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Manassas City School Board Meeting - June 10, 2025

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[00:00:02] School board meeting is called to order. Would you please stand for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

[00:00:41] Ms. Wolkowski, would you please call the roll? - Chair Seberg. - Here. - Vice Chair Spall. - Present. - Mrs. Stephens. - Present. - Mrs. Brescia. - Here. - Ms. Miles. - Present. - Ms. Brown.

[00:00:57] Dr. Jones. - Here. - 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. - Okay, may I get a motion to approve the agenda this evening chair i move that the school board of the city of manassas approve the public meeting agenda as presented second i have a motion by mrs stephens seconded by vice chair spall that the school board of the city of manassas approve the public meeting agenda as presented is there any discussion all in favor any opposed the motion carries seven zero okay superintendent's announcements

[00:01:36] and spotlights and i'll go to miss radford to introduce our guests this evening thank you thank - Thank you, Chair Sieber. Good evening to other members of the board and good evening to everyone who has joined us tonight and to our viewing audience. Tonight we have Suzanne Sloan and Kenny Moles with the Virginia Virtual Academy and they will be sharing some information with the board tonight, thank you.

[00:02:05] - Welcome. - Thank you very much, appreciate you inviting us here. I said I'm not gonna get choked up here but I started my education career right after college as a teacher, Manassas City Public Schools.

[00:02:25] I was a teacher at Weems Elementary from 1990 to 2001. So, so happy to be back home. That's what it feels like when I come back to Manassas. It is a pinnacle point for me, not that this is all about me for a minute here, but a pinnacle point to have come full circle.

[00:02:43] When I left Manassas City, I started working for K-12, helping open schools across the country. At the time, I thought, well, I'll just do this in the summer and then maybe I'll come back and work as a teacher again. And I just loved it so much.

[00:02:58] It was this idea that we could reach really every single child and give them some public school options. So I helped open some schools across the country. Finally, in 2010, included in the packet is the information about how the Virginia Virtual Academy came about.

[00:03:14] But just really pleased to be back in Manassas City. I said to my colleague, Kenny Moles, the last time I was here would have been during one of those award. I think Weems had won the technology year. That was 1998. Look it up.

[00:03:30] Keep me honest. And we were here as each school had a representative as Teacher of the Year. So I was coming in for that. So it feels very, very good to be in front of you again and happy to be back in Manassas. So the Virginia Virtual Academy is different than virtual Virginia.

[00:03:47] I just wanted to make sure there's a distinction there. And we have the name first, in case anybody wants to check that too. But Virtual Virginia really began as an entity from the Virginia Department of Education that was helping with courses and helping with teachers. So you're a school, you don't have a chemistry teacher, you're not offering AP Physics, and you could use Virtual Virginia for that.

[00:04:10] They then went into, after the pandemic, some online public school arena, but they are not what we are. We are a program of school divisions, and we are a partner. And so I want you to know that as we finish tonight and as we hope we have some good positive interactions with you to know we're here as a partner with you.

[00:04:31] And again, coming to you in Manassas City as a partner feels really good. There are students who we know that will do very well in an online setting, and we'd like to give them that opportunity. We have more students who want to attend we have seats for so if you go into your your packet i show you a little bit about which states we're in how many programs we have and schools that we've opened and then we have a little little bit tricky to read tiny but that's why i printed it for you the virginia virtual academy started in 2010 with legislation that allowed multi-division online providers mops to be able

[00:05:09] to work with school divisions to offer online opportunities outside your school division border So you may have some Manassas City students who would want to take some classes online, go full-time online, which is what we are. And we know there are students outside your border who want to attend.

[00:05:26] But the way the bill passed in 2010 and 15 years later still goes is each school division has a capacity. So a school division may be able to have 300 students that can attend based on their LCI, based on their financing and their state funding.

[00:05:42] A school division like Manassas may be able to take 3,800 virtual students. So because of that, we partner with multiple school divisions in order to meet the demand. Right now, my colleague Dr. Kenny Moles is the head of school and I think we have 6,500 students and it's just early June.

[00:06:08] The student applications are continuing to come in. So as we meet the capacity with our current partners, we will at some times, and this is that time, we have more students than we have seats for. So that's why we are talking to school divisions, and there are some other school divisions that are interested in working with us, but I promise you, I have prioritized, and that's why I'm here, Manassas City.

[00:06:33] Am I allowed to say this out loud? Yeah, I guess I could. Manassas City is my favorite because that's where I started, so I'd love to work with you and be able to give you this opportunity. There is a page that shows which school divisions we are partnered with. We started in 2010 with one partner, Carroll County in Southwest Virginia.

[00:06:50] We now have 21 partners across the Commonwealth of Virginia. And then the kind of hard to read slide, maybe that has a lot of dots on it, just shows you that when you decide to partner with us, we do it all.

[00:07:06] We take it from the marketing to students, to the enrollment of students, to the instruction, to the curriculum, but the program is yours. The Manassas City Virtual Program, or whatever you choose to call the program, is yours in terms of enrollment criteria, in terms of which grade levels, in terms of how many students you enroll, but we will be doing the bulk of the work for you.

[00:07:33] Some school divisions will look and say, uh-oh, this is going to be a lot of work. We're running a virtual program. We are running the program as we do with 21 other school divisions. And what we have put into an agreement that I did share with your superintendent is to give you a paid staff member to be able to assist.

[00:07:54] Because in the beginning, there will be some work, and the work will be entering students into PowerSchool. Right? It will be data entry, a lot of that. be questions as well that it may be someone from your staff might have a question someone from our staff might have a question as we're getting getting moving into the system but the work that will be done will be done by our team so don't let that be a concern that there's a lot to do enrollment is open as I mentioned and growing each day we're getting more students to come in generally I have been at k-12 since 2001 generally the peak of enrollment is mid-july it's when parents are starting to make decisions school starting in

[00:08:33] about two weeks three weeks and they're starting to make decisions at that time pre-pandemic I used to talk to people about why would a student want to attend an online school I think post pandemic we're starting to understand some of the reasons why our students across the Commonwealth across the country are staying in online school I think there was some maybe thoughts across the country that this post pandemic this might not continue people might say well I'm returning back to the traditional school but we've seen actually the opposite trend and over the last three years here at the Virginia Virtual

[00:09:13] Academy we have grown we started the school year with what 1400 fewer students than we have now so the students are continuing to enroll but that page I just kind of pause to let you read and maybe read that in your quiet time these are these are some of the students who were really pleased to be able to help some students as we know thrive in the traditional public school and some students really thrive in our online school we just had our graduation of over 400 students at the Virginia Virtual Academy and we were we had so many parents and so many friends and siblings that we filled pretty much

[00:09:52] completely James Madison University's basketball arena and we just had graduation last Friday and it was a great day and we have videos I have videos of you don't know if you know that and the teachers and the students and families and it was just a glorious day to see those students we have students who've been with us since kindergarten and they were walking the stage last Friday so it was a great day those are some of our stories so now we come to the point where we talk about benefits to you the first benefit I hope you'll always keep in your heart is that you're giving opportunities to students these are students who will not have this opportunity if we don't have a school division partner with us for this year we will have a wait list the

[00:10:32] second is and let's agree everybody needs revenue so this state funding follows the student as they come from each of the school divisions that they enroll to Manassas City Public Schools we have some divisions that like to wait until the end of the school year for that revenue to come in other school divisions request that the revenue come at on October 1st after the first count day so that would be your choice again the capacity the highest you can take and these numbers are from the Virginia Department of Education we have a consultant who works with us to let you know how many students each school

[00:11:11] division can take Manassas has a capacity to take 3,890 out of division students and you could include your in division students as well above that number the revenue does follow the state funding follows the student from their locality to Manassas City so I did a little bit of checking here and again these numbers were pulled just as count day came through on March 31st and 57 of your students who live in Manassas City were attending the Virginia Virtual Academy so that state funding was not going into your revenue that was coming

[00:11:49] into the Virginia Virtual Academy in each of the school divisions where we have your students partnered with us they return to you as your full students if you were to partner with us we would put those Manassas City students back into your power school and that funding if it were to stay at 57 that's why I put approximately here kids are enrolling today we had some seniors graduate from the list that Kenny and I reviewed so we did have some seniors that were Manassas City students that just graduated with us would be about five hundred and five thousand dollars just in returning your own Manassas City

[00:12:24] students to your roster if we were to enroll all the way up if we have that many students I think right now we're looking at about fourteen hundred fifteen hundred students on the wait list and again it's June so that will increase with your state funding that I've estimated from your most recent numbers about eighty eight sixty you can do the math on the previous page that would bring a revenue of about two million dollars to Manassas City Schools so sometimes you have someone coming in talking about how much it will you'll have to spend to do this this is bringing revenue to you and as a former

[00:13:01] school board member I was elected to two terms on the school board in Fauquier County I know your position and I know that there are probably financial needs across this school division that that would be helpful for so there are lots of operational and questions that sometimes come up from those that discussion after you're thinking about it like wait a minute this is too good to be true it is it is not too good to be true I'm here to tell you that this the students desperately need desperately need a partner so they can have a seat and this the revenue does follow I have each of those superintendents I've talked

[00:13:38] to your superintendent he knows some of them and I chatted with them if he wanted to make a phone call and say, hey, how's this working? You've been partnered with them for a while. I know they

would have good things to say. So Kenny and I are happy to take some questions and if you have any, we're happy to entertain a discussion.

