



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Manassas City School Board Meeting, March 25, 2025

Date Tuesday, March 25, 2025
Place Manassas City Public Schools / School Board meeting, Virginia
Length 1h 44m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNEUOyx75B0>

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

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-17. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:04] - Good evening, welcome to the school board meeting. We're called to order. Will you please stand for a moment of silence,

[00:00:10] followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

[00:00:49] Garza, would you please call the roll? - Yes, ma'am. Chair Seberg? - Here. - Vice Chair Spall? - Mrs. Stevens? - Mrs. Brescia? - Here. - Ms. Miles? - Here. - Ms. Brown? - Present.

[00:01:04] - Dr. Jones? - Ms. Blen? - Here. - Ms. Breeden? - Here. - Thank you. Madam Chair, we have a quorum. - Thank you. Dr. Newman, do we have any additions or deletions the agenda this evening no ma'am can i get a motion to approve the agenda chair i move that the school board of the city of manassas approved the public meeting agenda as presented i have a motion by mrs stevens second by vice chair spall that the school board the city manassas approved the public meeting agenda as presented is there any discussion all in favor aye any opposed the

[00:01:43] motion carries seven zero starting off the exciting part of our agenda tonight would be the the superintendent's announcements and spotlights and I'll go to mrs. Al Radford good evening Thank You Chair Seberg good evening to all members of the board and good evening to everyone that has joined us tonight it's always great to see so many of our seats filled with wonderful families and staff from Manassas City Schools and our community to join us during our spotlights tonight we will begin with our MCPS spelling bee over a hundred years ago the first

[00:02:22] National Spelling Bee was organized by publishers of nine newspapers across the country. School Spelling Bee competitions were held locally during the month of February. Tonight we are honored to recognize the first place winners from each school. These winners qualified for the regional competition held at Garfield High School in Prince William County on March the 4th. Just before the March March 4th event our division spelling bee champion was crowned and tonight representing Mets middle school that would be eighth grader Charlotte

[00:02:58] Vargas so Charlotte emerged as our overall winner and so we want to congratulate her for representing Manassas City Public Schools this year as our champion but in addition to Charlotte each school had a first place winner and we'd like to recognize them as well from Baldwin Elementary School

[00:03:29] 3rd grader Jaden Defo Chenda from Dean Elementary 4th grader Leopold Ibanez from Hayden Elementary 3rd grader Elias Martinez Johnson from Round

[00:04:06] Elementary 3rd grader Danika Patel Danika Patel from Williams Elementary school 4th grader Kayden Jacobs from Baldwin intermediate 6th grader Noreen

[00:04:30] Lisco from Mayfield Intermediate sixth grader Haiyan Joshi and again from Mets Middle School eighth grader Charlotte Vargas did I miss any of them that were able to come in any spelling bee winners first place winners well congratulations to all of you and thank you for representing Manassas City

[00:05:09] Public Schools at the regional bee and for being such wonderful spellers it's

[00:06:19] always an exciting time when we're able to recognize our fine arts department we have the Osborne High School fine arts team here and I think Miss Sarah Weaver is going to come and introduce them about some of the assessments and recognitions that they've had for this competition year. Good evening. We are changing up a little bit. Director Andrew Wasson is going to come up and do his

[00:06:52] recognitions for his band. Okay, Shirley Glom is going to come up to do the recognitions for her choirs. Hi, good evening. My name is Shirley Glom and I am the proud choir director at Osborne High School. Earlier in February, students who auditioned for District Chorus and who made District Chorus were eligible to go on to the next level, which was called

[00:07:26] Allstate Virginia Choir. Students chosen will be representing Manassas City and Osborne High School in Richmond from April 24th to 26th for a special weekend singing in a honor choir conducted by their director. Students have worked really hard to prepare a song and sight reading for this audition. With over 200 voices auditioning, they accepted two voices per voice part from each of our districts. Osborne was fortunate to have Nayla Abrego make it on alto one, Adriana Willard as soprano one, and Isaac Quintanilla as first alternate bass one.

[00:07:59] Please help me congratulate these fine musicians.

[00:08:02] Now, Andrew Wassum will come and do his Virginia Honor Band.

[00:09:09] So, hello. Hi there. I am actually, what I'm going to do first is I'm going to help recognize the orchestra. Orchestra, come on up. I am not Mrs. LeMond's, in case you couldn't tell.

[00:09:28] Mrs. LeMond's is away this evening adjudicating for another assessment. So, I'm going to be reading out her results for everybody so we can still celebrate their accomplishment. Come on up, orchestra. Val's pulling double duty.

[00:09:49] Okay, so this year, not only did the Osborne Orchestra Program host orchestra assessment at Osborne, which was a feat unto itself, but also the symphonic orchestra earned an overall superior rating, and also the honors chamber orchestra, the top performing ensemble for the orchestra program also earned a superior rating as well.

[00:10:17] So superiors all around, and I'm not Miss LeMond, so I will be shrinking away for the picture portion. Yes. Congratulations to the orchestra.

[00:10:30] Yes, come here.

[00:11:53] Hi. So I have a couple of band things now. First, I would like to recognize our three students. I think at least two of them-- is Jude here? Did you guys see Jude? Two of the three are here who made all district band this year. They are Jude Lopez, Theodore Wehner, and Valeria Lozano.

[00:12:11] come on down. So these students participated in blind auditions against students from all over District 9, which includes Prince William County, us, and all of the private institutions. These students not only earned spots in the all-district band, but all three of them actually placed high enough to qualify for all state band auditions as well, with Val actually making first chair

[00:12:40] for all of District 9. Congratulations, guys. Okay, part two. The rest of the band, come on up.

[00:12:58] band kids who are here. All right. So we have a delegation here tonight of a couple of seniors and principal musicians from our program. Earlier this month, the Osborne High School Band program participated in the yearly VBODA concert assessment event. These assessment events are meant to provide programs with a benchmark evaluation and critical feedback to encourage continued growth and improvement. I'm happy to report that our top performing concert ensemble, the Osborne Symphonic Band earned straight superior ratings from all four judges present, which is the

[00:13:36] highest distinction awarded by the VBODA during concert assessment. The Osborne Concert Band also showed a lot of growth from the beginning of the year, earning a rating of Excellent. With this event concluded, the Osborne Band Program has now meant the qualifications to once again be recognized as a program of honor by the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association.

[00:13:58] The Program of Honor Distinction, formerly known as Virginia Honor Band, is an award given by the VBODA to recognize band programs that are comprehensive and high quality. To earn this distinction, band programs must earn a superior at the marching band assessment event in the fall, and the top performing band ensemble must earn a superior at concert band assessment in the spring.

[00:14:18] So this will be the fourth time that Osborne earned this distinction, and the third since we have all been working together. So congratulations, guys.

[00:14:26] We have some really big news now.

[00:15:22] Okay, now I'm really coming to the mic. Good evening, Chair Seberg, Dr. Newman, members of the school board, families, distinguished guests. Thank you for the opportunity this evening to highlight our programs. So Osborne School of the Performing Arts will once again receive the Blue Ribbon Award for the Virginia Music Educators Association.

[00:15:48] The VMEA Blue Ribbon Award is the highest award given to school programs in the Commonwealth and recognizes excellence in band, choir, and orchestra performance.

[00:16:09] To qualify for the Blue Ribbon status, the top performing ensemble in the band, choir, and orchestra must earn a rating of superior at their state music assessment. This is the third time in school history that Osborne has earned this accolade, having previously been awarded the VMEA Blue Ribbon in 2019 and 2022.

[00:16:35] Andrew Wassum is the director of the bands. Shirley Glom is the director of choral activities. And Latoya Lamans is the director of orchestras. So congratulations, you guys. This is a huge accomplishment.

[00:16:47] I'm also from Osborne High School. Osborne had a speech and debate team for the first time in school history this year.

[00:17:50] They attended six tournaments and won medals or awards in five of those six. Mr. Mark Whitley is the debate team coach, and he is here tonight to introduce his team.

[00:18:17] Good evening. Thank you for having us. We have a couple more things to add to what was already said.

[00:18:33] Yes, this was the first debate team in the history of the school. We did medal or won an award in five of the six turns we were in, including six first-place finishes in one second. And we had a team that actually won the regionals and qualified for Super Regionals.

