31:47] from there if the first time they met us the importance of parent engagement and attendance we also coupled that with the way we do things is we're gonna pick up the phone and we're going to call you because we want to make sure that we're partnering with you so that you also know what's happening in the building. We often say that we are limited to what we can do without the support of our parents. So I really believe that's a huge aspect of where we are today with an increase in attendance. I also want to say that we could, like Dr. Chapman was saying, we can spend so much of our time and our human capital and our energies at that first

[02:32:24] phase of like how can we get our kids through the door that could take that could be every single day for the rest of the year and that's where we're putting all of our energies where we need to move to is that sense of belonging where our students are seen valued and heard because then they're gonna keep coming back right so we're we're we're front-loading with getting our students in the building but spending that time the rest of the time really building that sense of belonging for them to want to come back to the building and that's not just our students I know we're talking about student attendance but that's our staff and that's our parents that's our

[02:32:58] community and I can say that our school team our administration our counseling team front office staff like that's where we pour our energies into yes we focus on instruction because it's number one but it's also alongside the work that we're doing to support safety in our building communicating with our parents and just that work along the way I don't know if there's anything magical with what we're doing but it's consistent it's every day and again it's knowing our vision consistency I did remember hearing that word earlier in the

[02:33:33] presentation so I think that there are some valuable insights that you just shared with us that I hope that we can all benefit from because I'll just I'll just note it here because there's no need for everybody to get up and play musical chairs because I don't think this necessarily needs an answer unless you want to give it but looking at the chart for you know for how our different schools are going it's just like okay well all right I understand you Dean was mentioned it's the same number of students but it takes up a little bit because we're talking about percentages all that kind of stuff I mean thank you thank you for offering the explanation that's part of what we're all here for

[02:34:12] is to hear that explanation but also I want to see it go down right like I want to just make I know you know that but that I just want to make sure that that is communicated out there and which is why I wanted specifically to ask you to share any of your insights because it has gone down at Mets Middle School famous Mets Middle School it is possible a special place to be yes so that is the only note I wanted to make there thank you any other question yes miss miles I had kind of a question and a comment um I noticed you said that you have the

[02:34:51] 23 minute homeroom blocks, and how is that working? I feel like that's a great way to connect with students in the morning. So how has that been working? - So again, it's just that consistency that our students have each and every day with the same adult and the same group of kids, right?

[02:35:07] Eventually we're gonna end up calling it advisory block. This year we're just calling it homeroom 'cause we're not actually doing full on advisory lessons. So I didn't wanna call it something that's not really, but that's our intended hope, right? work on SEL and some of that growth mindset aspects but again it's that consistency every morning they know where to go they have the same trusted adult and the same group of kids so just in that environment in and of itself and again the ratio is so much smaller

they have a sense of belonging right there and are those teachers also kind of in charge of like if there's an attendance issue because they are the ones that make the phone calls home

[02:35:43] based off of attendance to school okay thank you so much first touch I appreciate it and thank you for all your hard work of putting this all together it sounds like it's really going well and and hopefully it'll continue so thank you again thank you anyone else yes congratulations on bringing your attendance from that high level 24 to 16 percent do you have a goal for the year so our goal originally was to reduce it by about 10 percent so I feel that we are well on our way to that we do know that just my experience last year at at Baldwin Intermediate, December and May

[02:36:21] were our toughest months with attendance. So just having that in the background, I know May is gonna be probably a tough month for us, so if we can just proactively plan and be very intentional about that time, then I feel that we can meet our goal.

[02:36:38] - Thank you, and I appreciate you making the link and the connection for us, that it begins with a culture of belonging, but not just for our students, but for our teachers, because they are the ones who impact our students the most on a daily basis. But the teachers cannot begin to feel that they belong if they don't have a caring administrator or someone who supports them all the way.

[02:37:01] So thank you for all that you do to, you know, just building that culture of belonging and care in your school is very visible and very palpable across just all of Manassas City. So I appreciate everything that you're doing. Thank you.

[02:37:17] - Anyone else, Vice Chair? I just wanna say that I'm in awe of your ability to create an environment where students want to come to school, and in a way that makes learning fun, and that you can connect it back to attendance.

[02:37:35] You've come a long way, and I have full confidence that you'll make your 14% and then some. Thank you. - Thank you. - Last call, anything for Dr. Zayetz? - Yes. - Dr. Casano? - I was wondering if anybody, just for connected all together, We have spoken about cuts and different things within a budget being so lean.

[02:38:03] But I'm wondering if anybody's keeping track of all the spending that is going on just to ensure that we lower our attendance. I heard lots of programs going on and lots of Saturday programs in addition.

[02:38:18] All of that comes with a cost. So we're either going to invest at the beginning know we're going to invest at the end but it is going to cost us if we don't connect the dots and see what's going on and what's missing in our schools why are the students absent so does anybody have any idea how much we have been spending on all of these programs I don't have numbers now but that's something we can look at but a lot of the things you heard about are provided by our staff so the costs come in extra extra pay for staff and then we have as as you heard Dr. Chapman mention the university instructors, so we can cost out some of those things for you,

[02:38:58] but that, I don't have that with me right now, but that's absolutely something we can give you. - Yeah, I'm wondering if we could get that number, because when we looked at the budget to have an alternative ed coordinator, someone to take care of this, I think number was 142,000.

[02:39:16] So it would be really interesting to put it in perspective of where we are putting our money, because that's where we're caring for our students, so.

[02:39:33] - Thank you, thank you for the presentation, and thank you Dr. Chapman and Ms. Spinnigan for the work you're doing to tackle the issue of attendance. It's a big issue, there are multiple factors that play into our students not being in school, so it's really a lot of work. I had a question for you, truancy versus chronic absence versus students who are tardy or leave early.

[02:39:57] Students who are tardy to school or leave early, How did they factor into absenteeism rates? - I don't have the numbers for that. We can get that for you. What we're really looking at right now is the daily attendance, just overarching, to get a good idea of the specific needs and where we can target our resources and supports.