[00:13:55] - Questions or comments from the board, Dr. Newman? - When we met, we talked about alternative school and I actually had a chance to talk to Salem. - Perfect, very good, very good. - And things are going well. Can you explain to the board how that would work? - Yep, so within the agreement that your superintendent has, We have included some information about bringing students from Manassas City back to you.

[00:14:19] So these are students who are currently attending the Virginia Virtual Academy. And we talked about some students who are currently in your Alternative Ed program that I believe you're considering bringing to the 8700 offices there and bringing those students in.

[00:14:37] So what would happen is those students would be able to come in as you're planning to have them set up in each of their areas, and they would be using the online curriculum. The nice piece is Kenny has employed all of the Virginia certified teachers, so that would relieve you of having to bring individually Virginia certified teachers into the building physically with the students because they'd be taking their online classes, which include synchronous and asynchronous lesson time, and you could employ perhaps behavior specialists or others who are skilled at working with alternative ed students.

[00:15:15] And the curriculum and the instruction would come through the Virginia Virtual Academy. We have a small pilot program in Salem City. And I'm glad you were able to have a conversation with our superintendent there. It's a very small program. The goal there is for the students to return to their traditional schools, which would likely be your goal as well.

[00:15:33] But you may have a student who would be there the entire school year. You may have a student who would be there for six months. You may have a student who would be there a period of time smaller than that and those students would just come in within the agreement there would be no additional charge for those students they would just come right to you it also solves i think the problem of bringing the teachers into the building and maybe such a small space i wasn't able to see the space but it looked like it was going to be maybe on the third floor i know that other school divisions have tried to do that and the difficulty has been with the teachers and being able to keep that together so we'd be keeping track of all that information and and reporting that to you.

[00:16:09] All of the student performance information is available to you at any time. You're able to log in all of the staff members that you give authority to do that, can see the instruction, the assessments, the work that the students are doing, and can see notes and information.

[00:16:25] They're also able to come in and watch the instruction, which is really fun to be able to see what the teachers are doing and how the students are interacting. We have some videos we can share with you and also some demos. I know sometimes former teachers like to look at the curriculum and like to look at some of the lessons and how it's laid out and think about how this might work with students with special needs, work with students in each of the classrooms.

[00:16:51] And the other thing that Kenny has done really nicely with his teachers is a lot of sharing of best practices because there are probably some of your teachers who probably thrived during the online instruction time and really like to know how this is working as well.

[00:17:06] So thank you for that question question other questions from the board in our comments. Mrs. Brescia. Thank you for the presentation I do want to make sure I understand this is new to me. So I have a lot of questions. I always get so loud Anyway, so how does this impact the first question whenever I brought this up with people in conversation is what about sports?

[00:17:31] Like are the 57 kids who reside in Manassas City if they come back to us or now are they now sports eligible? So according to VHSL they are not unless the superintendent allows it And I can tell you and Kenny if you'd like to speak to this I know you spoke to it during the meeting as well. We Generally the students don't live here So if the superintendent were able to give them the opportunity to play they'd be driving from all over the all over the Commonwealth So the VHSL does not allow for virtual student participation in high school sports Unless the superintendent allows that we've had some superintendents allow theater allow band participation, allow things like that,

[00:18:10] but VHSL doesn't allow that for sports. Additionally, we recommend that you create a new school code for your virtual school so that your numbers don't affect your classification of sports. I mean, I think you guys are maybe the high number anyway, so it wouldn't change, but in some of our school division partners in Southwest, that'd be a very big deal if their classification for sports changed by enrolling 2,000 students, so yeah.

[00:18:34] - Dr. Newman, did you have something to add to that? Yes, I had a chance to talk to Dr. Han, and especially for those 57, they are ours, so they would be eligible. Absolutely, yes. I'm sorry if I didn't get that part of your question. Your Manassas City students, of course, would be allowed to, again, they'd have to meet all the eligibility that the traditional students do with grades and whatever criteria you have in place right now for athletic participation.

[00:19:00] Student performance on SOLs, their graduation rate, does that come under us as well? That's right, yes. So even if they reside in Prince William County, if they enroll through us, through Virginia Virtual Academy, we are carrying the accountability for their academic performance now.

[00:19:20] Yes. Do they count towards our ADM? Yes. Yes. So that's potentially a lot. Like our ADM could potentially grow a lot if we get more than 1,000 students. The state funding will follow. Wherever the students are residing, that state funding will follow at your state rate funding, which is about, again, about 88-60.

[00:19:41] So, and this is also where I'm a beginner to this. There's lots of terms that I've heard and that I've seen in this packet. I've heard Virginia Virtual Academy, or VAVA, Virginia Virtual Academy. I've seen Stride, I've seen K-12. What are these three things, and how do they interact with each other?

[00:19:57] Yes, so the Virginia Virtual Academy is our school, and when the students attend, whether they are students of one of the 21 divisions, They really feel that this is their school. The Virginia Virtual Academy is their school. We are powered by K-12.

[00:20:15] K-12 is a Virginia-based company, and it is here. The headquarters for the national headquarters are right here in Reston, Virginia. Stride is the parent name. So we use Stride. I think of it as, you know, what's the parent name of Google? Anybody know?

[00:20:30] Alphabet. Alphabet. You did. Alphabet. So that's kind of how I would think of Stride. Stride is really more for our adult learners and the past learners. post K-12 instruction in any of the companies that we have acquired, K-12 has acquired, are under the umbrella of stride.

[00:20:49] So if I was following what you were saying correctly, the 57 students who are already here become ours. We can use this for our alternative program if we want to.

[00:21:04] And then in addition to that, potentially 1,400 to 1,500 kids who live elsewhere in the state, That would count towards our ADM and come in under our umbrella. You had said earlier in the presentation that the enrollment criteria is ours, like for the 1,400 to 1,500.

[00:21:27] So we can decide among those 1,400 to 1,500 whether or not we want to, like maybe we only want 1,000 for some reason. Absolutely. Yes. You may choose the number. You can choose the grade levels. We hope you would pick K through 12 as we have a lot of students coming in on the wait list.

[00:21:45] But that's completely up to you. And we have sample enrollment criteria if that is of interest to you. Some superintendents choose to have criteria. Some school board will recommend that to the superintendent that not everyone thrives in an online school. So maybe there should be some eligibility to get in.

[00:22:02] Because they're out of division students, the superintendent has that right by Code of Virginia, just as you would today. a Prince William County student wanted to attend your your one of your Manassas City Schools your superintendent would have the approval or denial for that to happen okay anyone else have more I have a card I'm happy to take a call I'm happy to take an email thank you Mrs. Stevens and then miss smiles yes thank you um so virtual Virginia student virtual Virginia Academy students get virtual

[00:22:37] Virginia. Virginia Virtual. Virginia Virtual Academy. Sorry. Getting the words mixed up. You get it. So can any student attend? Across the Commonwealth of Virginia any student can apply and if they meet your academic requirements or if you do not choose to have academic requirements they may attend. So that part is essentially up to us. What do things like, you know, the things that we're very concerned about are the students who are in Virginia Virtual Academy, do they take the

[00:23:09] SOLs? Yes. They're public school students. Okay. Do they take them virtually? No. Okay. So they need to come in. So would they come into our schools if they were out of district or would they just go to whatever schools are closest or would they go because you're shaking your head back and forth. He just finished that. So they go to a specific. Okay. And then what does the SOL pass rate look like? Because that's something we're frequently discussing and that's a really important piece to the puzzle. What do those SOL pass rates look like?

[00:23:50] can we access them online to get an idea of how those students are doing? Because that's one of those big measures that we're measured on. - Happy to have you talk? - Yeah, it won't be recorded if you don't. - I would recommend that you look at some of our division partners and their school accountability profiles.

[00:24:07] So most of them have the school code that Ms. Sloan spoke of earlier. They've acquired a school code from the Department of Education. And for example, they may be called Manassas City Virtual. and they are under that school divisions subset of school quality profiles.

[00:24:26] - Okay, and then another thing we always talk about is that on-time graduation rate. I saw that you've got nine different stories here of different students who were, and I have to keep looking at it, Virginia Virtual Academy was an appropriate choice.

