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Manassas City School Board Meeting - August 11, 2026

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[00:00:07] Please join me for a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[00:00:36] Madam Clerk, would you please call the roll? Yes, ma'am. Chair Spall. Present. Vice Chair Dr. Jones. Here. Mrs. Seabourk. Here. Mrs. Stevens. Present. Mrs. Brescia. Present.

[00:00:50] Ms. Brown? Present. Ms. Miles? Here. Thank you, Madam Chair. We have a quorum. Dr. Newman, are there any additions or deletions to our agenda tonight? No, ma'am. Okay. I'd like to move to board committee. Well, can I get a motion to approve the public meeting agenda as presented? 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 Ms. Stevens, seconded by Vice Chair Jones, that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the public meeting agenda as presented. All in favor?

[00:01:25] aye any opposed any discussion okay the motion passes 7-0 we will now move to board committee reports I think just miss Stevens yet chair we have a policy committee meeting scheduled for next Tuesday the 18th at 4:00 p.m. and on the action agenda will be the proposed policies that we went over on the discussion agenda at our last meeting. Okay. Thank you very much. I don't think there's any other

[00:02:03] reports for board committees, so we will move to welcome members of the public who wish to speak about services, policies, and affairs of the City of Manassas Public Schools. Because we have an

agenda to complete, we ask that the comments be limited to three minutes. We appreciate the time that you've taken to be here, and we treat public comments as a public hearing and do not engage in conversation with speakers. The lack of an immediate response to your comments should not be taken as a lack of interest or concern please do be respectful when

[00:02:30] presenting your comments and first up we have mr. TJ rodriguez future student ambassador program that I had a pretty loud voice but okay apparently need a mic as well but again I'm here this evening on behalf of the resilient future student ambassador program and our community and research partners tonight I really only have one purpose and that is is simply to say

[00:03:07] thank you I want to thank the school board dr. Newman and his leadership team team, Dr. Chapman, and the administration at Osborne High School, and especially our 9th and 10th grade PE and health teachers, who opened up their classrooms and supported this initiative throughout the 2025-2026 school year.

[00:03:25] Resilient Futures was created as a student-centered initiative focused on promoting healthy relationships, strengthening bystander confidence, and ultimately preventing intimate partner and dating violence among young people. Because of the support of Osborne High School and our PE and health teachers, we were able to complete both our baseline and end-line research, collecting over 1,114 student surveys from 9th and 10th grade health and PE classes. And while I don't want to steal the thunder from future presentations, I do want to share that early findings give us reason to be encouraged.

[00:03:58] Across the study, students' attitudes moved in a positive direction. The percentage of students endorsing at least one inequitable belief declined from 53% to 41%, so that's a 12-point change. with some of our greatest gains occurring among male and Spanish-speaking students.

[00:04:14] But perhaps one of the most important findings for tonight is this, the classroom mattered. 88% of the students reported receiving healthy relationship education through their PE and health classes, and those students demonstrated significantly stronger outcomes. In fact, classroom instruction was the strongest exposure signal in our data.

[00:04:33] At the same time, our research tells us that we still have work to do. One of the priorities is strengthening the student-led component of resilient futures, which officially launched in january 2026 with a continued focus on increasing awareness creating new and meaningful opportunities for our student ambassadors to reach and positively influence their peers and we're already getting started just yesterday our resilient future student ambassadors had the opportunity to engage the incoming freshman class during osborne's freshman orientation through a red flag green flag activity our ambassadors begin conversations with their peers about healthy and unhealthy relationship behaviors and i have to recognize that dr newman

[00:05:12] also got into the action and i have some really great photos for those that want to see participated along our students i think that moments demonstrated moments like this demonstrate exactly what this initiative is about students educators school leaders researchers and community partners working together to create a healthier and safer school community our hope is to return to this board before this board in the fall with dr amir ross our principal investigator from the george mason university and most importantly our resilient future student ambassadors at that time we look forward to sharing our complete findings what we have learned and the student-led prevention strategy we hope to implement during the 2026-2027 school year

[00:05:50] thank you thank you mr rodriguez we appreciate that report um the next item on the con is the consent agenda these items are considered to be routine and may be approved by a single motion unless a board member requests an item be removed for separate discussion um could i get a motion chair i move that the school board of the city of manassas approve the consent agenda as presented i have a motion made by miss stevens seconded by vice chair jones that the school board of