[00:18:51] Not bad for a first-year team. And we definitely learned all together. So I couldn't be more proud of them. Thank you very much. Oh, and the Super Regionals, which just took place last weekend, it was Medina Habib, who couldn't be here, and Amelia Breeden.

[00:19:12] - That's so exciting.

[00:19:20] Come on down everybody, let's get a picture for you.

[00:20:13] Awesome, congratulations to all of you, thank you. As some of you may have seen that the Mets wrestling team recognition was tonight due to a scheduling conflict that will be moved to the next meeting.

[00:20:32] So that concludes our spotlights for this evening.

[00:20:35] Thank you.

[00:21:43] - Thank you Mrs. Radford. Up next is our board committee reports and I'll go to Ms. Brescia for her board development committee. - Yes, thank you. The board development committee met on March 19th to discuss its final set of proposed edits and suggestions for our new operating protocol.

[00:22:01] The draft we developed has been transmitted to VSBA and we as a board will discuss it together at our next VSBA governance training on April 9th. The goal is to finish it at the April 9th governance training session and to add the finished version to the regular meetings agenda after that, which would be April 29th.

[00:22:18] - Thank you very much. Now we have citizens' comments. 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.

[00:22:36] 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 respectful when presenting your comments.

[00:22:54] And first on the list, I can't really read the name, something Gritzen?

[00:23:23] So good evening, fellow members of the community, school staff, administration, and sitting school board members. My name is Nate Fritzen, and it's been a while since I stood before this dais in an actual school board meeting. The last time was many, many moons ago, back when I was the student council school board representative.

[00:23:40] This was back in the Albrecht years, for those of you who were paying attention back then. And this is back when our elections were in May. You know, they were separate from all national news, and they were quiet. See back then we discussed issues that were mundane like leaking roofs and bathroom refurbishments, how many years to issue bonds for the new buses and I haven't been to these meetings in a while so I'm not sure what's been going on lately but I imagine the issues are very similar to what they were before.

[00:24:09] I must really thank you for all the work that you do, because I remember those meetings being so boring. And I applaud anybody, especially the young ones, any other of the representatives here, for staying awake. And I must really thank you for all you do, because the job is harder now.

[00:24:25] You guys still have the leaking roofs. You guys have to do the bathrooms. You guys have a new school that you want to build. We have school attendance issues, and we have performance concerns all on top of that. And worst of all, the teachers are threatening to unionize and strike. Which is weird because I remember the MEA just being a few folks in purple shirts at the polling places.

[00:24:45] Folks, I'm not anti-union. I think it's a bad time. We need to concentrate on our priorities, maintenance, facilities, and ensuring that the young people you guys brought up here and paraded around, making sure that they have the funding for the programs that they enjoy.

[00:25:01] Be that music, be that lecture and debate. And if it's the case that the teachers do want a greater voice, let us come together as a community with creative solutions. ones where the monopoly of negotiation isn't alone with one organization thank you for your time thank you mr fritzen tim plevniak good evening my name is tim plevniak i live on weems road the reason i want to talk to you is i understand there's a consideration for collective bargaining

[00:25:37] for the teachers and what i'd like to do is give you a little history of what i have experienced with unions. I worked with United Airlines for 34 years, member of the union. I was a shop steward. For a short time, I was a trustee at our local. I got to see the political workings of our union. We just did some quick math. Over my 34 years, I paid somewhere between \$18,000 and \$20,000 in union dues. I have to say the union did some really good things

[00:26:15] for me, but when push came to shove, my union abandoned me. Come COVID time, there's a mandate for vaccines at United Airlines. All employees were required, and my union, I could not do it.

[00:26:31] I tried for an accommodation, which I could not get, and I was terminated from United Airlines. The union did their song and dance, but when it came to it, they just let me go.

[00:26:48] And it wasn't just my union, it was every union at the company. But what I have to say is that the companies that don't have unions, their employees are happy because usually they're highest paid in the industry, and they have a system where employees and management can work out their differences.

[00:27:10] They usually have a board that consists of union and management where the employees' voices can be heard and they can get results for things they need. So what I'm kind of saying is if you give the teachers a competitive salary and you come up with a way to listen to them and work out their differences, I think they'll be happy.

[00:27:37] The union is going to throw promises at them. They're going to throw promises at you. A union is a business. All they want is more people paying dues. That's why they're coming here. They want this school district. They're going to go to every school district they can to get dues.

[00:27:53] That's their 34 years of experience. I know that's what it is. So I'm just asking you to consider taking care of your teachers without that. And when it comes to vote for that collective bargaining, I urge you not to allow it.

[00:28:08] And you could probably work out and keep your teachers happy without it. Thank you for your time. - Thank you, Mr. Plovniak. Robin Williams. - Hello, I'm Robin Williams.

[00:28:24] I live on Grant Avenue in Manassas City. Good evening, Chair Seberg, Vice Chair Spall, board members, and Dr. Newman. Alright, I'm here to talk about collective bargaining as well. As the board considers the adoption of collective bargaining, it's important to present evidence highlighting the negative impacts on student achievement, particularly for English learners, low-income and special education students, evidenced by many studies.

[00:28:50] MCPS is over 70% Hispanic, 55% English learners, and over 45% economically disadvantaged. While some studies suggest that collective bargaining has a positive effect on standardized test scores. Overall, much of the research indicates no significant impact or negative effects on student achievement, particularly for vulnerable student populations, per a Yale Law School study.

[00:29:16] A second study by the Yale Law School examined changes in a collective bargaining legislation in New Mexico, and it found that bargaining laws led to a decrease in high school graduation rates. Another consideration is that collective bargaining agreements may impose constraints on administrative decisions regarding teacher assignments and transfers and impose provisions to protect underperforming teachers.

[00:29:42] I found this interesting, that a Chicago Policy Review study and a study done by the American Economic Association suggested that collective bargaining disproportionately harms minority low-income students. Research have found that black and Hispanic males experience significant earning reductions of nearly 10% after high school.

[00:30:04] Manassas City's teachers are already seeing significant investments without needing collective bargaining. Virginia's state leaders just boosted K-12 funding by roughly half a billion dollars, specifically expanding support for English language learner programs and special education.

[00:30:21] Manassas City Council stepped up with an extra \$1.5 million dedicated to raising teachers' salaries, and the school board has prioritized pay increases to keep our educators' salaries competitive

with neighboring districts. The city has never been willing to fully fund all of the school system's budget requests.

[00:30:41] In fact, this year, the school had to cut \$1 million in intervention services and hire replacements at a lower salary just to balance the budget. There is little to no room for further funding increases without burdening local taxpayers who are already seeing higher tax bills.

[00:30:58] Introducing collective bargaining would be cost prohibitive for a small district like Manassas. Simply setting up the administrative union contracts has run into seven figures in Virginia districts of similar size, which would force our schools to divert existing funds, cut jobs, and student programs to pay for it.

[00:31:18] We really should not risk our hard-won salary gains and student support programs on an extensive collective bargaining process. Keep the main thing the main thing. Thank you, Ms. Williams. And would you be so kind to send that to us with your references? That would be helpful. Thank you. Okay, Lynn Forkel-Green.

[00:31:40] Good evening, Dr. Newman, Chair Seaberg, and school board members. I'm Lynn Forkel-Green, Manassas City resident. We all recognize the vital role teachers play in shaping minds and preparing the next generation.

[00:32:01] We want them to be valued, well compensated, and supported with the resources they need. However, we must also remember the other key stakeholders in this process. Taxpayers who fund our schools and students who rely on us for the best education. This year, I commend the school board.

[00:32:17] I know, I'm saying something positive, so we all must remember that I am your biggest supporter. I commend the school board for its thoughtful and responsible budgeting conversations. You're doing an excellent job balancing the needs of our teachers with fiscal responsibility, to the community.

[00:32:33] But we must ask, how can we sustain this balance and ensure our community thrives, both educationally and economically? While I'm not against unions, we must recognize that public-funded positions are tied directly to tax revenue, which comes from the community.

[00:32:49] Collective bargaining, while well-intentioned, can limit the school board's ability to make decisions in the best interest of the entire city. As elected officials, the board must prioritize the long-term needs of the community, allocating resources wisely to benefit all stakeholders.