[00:24:42] Do kids drop out and go to regular school? Do they just drop out? What's the on-time graduation rate? That's the part I'm kind of trying to envision in my head. Sure, it's a good question. Some withdraw, sure, they don't necessarily drop out, but they withdraw and they may go back to a traditional homeschool setting.

[00:25:03] They may go to a private school. They may go back to the traditional brick and mortar that's right down the street. Any of those options apply to many of our withdrawals. We do have some dropouts, but we are really proud of our graduation rate, our four-year rate. It's above 90%, somewhere around 94%. We haven't quite finalized those numbers this year, just as I'm sure you haven't either.

[00:25:22] But, again, that also can be found under the school quality profile of one of our school division partners. I'm sure I have more questions, but this is just so new to us, and it's so different than what we're used to.

[00:25:39] Because should we choose to have VABA, they would be our students, but they wouldn't physically necessarily be with us. So it's a very different way of envisioning teaching children. And it's different from when we were in the COVID pandemic, because that was our own teachers in our buildings.

[00:25:57] So my concerns are just right off the top of my head, the quality of instruction to ensure that the rigor is there for the students. And that should a child choose to go from VABA back into one of our physical schools, that they're in the same place academically as their peers.

[00:26:15] that they're not maybe missing certain skills or their instruction is out of sync with what we're teaching. So that's kind of one of my concerns. Can I speak to that for just a second? So as Ms. Sloan indicated, we do have a synchronous and asynchronous. Our curriculum is really rigorous in my opinion, but you don't just have to take my opinion for it. Everything that we do is approved by the Virginia Department of Education. We cannot offer a course if the department has not approved that looked at our scope and sequencing looked at what kids are supposed to be able to know and do when they finish that course we can't offer it without their

[00:26:54] approval and so everything is licensed and approved by the department and as she mentioned earlier we have fully licensed teachers for Virginia we do have some provisional in some areas just like some school divisions do maybe you do maybe you don't but we do have some provisionally licensed folks.

[00:27:13] But I think we're at like 97, 98% fully licensed. - All right, well thank you for now. - Sure. - Ms. Miles? - She asked some of the questions I had, so thank you for that, but I had a few more. What is the demographics, statistics for, I guess, the breakdown of the students who attend your schools?

[00:27:36] - It's really nearly identical to the state demographics. When you put them side to side, which I do have a chart on that that I'd be happy to share. It's nearly identical they are all across the state students and they really resemble the state demographics okay that's good to know and what about books I know when you get to the high school our students obligated to pay for their own books or is it just like public school where they would get a mail to them like how would that do they access them so everything is free the Virginia Virtual Academy is a free public school option and there are There are choices in some of the packets that come that they may choose the e-book or they

[00:28:14] may choose to actually get the package, but we kind of call it Christmas in July. We have a video of students opening their boxes. There are so many materials that come to the students, materials that will

help them do their science projects, math texts, manipulatives for the younger students, readers, and as the students get up into high school, some of the high school students choose the e-books.

[00:28:36] They don't want to have the books, but we do mail all of that, and I have a link that I can also send if anybody's interested in what materials are mailed by grade level. What do the students receive? Because they do receive physical materials, and it's really great. Yes, that would be awesome to have that, and the demographics as well. The other thing is, I know with students who are homeschooled, I have experience with that.

[00:28:56] How do the students socialize? Are there opportunities for them to do parent groups or student groups where they can get together? We have Honor Society, we have some of the exact same -- I think you have a whole list of all of the organizations that the kids can be a part of, and we also have a lot of resources for the parents and for the adults at home because they want to interact with other people who are doing the same type of schooling that they are.

[00:29:23] We also have outings scheduled throughout the year, very similar to field trips, but they're educational outings and opportunities for the kids to be together. And we have nationwide clubs that the kids can be a part of. Virginia Virtual Academy has actually been, I think twice in a row, the all-time winner of K-12 eSports.

[00:29:42] Really proud of that. And a couple of kids have gotten scholarships to college. There are two eSports coaches that are Virginia Virtual Academy teachers. One a former teacher because now he's taken on the national role. I was like, "I couldn't believe you left. I saw him at graduation.

[00:29:58] Why?" They have so many opportunities to be able to work together. We also have a whole host of student athletes who are enrolled five days a week. Students who go into the St. James Academy, if you've ever been down there in Springfield, and they go in and participate in sports and also have an opportunity to interact with each other as they're doing their academics.

[00:30:17] We hope to be able to support in some ways some of the other thriving student athlete organizations, but some of them are organic. We have a whole host of Virginia Beach gymnasts that work together. We have a group in Ashburn, Reston, that are ice skaters.

[00:30:33] Sadly, we lost a few of our ice skaters in that plane crash in Washington, D.C. Those were Virginia Virtual Academy students. I don't know if you had seen that news article. But we have student athletes across the Commonwealth in as many sports as you could name that are organically working.

[00:30:51] So there are opportunities, as parents will tell us, sometimes are even greater. to be able to be together and have options to do things. Instead of, you know, evening and homework and doing your sports and some of your things that you're interested in as hobbies, you can do those throughout the day and intersperse that throughout with your academics.

[00:31:12] We have, I think, over 45 clubs that the students can participate in. I don't know if you have participation rates or anything like that, Kenny, that you would be able to share. But we tend to get really high satisfaction rates. We survey six times and some of the parents, I would say that's maybe one of the complaints we get.

[00:31:32] You're surveying us too many times, but we wanna know what can we do better. We're always asking the parents and always asking the students, how can we improve? And one of the things that we ask

about is that social interaction. Tell us what you're doing, tell us what we could do better. And we tend to score very high from the parents in saying that they're actually interacting more with their peers than they were when they were in the traditional school.

[00:31:55] - I think the last question I have, what's the average, I guess, the breakdown of grade levels with the 57 students that would be a part of NASA study or are already currently part of? Do you have like the breakdown of how many? - I had the breakdown in the 57 that your person pulled for me.

[00:32:11] Yes, and I think we may have had eight seniors who graduated, so that may be down now, but remember new applicants are coming in, so the number is fluctuating, but I could certainly get you most current applicant numbers and most current students right now, so you would know how many students are coming in.

[00:32:28] But do know there are students who live here who are attending. - Thank you so much. - Yeah, of course, thank you. - Ms. Brown, you have a question? - Yes, I have a couple of questions systems wise. - Yeah. - And forgive me if you already share this, I'm trying to write notes very quickly here, but you mentioned that we will be a partner, Manassas City Public Schools.

[00:32:51] So does that mean that Prince William or Manassas Park will not be a partner and that they will filter through us, will we be the only partners here? - So students could be coming from, I believe we have at least one student in all 132 school divisions right now.

[00:33:07] So there may be Manassas Park residents who are currently Virginia Virtual Academy students. Those students may become a part of the virtual school here. If I'm answering your question correctly, they could live anywhere in Virginia. So your neighbors may have some students who would be coming here.

[00:33:23] - Okay, so you can partner up with Manassas Park, Prince William County okay and with us so only our students will be our students that count for us so cuz I so the student the Manassas City students the 57 let's use them as an example right now that would be coming back we would be entered back into your power school because right now they're not they're with us and any other student from anywhere in Virginia would also be counted in your Manassas City power school numbers they would be entered in there as if they resided here confused about that but we'll get a little bit

[00:34:01] more about that so how are you able to provide services such as ESOL or students with disabilities that may have special education services minutes or any gift to students how are you able to accommodate yep if I skip something Kenny please pop up and let me know I was the head of school for 12 years and And then Kenny is for the last three years.

[00:34:28] So I'm answering in some cases for him because that was my position before. But if something has changed, let me know. So we have an entire team of special education teachers, ESOL teachers, gifted education teachers. And if the services can be provided online, we do provide them online.

[00:34:44] And you'd be surprised at some of the related services that can be done online. Speech comes to mind as being sort of an easy one. But even OT, surprisingly, there's some OT that can be provided online with cameras and with the correct equipment. If we cannot meet those needs online, we partner with related service providers all across the Commonwealth of Virginia and have for the last 15 years.

[00:35:07] We have our own school psychologists. We have an entire team that runs the IEP meetings, which of course you can be a part of and will be invited to and attend as many as you're able to with your special education team. Those related services may need to be face-to-face and they are all included in all of this.

[00:35:24] There's no additional cost to you for any of that. If a student goes through the IEP process and those services are required, they are provided by our team, our related services team. - So you do your own child find? - All of that, all of that, yes. - And then I know that you mentioned there were a lot of clubs, 45 clubs, but do you offer any arts or music as electives or specials?