[00:06:27] the city of manassas approve the consent agenda as presented is there any discussion all in favor any opposed we'll now move to the discussion agenda the first item is finance we will see mr kelly director of finance present the fy 28 draft budget development calendar for school board discussion thank you mr kelly good evening chairs paul vice chair jones members of the board and dr newman i come before you tonight to present the 2028 budget calendar it seems like that season rolled around pretty quick i feel like i just caught my breath from the 27 budget season

[00:07:06] before we get started there are a few changes to the calendar this year that are a little different from the previous years as you can see in the calendar in previous years we've had a budget work session around november december time frame as you all may or may not know typically we don't get the state revenue numbers until about december 15th or around that date and so the last few years we've had that work session but we don't really have a lot of information to present to you all and so in order to make sure these work sessions are meaningful we decided to take that work session off of the calendar and do the first work session on january 7th so that would give us time to get the data analyze the data and present to you all uh and actual actual results that we

[00:07:45] got from the state and so that will lead us to our first work session which will be january 7th then another change that you're going to notice is that we decided to push the superintendent's proposed budget up to the first work session the first regular scheduled meeting in february and so that just helps us push the entire schedule up as you all may remember in the previous years we've presented in the second session in february which has allowed us to then do the approval at the end of march and then we have to turn around very quickly to do the presentation of the joint session to the city and so this will help us get a little breathing room there to

[00:08:21] allow us to adjust our presentation for the city in order to make sure we're providing them with information that they want to see and so that just gives us a little a little breathing room to get that prepared and so with that the dates are january 7th for the first work session february 9th for the superintendent's proposed budget february 23rd will be the public hearing we would then have the second work session which will be the final markup on march 2nd and with the intent to adopt the budget on march 9th the date for the joint session is tbd as you all know that is something that is discussed between you all in the city and so with that i will take any questions that you may

[00:08:59] have any questions to my right miss stevens um i appreciate the removal of the november work session not because it takes a meeting off our plate but also because what i've noticed being on the board is that after we have a new election and we have new board members join us in january we've already started having that budget discussion process and so they're a little bit behind in the information we have and we have to catch them up so i do appreciate that and i also appreciate moving up um when we adopt when the budget is presented to us and when we adopt

[00:09:36] the budget because as you know we've often had times where we vote on the budget and then the next day we have our joint session and you know we've seen some issues with that so i really

appreciate those two changes i think they'll be really helpful so thank you sure to my left miss miles i appreciate also the changes and i wanted to make note i know we had mentioned the fact that we wanted more time um to discuss the budget and our unfunded needs and everything giving us more time to present it to the city so i think this is helpful because it gives us almost

[00:10:11] i think an extra few weeks before that happens so thank you again no problem any other questions I appreciate that we're learning and adapting, so thank you very much for making those suggestions. Now we will hear from Ms. Al Radford, Director of Communications and Community Relations, Ms. Hart, Executive Director of the MCPS Education Foundation, and Mr. Jimmy Conroy, possibly, or not.

[00:10:43] They will provide an update on our foundation's work for the 25-26 school year, so thank you for being here. That is correct. Good evening, Chair Spall, Vice Chair Jones, Dr. Newman, other members of the board. Thank you for having us here tonight. As you know, one of the pillars of the strategic plan really boasts about strong family and community partnerships.

[00:11:05] And so I'm very excited to have the Education Foundation under the umbrella of the Communications Department. As you know, that one of the biggest pieces of the foundation is that strong partnership in our community with our businesses and organizations.

[00:11:20] So Ms. Carol Hart is here tonight. Mr. Conroy could not be with us this evening, so she will take care of the presentation. But we're very excited about the work that has been done, not just over this past year, but the previous year as well, the continuing work that is building the bridge between Monash City Public Schools and our greater community, bringing a lot of our business partners into our buildings, the donations that have increased, and she'll highlight a lot of that tonight, but we are very excited and pleased with the work that Ms. Hart has been doing, and very happy to have her here tonight to present.

[00:11:56] - Thank you, Ms. Bradford, and welcome, Ms. Hart. Thank you for being here. - Thank you, it's good to see you all, and thank you, Ms. Bradford. And I believe we have a couple board members. Ms. Robin Williams is here, she's on our board, and Ms. Roslyn Giddens from UVA Health is on our board.

[00:12:12] So thank you all for coming. So, the next slide, please. Oh, oh, okay. All right, so our board president is Mr. Jimmy Conroy.