[02:40:17] But we can absolutely get those numbers for you as well. - And the chronic absenteeism numbers are based on daily attendance, just to make sure we have that. - Yeah, I wanted to make sure that everyone was aware of that, because they are different things, But at the same time, those tardies and those early dismissals impact learning just as much.

[02:40:35] Absolutely. And, you know, anecdotally, I have heard that to avoid their students being chronically absent, there are some folks who make sure their child comes in for at least one class in the day. And when that happens, technically, they're no longer chronically absent.

[02:40:53] But what are they getting out of the school experience? you know maybe not today but looking at that down the road how we deal with that because that has a huge impact as well and I think it's a lost impact that tends to get glossed over when we look at that total number of chronic absentee students so that that was just one quick thought and then on slide nine you mentioned it had I'm just scrolling back to slide no slide seven slide eight

[02:41:28] sorry on slide 8 flexible instructional time does that flexible instructional time just include Osborne students or are we talking Matt's Mayfield Baldwin that's a statewide offering so the state has that option it's students at any level right and it's not only for students who are meeting chronic absenteeism thresholds it's for students missing instruction right that's primarily focused on ways for students to recap instruction there is the added benefit or credit you can get for that if students spend enough time it can help

[02:42:03] kind of reduce the numbers in the calculation but that's available at any any grade level across schools yeah so it looks different at different schools but after-school programs before school programs at the elementary and intermediate level have the same type of way in schools track who's participating and then that will get calculated that way and that doesn't get calculated till the end of the year correct correct they maintain logs of who is attending right and again they have to meet requirements that these programs have to not just be they have to be structured instruction with licensed teachers and so schools have spreadsheets that they're keeping of the students and when they're attending and asserting that they're meeting these

[02:42:42] requirements and then at the end of the year we compile that information in what we report to the state and the calculation is done on the back end. Okay then the next question is is the state providing funding for this to provide this flexible instructional time no thank you that's kind of what I thought so that's another cost that we incurred that we don't think about when we talk about the budget correct this flexible instructional time and that's something just as Miss Brown said earlier that's something we really have to think about because you don't have licensed teachers who just come in early or stay late they

[02:43:22] love doing it and they do it because they care but at the same time they need to be paid for their work correct so you know that's a really important piece and then I did want to ask you mentioned holidays families going on vacation and anecdotal I noticed that vacations especially when you have elementary students who have no control how do you address that while recognizing the autonomy of the family and multi-generational issues that impact when

[02:43:57] those families take time away including we have a huge immigrant population so we have lots of kids who go back to visit relatives and the parents tend to schedule those trips when they're least expensive and that tends to be while school's in session so how do we meet the needs of those families at the same time as those chronic absenteeism numbers so there's there's two parts to that right there's the missing instructional part which is paramount but then there's also the chronic absenteeism that oftentimes will will

[02:44:33] come from those those family trips this is something that we're continuing to explore it's a topic in several principals meetings it's a topic in our attendance officers meetings it's a topic that's happening in our regular attendance meetings at schools and it's something that's being addressed by typically our counseling teams our admin teams at the building level to speak with families but it's really important that we're coming together in principal's meetings we're coming together in other division meetings because oftentimes they're siblings in several of our buildings and that brings me back to that my favorite word consistency if you have several children in several buildings within our division there's a consistent protocol of how are we supporting you how are we number one educating you that we do understand that

[02:45:12] perhaps you you have a family obligation that you are adhering to and then we respect that but we also want to make sure we're educating of there are some really great times during the year to make those those trips but you're right cost is also an important part of that that trip but then how are we also supporting the instructional parts not only when they're gone when they're on the trip but also when they return how are we welcoming back because oftentimes these are for several weeks and so your peers have moved forward your classes have moved forward how are we welcoming you back and I think most of our buildings would have really great ideas to share with you METS I know that we've talked before about how they welcome back and they're small groups

[02:45:50] they're one-on-one. I know Dr. Chapman has talked in her attendance meetings regularly every two weeks about how they're addressing those needs as well. So it's really a case-by-case but it's also applying a consistent division protocol because we know that we are going to have those instances. And then really talking with our registrars as well it's not just about teachers and the counselors and the administrators it's also the registrars. We know that no matter what the absences are at day 16 of consecutive absences we have to withdraw your child and now it becomes a hardship when you come back how are we re-enrolling because we can't just bring you right back in we have to go through the processes again with our school nurses for example and including them to make sure we're medically compliant and and so forth so really

[02:46:28] developing those consistent protocols so our registrars can lean on each other our attendance officers can lean on each other administrators and so forth can lean on each other that welcome back and get you in as soon as possible well thank you a lot of factors yes there are a lot of factors and you know when we talk about chronic absenteeism we don't think about all it encompasses and all all the moving

parts that can change and shift on a daily basis and how much time it takes out of the school day to handle absenteeism and tackle it.

[02:46:58] And it's very much so a person-heavy job. So thank you, thank you, thank you. And thank you to everyone who's there in the buildings every day on the front lines doing the job. So thank you. Thank you, Dr. Zayetz.

[02:47:16] Thank you, Dr. Quesada. Thank you, Dr. Chapman. And thank you, Ms. Finnegan. That was a very intensive report. We appreciate all the information and we hope it helps us guide us further. I'd like to shout out back there to Councilwoman Sonia Vesquez Luna.

[02:47:32] You stuck with us through that whole, what, hour and 45 minute presentation. And I know that Councilman Ocina was also here in and out and Councilwoman Ashley Hudson. We thank them for stopping by. Mr. Gefeller, gonna share some stuff about Jenny Dean, new Jenny Dean.

[02:47:51] - New Jenny Dean School. - Yes. - So good evening Chair Seberg, Vice Chair Spall, members of the board and Dr. Newman. So I have two presentations tonight. We're gonna talk about the first one is how kind of a virtual look at what the inside of Jenny Dean is going to look like.