[00:35:49] - All of that, art, music, and electives are included. at all three levels elementary middle and high school is what Kenny's saying and I'm just concerned with the in and out in regards to pacing I know that you follow VDOE but as you know any every district is different so when the students go because that's the goal right to get them back to their homeschool they might be either ahead or behind what are the transition services that can be done when the kids are going from one placement to another yes so it's our goal to keep the students with us we're a full-time online public school so we're

[00:36:28] hoping students aren't staying with us for two weeks and going some of the alternative program for you for your students who will be coming in so we'll work obviously with your team just like we work with the team in Salem City to make policy decisions we can have an entire this is your program so if you were to make a decision about about students moving in students moving back out you could make a decision that once you have completed the program and and all the other parameters that you put in place the student will go back right over to the middle school or to the high school or you may make a decision that you want the student to stay and continue and finish out the school year so those those policy decisions about how you are to work your hybrid program

[00:37:06] or your your fully immersed program that you would have with your alternative ed students is completely up to you we have a ton of best practices to share with you from across the country and from the small program that we have in Salem I can see a lot of interest in something like this but you did mention that the superintendent or the school board I'm not sure which sets the criteria for referral to the program mm-hmm correct that's right okay for your own students so you would see that list of students and be able to make a decision about your own students whether they were to participate or to not there are some students who this this doesn't work for so you may make a decision that they should stay at Weems Elementary and continue their work

[00:37:46] there. All right. Thank you so much. Of course. Thank you for your questions. Mrs. Fall. So hi. Hi. This is really great. I know that I had a neighbor pre-COVID that had a, you know, debilitating illness. It was very difficult for her to find anything, anyone that would let her do something online for free. And then COVID came and then, you know, after COVID, she still wasn't really able to be helped in this way or she wasn't aware of your program. So this is very exciting

[00:38:23] and I think it's going to be a value-added opportunity for us I just want to make sure procedurally there are I'm guessing a minimum number of students and you don't have to tell me what it is that we would have to commit to before we would get that extra staff person within the agreement 750 okay but it is one to 750 right so as soon as the you know you agreed to partner with us and the agreement was signed as soon as one student enrolls we're giving you a part-time person right when we get to 1500 you get a full-time person okay

[00:38:59] so 1500 is a full-time person 750 for part oh up 751 thank you for so one to 750 it's in the agreement it's written in there clearly is the part-time person okay 751 as we go further could be your full-time person so then with that but the max is one person so if we've had three hundred three thousand students we would still just have one then let's let's talk about that you make you may find that one is plenty sure that's what kind of our school division partners have found it's really I would I would argue that heavy lift is those first few

[00:39:39] months right and the heavy lift is putting the students into the power school I mean really it's a lot of data entry after that but if you were to say look this is great this person is completely overwhelmed and we need a second person absolutely we can have a discussion about that okay I appreciate that really my question was is their minimum number so you answered that we do struggle like everyone else with attendance so I'm assuming that you do have attendance measures in place and also remedies if there are attendance issues yep daily attendance and then once we became partners we're happy to have you review the handbook where it lists all of the tiers of support that

[00:40:18] we do as students begin to struggle. We try to find out is it a technology issue. If it's a technology issue and the computer you're using isn't working, we'd be happy to send you a new one. We will provide materials to students, hardware that need that. Maybe it's a problem that the internet is going out because the bill hasn't been paid. We're happy to assist parents who need that help with reimbursement for internet services. Maybe it's a problem that the student's not getting out of bed and not logging in and all of those. So that's That's where our counselors come in and our engagement coordinators and those that work with the students for not the curriculum and the academics, but really that whole learning

[00:40:55] support that you need to have to make sure that the child's succeeding. Kenny has a great team of people who have worked in our traditional schools. I think nearly every single person that you've brought in has had time in a traditional public school or in a private school and is now teaching with us or working with counselors.

[00:41:12] We use the same -- because it's SOQ funding, we use the same ratios that you do. So if it's 325 to 1 for a school counselor to a student, that's the same ratios that we have for our hiring, so we have a full team of students to be able to support. If the student reaches the end, we've had Tier 1, Tier 2, we've had multiple conversations, and really this is just not working out.

[00:41:33] We have a team -- I don't like to call it the truancy team, but it's the team that will help you get to the best environment where you can begin learning again, and that may back in the traditional school where they live and so we have gotten to know on a first-name basis some of the truancy officers and some of the school divisions as we as we help students reunite to where they can be successful because that's what we want we want all the students to be successful all of your students that we'd be bringing to you and nobody likes the term expulsion but I'm guessing that you know that's probably the worst offense that you have is a lack of attendance well we which we kind of call it voluntary withdrawal

[00:42:10] right here if you're making choices that are causing you to not be successful and we're providing all those resources and you're continuing to not meet those you're choosing to withdraw from the program so okay it's kind of a more pleasant way of saying that you're not succeeding here just to clarify so we have criterion that we can use just to before we allow someone in but I'm guessing that you do have a waiting list but there may be more people that want to get into you also I'm guessing have some

level of criteria that you we have a best practice need kids to meet before they're eligible for your program is

[00:42:48] that correct well it's your program so you're giving us the eligibility criteria okay we certainly have best practices that we're using with our other partners but the people that already got there on the waiting list they're just on a waitlist they haven't been enrolled yet in a school division so they're on a screening has actually occurred okay that's right okay and then I guess we can just ask about the financing I I don't want to appear not to grasp it but on the page out of division enrollment you say our max capacity is 3890 fully

[00:43:22] enrolled revenue is 2 million mm-hmm that's like 514 dollars per student but on the next page you're saying out of the 57 that we have we were missing or we could gain back \$505,000, which is more like \$8,000 per student.

[00:43:38] I'm glad you brought that up, and that came up in our meeting as well. Very good. The calculators are working in everybody's brain. So the students who are living here in Manassas City and who are choosing to attend the Virginia Virtual Academy, you're getting all of that state funding back.

[00:43:54] The students from out of division that are coming in, you're getting a percentage of that, and since we're doing all of the hiring and all of the work that goes on, that's where we pay our people with that. I think that's all my questions, but thank you very much. Ms. Bersha, did you have a follow-up question? Which turned, went from one to two.

[00:44:13] So a question I have is actually maybe for Dr. Newman. So when kids are long-term suspended or expelled, we already have a virtual program that we put them on. How would this interact or would this replace that? We have not gotten there yet, okay. Some superintendents choose to not accept students who have been expelled from another public school division.

[00:44:34] That could be a decision you make or that could be a decision that you want to have a committee to review. But some superintendents will put that in the criteria. There are certain offenses that a student may have been expelled from that you may say that disqualifies you from being in the Manassas City virtual school. And then the other question.

[00:44:51] Ken's got a quick one on that. But also related to what Dr. Newman's alluded to, I do get calls more frequently than I think anybody would hope about how we might be able to help a student who has found themselves in a challenging situation in their traditional brick and mortar and can we get them into our program, to the program, as soon as possible.

[00:45:13] I feel, sorry, I feel those calls all the time from superintendent partners. So it is possible to move students from a challenging situation that they may be in in a traditional brick and mortar into our program. That's part of what Salem City does, as Ms. Sloan has alluded to a couple times.

[00:45:30] And the second question I had was, And I think that maybe this was a little bit what you might have been getting at, but why us, you know, why partner with us and not Manassas Park next door or Prince William County next door, you know, why Salem and not, you know, why us, why do you think we would be good partners?

[00:45:49] Well, aside from, you know, my connection here. But when we look at all 132 school divisions, not every school division can partner with us due to capacity or due to the state funding. Remember, this

comes from your LCI, comes from a complicated funding formula that shows how many students can Manassas City take before the local match would have to kick in.

[00:46:13] And I really don't think you want to be able to be speaking to constituents saying, we are paying for students who don't live within our school division. You have, you know, your budget to pay for your Manassas City residents, so you don't want to be doing that. So there are some school divisions that couldn't partner with us.

[00:46:30] The reason why they couldn't is their state funding is so low because their local funding is high. I'll give you an example, Fairfax County, right? So their local funding is so high that the state only gives them \$1,500 per student. We can't pay our teachers and can't run the program on \$1,500 per student, and we don't want to be asking your locality to pay for students who are outside that.

[00:46:51] On the other side, there are some that have a capacity, a high, sorry, high ADM, 8,800, 9,000 students. They can only take four kids, capacity is four. We wouldn't approach a school division that can only, I mean, you're welcome to partner with us, but we can put four kids in your program.

[00:47:09] So this complicated formula comes up each year and we recalculate it for each of our school division partners. So that really narrows down to probably only about 25 total school divisions that we could partner with. They have the right capacity and they have the right funding. We are with 15 of them that are taking, how many do you have, 11 taking out of division right now.

[00:47:30] and our other partners are taking in division. So when you see these pictures of all of these school divisions that we're partnered with, some of them have students that live in their school division and they don't take out of division. So that's the 21. So you are one of those. And we have a list and a busy summer of people that we're going to be talking to because I don't want to leave one student on a wait list.