[00:12:28] And I think the fact that he and I get to work together is just a testament to how special Manassas City Schools and the city of Manassas is. A lot of people would consider Manassas maybe just another suburb of DC these days, but it still has its small town feel and our small school system just enhances that.

[00:12:49] And as many of you know, I taught Jimmy. He took four years of Latin with me back at Osborne High School. And the fact that an Osborne graduate has come back to Manassas and not only become a productive member of society in his role as United Bank, but is also teaming with a former teacher to help support our modern students and teachers, I think that just is great for our school system.

[00:13:14] So as for me, as many of you know, I taught at Osborne and occasionally at Mets for 23 years. I then went to central office where I coordinated different programs for seven years, and then I retired. I hit the magic numbers, 30 years, age 55 the same year, retired.

[00:13:32] But then two years later, I'm back, and it was this job that brought me back. My favorite thing about my central office position before was supporting our students and our teachers. And when I saw this job advertised, knowing that that's basically the whole point of the foundation is to support our students and teachers, I really felt that I had to come back and see if I could do that.

[00:13:59] All right, so on to our report. So our board of directors, oh, sorry, I am coordinated, I promise. So our board of directors for this year is pretty much the same as last year, although we did add a new board member reno mccormick um from flatter inc and reno web development he actually has designed our new website and he's in charge of running that so we were very happy to be able to bring him to our board and where he is donating his time to keep our website up and running and looking as great as it does and we've actually had some some compliments from various

[00:14:35] people about our website and that's all thanks to reno and then of course we have miss giddens giddens from uva health and miss williams from redstone realty who are on our board as well and the rest of the names i think you probably recognize um from last year so um our fy26 goals i basically just copied and pasted this slide from last year's presentation so you could see where we are we had a goal to bring back our innovative educator grants and we were able to do that and i'll be talking more about that a little bit later in the presentation but i think our

[00:15:15] first year back after revamping the process went really well and we had some positive feedback on that board development we wanted to develop and codify new board member selection and onboarding process that has been done it's been typed up the board has it and now we know exactly what we're going to do when we bring new members on and we were able to add one new member as i said reno McCormick to our board fundraising we began researching possibilities for a second yearly fundraiser we talked about a bunch of different ideas and we have

[00:15:49] something that we may try implementing in the fall of 27 but that's still very much in the planning stages and we did hold our annual second annual pancake supper in the spring and I'm pleased to say that we made approximately two thousand dollars more this year than we had done the previous year and we were very happy with that codification of various policies and procedures the main ones we wanted to get done were our policies and procedures for how we handle finances and those have also been fleshed out typed up and approved by our

[00:16:26] treasurer and so those are ready to go as well and we wanted to improve visibility networking events and I've I made it kind of a personal goal to try and get to at least one networking events per week I didn't quite make that every single week but I did get out there and I'll be telling you a little bit more about some of my community connections later and we were able to start a quarterly newsletter which I've been sending to you all and that will continue in the coming year as well so our financials these are the past three

[00:16:59] years the kind of speaks for itself I do want to point out there is an asterisk beside the investments for FY25. You'll notice that that is significantly lower than the surrounding years, and one thing to remember is that that was the year we did not award any educator grants at all, and we also gave out substantially more amount in scholarships in the other, the next year.

[00:17:28] So that's why that's a little bit lower. I do want to point out, it does seem that we were a little over budget this year and again we you know doing the teacher grants again i'm going to talk a little bit more about that in the next slide but the teacher grants all come from undesignated donations that we

receive and um we need to start working on getting more of those undesignated funds so that's that put us a little bit over budget but i do want to point out um we are still good to go. Our total bank account balance as of June 30th, 2026 is \$167,899. Let me try that again,

[00:18:08] \$167,899.05. And that is divided between a checking account and the balance for that at the end of June was \$52,517. And then we also have a money market account. And the balance of that at the end of June was \$115,381. So we do have some funds there. And I know a question about endowments had been asked before. And basically, we have not found any individual or organization

[00:18:42] at this point who is willing or able to give us a healthy endowment, an endowment that's big enough that we can use the interest and stuff from that to do a lot. And I did actually do a little bit of research into turning our money market account into what they call a quasi-endowment, where you would only be using the interest basically. But in my research, it seemed there were some legal restrictions and requirements that at this point just don't make much sense for our foundation. You know, some of the foundations in the really large school divisions

[00:19:19] are dealing with millions of dollars every year, but we are not. I mean, we count our budget in thousands of dollars rather than millions. So that's where we are with that right now. So we included some pie charts this year to kind of give you a better idea of exactly where the funds come from and where they're going out to.