[00:33:06] By engaging in collective bargaining, we risk committing to financial agreements that reduce our ability to invest in essential programs for students, such as after-school enrichment, sports, technology, or even special education. The long-term sustainability of our schools depends on maintaining flexibility to invest in what matters most, our students' future.

[00:33:26] I urge the board to continue its careful stewardship of resources, empowering teachers while preserving the authority to make decisions that serve every student, family, and taxpayer. Together, we can create an environment where teachers thrive and students succeed without losing the ability to make bold, necessary decisions for our school and our community.

[00:33:46] I wanted to say, I've watched you personally as a council member, as a community member, as a mother and a grandmother, and I would be frustrated as a resident if the school board, specifically most

of you who've been here for a while, who have fought for the respect and recognition that you deserve to give up the power to make hard choices because a union agreement will tie your hands.

[00:34:16] So please keep that in mind as you're trying to ensure our teachers get what they need to. Thank you. - Thank you, Ms. Forkill-Green. Is there anybody else that wishes to speak during citizens' comments? Please come forward.

[00:34:32] - Okay. - I wrote your name in, so. - I'm Tammy DeHaven. I live on Massey Street. And clearly I'm outnumbered tonight, but that's okay.

[00:34:49] I'm used to that. I am the secretary of the local union, and I just want to remind everybody that we do meet with you all every month, right? You hear us out, and still, even though some of us meet with you, there are members that do not feel represented.

[00:35:12] We wouldn't need collective bargaining if we truly felt heard. That's part of the problem. One other thing, your students' learning conditions are the very working conditions we are in every day.

[00:35:31] And I'm telling you, I'm tired. Not done fighting, but I'm exhausted because the working conditions are rough right now. We cannot keep creating positions when we can't fill the ones we have.

[00:35:52] That hurts kids. And I commend you for some of the things you're doing, but I really want to urge you to think about when you're promising us more people that aren't out there, they're not running to us. I would dare say some of them are, how was it put at the work session, chasing the buck.

[00:36:16] mine, y'all. Our kids deserve better. We can do it. I chose Manassas City for a reason, because we can do it, but pitting people against each other isn't how we do it. Thank you, Mr. Haven. Anyone else? Hello, good evening already. My name is Allie Forkel, and I feel it's time to share my story as a

[00:36:54] parent. So today I'm wearing my parent hat, and I'll wear a lot of hats in this community. When Alyssa, my daughter, was four, we tried very hard to get her into the VPI Head Start program. My daughter has neurofibromatosis 1 and was later diagnosed with ADHD. I sat in many meetings where I was denied testing. I had to throw out Virginia State Code. My daughter has a thing she has because she's a mother who was a special education teacher and is well-versed. That shouldn't be the case for our students. I have fought for many of these students and Alyssa being one of them. We get through the VPI program. Wasn't the best experience. Later when I was asked why my daughter was pulled

[00:37:30] out of Manassas City Public Schools and we chose to go to private school for a few years. It was mainly due to COVID. I couldn't teach online to my special education students and help my special education daughter online at the same time for kindergarten. It wasn't possible for our household. Once you move a kid, you don't want to keep switching their schools, right? So we stayed there for a few years. Fun fact, All Saints and Manassas City work together. All Saints pays Manassas City money. I'm sure it's worn out with inflation. They get speech services. Awesome. I love that. We should be working together. So Alyssa was able to continue her speech journey while she was at All Saints, and that was really beneficial for her.

[00:38:06] One thing that I struggled with were her services. If she was absent, or the speech teacher was absent, or they couldn't get somebody there, my daughter didn't get compensatory services. I was the first parent who, to my knowledge, has ever brought up that because the schedules didn't align, my daughter

was missing out on minutes that she was entitled to, per document that I signed an agreement with Manassas City Public Schools.

[00:38:28] That was rectified, and we have great staff who worked with me. They were able to continue once Manassas City teachers were done. It was all good, but did every student get that? Does every student have these things available because their mom is knowledgeable? No, unfortunately they're not.

[00:38:45] We can't talk about serving all of our students if we're not looking into these things. Manassas City works very hard to make very pretty IEPs. It doesn't mean they're followed. So fast forward, we decided to come home because Alyssa needed some more services that the private school does not have to give us.

[00:39:00] We did summer school. She's now in fourth grade, enrolled in one of the schools. I've been fighting since August for services, for support. One of my meetings was in December Dr. Newman knows prior to this it took me 12 emails in four weeks personally seeing the superintendent on my 11th email that I was able to finally get a response in a meeting I shouldn't have to send that many emails to get a meeting for my child since December I have been waiting on increased service minutes whenever I ask what the service minutes were I'm going to run out of time but I'll email you guys but push come to shove since December I have not

[00:39:37] gotten anything promised in my prior written legal IEP document I have inquired and I'm concerned because it was happening to my daughter who has an involved parent, it was happening to other students who don't have educated parents on IEP language. Thank you. - Thank you, Ms. Farkel, and yes, please email us.

[00:39:53] I signed you in. Is there anybody else that wishes to speak during citizens' comments? Anyone at all? - Okay, we'll move along to consent agenda.

[00:40:15] - Chair, I move that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the consent agenda as presented. - I have a motion by Mrs. Stephens, seconded by Mrs. Spall, that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the consent agenda as presented.

[00:40:30] Is there any discussion? All in favor? Any opposed? Motion carries 7-0. Moving along to our discussion agenda. We have a facilities and maintenance update on Jenny Dean School update.

[00:40:49] I'm guessing this is the new school. - Yes. - Good evening, Chair Seberg, Vice Chair Spall, members of the board and Dr. Newman. Tonight, I wanna provide a brief update on the construction of the new Jenny Dean Elementary School.

[00:41:09] Since my last update, the following has happened. So we have construction trailers are now on site and they are operational. There has been a great deal of earthwork that has been done. So if you drive by the school, you will see there's been lots of trucks in and out, hauling dirt, moving dirt.

[00:41:28] The ground has been compacted and that is to allow for the concrete footers and the concrete pad that will be hopefully starting to be poured this week. We've developed a phased approach to putting in the water and sewer lines that will be starting very soon and that will go into the summer months.

[00:41:49] And then we will be working closely with our contractor, who is Shockey, Manassas City, and Skanska. That has been a very good and positive working relationship. The upcoming milestones for the

Jenny Dean project are the completion of the building concrete pad, And then we will be being seen very visibly very soon the actual building of the structure.

[00:42:12] And so that will be happening over the next month. So by the time I bring the next update to you, if you drive by, you will see the structure in the concrete pad that is being developed over there. And so just a quick, a couple of quick pictures. You'll see if you've driven by, you'll see a lot of the earth has been moved.

[00:42:32] And you'll see a lot of these over there right now. And so we are excited about the progress. We remain on time and on budget. So with that, I'd be happy to answer any questions. Thank you, Mr. Kefeller. Any questions or comments from the board? No questions.

[00:42:50] Thank you. Thank you. It's very exciting. Okay, now we're on the action agenda. And our first item is the FY25-26 proposed budget.

[00:43:08] Dr. Quesada. We have some updates for us. All right. Good evening, Chair Seberg, Vice Chair Spall, school board members, and Dr. Newman. We are at the next step in our journey of adopting the FY26 budget. You see this presentation, it's the same slide deck from the end of February, but there were some changes that were discussed at work sessions, but we wanted to bring them to the public in this.

[00:43:30] So Mr. Kelly's gonna walk through, you're gonna see him flying through slides, any slide he skips over are slides with no change from the previous presentation. We wanted to highlight and keep the same structure. And then after tonight, should the board adopt the budget, then the next step is tomorrow evening we would go to the city council at the joint session to share what would then be the school board's adopted budget.

[00:43:49] So I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Kelly. Wonderful. Thank you, Dr. Quesada. I'm going to get started with some updates to the legislative and our revenue.

[00:44:06] So our projected revenue has changed since the previous presentation that took place on the 25th. There was a new calculation tool released by VDOE, which provided us with some additional revenue, about \$330,000 of additional revenue.