[02:48:08] And so I wanna share a little bit about the interior design in the curriculum and how we have intentionally designed some of the interior to not only focus on our learning but also honoring the legacy of Jenny Dean.

[02:48:25] So we're gonna start as we walk into the building. So you can see highlighted here is the entrance of to orient Jenny Dean. As you walk into the new Jenny Dean School, we will walk in and we will see a picture and I'll show you in a minute what that looks like in real life.

[02:48:47] But the words there were taken from an actual publication of Jenny Dean. And I wanna thank our partner, the Manassas Museum, who has been a real partner to us in gathering artifacts to be able to authentically honor the legacy of Jenny Dean.

[02:49:03] And so, as you walk in the building, you'll see a portrait of Jenny Dean and you'll see the words from a publication that the museum shared with us. And so you walk in and you'll see that as you first walk in the building, you will see Jenny Dean there and a little bit about who she is and about what she meant to our area.

[02:49:30] So as you walk in a little bit further, you will see a quote from Frederick Douglass. And the quote was taken from a speech that he gave, the opening ceremony speech for the Manassas Industrial School in September 3rd of 1894.

[02:49:46] And so as you walk in, this is what the front, the lobby will look like as you walk into Jenny Dean Elementary School. So you'll see Jenny Dean and then you'll see quotes from Frederick Douglass. Moving in further, this is what's highlighted there is the media center to orient you as you walk further into the school.

[02:50:10] And what we will see, the design team, RRMM, our architects and design team, have tried to incorporate as much as we can about the industrial school, about Jenny Dean. And so you'll see as we go through this presentation tonight, you'll see a lot of photographs, original photographs that they have recreated to be able to display inside of the New Jenny Dean School.

[02:50:36] And so this is, you'll see as you walk in near the media center on, you'll see pictures, photographs of the Manassas Industrial School that were shared with us from the museum.

[02:50:52] So those are two pictures to what it will look like. And again, trying to highlight the education aspect so that students know a little bit about the history of Jenny Dean as they walk through the halls of the new school.

[02:51:10] And so here you'll see, this is across from the kindergarten pod, the kindergarten classrooms. Again, more pictures, more photographs of the Jenny Dean school.

[02:51:28] If you look into the media center itself, there are four areas. Those are called think tanks, as the architects refer to them. Basically, there are areas, small rooms, where teachers can work with small groups of students. And so in them, and I'll show you a picture in a minute, but some of the major donors of the industrial school are here, Clara Barton, Emily Howland, Andrew Carnegie, and Frederick Douglas.

[02:51:56] And so those are four of the major donors that helped to launch the industrial school. And so as you walk into the library, into the media center, these are what you will see in those think tank. see the pictures of each of those individuals and you'll see a little bit about their story about who they are for our students and our staff. So again this the four donors Emily Howland, Andrew Carnegie, Frederick Douglass and

[02:52:31] Claire Barton. As we go into the gymnasium and the cafeteria you will see this is the gym and we'll see a vinyl wall covering as a custom would be custom murals mounted up high on the walls that are highlighting of course the Ginny Dean Dolphin is there with the different athletics and different sports represented in that mural. If we look into the cafeteria we will see another

[02:53:10] mural, two murals, one highlighting music, the fine arts, also one that I will show you is a nice little unique thing that RRMM did is this is an actual photograph of the Jenny Dean site and so they tried to replicate what that would look like in a mural so if you see this silo there's some cows on the other side the building the barn on the houses in the back they tried to recreate in detail what that would look like to be able to put into a mural to be hung in the

[02:53:47] this school. So when we talk about incorporating the curriculum we want to make sure we put together we had meetings with our curriculum team to look at how could we incorporate elements of the curriculum into the new Jenny Dean School. And so we have glass and magnetic with maps that are printed behind it so that students can interact with these things whether in the hallways whether in the learning areas and so I'll show you that what that will look like kindergarten there's going to be a map of the city of Manassas first grade the

[02:54:22] Commonwealth of Virginia a United States America map the world map and a solar system and so this is our kindergarten this is a mural that will be again that students and teachers can use as a teaching tool that will be able to be interactive for students of the city of Manassas first grade they will see a a a map of the Commonwealth of Virginia, again, that they can interact with and use as a teaching tool.

[02:54:54] In the second grade area, right now is planned to have a map of the United States that can be used for instruction. In third grade, the world map. In fourth grade, we chose the solar system that can be used for students for science.

[02:55:16] If we go further into the school, into what we call the learning labs, which are essentially pod areas, open areas, similar to Baldwin Elementary and Baldwin Intermediate has.

[02:55:33] Open areas that can be used for instruction. Again, you will see ways that we try to incorporate the curriculum and also as a way of incorporating photographs from the industrial school into this design.

[02:55:50] And so you'll see here, those are two areas that we'll get a closer look at in a moment. You have here in the one learning area, you have Manassas Industrial School, the historic photograph of graphic connects to subjects within the image of the curriculum.

[02:56:11] Again, they're glass and magnetic so that students can interact with them. And so you'll see here, this is in the kindergarten to incorporate shapes. This is the actual photograph that was recreated by the RRMM interior design team from the industrial school to be able to look at shapes.

[02:56:33] You also see in each of these murals, you'll see our dolphin that is asking a question that can be used as a teaching tool for our students. In first grade, we have how plants grow, and that is a connection to the agricultural history of the industrial school and the dolphin talking about, can you zoom up please, Elba?

[02:57:10] What kinds of fruits and vegetables do you see in the photograph? do they grow. We also have talked to RRMM about making connections to our farmers market here in Manassas City and trying to make it more personalized. In second grade units of measurement and looking at the photograph around culinary arts that was at the industrial school. In third grade complex machines, again recreating the images that were shared with us from the Manassas Museum to be able to incorporate that into teaching and simple machines which correlates with our

[02:57:47] science curriculum, and then in fourth grade, graphs and charts, tying it to, and it's small print, but those are actually, it's a menu of what you could buy from the industrial school. I wish some of those prices were what we could afford now, but they are no longer.