[00:47:49] If somebody wants to attend the Virginia Virtual Academy, I really want to give them a seat. And so first meeting, keep me honest, first meeting I'm doing this summer is right here, Minnesota City Schools. So I'd like to give that opportunity to you. Thank you. Yes, thank you. Thank you for coming here. Can I get my questions? Okay. We talked a little bit about diversity in a couple of questions. What about teacher diversity? I don't know that we have something in any of our slides about that. So I'm just curious about it. If you could just get back to us, that'd be fine. And then how about class sizes? Class sizes adhere to the capacity for

[00:48:29] virtual schools. I think you are at a 50 to 1 for your elementary, 55. Tell me which are. Come on up. So the office at the Department of Education for Multidivision Online Providers gives us guidance on what classroom ratios should be, need to be, must be, and those are 150 to 1. In elementary school, though, our decision is to make that far lower. It's roughly half that, okay, but at middle school and high school we do adhere to the 150 to 1 average across this across

[00:49:05] the school right good to know yeah miss Stevens did you have another question thank you um when we're talking about funding you you have your teachers that you have to pay what does teacher turnover rate look like for yes we have very little teacher turnover folks find themselves to be highly satisfied in their work with us they're teaching students and they well they're getting to do what they can what they signed up to do when they first went into the

[00:49:44] profession but maybe a life situation has changed for them and they could no longer do that whether they're had a newborn baby or whatever the case may be but they this allows them to work from

home full-time and so we have very little turnover it is once folks get in it is if they don't leave now I will say however we're around maybe just below the state average and pay okay and so this is an area that is we don't have a lot of teachers represented in the Northern Virginia area because of the pay gap that exists between our pay scale

[00:50:22] because we service we have teachers from all across the Commonwealth and the pay scale that Northern Virginia has regionally yes the average pay scale in Virginia if you take out Northern Virginia is actually very low so yeah so are all the teachers from Virginia not all no I don't not maybe not from they all are licensed and have likely taught here at one point or another okay some may live in an adjacent state okay correct me if I'm wrong because I was doing a little bit of googling while you were talking because I hadn't I've

[00:51:00] heard k-12 but i hadn't heard of stride so i just did a quick little google search now part of your funding comes from the state when if we had a if we had a vava the students who are from out of district who would come to us a portion of what the state would pay us if they were our students will go to you but i would imagine that that's not enough to fully fund vava where does the where do the other funds come from we only work we only work on the Virginia state funding that's that's where the funding comes from that that's the only

[00:51:40] way that the program works based on code of Virginia based on how this bill passed into law into in 2010 so our school is fully funded by the state so there's no outside there's no outside funding no yeah no we don't we're it's state funding only but we have fought a little bit for that you touched a spot for us. We would we would like to be receiving some federal funding, would like to be receiving some title funding, but we do not. It's it is completely funded by the state. State funding only. If I may jump back to your previous question about teacher residency really quickly though. One added benefit to the

[00:52:18] the partners that we have is we do not recruit or interview teachers from your school division. Okay now if someone does apply and and they want to interview with us we would first start with dr. Newman and alert him to that and see if there's something that can be worked out but in it as a general rule we do not poach teachers for lack of a better description from our partners that's

[00:52:48] correct so we're go ahead we are we are putting together the school calendar that is, as you might imagine, some of the Northern Virginia schools start a little bit later than some of the Southwest. But we tend to try to find a date in the middle. So your first day of

[00:53:19] school is... No, I wasn't going to say that. I was just going to say it is nearly impossible with as many partners as we have to find a calendar that is identical to everyone. So we do the best job we can with trying to find something in the middle, but that just isn't, you know, we work hard for that but no the students who are in division for you the 54 that she has referenced they would be working off of your school calendar the non-resident students would be working off of our school calendar which would look a

[00:53:55] little different from terms of breaks start and stop I'm sorry for summer school we do offer a three-week summer school yes and we do have cohorts start dates so students start roughly every two weeks we enroll continuously throughout the year and so those students are placed on what we refer to as cohorts for their start dates did you have any other questions for sure okay well thank you both for your presentation this is the first time we're

[00:54:35] hearing this so I'm sure we're gonna have more questions and I would like to ask the school board members if you do think of something send it to dr. Newman where he can compile them and send so you're not getting it from seven different people or eight or nine or ten so dr. Newman is there do we have a schedule on this or are we going to be getting so you recommendation from you or we're just thinking about it okay okay very good thank you very much thank you and you don't have to twist my arm to come back to Manassas so happy to come back happy to come back in small groups to and talk to other people like your

[00:55:14] teachers or others who might want to hear about it thank you very good thanks for inviting us. Appreciate you. Okay next up on our board agenda is committee reports and I'll go first to the Academics Committee which is chaired by Dr. Zella Jones. I did not have a formal report we met yesterday but we will make a formal report in reference to the student code of conduct at a later meeting. Thank you. Vice Chair Spall you chair the Educational Support and Finance Committee. Yes the Educational Support and Finance Committee met on June 5th we

[00:55:49] discussed a four topics a possible Town Hall we discussed the definition of student outcomes and how we can keep it the main focus of our work we are explored are beginning to explore some funding options for the future and we discussed facility study these matters will be further discussed at our retreat next week and at that time the full board will enter our discussion thank you very much. Next up is citizens comments. Do we have any citizens signed up to

[00:56:26] speak? Is there anyone at all who wishes to speak during citizens comments? We will move on to the consent agenda. Can I get a motion please? Chair, I move that the School Board of the City of Manassas approve the consent agenda as presented.

[00:56:41] I have a motion by Mrs. Stevens, seconded by Vice Chair Spall, that the School Board of the City of Manassas approve the consent agenda as presented. is there any discussion yes I have a statement in the interest of transparency I would like to disclose that my son is included on the personnel list tonight as a potential substitute this affiliation will not influence my objectivity or the manner in which I cast my vote is there any other

[00:57:12] discussion all in favor any opposed motion carries 7-0 hey now on to our discussion agenda we have new business our student representatives for the 25

[00:57:36] 26 school year and I'll ask Dr. Zella Jones to introduce them. So as you know each year the school board of the city Manassas appoints two student representatives to serve in a non-voting advisory role. These students represent the interests of their peers across Manassas City Public Schools and have a unique opportunity to gain first-hand experience in the city and school

[00:58:13] governance. Their service helps ensure that the voices of students are heard in discussions to shape the learning environment for all students. For the 2025-26 school year our student representatives will be Amelia Breeden and Henukh Iman. Please come forward. So we know Amelia. She will be serving for the second time and she is a rising senior. She's looking forward to her senior year and during the 2024-25 school year Amelia found her voice and

[00:58:50] developed confidence through her role as a student representative. She She clearly communicated her mission to fellow students, served as a reliable advocate and regularly updated the

board on school happenings. We welcome Hinoch Imun, who is a rising junior, to his term starting for the 2025-20s his school year.

[00:59:10] Mr. Imun impressed us during his interview. He's a listener and he looks forward to communicating with his friends and his fellow students that want to share their glows and grows regarding the school with him. The board welcomes both of you. And we look forward to working with you this school year.

[00:59:28] Would you like to share any words, Ms. Breeden or Mr. Eamon? You want to share anything? Any words? You don't have to. Yes. Get a picture. I just want to thank the board for allowing me to extend my term into my senior year as being student representative.

[00:59:50] I'm excited to see what I accomplish and how I grow as a person. Thank you. Thank you. I hope I have a lot of fun with you guys. And, you know, thank you guys for choosing me to be in the school board.

[01:00:06] Thank you for applying and acing your interview.

[01:00:18] Ms. Brown is coming too. With our discussion agenda, we have our LGBTQ plus pride proclamation.

[01:00:57] The school board of the state of Manassas proclaims June 2025 to be LGBTQ plus pride month and urges our citizens and community members to recognize the value of and contributions made by the lgbtq plus staff and students we actively promote the principles of equality and liberty and i'll go to miss brown to read the proclamation thank you chair thank you for allowing me the opportunity to read this proclamation whereas manassas city public schools is committed to creating an inclusive safe caring and challenging learning environment viewed through

[01:01:35] an equity lens and whereas the City of Manassas recognizes the importance of equality and freedom of discrimination and whereas the Manassas City Council has adopted a Pride Proclamation annually since 2017 and whereas the Commonwealth of Virginia passed the Virginia Values Act prohibiting discrimination in public places against members of the lgbtq plus community and whereas p flag is the nation's largest organization dedicated to supporting educating and advocating for lgbtq

[01:02:15] plus people and those who love them whereas the human rights campaign believes that lgbtq plus individuals must be ensured equality and embrace as full members of society and whereas the national institutes of health and national education association recognize that lgbtq plus youth and teens are at an increased risk of violence discrimination and have higher suicide rates and whereas manassas city public schools are an integral part of the greater

[01:02:52] Manassas City community and whereas the staff of Manassas City public schools are valued community members and whereas it is imperative that students and staff alike regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity feel valued safe empowered and supported by their peers educators and community leaders now Now therefore, the Manassas City School Board proclaims June 2025 to be the LGBTQ+ Pride Month and urges our citizens and community members to recognize the value of and contributions

[01:03:32] made by LGBTQ+ staff and students and actively promote the principles of equality and liberty. Be it further proclaimed that the Manassas City School Board urges all to respect and our diverse

community, and celebrate and build a culture of inclusivity and equity, both during Pride Month and the rest of the year.