[00:44:23] And so we have made some decisions along with working with you all to make some decisions on how that additional revenue is going to be allocated in the budget moving forward. And so with that, our revenue now for the operating fund has increased to \$151,404,529.

[00:44:40] That's an increase again of \$30,000, and that's moving up from \$151 million. There's still some uncertainty as to when the actual budget is going to be approved. As of right now, we are anticipating an approval of the governor's budget around April or May. And again, I'm going to go through these slides that have not changed.

[00:45:03] And so we've updated our revenue summary. This is our operating budget summary. Most of the, well, all of the additional revenue was from state aid. And so the state aid calculation or that number has changed. It was \$83 million previously, and now it's \$84.1 million.

[00:45:19] Overall, it's not a huge change. So the percentages to the change haven't changed very wildly at all. It's just, again, a \$300,000 change. Again, here we've updated these percentages. It's such a minimal change, you likely won't even see the difference, but they have been updated.

[00:45:39] And now the operating budget highlights. We've made a few changes here just to highlight the things that we have decided to do with the new revenue that we received. So the total revenue increase has changed to \$5.1 million. The \$5.2 million in compensation increases has remained the same.

[00:45:56] and there's a \$1 million increase in employer contribution to the health care, I want to point out that this is additional costs that we as the employer are taking on to reduce the burden on our staff. And so by taking more of a cost, it will reduce the percentage increase that's going to happen to our employees.

[00:46:14] And then \$396,000 in additional strategic investments beyond compensation. That number has changed and is up a little more than last time, and I'm going to explain what those additional items are going to be. And so here, this has changed very little.

[00:46:30] Again, I just added a line about the employer increase for the health insurance. And again, we're going to talk a little more about that. No changes to the overall compensation over the years. Here, we've added a few lines to highlight some of the changes that we're making with the \$330,000.

[00:46:46] And so there is an adjusted employer contribution to the health insurance. Again, I just mentioned that. And then we have decided to add an alternative education coordinator. That was one of the, if you remember, that was one of the critical unmet priorities for the school board and for the superintendent.

[00:47:01] And so that has been added and so it's taken off of critical unmet needs and it's being added to the budget. Changes there. There are a few changes to the critical unfunded priorities. We have added here the cost of providing meals to all students.

[00:47:18] And just to give a quick update on that, there's been some discussion, a lot of changes happening right now at the federal government. I'm sure you're all aware. And some of that discussion has been led back to funding meals for students. And so, as you all know, we currently provide 100% free meals to our students.

[00:47:35] We do that through the ability to work with the federal government on a program called CEP, or Community Eligibility Provision. That program potentially could have some disruption down the road. And so we wanted to add that here just in case that is to come to fruition down the road. Paid parental leave is also new to this list.

[00:47:53] If you recall in the last presentation, that was going to be one of our potential unknowns. It has now been moved to a critical unfunded priority, as we feel that that's a huge priority and something that we want to look further into for our employees and our staff. Additionally, an additional social worker has been added to this list, as well as an additional speech-language pathologist.

[00:48:14] There haven't been many changes to potential unknowns, except for moving the paid parental leave from here up to our critical unmet priorities. However, we did add some language here to kind of talk about the impact on student males as it relates to our concerns with federal funding everything else that has been here collective bargaining state and local funding are still things that are potential unknowns and with that those are all the changes that have taken place since our previous presentation on the 25th and I'll take any questions any questions for mr. Kelly

[00:48:48] if we can go back to slide 20 the longevity step for instructional and support staff can you explain that sure so the longevity step is it was was a way for the school division to provide more than the cost of living increase for our staff who have been with us for more than 30 years and so as you all know we work on a on a step allocation for our salary scales specifically for

[00:49:23] our teachers and our support staff and so our salary scale previously only went step 30 this would be an additional step called a longevity step which doesn't provide the same salary increase as say as someone who's in the middle of those steps however it does provide more than the average cola and allows us to show a little more appreciation to our to our employees who have been with us for more than 30 years or around the 30 year mark so you said it provides around the average cola it adds more than the it provides more than the average okay and And could you say on average what that percentage is?

[00:49:59] I could. So the COLA would be around 2.2%, give or take. And so the longevity step will be providing a 3.5% increase. And that would be for both instructional staff and support staff. That is correct. And how many, approximately how many employees are impacted by this?

[00:50:17] There is approximately 100 employees will be impacted by this. And then this is a one-time increase, but it reflects future years. Correct. Future fiscal years coming up. But once they hit this longevity step, there are no additional steps past this?

[00:50:36] There are no steps past this. So moving forward, the increase would just be the standard COLA or the 3.5% that comes with this. And what is the cost for the longevity step? Approximately about \$100,000. Okay. The reason I'm asking is because we have a lot of unknowns going into this year.

[00:50:56] And I know we've discussed it at work sessions. We have many, many unknowns. And, you know, one of my big concerns is feeding our students. We've been able to provide our students with free breakfast and lunch since COVID. And we know that with funding cuts and the move of student meals to health and human services with the executive order to end or disband the Department of Education we don't know what's going to happen with that and so I do have concerns that we're

[00:51:29] going to have some significant financial changes at the federal level and how we can prepare for them when we don't know what they are yet so and that's not really question and I'm sorry it's not really question it's more of a statement but there's a lot of unknowns coming up and there are concerns that we could be headed in the direction of a recession there are concerns about you know funding cuts at the federal level the governor has said he supports the ending of the Department of Education because he feels that um states should be in

[00:52:08] charge of education but he hasn't attached any dollar signs to it so that's where my conundrum I guess for lack of a better term and I'm curious to hear what other board members say and what the thought process is on it because and and a little bit background for everyone at our last work session we really talked about our unfunded needs and prioritizing our unfunded needs because we have so many and we may not have had as much time to discuss the longevity

[00:52:41] step and so I look forward to hearing what other members say miss Bresha thank Thank you. So I will speak up for the longevity step. This has become a common thing across school divisions. You know, we are not inventing the concept here. You know, it exists in other school divisions that are around us. And the idea behind the longevity step is that for our very experienced teachers who are on that last

step, you know, there's very little danger of losing those teachers to other divisions, right, because you're never going to get your years of service

[00:53:18] matched and all that other kind of stuff. What you're going to lose those teachers to is retirement. And so, there is a, you know, school divisions, and this is not, we're not leading the way on this, other school divisions are doing this, have started adding longevity steps to induce those teachers to stay in the workforce so that we do not create additional vacancies which are hard to fill, admittedly hard to fill.

[00:53:42] So that's the theory behind the longevity step and a reason why I support it. It is just the fact of our current teacher pipeline that the, I read somewhere, that the largest generational cohort of teachers who are teaching in the United States are still the baby boomer generation.

[00:54:00] There's not enough X, there's not enough millennials, there's not enough alphas behind that boomer generation to fill all those positions. So I'm really interested in keeping the longevity step in order to keep as many of our folks at that step here in the workforce.

[00:54:17] So that's my two cents. - Anyone else down here? Ms. Miles. - I had a question about the increase for those teachers. Will they also get the 5.5 increase on top of the 3.5 step?

[00:54:37] - No, they will not. This is in replace of the three and a half percent because if we continue to move the top of the scale the same as the other scales, and you typically don't, you just don't have a top, right? And so we're trying to avoid that while also showing that we value our employees who are at the top of the scale.

[00:54:55] - Right. The other question I have, I know in Prince William, they allow teachers who retire to come back. Do we have a program like that where they could come back for a month, a few months, and serve as subs or, you know, coaches? Is that something that we do?

[00:55:12] That's not something that we do that I'm aware of. Okay. I will say that I want to make sure to reiterate that we respect and honor all their service that they have given to our district.