[02:58:07] But a way of, again, honoring the legacy of the industrial school and Jenny Dean, and tying it to our curriculum for our students, and I'm happy to answer any questions. down here. I'm proud of the work that was done by the design team and I do think that we stay true to the roots of the school while also making things modern for our kids. Thank you. It's very

[02:58:40] exciting and we look forward to the coming months and seeing it put into place. And you have another one for us? I have two more. I just along with the interior design. Yes. I also want to share a little bit just to show you how the curriculum was incorporated into the flooring. So I want to be able to show that to you as well. So this is a floor plan and you'll see the

[02:59:17] design, the just the design of the of the flooring with the colors of Jenny Dean Elementary School. So you can see the colors that everything will correlate to those colors throughout the school that with that with that color palette through we're tying it into our furniture to everything will be tied to that color palette. So we look at our first grade, the hallways in the first grade will knowing that counting by groups of five is incorporated there so

[02:59:54] you will see some of the different things that are incorporated with the curriculum that are actually embedded in the floor trying to again maximize when kids are in the hallway that we're able to use some of those things as teaching tools for our students in kindergarten alphabet you'll see the alphabet

that is incorporated into the flooring as well as simple shapes those are things that are part of the curriculum for kindergarten in second grade we have simple fractions that you'll see as you walk in the hallways that are near the

[03:00:31] second grade classrooms you will see that in fourth grade you will see shapes within a shape in third grade you'll see multiplication grouping so trying to tie the math into the the curriculum again I want to emphasize the intentional planning that has gone into actually looking at how to incorporate the curriculum into the new school a third grade again areas there where the multiplication groupings you'll see that embedded in the floor and is it so I

[03:01:11] just want to give you a high level of what that looks like just some of the the simpler finer points that went into the planning of the new school I see no question I got a question well I just have a comment I was not gonna read it but I do think we did good work I want to say that new Dean is redefining education by weaving SOL goals into its very foundation from flexible classrooms that foster collaboration to purposeful interior design that enhances learning environments. Every detail is designed to support student achievement. STEM labs, special education, pre-K, in addition

[03:01:50] to all grade level rooms, encourage hands-on experimentation. An outdoor classroom brings science to life. And a literacy-rich library aligns perfectly with benchmark, reading benchmarks, hallways double as interactive learning spaces reinforcing key concepts beyond the classroom this innovative approach proves that when a school is built with learning in mind students are set up to succeed from day one thank you thank you thank you for your presentation and you have one more one more okay now I'll take

[03:02:26] you to the outside so I want to provide some updates to the construction of the actual building if you have been by the school you will see construction has begun. Bi-weekly meetings have begun between our contractor, Howard Shockey and Sons, MCPS, RMM in Skanska, who is our on-site project manager. Our MCPS

[03:03:05] project manager, Russ Helton, who does a fabulous job, is our liaison who makes sure all of these pieces are in fully working order. The construction remains on time and in our budget. That's important to note. During the month of January you will see if you drive by a safety perimeter was established there was signage that was installed and our general contractor has assumed control of that construction site the earthwork has also begun and the erosion and sediment control measures were completed and just today we got approval from the city for those which means we can proceed to the next

[03:03:43] phase so we are excited about that in terms of the procurement we are have been ordering building materials we've been working on placing orders for kitchen equipment generators and we have had two meetings around the furniture of how we will furnish the new Jenny D school the next steps will be the completion of the building pad if you a lot of concrete a lot of earth moving very soon now that we have the erosion and sediment control approval and the building of the structure and so just to share a couple of pictures if you this

[03:04:21] This was back in January. You will see that this is some of the materials, some of the drainage things that were on site that you should not see many of those right now because they have been installed. You will see a retention pond that has been built in terms to prevent erosion, soil erosion.

[03:04:44] And then you will also see just the perimeter and the erosion control around the perimeter of the site. so those are things that you will see. You will expect to see, since we have the approval of the erosion control right now, you will see a lot of earth being moved very quickly by the time of my next update. So we are excited about the progress. Again, just want to emphasize that we are on time, even though we have had some weather. We have a very wet site, but we are moving full steam ahead.

[03:05:21] Looks great. Any questions or comments? Mrs. Brescia. I do. I am going to ask quickly because it is 9.04 p.m. So I know that the contract that we have signed with our builders is such that if there is any increase in the price of materials, that they bear the burden of that differential.

[03:05:44] Correct. But I worry a little bit about delay. but this sometimes happens when if a contractor can't get the price they want on something, well, then they end up waiting, you know, because it's coming out of their budget instead of our budget.

[03:06:00] They end up waiting for the supply, you know, to change. And so is there anything in our contract to guard against that, or is, or we just, I'm just worried about that. So I want to give you an opportunity to respond. Yeah, I can't speak to, I don't have the contract in front of me.

[03:06:16] Obviously, a very lengthy contract. What I can tell you is that we have been working closely with RRMM, with our architect, who is part of our biweekly meetings, as well as Skanska, who is our onsite project manager, and then, of course, Russ Helton.