[01:03:59] Thank you very much. Any questions or comments from the board? If not, we will move this forward to the Consent Agenda for the next meeting for approval. Thank you very much. Next up is Finance, our FY26 budget update and Next Steps, Dr. Jennifer Cassata, Executive Director of Accountability and Finance, and Mr. Taft Kelly also here, Director of Finance will discuss the budget including updates from state and the city now that both have approved their budgets they did approve it last night and city canceled it okay great all right good evening chair Seberg vice chair Spall

[01:04:36] school board members and dr. Newman I'm gonna turn this quickly over to mr. Kelly just this is the first of two discussions this one is about the FY 26 budget and as chair Seberg just correctly noted the state approved their budget and last night the city approved theirs mr. Kelly will talk about what that means for us and the next steps will which will require action from you but not tonight on this one and then we'll be back for the next one thank you Dr. Casado as you all mentioned I just want to give a brief update regarding the FY 26 budget I was at the board meeting last night with our city council meeting

[01:05:14] last night and they did approve their FY 26 budget and so we will talk about that but first I want to start with on June 5th the video e Virginia Department Education released their final calculation tool if you recall this calculation tool is what we utilize to build our FY 26 budget and our budget moving forward we previously were given guidance to utilize the tool that was released in March it wasn't finalized and it did give us a little additional funding I'm happy to report that it did finalize that that budget and it's there is no change so the additional funding that was put in that March 20 March budget has been included in our final and we made a decision earlier in the

[01:05:54] to what we're gonna do with that funding. Now last night, the city, Mass City Council approved their FY26 budget, which included an additional 1.5 million in funding for MCPS. And so I do wanna thank City Council and the folks I work with over at the city for their generous gifts in their budget.

[01:06:14] And so we will appreciate that moving forward. Also wanted to point out here that back on March 25th, when we presented the school board budget to City Council, we listed some school board unfunded priorities. And so, these were the top priorities that we listed at that time.

[01:06:30] This is important, and we'll talk more about that at a later slide. So, we've updated the FY26 operating budget summary. As I mentioned, the state funding hasn't changed since the last time we provided the summary, but the state budget did go up.

[01:06:46] And so, currently, the change from year to year is \$3.1 million, about 3.3 if you include the debt service funding that the city gives us. And so, that is a 5.25% increase over last year's funding from the city, which we will utilize based on this proposal.

[01:07:05] And so, keeping with your list of priorities, we would like to use additional funding to compensate our employees. As you remember, we asked for a \$1.7 million to increase to a 1.5% increase.

[01:07:23] Obviously, we did not get that full amount. And so, the amount that we are able to do is 1.2%. that would keep us well within the 1.5 that we received and allow us to compensate our employees a little further. That would move the total compensation for FY26 to 6.7%.

[01:07:41] That's a change over FY25. So that's a huge increase for our employees. If this proposed use of the additional funding is accepted, we will move forward with updating the salary scales and providing updated contracts to our employees.

[01:07:57] And with that, I'll take any questions that you may have. - Questions from the board? - Seeing and hearing none. All right, thank you all. - Thank you. Okay, moving along to the action agenda, again under finance and operations.

[01:08:22] We have the 2526 student fees and charges, building use fees and charges and fee waiver guidelines as presented at a previous meeting. Is there any, maybe we take a motion and then we'll-- - Chair.

[01:08:39] - Have a discussion, yes ma'am. - I move that the School Board of the City of Manassas approve the 2526 student fees and charges, building use fees and charges and fee waiver guidelines as presented. - I have a motion by Vice Chair Spall, second by Dr. Zella Jones, that the school board, the city of Manassas, approve the 2025-2026 student fees and charges, building use fees and charges and fee waiver guidelines as presented.

[01:09:07] Is there any discussion? - Yes, I don't see the changes for the warning for the parking. I know it was being considered. that's at the school level right okay we have to approve it first yes and then to

[01:09:34] a warning okay so do we need to make a motion we have a motion so the motion is to approve it as it is the if you wanted to include and if you wanted to amend

[01:10:08] this to include warning that would be a motion to amend and then that gets voted on first so if you want it and if that motion failed then we go back to the original motion okay any other discussion yes no so I would like to make the motion to amend it we already have a motion on the table she's allowed to make a motion to amend with this and then any it's technically a substitute motion she's offering a substitute motion to amend the fee schedule to

[01:10:45] include a warning for first-time offense for part for parking for the parking situation yes all right I'm making a motion to amend the current motion to include a warning prior to receiving the first parking fee of \$20 I have a a motion by Ms. Brown to amend the 2025-2026 student fees and charges, building use fees

[01:11:24] and charges and fee waiver guidelines as presented to include a warning for the first infraction prior to receiving the first \$20 fee occurrence. Let me write that down.

[01:11:47] First, it's to the first infraction prior to receiving the first. The first, it's \$20 first occurrence infraction.

[01:12:05] Fine. They call in it first occurrence, but fine. Okay. And was that Mrs. Stevens? Yes. All right. I have an amended motion from Ms. Brown, seconded by Mrs. Stevens, that the school board, the city of Manassas, approve the 2025-2026 student fees and charges, building use fees and charges and fee waiver guidelines as amended to include the first -- a --

[01:12:42] First \$20 fee. First infraction, a warning to the first infraction prior to receiving a first fine. Got it. Is there any discussion? All in favor. May I have a show of hands, please? One, two, three. Any opposed? Nay. The motion carries. Four, three.

[01:13:13] Opposed is Brescia, Spall, and Seberg. Did I get that right? Okay. All right. Moving on to more finance.

[01:13:30] the FY 2025 bonus payments. Mr. Kelly. Hello again. Yes. Thank you all. I do want to speak to the FY 25 bonus. Earlier I mentioned the Calc tool that the state has finalized. Within that Calc tool was a bonus that was added for FY 25. It has to be paid out by the end of before June 30 for bonuses for certain SOQ positions or SOQ employees. The amount that we received from the

[01:14:01] The state was \$781,119, and again, that is to be used for one-time bonuses up to \$1,000, but the state did give us the ability, the flexibility to give bonuses, certain amounts underneath that in order to expand it as far as we can.

[01:14:21] And so the amount that was determined was based on the standard of quality and all the formulas that the state uses to determine our funding. CPS will be supplementing those funds with local funds in order to give a bonus to all of our employees who are eligible to receive a bonus based on the criteria that we established bonus payments will be made on June 30 it will be made in a separate payment and so as an employee you will receive your normal semi-monthly payment and then you were getting additional payment on June 30 for a certain amount depending on what you qualify for so on the next slide I'll talk about the bonus payments and how you and how those are going to be paid

[01:14:59] out and then once approved staff will be notified of the bonus plan and of the criteria and so just so you all know the bonuses will only be eligible or employee only be eligible if they are completing their FY25 contract again the payments will be received as a separate check and they will be paid out as as written so full-time employees will receive a bonus in the range of 250 to 1000 and this is based on start date a part-time employee will receive a range between no bonus and then five hundred dollars again also based on start date and substitutes and temporary employees will receive a range of zero to five

[01:15:36] hundred and they'll be based on number of hours work during the FY 25 school and so with that take any questions that you may have I just had a point of clarification can you go back once I can so a full-time employee that's been working with us all year are they gonna get a thousand dollar they will get a thousand dollars okay and do you know I mean I'm I'm clear on what we're offering but do other divisions are they also do they have the same requirements sure so all school district did you want to I received a call from one of our

[01:16:14] larger neighbors today asking what were we doing about bonuses and if we were retention bonus because that is what they would be doing and they are only giving their bonus for those that are returning we are not okay any other questions or comments from the board another thing that makes Manassas City unique is many places that we from what we've heard anecdotally do not include substitutes and temporary employees in their bonus structure all right thank you for that seeing in here you do have a

[01:16:49] question no I was gonna make the motion okay chair yes I move that the school board of the city of Manassas approved the plan for utilizing local funds to supplement the revenue received from the Virginia Department of Education for the purposes of providing employees with FY 2025 bonuses.

[01:17:11] I have a motion by Vice Chair Spall, seconded by Mrs. Brescia that the school board, the seat of Manassas, approve the plan for utilizing local funds to supplement the revenue received from the Virginia Department of Education for the purposes of providing employees with FY 2025 bonuses.