[00:55:28] The one thing, though, my concern, I know she's talking about food and providing food services for our kids. but my concern is also the lack of our teachers because right now we're really struggling to fill spots and one thing that we've talked about as a board is possibly providing stipends or bonuses to teachers who continue to you know serve us and i know that's something that we had talked about previously is that something that we could maybe do the numbers on to see how much it would cost for us to provide bonuses to teachers in lieu of you know possibly not giving that step to those

[00:56:07] teachers. So if you're asking if that's something that can be run obviously we couldn't do before we went to adopt a budget but that is something that we can certainly earmark and take a look at and for the future for sure. Yeah definitely because I think that we have to also remember that we are looking for you know certain types of teachers we haven't been able to fill those positions. We want to attract those teachers. And if we're going to attract them, we may need to have something as an incentive. And so that's something that I mean, \$100,000, we really honor those teachers. And I want to make sure to say that because I know I'm in the classroom and spending

[00:56:43] 30 years in a classroom or wherever they're serving, it's honorable. And we don't want them to think that we don't honor them. But we also have to do what's best for the total district and for students

and I think that it's we really need to look at that is that something that we want to continue and keep the longevity step or there's some other ways we can tap into that money and use it you know better dr. Jones did you have comment I just wanted to say I think the longevity step is a step that's needed I mean I when I go into the schools or in the city I see teachers who were some was teaching when I was there even someone teacher when my children were in

[00:57:23] school but I think we definitely need to honor them and appreciate them and so I I think the longevity step is a good thing. - Mrs. Spall, oh, sorry, Diana. Ms. Brown. - Thank you. There, you know, there is going to be a lot of unknowns in all aspects of education.

[00:57:44] That is a new reality. But when given the choice as school board members to look into fiscally responsible decisions, we have to prioritize our workforce.

[00:58:00] And this longevity step is the right message to send to our teachers in this uncertain times. And for me, it is something that I'm not willing to negotiate or compromise on, so I support it wholeheartedly.

[00:58:16] If we need to look at other areas as, you know, emergencies or needs arise based on what is or what is not available or what will not be available, I'm willing to look at that. but I want to make sure that we retain a quality staff and there is a measure for expertise and we really need to compensate our teachers who are the experts and the leaders for our new teachers as well, the models for our new teachers.

[00:58:48] So I am 100% on board with this longevity step and I'm not willing to compromise that. - Vice Chair Spall. - I've been on the whole time.

[00:59:05] I just want to say that this is not a question at all of who we value. We absolutely value all of our teachers and all of the expertise that they bring. To me, \$100,000 is a lot of money, and it can be used to fill some critical needs in other areas where other teachers are struggling, even if it looks like signing bonus or something like that.

[00:59:31] We are in a critical period right now where we are having trouble in special ed. And I just think that naming this as a strategic investment is taking away some flexibility that we may have for, it's not a lot of money, but every little bit can help when we're trying to grow our staff.

[00:59:51] When we, it is absolutely true that I think our 100 teachers that are at 30, Step 30, will appreciate this investment. but then we're still going to have 100 teachers at the highest step.

[01:00:07] It's not going to change our situation. That's my problem. So I would rather have the money that can be used a little more surgically to help some of our immediate needs. That's where I stand on the money.

[01:00:27] Mrs. Brescia, you had something else? Yes. I would just like to point out, listening to my fellow members, I've heard bonuses, I've heard lunches, i've heard i don't know what i necessarily i just heard right there just keep it with a bow on it and you know we have to adopt a balanced budget we have a meeting literally tomorrow and one of my with the city council to present this and we have had you know we've had been having budget meetings since november this has been in the superintendent's proposed budget

[01:01:04] since February. We had several work sessions to discuss it then to gather the -- even if we had decided to eliminate the longevity step, even if I could -- you know, a majority of people got on board with

that. Well, where does it go now? What do we do now? You know, it is not -- this is quite outside the process, frankly, and I would have much preferred that this had stayed in the process so we could get all of the information we needed to make a really strategic decision and I do think it's the most a very strategic decision keeping vacancies low is good for kids keeping vacancies low is dare I

[01:01:43] say best for kids so that is what I have to say all right I'm gonna wrap up a summary here and if there's anything left to be said you can say it all right I want to make sure everyone has their voice heard I would be in favor of taking the longevity step and putting it into a student achievement what is that called account contingency that we can decide on when more of these things the

[01:02:20] uncertain funding falls into place that's what I would be in favor of and you know it's Mrs. Breja it's not always elegant how these things happen but it's important and we did discuss this at the work session briefly last week and I heard from at least one school board member that they were under the assumption that the longevity step was coming out so there may have been some miscommunication there or misunderstanding but I'm glad we're having this discussion so we can make it clear and miss miles did you have

[01:03:00] something else you wanted to say I have a question I know that contracts will be going out soon I mean that's something that happens I know is there any talks of teachers those specific hundred teachers retiring is this something that you know for certain they're going to use that step or is this just presumption that's that's a question that's a great question and so we did our analysis we removed any potential retirements because we get that information pretty early and so we did remove those folks out of the list okay

[01:03:34] thank you so much no problem mrs stevens thank you chair um i appreciate everything everyone said and for me the big piece of food for thought is that those of our those employees of ours because it's not just teachers it's also support staff who have hit the top of the pay scale they do not get raises for the 5.5% their salary would stay the same year over year if we did not add this longevity step that's not necessarily so their salary will go up it will go up by about 2.2% which is a standard COLA

[01:04:14] percentage okay all right but they won't get the 5.5 they will not get the 5.2% I think that's an important piece and I appreciate everything that everyone has set up here it gives great food for thought and puts a different perspective on so thank you all right so we do need to finalize this budget we have our amount the amount doesn't change but we do need to be clear on what direction we want to give on longevity step yes miss Brown you know as a I'm just going to speak as a new board member I just believe that clear is kind and yes this

[01:04:52] This was mentioned, not discussed. Had I known that this was going to be up for discussion or for possible consideration of removal, I would have appreciated as a new board member to have the opportunity to get context, to look into it so that I could make my informed decision.

[01:05:14] Because we did have other monies that we did discuss and appropriated to other initiatives, such as the hiring of the alternative ed and also to the adjustment to the health insurance premium.

[01:05:31] I would have liked to known as a new board member that we were not clear or that there were items such as this one that needed to be removed or considered. At this point, I just do not believe that as a new board member, I can make any decisions in regards to this and I'm unwilling to compromise at this point.

[01:05:54] I do believe that it is in our best interest and transparency, we owe it to our teachers and to our constituents. This longevity step is the message and it is the right thing to do for our teachers who have spent 30 plus years with us.

[01:06:11] And again, I will reiterate, who are leading as role models for new teachers and even those teachers who are in mid-career transitions. So I will remain on move and I believe that this is the right thing to do.

[01:06:28] They should receive this longevity stop. Ms. Brown, what information do you need? I need a context. And you guys are discussing this for the first time at this meeting and asking, and I just mentioned it, so I don't know if people were not listening, if you were not listening.

[01:06:50] Had I known that this was going to be up for discussion or that some board members felt that we needed to consider removing this I would have liked that information at the work session when we allocated over \$300,000 to other initiatives. No doubt about it that would have been a better place to discuss it. Anyone else? Dr. Jones. I basically think we need to be true to our word and that is what was in the budget. Other school districts are doing it and remember too also these people are giving a lot of time and energy to our school system and we value them but also

[01:07:30] remember they can retire at any point in time. I remember for the last couple of years when I was working every year I put undecided, undecided, undecided. And I finally called the superintendent said, okay, this is a year I'm coming out. But I think we want to keep those people that we have. They are good role models. They're good teachers. And I don't think we put something in the budget and we wait till the last minute and try to take it out. I think it needs to stay in there, show our good faith and when we say something we do something and not yank it out at this time. I think it's inappropriate. Vice Chair Spall. I think it's time to

[01:08:07] make a motion. Okay. Chair I move that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the FY25-26 budget as presented. As presented. No I'm not. I'm asking. We had a discussion. I'm making a motion. It is. I'm ready to move. In In good faith, I'm making a motion in the amount of \$184,024,855 and authorize the school

[01:08:44] board chairman to transmit these schedules to the city of Manassas in accordance with school board policy and Virginia state code. Second. I have a motion by vice chair Spall, second by Mrs. Stevens at the school board, the city Manassas approve the FY 2025-2026 budget as presented in the amount of \$184,024,855 and authorize the school board chairman to transmit these schedules to the city council of Manassas in accordance with the school board policy and Virginia state code. Is there any

[01:09:19] discussion? Ms. Brescia? I have a clarifying question. The budget as presented includes the longevity step. That's correct. That's correct. That is the motion. So if you favor keeping in the longevity step? I think it's on this motion. I don't like what I don't like it but it's the right time it's what's up there that's what we've given to the family that's what we've told the people. Okay so can I clarify that so if we are not in agreement with the longevity step we say nay correct? That's correct. Okay I just want to make sure. Okay I'm going to

[01:09:58] read this again. Vice Chair Spall made a motion seconded by Mrs. Stevens at the school board the of Manassas approved the FY25-26 budget as presented in the amount of \$184,024,855 and authorize the school board chairman to transmit these schedules to the city council of Manassas in accordance with

the school board policy and Virginia state code. Is there any further discussion? All in favor? Aye. Show of hands please. Your hand is up, Dana. Diana is your hand up.