[03:06:35] I will tell you that we have made it very clear what our expectations are, and we have repeatedly said we are going to be on time and under or at budget. we have had to work through some things but I will tell you that the the team is working very closely together and we have been partnering with Manassas City the inspectors that were working closely there so I would say right now things are running very smooth I can't speak to you know things that may pop up but

[03:07:09] right now that I would say I talked to Russ Helton today and I said you know I asked him I said if if I get asked the question regarding weather delays or things like that he said right now he is not concerned about anything in terms of coming in on time good to know thank you anything else okay we're gonna change a couple things in our agenda here before our mr. Rockefeller are you dead thank you thank you so much miss Whitton do you have notes that we can read our

[03:07:46] student representative is excused at nine o'clock so I was just sad that she didn't have an opportunity to present her notes so I know I said we're having a change in our agenda so I will save these and it has been requested that we have a recess so I'm gonna allow a five-minute recess so let's meet back

[03:08:17] here at 9:12 all right next item on the agenda is on our action agenda and I'm

[03:09:26] gonna go to miss Stevens who's the chair of the policy committee yep so on the action agenda are two school board policies we presented them at our last regular meeting the first policy is bce school board committees and the change was that we removed the finance committee we changed the name of the personnel committee committee excuse me to board development committee and then we merged educational support and finance committee that was policy bce the

[03:10:02] second policy BCF let me slide down on my screen the second cut policy BCF changed the name of the ESL Advisory Committee to English Learners Parent Advisory Committee EPAC and got rid of

the fine arts advisory board and those are the two chain the two policies that are up for vote tonight chair yes I move that the school board of the city of Manassas approved policies under section

[03:10:37] School Board Governance and Operations, B.C.E. School Board Committees and B.C.F. Advisory Committees to the School Board as presented. Second. I have a motion by Vice Chair Spall, seconded by Mrs. Brescia, that the School Board, the City of Manassas, approve policies under Section B, School Board Governance and Operations, B.C.E. School Board Committees and B.C.F.

[03:10:58] Advisory Committees to the School Board as presented. Is there any discussion? Yes. I just want to mention that the Fine Arts Advisory Committee has not been active for ever since I've been on the school board so eight plus years so I think this is a good effort because we want our actions and our procedures that were taken to be met with policy we want them to match and we haven't utilized our finance committee so we grouped it in with educational support and what was the third one oh and then we have personnel committee which we're renaming to board

[03:11:37] development committee because it's very confusing for people to hear personnel think we're talking about staff staff personnel and really what that was is our in our school board member handbook and other matters related to the board so I do think that board development committee using that name and moving forward with those efforts is matching what we do and what we want to see any other discussion I will read it again miss vice chair Spall made a motion seconded by mrs. Brescia that the school board the city of Manassas approve

[03:12:15] policies under Section B School Board Governance and Operations BCE School Board Committees and BCF Advisory Committees to the School Board as presented. All in favor? Aye. Any opposed? Motion carries 7-0. Okay school board member comments and I'll go first to Miss Breeden who whose comments will be read by Dr. Jones. Okay she said good evening. I would like to send my appreciation to all of our amazing school board members as well as our current school board clerks.

[03:12:50] The Osmond Leadership Class is hosting the Placera Project, which is a non-profit organization that donates its proceeds to Central America communities and helps employ local artists. They will be selling handmade, colorful bracelets during OHS lunches for \$5 each until March 10th.

[03:13:09] Please consider stopping by and buying one, as they are beautiful. I would also like to congratulate the top three winners Spelling Bee winners from all of the elementary schools, intermediate, and middle schools. A friendly reminder is that the winners will be competing this Friday at 7 p.m. in the Osmond Auditorium.

[03:13:32] Tomorrow night from 6 to 7.30, Jenny Dean is hosting a Black History Month event that includes a potluck bingo and dance lessons. Consider attending and bringing a dish to share. Also tomorrow night, Osborne Athletic Boosters are hosting donations at Texas Roadhouse from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m., where 10% of your total will go towards supporting them.

[03:13:58] Consider joining Mills. I will be enjoying one of their amazing steaks after you stop by the Black History Potluck, of course. So you go to Jenny Dean first and then to Roadhouse, Texas Roadhouse. And then she said, that's all I have.

[03:14:14] Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Breeden, on behalf of Dr. Jones. And now I'll go to Ms. Brown for your comments. Good evening. I want to begin my comments by noting that as we approach the end of

African-American History Month, I want to encourage continued learning and reflection on this rich history and diverse experiences.

[03:14:40] I want us all to remain committed to affording students a learning environment that values the contributions of every individual. And on that note, let's welcome March, which is Women's Month. Make sure that you take time to celebrate a woman you know personally, someone who inspires you to want to do more and be more.

[03:15:01] And speaking of more, I will always advocate for teachers and students. I know that there are lots of unknowns and there will be lots of chatter about collective bargaining, leave budgets and federal cuts. I want to assure you that my priority will remain on teacher compensation resources for our students. I wanted to extend my congratulations again to the Apple Award recipients, the peer award recipients, the super substitute award recipients who were described with very beautiful adjectives. Too many to mention here. But also I want to thank my fellow school board members for their

[03:15:39] willingness to serve and for all that they do. I know firsthand how hard this job is now and so they give a lot to the community. So thank you. And of course - Of course, thank you to our very own school board clerk, Ms. Garza, we appreciate you.

[03:15:55] And I want to end my comments with a call of action on school attendance. School attendance is important, and when children do not attend school, this is often a sign that something is missing in their experience. And national trends cannot be our answer, current events cannot be our answer.

[03:16:15] It is time for all of us in Manassas, including parents, educators, and the community to listen and reflect on what is missing. We need to ensure that we're responding to our family's needs and to our families.

[03:16:32] If there are any challenges or obstacles preventing your child from attending school on a regular basis, it may be transportation issues, health concerns, family responsibilities, I do not want you to hesitate to reach out.

[03:16:48] We are here to support you and to find solutions together to ensure that your child has the best opportunity to succeed. We are in a partnership and we want to work alongside you to remove any barriers that may be impacting your child's attendance.

[03:17:05] And Manassas, everybody can do something. Attendance is everybody's business, not just the teachers and the administrators in the schools, it is everybody's business. Let's reflect on that. - Thank you, Ms. Miles.

[03:17:22] - Yes, I'm so excited that Jenny Dean is doing a Black History Potluck. I look forward to going to that actually. So first I wanna congratulate all our apple pear and super substitute award winners tonight. Thank you for your dedication to our students and families.