[01:17:29] Is there any discussion? All in favor? Aye. Aye. Any opposed? Motion carries 7-0. right our action items are done and we'll go to school board member comments and I'll go first to Miss Brown okay thank you I would like to begin my comments by congratulating all the appointed and promoted staff and I would like to say thank you to all teachers and staff for another year with Manassas City Public Schools I'm so grateful for your dedication for choosing to share

[01:18:07] your gifts and talents with us. Thank you to City Council for approving our requests for an additional funding of 1.5 million dollars. You have sent a clear message that you value our teachers and the success of our students. I will also like to publicly thank board member Miles for elevating the need for interpretive and caption services for our residents during our stream and in person meetings here at City Hall. It takes a special lens and heart to think outside of our own needs and comforts and inclusion is the love language to keep and at the last work

[01:18:46] session i advocated for live stream work sessions and we are looking into the actual cost before bringing it to a vote so stay tuned in the interim please feel welcome to be at every work session the case to introduce zeros into the grading scale was brought forward during a recent work session at this time i am not interested in pursuing any changes to the grading scale unless they are clearly supported by our data while i understand and respect the many perspectives on this issue i believe it is essential that officials remain grounded in evidence and focus on our student

[01:19:26] outcomes this um this month may prove to be a very busy month for all of us so i would just highlight a couple of the events that I attended. I attended the Northeastern Region Spring Network Forum at the Kelly Leadership Center. I also attended the senior ceremony at the Governance Innovation Park. I was also invited by families to a very special event on May 17th to witness the Catholic confirmation of many of our Osborne students. This ceremony was uniquely special as it prepared and empowered many of our Osborne students to live in

[01:20:02] faith and to live a life of discipleship. It was such a privilege to be there and witness such a commitment from young people. So congratulations to all our students who received their confirmation on May 17th. On May 20th I was invited to attend the Latino Victory Annual Talks which aims to build and strengthen the voice of Latino leaders to make a positive impact in their respective communities. I met with leaders from all over the state who are invested in my success as a Latino leader and the success of our Manassas City and Manassas City public schools one of the most meaningful things that I accomplished in May was the review of applications for the various

[01:20:41] scholarships granted by the mcps education foundation the students wrote compelling essays telling their stories I am still in awe of our students I attended the Osborne graduation followed by the eighth grade graduation of maths and followed by the Baldwin intermediate sixth grade graduation and i want to take a moment to speak directly to our graduates and our three students that i see that are present here because all of our students have accomplished so many things and everything

[01:21:16] that you got that you have accomplished is nothing short of extraordinary many of you have walked a path filled with challenges you balance the way of learning into languages you push forward through financial hardships, through moments of uncertainty, and through obstacles that may have stopped someone else dead on their tracks, but not you. You kept going, you kept showing up, your strength, tu fuerza, is not hidden. I see it, I feel it.

[01:21:47] You are the dream and the proof for your families, for your communities, and for yourself. And as you know, in nuestras familias, we don't just celebrate a graduation, we celebrate resilience, we celebrate identity, we celebrate our power, who you are and where you're going. I am very proud of each one of you. Felicidades y adelante. I would like to end my comments by speaking directly to our Hispanic immigrant families and parents in our community. Familias, sabemos que estos tiempos no son fáciles. Las noticias cambian todos los días.

[01:22:25] A veces parece que las reglas también cambian, sin aviso, sin sentido. Hay miedo, hay cansancio y hay confusión. Muchos de nosotros estamos preguntándonos si estamos seguros, si nuestros hijos están protegidos, si este país nos quiere o no.

[01:22:44] Si no sabes qué decirle a tus hijos, está bien. No siempre hay respuestas claras. Pero si hay cosas que puedes hacer, aunque el mundo se sienta inestable. Puedes abrazarlos más fuerte, aunque no sepas qué decir. Puedes enseñarles a ser amables a pesar del odio, mostrarles cómo seguir adelante, incluso con miedo.

[01:23:17] Tus hijos te están mirando. Ellos aprenden fuerza en tu manera de levantarte cada mañana. Aprenden tu dignidad cuando hablas con respeto, incluso cuando el mundo no te lo da. Quiero decirles hoy que no están solos, aunque las escuelas van a estar en recesión por el verano, nosotros estaremos aquí con todos ustedes.

[01:23:43] Y les quiero recordar que lo que están haciendo es lo mejor que pueden hacer con lo que tienen, y eso es la mejor forma de resistencia. Recuerda y cree que tu amor es más fuerte que cualquier frontera.

[01:24:02] Parents, I know these are not easy times. The news change every day. Sometimes it feels like the rules change too, without warning, without reason. There is fear. I see your exhaustion. There is confusion. Many of us are wondering if we're safe, if our children are protected, if this country really wants us here or not.

[01:24:24] If you don't know what to say to your children, that's okay. There aren't always clear answers. But there are still things that you can do, even when the world feels this unstable. Hold them a little bit closer. Tell them stories of where we come from, even if the endings are complicated.

[01:24:43] Teach them to be kind, even in the face of hate. Show them how to keep going, even while you're afraid, even while they're afraid. Your children are watching you. They learn strength from you. They see you get up every morning.

[01:24:59] That's enough. They learn dignity when you speak with respect, even when the world doesn't return it. They learn courage when you protect them with everything you have. You're not alone. Although school may be closed for the summer months, we are here for you no matter what.

[01:25:15] And this is a reminder to you, you are doing the best you can with what you have, and that is the best form of resistance. Your love is stronger than any border. Thank you.

[01:25:32] Thank you, Ms. Brown. Mrs. Stevens? Thank you, Ms. Brown. don't know that i can follow up on that um first of all welcome miss breeden and welcome mr moon we will be so excited to have you miss breeden for your second year um i think your comments every week every meeting were a highlight for me you always had so much to share your in your opinions and your insight were very powerful so

welcome back um and i also wanted to share that our one of our fourth grade students at weems elementary school kingston rosner fourth grade at weems

[01:26:07] won the state one at the state level for the elementary school winner in the inaugural virginia school board association statewide art contest he was the regional winner and then again the state winner he will be presented with a thousand dollars and a trophy at the vsba annual convention in williamsburg in november of 2025 and what's interesting or exciting about this and i didn't realize it was last year a weems student won the regional contest as well so weems must be doing something well in the fine arts department um school is out for the summer

[01:26:43] watch out for kids in the neighborhood keep an eye out for our kiddos out playing and around and remember the best thing you can do to keep your brain working is to read read a book read a box read anything you can whether it's in front of your eyes or up to your ears read read read thank you thank you mrs. Stevens miss miles okay so I have a committee update I'm going to start with that May 22nd I attended the last ELPAC meeting we had over 40 parents and families who attended on the focus was giving families

[01:27:20] information about the ESOL program that we have at our schools how we work with students the hours required to service our ELLs English language learners based on their WIDA levels which is a test that they take every year just giving information for those who don't know.

[01:27:36] Emphasizing also that GT, our gifted and talented, our SPED, can have both English language support and gifted and special education support, and even CTE collaboration, which I thought was really good to hear, especially for our parents who are wondering that.

[01:27:52] And Mr. Emil talked about the different types of English language support, classrooms, including inclusion, separate classes in grades five to 12, and specific classes who have been English language learners for over five years. So we have those separate classes.

[01:28:09] He also talked about caseloads, how many Ls are assigned to each teacher, which was great information for parents to know. Not only did they discuss the school-based ESOL program, but they also went over the goals of additional L programs that are offered after school for Ls and their families, enhancing and supporting Ls academically, supporting families and connecting families teachers with PEP, which is our parents' educational partners, Summit K-12, which is also an afterschool program, and the Latin Family Literacy Project, Voices from the Heart, which we just received a thorough presentation of last month.

[01:28:46] And at the end of the presentation by Mr. Emel, parents were given an opportunity to ask questions and write down any questions they have, and those were shared with everyone. And a few of the questions that were asked were parents wanted to know the difference between SOL tests and the excess test, which is where we get our WIDA levels.

[01:29:05] And a description was given about PEP, which is a class that families can attend to learn more about the exams. So I encourage any families who are wondering where they can learn more information about how we do school here in America, those classes are so important.

[01:29:21] And the great thing about it is we give meals during those classes and also free childcare. So I encourage families to sign up for next year, and it's held at METS. So that's my committee update. I have some other comments to go along with.

[01:29:37] I want to first thank city council members for the generous increase. I believe our staff and teachers are well-deserving of the 6.7% increase, and we're now able to provide it to them. So I really thank Manassas City Council for the extra funds to be able to give our teachers an increase in their salary comparable to our neighbors, which is really awesome.

[01:29:57] I also want to formally congratulate all our Osborne graduates. It was so nice to be able to attend graduation a few weeks ago. You all should be proud of what you've accomplished, passing your SOLs and classes. You have a bright future ahead, and there's nothing you can't accomplish if you put your mind to it.