[01:10:37] all right um are there any nays nay so the motion carries six one seabrook opposed moving along on our agenda to personnel and our health insurance the school board annually approves the health insurance plans and premiums for all employees the health insurance plans and premiums were presented at the march 11 school board meeting the school board determined at their budget meeting on march

[01:11:12] 18th to contribute an additional one percent to the employer contributions at each of the three tiers to offset the cost for employees. This change is reflected in tonight's presentation or in this presentation. Yeah. Ms. Billy Payton. At the last school board meeting, Megan Mills presented the proposed health insurance rates for school year 25-26. This presentation identifies the changes from the proposed rates based on the school board's decisions for discussions at the March 18 budget meeting. The school board discussed the increase in rates and decided to contribute an

[01:11:49] additional 1% of the employer contribution for each of the three tiers to help offset the cost for employees. Anthem's monthly premiums had increased by 9.3% and Kaiser's premiums had increased by 5.4%. With this additional 1.1% employer contribution, the employer contribution employee-only plan increased from 83% to 84%. The employee plus one increased from 73% to 74% and the family tier increased from 73% to 74%.

[01:12:25] The rates were revised for all tiers of health insurance plans that are captured on this slide. The full monthly premiums in the first chart, the employer monthly contribution is identified on the second chart, and the employee monthly contribution is identified in the third chart.

[01:12:42] Monthly savings for employees range from \$7, \$17, and \$25. As stated in the presentation on March 11th, A health insurance request for proposal was issued and determined that the local choice was the best plan.

[01:12:58] The renewal rates of 9.3% increase in Anthem monthly premiums and a 4.4% increase in Kaiser monthly premiums are what led the school board's discussion at the budget meeting and ultimately providing an additional 1% for employer contributions.

[01:13:16] The increased employer contribution led to no change with the premium average. The average premium had been calculated. The employee contribution in all tiers was adjusted by 1%. The standalone rates were not affected by the increased 1% contribution.

[01:13:36] The benefit plan changes remain the same. This concludes my presentation. Are there any questions? Anyone at all? I'll just say I think this is the right move for our employees.

[01:13:57] Thank you. Thank you, Billy Kaye. Ms. Wingfield. All right. Next up on our agenda is the statement of ethical... Sorry. Do you have a motion to vote? Do we have to vote? Yes. Chair, I move that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the SY2526 insurance plans and premiums as presented.

[01:14:19] Second. I have a motion by Mrs. Falls, seconded by Mrs. Stevens, that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the school year 2526 insurance plans and premiums as presented. Is there any discussion? All in favor? Aye.

[01:14:34] Any opposed? Motion carries 7-0. All right. Next on unfinished business, statement of ethical standards and good governance. And I'll go to our board development committee chair, Ms. Sarah Brescia.

[01:14:56] So the only thing that has changed between the discussion and when this was first on our discussion agenda and now is that Ms. Garza has put it on this lovely letterhead. So we can obviously, at any point, people can discuss changes they want to make.

[01:15:13] But otherwise, this is ready to vote on I guess vice chair small procedurally I just have a question are we expected to sign this before that other document is finished? It is up to us But since we are adopting it officially today, this the signature part is strictly ceremonial Once it's adopted it is the will of the board whether or not we sign it if people would prefer to Wait to and sign both at the same time. We can definitely do that

[01:15:48] but once it is voted it applies to each of us regardless of okay signing. Thank you. Anyone else? I want to thank the policy team I'm not saying it right though. Board Development Committee for putting this together. I know it took a lot of time and as I read it I really agree with it and I feel strongly about it so I'm I'm so glad that you took the time to kind of comb through all those things so thank you. Anyone else? All right. Chair, I move that the school board approve the code of ethics

[01:16:26] as presented. Second. I have a motion by Mrs. Spall, second by Mrs. Bregia, that the school board approve the code of ethics as presented. Is there any discussion? All in favor? Aye. Any opposed? Motion carries 7-0. Okay. Now on our agenda is board member comments, and I will go first to Ms. Bland. Good evening, everybody. Congrats to the Spellingview winners for tonight.

[01:17:01] I have never made it past my class spelling bee, so let's just say I'm very impressed. Monassau City Public Schools is looking for two new student representatives. Unfortunately, I will not be returning in the fall, as I will be attending the University of Mary, Washington.

[01:17:20] Fortunately, that means we are looking for new representatives. If you or someone you know likes public speaking, being involved in local government, or making our students' voices heard, please apply now on the Mass City Public Schools website.

[01:17:38] The deadline to apply is quickly approaching. Send in your application before March 31st. I have some senior reminders. We receive our cap and gowns on April 2nd. Decision Day is on May 1st, and Prom is on May 2nd.

[01:17:57] Please be sure to join us on April 3rd, 4th, or 5th at Osborne High School for our spring musical, The Wizard of Oz. Students are free. The show will be at 7 p.m. for all three dates, so make sure to get there early to get a good seat.

[01:18:13] On Friday, March 28th, the Osborne Muslim Student Association will be holding a Ramadan potluck from 6 to 8 p.m. in the cafeteria. All are welcome to enjoy various foods provided by our students and community.

[01:18:29] And lastly, the Osborne Athletic Boosters are conducting their annual mulch sale. There's a 10-bag minimum purchase. 10 to 20 bags are \$4.90 per bag, 21 to 50 bags are \$4.65 per bag, and 51 or more bags are \$4.50 per bag.

[01:18:51] Checks can be made out to OHS. Please see the athletic newsletter or contact coach Mike Johnson for more information on where you can send your payment. Payment is due on April 16th in

order to receive your mulch on April 19th. Thank you.

[01:19:07] Thank you, Ms. Bland. Ms. Breeden? Good evening. The National Honor Society is holding a car wash fundraising event Saturday, April 5th from 9 to 12 p.m. Stop by for the student benefiting car wash. It's only \$8.

[01:19:24] And then all of Manassas City Elementary Schools are hosting a STEM night on April 1st from 6 to 8 p.m. at Jenny Dean Elementary. And I think this will be an exciting opportunity to showcase all of our elementary school students' interest in STEM. And then lastly, a comment on our like decision making in regards to school and environment just like keep in mind that students are majority of students are going to be there regardless but in favor of our students showing up we need to consider our teachers who like choose to be there we already have made great

[01:20:01] strides for students for free meals and strong transportation services but we need to you know give back to the teachers who are devoting a lot of their their time energy and money and that must not go unheard or seen and so I feel like once we establish these foundations then we can look into the fine print and work out the details but please consider prioritizing those within the classroom meaning our students and most importantly our teachers thank you thank you miss Braden dr. Jones

[01:20:36] congratulations to all the spelling bee contestants your spelling ability was evident and I hope you're all preparing for next year congratulations to the choir members orchestra band for your awards and accomplishments and it was nice hearing that the debate team did well their first year. I recently had a college student share her experience on the college debate team and she had the opportunity to travel the world and to go to school for free. So something great for those who don't like sports. I had the opportunity to attend several events on the past two weeks. The Jenny Dean Park ribbon-cutting allowed residents to see firsthand the facilities available to our families and community. Their

[01:21:14] turnout at the Manassas Education Foundation pancake dinner was great. It was great seeing both young and old enjoy pancakes, the band and dancing. The education foundation plays a critical role in supporting our schools. Also took part in professional development today. I attended a workshop on superintendent evaluations. The board believes in continuous learning and each of us attend a lot of training and workshops and the Virginia board, um, school board association offers a wide array of opportunities for us to learn more about being on the school board. I want to remind all rising juniors and seniors has already been stated that the deadline is fastly approaching for you

[01:21:52] to submit an application to be a student representative from a NASA city schools. Two students will have the opportunity to represent all the NASA city public school students in a non-voting advisory capacity. This position will provide the opportunity for you to serve your community and to gain a more thorough understanding of city and school governance and its role in creating an effective learning environment for all students.