[03:17:37] I'm sure you were nominated for a really great reason. It was great to hear all the great things that you're doing. I really wanna say that I believe Mr. Rupert actually said this, all students are our students And I really believe that, that it's so true that we're responsible for all the students in our city, not just in our classrooms or in our school, but all of the students in this city.

[03:17:59] And I want to thank the principals for putting together those videos. I know that that took a lot of hard work and patience to complete those. I even saw one of my former students in the video, and they

warmed my heart just to know that, you know, they know who we are as the school board members.

[03:18:18] And I want to thank my fellow school board members for their service to our community and ensuring our schools are the best they can be. It was nice also to see the school board member highlighted on the Manassas City School Board's Facebook page. I like to get to know where we're from, why we do what we do, and also some of the hobbies that we enjoy.

[03:18:40] Last week was School Board Clerk Week, and I want to say thank you to our school board clerk, Alva, and also Muffin, who's not here, But for all they do for our school board and the governing team, it's great to see also the support tonight from the colleagues at METS with their board just congratulating each other.

[03:19:02] I think that we have to make sure that we're all supportive of everyone, and it was great to see that. I know that this past week I had the pleasure to attend a few events and also have an update from one of the committees that I attend as well. last week i was able to attend the annual all county chorus held at the hilton performing arts center and it was a great event i have to say it was evident that the dedication um that is there from our music department so i want to give a shout out to the music department um it was such a great way to showcase the students showmanship and talent i love singing and music so i it was

[03:19:36] just a treat to hear all the students um i also have an update from the on the epac meeting recently that we had last week there were 25 families that were in attendance which is awesome and these families have expressed their gratitude to the esol department for their support and they're very thankful for the adult esol classes and i hear that they're going really well so uh shout out to the esol department for for doing those at mets a couple reminders before i end my comments i first want to encourage everyone to participate in our communication survey that has been set out. We want to hear from as many families, community members, and staff as possible.

[03:20:14] And this Friday, the top three spellers from each school will be participating in the Division B at 7 p.m. at the high school auditorium. I plan on attending that. I always love watching spelling bees. And on March 22nd, the MCPS Education Foundation is holding a pancake supper fundraising event and they're gonna have live music by a local band one-way and a basket raffle tickets are available online so don't forget about that and I also want to mention the keep Manassas beautiful video contest deadline is a little over a month away so there's still time for you to

[03:20:51] participate in that if you're interested in entering the contest you should send your submission to Colleen Burrows at cburrows at manassasvirginia.gov and and they're awarding \$500 for the first prize winner. That's great, or second prize, 300. And this year's theme is food waste composting, ways to help our community and the environment.

[03:21:12] So I'm hoping that some of our high school students will participate in that. I keep mentioning it, so hopefully someone will be like, oh, I wanna do that. So anyway, that ended in my comments, and I hope everyone has a wonderful weekend. Thank you.

[03:21:27] - Thank you, Ms. Miles. Dr. Jones. - Good afternoon, good evening. - Well, I want to congratulate the Apple Award winners, Pear Award, and the Super Substitute Award winners. I want to thank my fellow board members who are all committed to Monaster City Public Schools.

[03:21:45] The videos from the elementary school were so reflective of elementary school day. It was also very interesting to hear the opinions of our secondary students and what they want to do with the school

board and what they like in their schools. And what will we do about our school board clerk and assistant clerk? Thank you for all that you do.

[03:22:01] I'm looking forward to attending a Black History Month program at Mayfield Intermediate on Friday at eight o'clock a.m. and also in honor of Black History Month I wanted to research a little bit about the impact of African Americans on the Manassas City School Board so Reverend Henry Barnes was the first African American appointed to the board in 1975 and the library at Metz bears his name. Dora Brooks was appointed to the board in 1992 and she was the first African American elected to the board in 1994 and other African Americans who have served on the board include Kermit Dance, Sanford Williams and

[03:22:36] Carl Hollingsworth. February is also designated as American Health Month to raise awareness about health disease and that is why I'm wearing red today to us all to be aware of our health this month. During the month of February I had the pleasure of attending several events and one was a girls basketball game and they played with great determination. Also attended two advisory board meetings the The first was the Manassas Regional Airport Career and Technical Education meeting.

[03:23:05] Three students from Manassas City shared their experiences while working in internships. So the students were asked several questions, I'll just say a few in the interest of time, but one question was, what was the most valuable skill you developed during your internship?

[03:23:21] And their answers included, they learned to pay attention to detail, they learned to troubleshoot, They learned to communicate better, and they learned about collaboration. Another question was, "What advice would you give to a business partner who's looking to hire an intern?"

[03:23:39] And they said, "To look for someone would drive an initiative to take a chance. Students are more capable than you think. They know there will be some mistakes, but trust that the intern will learn and improve their skills." And one student noted that he has already been offered a job after graduation in May.

[03:23:57] And the students said the internships gave them a sense of responsibility and it opened up their mind to different career paths. The last part of the meeting, the aviation, they talked about the Aviation Career Exploration Program, ACE, and they brainstormed about that.

[03:24:13] So Manassas City, Manassas Park, and Prince William County school staff will meet with the airport community to further discuss a 36-week program. So there is interest, so definitely stay tuned for more information in the weeks to come. I also attended the Gifted and Talented Advisory Board meeting.

[03:24:31] Students from Mayfield Intermediate shared their current projects to include a demonstration of a pigeon game, a presentation on Pearl Harbor, and a play on the Titanic. The meeting was very informative, and their goal is to have at least 15 members, so I strongly encourage all parents who have students in the Gifted and Talented program to attend the meetings, and for all of our parents to read the website for more information.

[03:24:56] And lastly, I want to continue to ensure all of our immigrant families and refugees that we are aware of recent discussions and concerns. And please note the Manasseh city public schools remain committed to maintaining a welcoming and inclusive environment and ensuring a high quality education for all.