[01:30:15] As you make decisions for college or career, I hope you remember Manassas City, your hometown, the place you graduated from, and the place that invested in you. I welcome you to come back and invest in our community, whether it's raising a family here or finding a job here or working in our schools as a teacher or a substitute, which I hope some of us, we will have some students who will come back.

[01:30:36] My hope is that you find a place here in Manassas City beyond high school. So that's to our graduates. So I visit, I was able to attend not only the high school graduation, but I also was able to go to the Mets middle school graduation and some other events.

[01:30:52] It was wonderful to see so many families come and support their eighth graders and their advancement to ninth grade and the start of high school. I also was able to attend the department awards at Osborne High School and congratulations to all the gold, eagle and eagle winners. It was a pleasure to see teachers acknowledge the accomplishments and achievements of our students.

[01:31:12] I love how we celebrate the dedication, the determination and perseverance of our seniors. So congratulations to all those who won. summer begins and school has come to a close I encourage all our students to get a library card so they can continue to read over the summer I want to thank all of our administrators our teachers and our staff who made this school year a great one for our students and our families I know we could not do it without you we appreciate all you did to teach and guide our students providing a safe place for our families to send their child each day I hope you enjoy

[01:31:45] your summer break thank you miss miles dr. Jones I want to first welcome our school board student representatives we look forward to working with you I had the pleasure of attending several events during since the last meeting on May 20th the Osmond scholarship program May 29th Osmond graduation June 2nd meet and greet Mr. Lacey is the new Osmond basketball coach and the Mets promotion ceremony and on June 3rd the Baldwin intermediate promotion ceremony each of these events spotlighted our students parents families and the Manassas community celebrate the milestone success and

[01:32:25] endless possibilities of our students let's continue to support the students in the upcoming year school ended on June 4th I strongly encourage students to stay active and engaged this summer think about volunteer opportunities visit the local parks and museums and stop by the library to get some books to read start signing up for the summer reading kickoff at the library on June 16th you can also bring dancing painting cooking puzzles and games into the mix lastly take advantage of some of the summer enrichment program in our system and check out the camps offered by the city of Manassas Parks Culture and Recreation of Mostello Park and Community Center I strongly encourage all

[01:33:04] Manassas City employees parents and teachers to use this summer to rejuvenate and to take some time for self-care June is well Juneteenth June 10th is on June 19th 2025 Juneteenth Day is a celebration for the emancipation of enslaved people in Texas and the end of slavery in the United States. There will be celebrations in Manassas, Manassas Park, and Prince William County. These events will celebrate the rich traditions, contributions, and diversity of African American community. So I encourage you to attend those events. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Jones. Mrs. Brescia. Thank you. So the end of

[01:33:43] the school year has come and gone. Here we are on the other side. Congratulations again to our graduates, to all our students and staff who put in so much hard work this year there were a lot of events I went to most I went to many of them I don't even know if it was most of them but I really enjoyed the season celebration was happy to celebrate everybody since we last met I have the following items to report on the first is the immigration committee the committee decided to continue to meet through the summer to discuss some new mental health resources and other initiatives that various committee members volunteered to explore and report on at our next meeting in July so

[01:34:17] it was good to see committee members taking that initiative to do that we had a work session on Thursday June 5th and I introduced three items at those work sessions so I'd like to discuss those items one was bullying the board agreed to my request for a presentation from the administration on the topic of bullying in order to address community concerns on that topic and for all of us to learn more about what it is how it's handled and what improvements if any we have identified and are working on so we can look forward to that at a later date item two was staff retention data the board receives this data in the regular course of its business during closed session on June 24th so this item

[01:34:55] will be taken up again at a later date to decide what from that data will be potentially of the most interest to be most interesting and the most useful for any kind of public discussion the item three item three was the grading policy I suggested that the board consider updating our grading policy to include with the following provision from Fairfax County's grading policy.

[01:35:18] For assignments or assessments that a student did not attempt, a student can receive a zero. Teachers should follow all related late work policies before assigning a zero. In our case, our late work policy specifies that students have two weeks to turn in late assignments.

[01:35:34] This provision would have allowed teachers to assign a grade of zero, only if two weeks had passed and only if no reasonable attempt had been made. Some board members expressed hesitation. offered to include a provision from Loudoun County which states that teachers in consultation with student support teams and parents will provide students who demonstrate a pattern of repeated later missing work with an appropriate intervention including assigning a grade less than 50% which does include a grade of zero which would have meant in our case that parents would have had to be notified prior to a student being given a grade of zero which is not something I personally prefer but is an item I offered in good faith to help with some of the exact objections expressed but this also did

[01:36:13] not gain sufficient interest there was some discussion of data that perhaps the board could support exploring how this grading policy is showing up in our data of course we already have access to data on this topic last year we did a data analysis which found that a grade of C in Manassas City Public Schools prior to this grading policy used to correlate highly with passing the corresponding SOL and that this was no longer the case at least as of last year we have our school quality profile data from Osborne last year, showing our graduation rate increasing while chronic absence rose and test scores fell.

[01:36:48] This data shows us that kids pass classes that they do not attend, and that kids pass classes where they do not master the content sufficiently to pass the SOL on their first or second try, since only those first attempts are the ones captured for the school's data purposes. Now that's just the hard data, never mind the many, many sources of anecdotal data we have heard over the years.

[01:37:09] But in any case, I offered to refer this matter to the academic committee for them to design what any such data report might look like to supplement the data we already have, but this was also rejected. I would like to thank member Miles for joining me, for being the only one to join me in support of these measures.

[01:37:26] I do think this is unfortunate. I was not suggesting something extreme. This was from Fairfax and from Loudoun and kept the rest of our grading policy intact in every other respect. I think our kids can do it. I think they are just as capable as the kids in Loudoun. But the board disagreed, and I respect the process and my fellow members, and it is what it is.

[01:37:49] Thank you, Mrs. Brescia. Vice Chair Spall. Yes, some of this has already been gone over, but I think it bears repeating in some instances. Number one, congratulations to our new school board reps and our returning school board reps.

[01:38:08] We do look very much forward to working with you, Amelia. Congratulations to Class of 2025. It was a very moving ceremony, and it was exciting to see kids graduate as it always is. Now that the budget has passed, I would like to take a moment to thank the members of City Council and Mr. Burke for the continued support and trust in the leadership you have placed in the Manassas City Public Schools School Board.

[01:38:32] Because of your investment and collaboration, we've been able to do more than just respond to challenges. We've led the way in several key areas of education locally. One area where this leadership is clear is in our commitment to professional development for our educators. While many districts are still trying to find their footing, Manassas City as a strong has built a strong foundation of training and support that exceeds what our peer divisions are currently providing. We've created opportunities for our staff to grow in their practice, deepen their knowledge and better serve our students all without compromising classroom time or stretching our resources thin. Equally important is how we've navigated the growing financial pressures facing school divisions across the region.

[01:39:11] Well, neighboring districts have had to make deep cuts to meet collective bargaining costs and others have scaled back previously agreed upon compensation increases, reducing raises from 7% to 6% and some neighboring jurisdictions. Jurisdictions Manassas City has held the line. We have not had to return to the negotiating table or walk back our commitments. We have not resorted to broad-based cuts or reductions in force. And we've done all this while continuing to prioritize outcomes for students, retain high-quality staff and maintain strong fiscal stewardship. This is no accident. Our key decision-making is the result of thoughtful planning, disciplined budgeting, and a City Council that has partnered with us along the way.

[01:39:51] Your trust has allowed us to build, not just to tread water. In times of uncertainty, our schools have remained steady, focused, and forward-thinking, and that's not just good governance, that is leadership. Thank you for continuing to believe in our schools, in our educators, and in our students. Because of that belief, Manassas City is not only keeping pace, we are setting the pace in some instances.

[01:40:11] And that is a very important place to be in the history of a city we all love. Summer school starts June 16th. I think someone said that. And I have to plug Loop for the Library is a mid-summer reading program event where we're taking a loop around the library.

[01:40:28] So look for dates and times to do that because it promises to be a fun time. How many miles is that? It is 1.5, unofficially, according to my measurements alone. Thank you, Vice Chair. - Yes, the end of the year is a very exciting time, both for honoring our students for their achievements, and also for looking forward to the summer break.

[01:40:54] I want to issue a congratulations to the class of 2025. We look forward to graduating more of you on July 31st in the Osborne Auditorium. Everyone is welcome. Thank you to the school staff at each of our schools for your dedication throughout the year.

[01:41:10] Manasseh City Public Schools Summer Arts Symposium will be on Thursday at METS, that's June 12th. There will be an art gallery and concert beginning at 11:00 a.m. And with that, I'll ask for a motion to adjourn.

[01:41:27] - 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? Any opposed?

[01:41:43] The motion carries 7-0, we are adjourned. Thank you all.



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