[01:22:19] I also want to encourage all 5th through 8th grade students to attend Astronomy Night on Thursday, March 27th from 6 to 8 p.m. at Metz Middle School. You will surely enjoy an evening under the stars as you explore the universe through interactive activities and powerful telescopes.

[01:22:37] And lastly, as we're wrapping up the month, I want to congratulate or I want to thank all of those that helped celebrate Women's History Month. I'd like to commend Dr. Karen Wallace at Osborne high school for her work with the women's her story spotlight at Osborne high school, Dr. Chapman, the

school principal, school board members, central office staff and women in history were highlighted during morning announcements. And as we're ending the month of women history month, please reach out to a woman in your life that's done something special for you and let them know that they made a difference in your life. Thank you.

[01:23:12] Thank you. Mrs. Brescia. Thank you. So first of course, congratulations to all of our spotlights tonight very excited to see that Osborne now has a speech and debate team I'm wondering if school board members are allowed to coach now I know but it's always a pleasure to celebrate our student achievements and I was glad to do that tonight so between now and our last school board meeting I have four things to report on first I attended the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting on March 12th where they discussed their continued work on some new upcoming events and initiatives Coming up the soonest is the Little Feet meet on April 4th at 10:00 a.m. at Osborne, so please save that date and check it out if you can.

[01:23:50] I also really appreciated at that last meeting that Mr. Masiak walked the committee through the federal funding and what that all goes to fund in Manassas City Public Schools. The federal funding we receive goes towards 15.66 employee positions here in Manassas City Public Schools, which is actually very little if you think about it, and it's definitely money that needs to be protected.

[01:24:19] Second, I was able to take a tour of our facilities at the Governor's School. I was totally blown away by the opportunities available there. I saw a number, I was there, I scheduled it so I could be there when the kids were there. I got to see our Osborne kids in action and I got a chance to speak with some of them about their ambitions and got a chance to speak with the staff there about the opportunities available to them.

[01:24:40] That was a really great, fulfilling day trip. I third also had the opportunity to shadow Miss Whatley, the speech language pathologist, maybe I need an SLP, at Round Elementary. I enjoyed the opportunity to see her in action and understand a little bit more about her kids, what they need and how those needs have changed over the years, which I think is something that we can lose track of from our seat up here.

[01:25:05] So I was really happy to have the chance to go be there on the ground with her for that opportunity. And finally, I just want to shout out to family science night at Baldwin Elementary School, which was such a hit with our household that literal tears were shed when it was time to go. So for coming attractions, there is a joint meeting tomorrow with the city council at 5:30 p.m.

[01:25:24] right there with some city council members who snuck in the back here, council member Rosina and council member Vasquez Luna, stem night at 8 Jenny Dean, April 1st from 6 to 8 p.m. And of course, in our community, there is first Friday on April 1st, 4th, And an Easter Bunny brunch being held by the Manassas Volunteer Fire Company on April 5th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

[01:25:47] That's all. Thank you. Mrs. Stevens. Thank you. Several items. First, I want to congratulate all our Spelling Bee contestants. I was there at the Spelling Bee, and I found myself trying to spell along with the kids. And I used to think I was a good speller, but I would have lost to most of them.

[01:26:07] So that kind of knocked me down a notch. And I want to give a special shout out to the Osborne speech and debate team. That's a pretty amazing thing. It feels like 100 years ago, but I was on the debate team for my high school. It was an amazing experience.

[01:26:22] I got to travel to many places. I made many new friends. It helped me build confidence in public speaking and being around strangers. I hope the students enjoy it as much as I did. Even though my team was much smaller with only about 10 members, whereas Osborne has about 30 members I was also able to attend the Manassas City Parks and Rec meeting as an observer recently the biggest news out of the meeting was the upcoming events at the new Marsteller Community Center and I'm actually going to go to the website because there was so much coming up Marsteller limited programming will begin on April 1st some of the highlights

[01:27:00] are five versus five pickup basketball from starting April 3rd every other Thursday from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. it's in alternating age groups ages 6 to 15 and then 16 and up you do not need to be an expert another thing that will be going on at the Marsteller Rec Center or Community Center is Lego Club every other Tuesday beginning April 8th from 5:00 to 7:00 for ages 6 to 12 so I actually know several young people who are gonna be excited about that and then there's also toddler drop-in which is going to start every Monday morning from

[01:27:36] 10:30 to 12:30 however if you're a parent of a toddler you need to actually stay with your toddler as opposed to dropping them off and going across the street to Starbucks which is something I might want to do and then last but not least at the Marsteller Community Center they're holding an spring egg extravaganza Saturday April 12th from 11:30 to 3 p.m. 11,000 Easter eggs petting zoo with camels ponies and more there's going to be the touch-a-truck if you've ever gone to other events in the city they always have a touch-a-truck where the kids get to experience being on the different kinds of trucks there's moon bounces

[01:28:14] community vendors food trucks and more and finally in honor of women's history month this week is the last week of women's history month I want to talk about a woman who's very integral to the city of Manassas and that's Jenny Serpeta Dean as I was going through women's history month I was looking for information on her to understand better who she was because we know she was an educator we know she started the industrial school here in the city of Manassas and then it was open to all african-american black students in Prince William County but I wanted to know a little bit about more about her so I did have to do some digging and from the what is it called it is the

[01:28:54] Virginia law education website there's a little bit of a background on Jenny Dean. I'm going to actually read this to you because I can't put it into my own words. Jenny Dean was born enslaved in Loudoun County. Her name was Jenny Serpeta Dean. She became involved in education at the age of 30 when she founded a Sunday school in Prince William County. From there she established more religious schools, several of which grew into church congregations. She also taught classes in cooking and sewing. She began planning the new institution that would teach skilled trades to african americans she her sister and another person started building local support

[01:29:32] for the idea in 1888 what some people don't know is she worked with frederick douglas and he actually came here and he was a strong supporter of hers she found her organization found a suitable site near manassas it took her five years to raise the money and plan the school new school and she even worked as a cook in massachusetts to build funds for the school So when we think about our local people, let's think about Jenny Dean and let's think about a woman who is a foundation in our city.

[01:30:04] And I also found from Dr. Jones that there's actually a Jenny Dean Park in Arlington. That's how wide her reach was. That's how strong her impact was. So as Dr. Jones did say, at the end of Women's

History Month, think about a woman who's made an impact in your life and reach out to the woman and let them know how important they've been to you and what impact they've made on your life.

[01:30:26] So thank you. - Thank you, Ms. Stevens. - Ms. Brown. - Good evening. I would like to start my comments by thanking all of us citizens who attend and/or watch our meetings.

[01:30:43] Staying invested in these local policies and decisions is worthy of our time. So I appreciate all of your support and feedback. In fact, I welcome your feedback. Speaking of supporting efforts, I continue to support our staff and students by attending and hosting events.

[01:31:00] If you allow me, I will share a couple of them. On March 12th, I engage with residents by hosting a walk and talk with Diana Brown. I spend the evening walking, chatting, but I must admit I did sit in a lot of porches, discussing just current events and concerns.

[01:31:17] My intention is to host a few more of these walks and talks now that the weather's warming up, so stay tuned, and hopefully some of you can join me. On March 14th, I was able to spend some time. Hayden Elementary during the well-organized career day.

[01:31:34] I spent a couple of hours with kindergartners and first graders. I miss them so much. I work in central office now. But they were so excited to learn about my friends on the board and Dr. Newman. I told them all about Dr. Newman.

[01:31:50] They had lots of questions about how to become a school board member, and we actually spent a delightful time. But a special thank you goes to Counselor Heather Hartman and the entire staff and volunteers for organizing and some of them attending such an important event.

[01:32:07] As one of my favorite German poets, Johan Wolfig once noted, instruction does much, but encouragement is everything. So thank you Hayden and Ms. Hartman for showing the kids all that is within their reach and their potential.