[03:25:14] And I ask that as February is coming to an end and it's almost the end of black history month that we celebrate our history all year long. So continue to study not only black history, but women's history, Asian history, Hispanic history, and all of our histories, 'cause we are all Americans.

[03:25:30] Thank you. - Thank you, Dr. Jones. This is Brescia. - All right, good evening, everyone. Lots of updates to share today, since this is the first time we've been together since January. First, of course, my thanks, my congratulations to our award winners tonight.

[03:25:45] Thank you to everyone for the school board thank yous. And thank you, Ms. Karza, one more time, for all that you do, and Ms. Wilkowski, who's not here for doing all that you do to support us. So I would like to report on two business items, offer one thought and share one inspirational story.

[03:26:04] First business item in my new capacity is one of our two liaisons to the Governor's School Board of Directors, Chair Seberg being the other. I was happy to sit in on my first meeting. The meeting included student presentations which were extremely impressive and I barely followed, but I was very impressed with them as students and so excited to see how they are making the most their governor school opportunity the business part of the meeting included discussion of the calendar enrollment and upcoming event highlights so my fellow board members and members of the public you might want to mark your calendars for May 2nd where all governor school students will have their research symposium and show off their work at the Freedom Center and the

[03:26:43] governor school graduation will be on May 17th at 10 a.m. at Colgan high school the second business item and I have not heard anyone addressed yet but if I'm stealing the thunder from anyone further down the line I apologize we all heard here at a previous point a member of the public come and make us aware that students were not receiving an academic and career plan as specified in board policy IJD. I want to first thank that commenter for bringing this to our attention. I want to take the opportunity to close that loop and offer some information that was recently provided to us as board members by Dr.

[03:27:15] Newman and long story short all students at METS will have a completed academic and career plan by the end of May and there is a plan to get us there. Dr. Newman also shared with us a plan for bringing Osborne into compliance through the next school year so I'm glad that this is being rectified and look forward to any additional feedback from families or any other stakeholders this is rolled out I do think this opens a larger question of how it came to be that we passed upon a policy apparently without an implementation plan and I am not pointing fingers here this governance team includes me as well but it is something for us to reflect on so that it does not happen again and

[03:27:51] speaking of opportunities for reflection I would like to offer a thought we heard Dr. Chapman today discussing Osborne's challenges with students who struggle with motivation to attend school especially as they gain more autonomy and I would truly and I'll say it again like us as a board to consider the possibility that our grading scale and our policy of no penalty for late work is contributing to this but finally time for an inspirational story I wanted to share a bit about my visit to Hayden elementary school a few weeks ago you might recall that we all received invitations from Hayden to see benchmark

[03:28:25] advanced clts and kega cooperative learning in action and wow i saw a school that was really leaning into the challenge embracing the difficulty and pushing through it in a remarkable way and i really enjoyed seeing one teacher hype up her students for an assessment she walked through her classroom and asked her kids is this test gonna be hard and the kids were like yeah and she's like are we

just gonna click through and pick any answer just to get it done no and why not? Because we can do hard things. And she turned on this neon sign at the front of her classroom. It

[03:29:01] was awesome. And you know, it really made me reflect on my past two years and the two years we have here, I have going on into the future. When I first got on the board two years ago, after spending time talking about the truancy issue that existed at Osborne, there were some people, not every person, but there were some people who would say, well, you know, there are 44 doors at Osborne High School.

[03:29:24] how could we possibly keep students from leaving? Well, the last I checked, there are still 44 doors at Osborne High School, but many fewer kids are leaving the campus today than they were two years ago. We can do hard things. You know, when I got on the board two years ago, there were some people who would say, oh, how could you expect our SOL scores to improve? Those SOL tests are hard.

[03:29:47] That is true. But you know what? Last year, Hayden's third grade reading scores improved 15 points in a single year. We can do hard things. Two years ago, people would say, oh, you know, our kids have so many barriers, we cannot possibly hope for a better attendance rate.

[03:30:06] And yes, that's true. We have families with a lot of barriers. But you know what? Weems cut its chronic absent rate in half in a single year, and METS is on track to cut it by 10 points this year. We can do hard things. And I believe in us. We have a long way to go, and it will be hard.

[03:30:26] it will be hard but we can do it so thank you so much to Hayden for hosting me and that's all for my comments thank you mrs. Stevens thank you um i shared what a shared observation i made when watching the video of our secondary students i listed down all the reasons they said they liked our schools and the overwhelming winning was teachers more students said teachers than anything else and we really have to remember that because it's the people who make our schools the the amazing places they are and without them our students could not

[03:31:04] be successful so while that video was dedicated to the school board it was really about the people who were in the schools with the kids every day they're the people who make the biggest difference in our students lives they're the ones who spend seven hours a day with our kiddos they're the important folks here not that in my opinion not me it's our teachers it's our staff it's the boots on the ground they're the ones who count the most and although she's not here now thank you to Lee Miller for all her beside behind the scenes work on all things finance and budget we'll miss her we may not realize right now all the

[03:31:42] work she does but I know when she's gone we'll be feeling the pinch and the crunch because she does quite a lot on the 20th I as the new liaison to the Safe and Healthy Schools Advisory Committee. I had the opportunity to attend the meeting on February 20th at Osborne High School in the library.

[03:31:59] In attendance were school nurses, parents, and OHS student representatives from the MCPS Education Foundation, the Health District, UVA Health, Mason and Partners Free Clinic, myself and fellow school board member, Ms. Miles. We discussed the new portable electronic devices policy and how it impacts student performance and mental health and how we can continue to protect the needs and the privacy of our students who require access to their personal devices, whether it's for medical reasons, part of an individualized education plan, or an English language learner plan.

[03:32:37] We also had Joanne Gaynard, who is a social worker for Osborne High School. She shared information on CBITS, and I hope I get this right, which is the Cognitive Behavior Intervention for Trauma

in Schools program at OHS. The program is funded through a grant with Nova Family Services and is being offered to specific OHS immigrant youth or children of immigrants at OHS.

[03:33:03] There are already several students participating in the program at this time. Intervention is also available in relation to gang activity and human trafficking. The next meeting will be held on April 24th at the OHS library at 4:00 p.m., MCPS families, students, and community members are all invited to attend.

[03:33:26] And to close out my comments, I've been looking for a Black History Month quote that really speaks to us. And the original quote I had, I decided not to use because I heard what Dr. Jones said about how black history is American history.

[03:33:43] And so I wanted to share this quote by Maya Angelou. Wouldn't it be wonderful if Black history and Native American history and Jewish history and all of U.S. history is taught from one book, just U.S. history? All of us, all our ancestors played a role in the building of this country.

[03:34:03] And African American history is American history. And we always need to remember that and never forget it. So thank you, Dr. Jones, for that reminder. I appreciate it, and have a wonderful evening. Thank you. Vice Chair Spall.

[03:34:19] Yes, I want to reiterate my congrats to the apple pear and super sub awards. I want to thank you all for the appreciation. I loved the video, particularly of the young kids talking about what I would title unintended outcomes, which are amazing.

[03:34:38] They talked about keeping neighborhoods together, jobs, the concept of appreciation, opportunity was defined throughout, and then they just highlighted how much they love encore, core classes, lunch, and recess.

[03:34:55] I also wanted to shout out to the RSVP student leader panel for the month of February. I was sick and had to participate the old-fashioned way, which was via Google Doc, but our student leaders are sharp and care about outcomes for themselves and their peers, and I look forward to meeting with them in a month to see if we've been able to resolve any of their very valid concerns. I attended committee of the whole meeting for council and learned just a couple tidbits. One was that 2,000 people live and work in our city. You know for 42,000 citizens that doesn't seem like a huge amount but it's

[03:35:34] a number I guess we can work with if we know what it is. They also gave an interesting multimodal report discussing exciting nature and historical paths that connect us to Prince William County and Manassas Park. Going back quite a while, because we haven't met, three weeks ago I did have the honor of representing Manassas on Capitol Hill as part of the VSBA legislative advocacy team.

[03:35:57] And while the mission of the event is to promote statewide initiatives for VSBA, I had the opportunity to represent our Manassas as part of the envoy. I feel we must do everything we can to equip our students with the tools they need to succeed in the classroom and contribute to society and one day our economy.

[03:36:14] Any chance I can get to collaborate on how we can best support our students, teachers, and schools, I will take. Immigration, loss of jobs, and the higher cost of living in recent weeks were top on everyone's lists. So please remember that we do have legislators with offices right here in our city. Feel free to use your voice when you support or disagree with federal and state acts.

[03:36:32] Your voice does matter. With National Counselor Month underway, almost over now. I wanna take a moment to remind parents and students alike that we have national, local, and city-based services to help people in need. So please don't ever feel alone if you're a city student or resident.

[03:36:49] We are here for you. And then a final reminder to please do fill out the communications audit. It's important and we need as many people, as many voices chiming in as we can get. Thank you, Chair. - Thank you, Vice Chair. And my comments for this evening will be short, but they are sincerely meant.

[03:37:08] I first wanna thank my fellow school board members. Thank you for your dedication to this role. I enjoy working with you all, and it's going to be a great year. I also want to thank our clerk, and I've said it before, Mrs. Garza, but I wouldn't want to do this without you.

[03:37:27] You make us all better. You make each of us better, stronger, and a stronger board. Thank you. And I want to thank all the apples and pears and super subs that were honored here tonight, but there was also a special highlight for me. There was many highlights tonight, But one highlight was that one of our super subs used to be one of my Daisy Girl Scouts when I was a Girl Scout leader.

[03:37:50] And it was just really great to see her. I see her often, but it's really kind of come full circle when someone you knew as a small child is an adult and thriving and helping our community. So thank you, Oasis.

[03:38:07] And that's all my comments are tonight. I do want to just thank all the teachers and students that showed up for school today, like in the video. And have a great evening. Can I get a motion to adjourn? Closed session. Oh! Chair, I move that the School Board of the City of Manassas enter a closed session pursuant to exemptions from open meetings allowed by Section 2.2-3711, Part A, Paragraph 29 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, is amended for the following purpose.

[03:38:38] Discussion of the award of public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offers, and discussion of the terms of scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. 2.2-3711 Part A, Paragraph One, Code of Virginia is amended for the following purposes.

[03:38:58] One, discussion of superintendent's mid-year evaluation. Two, discussion of personnel matter PERS 2425-0346, 2.2-3711 Part A, Paragraph Two of the Code of Virginia, 1950 is amended for the following purpose.

[03:39:13] One, discussion of student matter STUE 242520.2.2-3711, part A, paragraph one of the Code of Virginia, 1950s, amended for the following purpose. One, discussion of personnel matter PERS 2425-0346.

[03:39:35] - I have a motion by Mrs. Stevens, seconded by Mrs. Brescia, that the School Board of the City of Manassas enter a closed session pursuant to exemptions from open meetings allowed by section 2.2-3711, Part A, Paragraph 29 of the Code of Virginia 1950 is amended for the following purpose.

[03:39:50] Discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. 2.2-3711, Part A, Paragraph 1 of the Code of Virginia 1950 is amended for the following purposes.

[03:40:11] One, discussion of superintendent's mid-year evaluation. discussion of personnel matter PERS 2425-0346. 2.2-3711 part 8 paragraph 2 of the Code of Virginia 1950 is amended for the following purpose. 1 discussion of student matter STUE 2425-20 and 2 oh no 2.2-371 on part 8 paragraph 1 of the Code of Virginia 1950 as amended for the following purposes. 1 discussion of Personnel Matter, PERS 2425-0346.

[03:40:45] Is there any discussion? - All in favor? - Aye. - Any opposed? Motion carries seven, zero. We will go directly into closed session. Okay.



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