[01:32:26] On Monday, March 17th, I attended the first Immigration and Refugee Advisory Committee. They were very positive outcomes from that first meeting, but one worthy of mention is the unity and commitment from all stakeholders in this city.

[01:32:44] The committee has a true diverse representation and I look forward to our next meeting. Saturday March 22nd. I was invited to lunch with the robotics team and Chair Seberg so thank you. A big thank you goes to Dr. Chowdhury. I did it okay for cooking. She cooked such a delightful meal for us. I truly appreciated just the hospitality and I also enjoyed chatting with the students and the staff and I

[01:33:18] hope this is the first of many more invitations following that event I attended the in I was part of the committee for the Education Foundation who hosted a pancake supper it was my first event as a committee member and of course I enjoy every moment of it we were able to fundraise very needed funds to support scholarships and other foundation endeavors if you missed it that's okay no worries you can still support us by making a donation just visit mcpsedfoundation.org because every donation counts towards fulfilling our

[01:33:55] promise to invest innovation and student growth congratulations to the spelling bee winners and congratulations to the Met's wrestling team and the fine arts department and debate teams at Osborne High School. I will end my comments by noting that this is my first budget season as a as an educator I understand how critical these discussions are while the current landscape for funding is not ideal I am

committed to making informed and sound decisions to promote student achievement and I just want to take a minute to

[01:34:32] express my gratitude to Dr. Casada and her team for taking the time to answer all of our questions but specifically my questions and also to my fellow board members thank you for your patience as I process all the information about the budget I am very passionate about students and teachers so I appreciate all of the time that you give me and all of the grace that you afford me thank you thank you miss Brown I liked your quote I hadn't heard that before very good. Ms. Miles. Yes, I have quite a bit of things to say. I have an update actually for the English

[01:35:10] Learner Parent Advisory Committee and they actually, I got a whole list of their, the survey questions that were given to them. We had 43 participants. It was a two-hour meeting and it was led by Kurt Emel and it was a collaborative working with the METS family liaison. Teachers who teach the adult ESOL students also conducted the paper survey so 23 out of the 43 parents that attended were able to fill out the survey and these are their the survey questions so bear with me as I read the results the first question was what aspects of the current ESOL program do you feel are working well for your child

[01:35:49] and parents praise ESOL program and its efforts to prepare students for the SOLs and get better grades when they were asked how well do you feel your child's school is preparing him or her for his or her next academic year. Parents selected well or extremely well. When asked what additional supports or resources would you like to see in the ESOL program to better meet your child's needs, students, their answers range from parent support to help their student graduate, more sports, sports that are non-competitive, an alternative school for kids who struggle with school, support for homework, more practice for students and families in English, more reading and writing practice for students, and a request to record

[01:36:29] classes to review lessons at home with parents. Number four, when asked how confident are you in your ability to support your child's learning at home, the responses varied from nine parents selected extremely confident, six chose somewhat confident, and the rest were slightly confident, only two chose not confident, which I thought was encouraging. Number five, how effective do you find the communication between the school and families about your child's progress and ESOL services most of the parents chose very effective there were a few that chose somewhat effective and only three chose very ineffective number

[01:37:07] six was how effective do you find the communication between the school and families about involvement opportunities 11 parents chose very effective and then some were ineffective somewhat effective and there was only one chose very ineffective number seven was what types of events workshops or information sessions would you like the ESOL program to offer for families and parents suggested computer learning workshops or online learning workshops educating parents and students on the dangers of substance abuse continue having adult ESOL classes as an option conduct home visits to ensure that

[01:37:45] students are safe health healthy and free of violence specialty workshops community resource awareness tutoring for students and at the high school Saturday seminars to include reading programs for families as well as the students and vocational workshops and understanding the school system information sessions by school for the limited English proficiency and non-LEP families as well number

eight was how satisfied are you with the opportunities for your child to participate in school activities and feel included in the school community and most said they were very satisfied

[01:38:19] only a few chose somewhat dissatisfied and number nine was do you have any other suggestions or feedback about the ESL program and parents gave more suggestions about having meetings at the high school to discuss progress in school hold workshops how to improve motivation for students to do better at school and offer more adult ESL classes which I see that there's a trend there so those are doing really well and parent workshops bullying prevention and improved communication so I was just pleased overall with the feedback from the parents I know it was only 23 but we're gonna be having another meeting

[01:38:55] they're gonna be having one on May 1st so if you are a parent of an L English language learner be sure to come to that so you can voice your concerns and that'll be held at Mets Middle School I also was able to attend I tried to get through that pretty quick I know that was a lot to attend a few events in the community last week the opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony at Dean Park it was great to see the excitement for the community seeing the Dean Park renovations including the pickleball courts which were what everyone loved the pickleball courts I've never played pickleball but it was exciting to see people excited about that and also more field space for our students who love soccer there's

[01:39:34] also an ability for you to play at night which is really nice with the lights. I also attended the Pancake Supper that the Monassa City Education Foundation hosted on Saturday and they had some great auction items, good food good food excuse me and music and I appreciate what the Education Foundation is doing to raise money for scholarship money for our seniors and providing opportunities for our teachers. I know when I actually got a grant from an Education Foundation to give Scholastic to my students and I know how important it is that they're doing that so teachers that they have you know opportunities that they see they want to grant this is a great way to get

[01:40:13] connected with Education Foundation and the last thing I'll say is April 5th at noon Manassas Museum is hosting a gallery talk and Osborne student art show and it will we will learn from two young artists who are from Osborne high school about the vision and inspiration behind their artwork they did not tell us the names but I plan on attending and I hope everyone else will attend that as well so thank you that's it. Thank you Ms. Miles. Vice Chair Falk. Yes I just want to say I'm very proud of all of our Dean updates that everyone got to see tonight

[01:40:49] that's the fruition of a lot of hard work and things are going well I'm proud of the budget that we presented tonight I think that you know there's opportunities for us to hopefully fill positions and also let let teachers and staff know how much we care about them. I want to congratulate again the Spelling Bee winners. I wrote their names so let me just shout out to Charlotte, Jaden, Leopold, Elias, Danica, or Danica, Caden, Noreen, and Hyen. I'd like to congratulate our own Amelia for her speech and debate work and Mr. Whitley

[01:41:27] for getting 30 kids in the first team. That's amazing. I am very proud of our work to be a blue-ribbon school and I think that that if we can finagle it should probably be something that we put up in banners and things like that around the school or the outside of the school probably inside and outside if I had my choice but congratulations to Miss Glom and Mr. Wassum and Ms. LeMans I appreciate our former school board representative coming after all these years to speak up and those who spoke on collective bargaining I just want

[01:42:03] everyone to know that we're going to continue to work hard to remove barriers for kids so that they can spend their days in our schools finding things that they love to do that hopefully will make them better people better people meaning well-adjusted adults who can contribute to society because that is ultimately what we're here for thank you thank you vice chair and I could go on and repeat what a lot of people have already said but I'll just be brief Dean Park ribbon-cutting it was a beautiful day and it was great to be there with

[01:42:38] some of my school board members and it's just it's a good it's a promising start for a new park and soon to be a new school there I wanted to thank all my school board members because this month has had a lot of meetings we've had a lot of meetings budget work sessions hearings and regular meetings I want to thank the Board Development Committee for your work on bringing forward the Code of Ethics and Dr. Jones had mentioned about the student representatives I wish some of our high schoolers were still here but we do want

[01:43:16] to keep encouraging rising juniors and seniors to consider that opportunity and the applications are available online and due by March 31st at 5:00 p.m. and I will close out my comments actually two things one I want to say the school board tonight approve the budget yay and we look forward to presenting to City Council tomorrow night with the help of awesome staff and last but certainly not least happy birthday to Chris Taylor she's our director of CTE and we love

[01:43:52] you you're awesome you do so much and you're so enthusiastic about what you do and you represent us so well and bring great opportunities to our students so Thank you so much. Happy birthday.

[01:44:07] And with that, I will take a motion. Chair, I move that the school board meeting adjourn. I have a motion by Mrs. Stevens, seconded by Vice Chair Spall, that the school board meeting adjourn. Is there any discussion? All in favor? Aye. Any opposed?

[01:44:23] The motion carries 7-0.



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com