[00:19:39] So the FY26 raised funds, you can see scholarships is almost half of what we do is giving out scholarships. and other designated funds were 46%. Now technically scholarships are also designated funds, so when you add the two of them together, basically 91% of our budget comes from designated funds.

[00:20:03] So there's the scholarships, and there's also big donations from Micron and Lockheed Martin. For example, Micron donated 17,000, but it had a specific use attached to it. had to be used for literacy in the STEM with hopefully a STEM bent to that.

[00:20:21] And we were able, with that \$17,000, to purchase new Zella subscriptions for the science and social studies classes at METS last year. And, but that's the point of the designated funds. We can't use that for anything else. So we couldn't have taken any of that to put towards a scholarship or to put towards a teacher grant unless they specifically told us that we could.

[00:20:45] So that's most of what we take in are designated funds. Only 9% of the funds we raised were undesignated. And if you look at the next pie chart, you'll see that the undesignated programs and initiatives make up 16% of what went out.

[00:21:02] So there's a little discrepancy there. We're only bringing in 9% undesignated, but we have to put out 16%. So one of our focuses this year is going to try to be to brainstorm some ways raise some more undesignated funds and because those are basically the funds that we mostly go to for our educator grants the designated programs and initiatives were 72% of the funds that we awarded this year and then administrative costs we've we managed to keep our administrative costs pretty low it's a total of 12% and it's not even 12% some years but what that typically

[00:21:39] includes is general operating expenses, our subscriptions, our website, things like that. It includes professional development. We are members of the National Association for Education Foundations, which is a very good organization. I've learned a whole lot from them. They have a lot of

good resources. We're also a member of the Prince William Chamber of Commerce. And I also this year went through the Leadership Prince William program. So part of that went to pay my tuition for Leadership Prince William. And then we also have other expenses as well, like the programs

[00:22:17] and stuff that the convocation cookies and our print giveaways, you know, we have pens and cups that we like to give out. And so that's all the kind of stuff that's included in that 12% administrative cost wedge. All right. So as I said, our focus really hasn't changed. Last year in this year, our focus is scholarships, which as you saw was 45% of what we gave away or what we brought in and what we're putting out, college and career readiness, and also community engagement.

[00:22:51] And the community engagement piece, I've really been working hard on that this year, and there'll be a slide a little bit later about that. So scholarships, which as you saw, is a huge part of what we do. I'm not going to read through every single one of them, but I do want to point out a few things. We did have a new scholarship awarded this year, thanks to Mrs. Diana Brown. She funded the Brown Scholars Community Excellence Scholarship. She funded two of those for \$1,000 each. So thank you, Mrs. Brown. We also, in addition to having the new scholarship, some of our scholarships

[00:23:28] increased the amount that they gave away. And one of those was Dream and Nova Scholarship. Last year, it was only \$500, but this year it was up to \$1,700. \$1,200 of that came from Dream and Nova, and the other \$500 came from Mrs. Heberg's daughter, Meredith, who very kindly gave us a \$500 donation and asked that we add it to that scholarship. So I thanked her, but tell her thanks again. And also the Mason E. Dayton scholarship, that's donated by the Kiefer family. And this year normally it's just a thousand dollars and one scholarship but this year they could not make up

[00:24:07] their mind between two of the candidates so instead of making one go without they decided just to put up an extra thousand dollars which was very generous of them also united bank increased the value of their scholarship from five hundred dollars to one thousand dollars um so it was a banner year. All in all, the previous year, the scholarship awards totaled to \$35,500, and this year the total amount was \$42,700. And I already have some possible new scholarships on the hook for next year. The Manassas Host Lions Club has told me they would like to do

[00:24:46] their scholarships through us, and there's a local author who may be donating a scholarship through us as well. Educator grants. So we were very excited to bring this back for last school year. We received seven applications and the board voted to fund five of those seven applications.

[00:25:09] And I know I don't have time to talk about all of them, which is too bad because they were all really cool projects. But I do want to mention just a few things. The Hayden Scientific Weather station that was awesome basically at Hayden uh Sarah Cordetti and Joanne McWalters wanted to install a weather station which you can see in that bottom left picture there on their playground and this is not a digital one this is analog instruments that the students actually have to learn to read the analog data and they have to learn that hey a low pressure low barometric pressure means a storm may be coming. At least I think that's right. I was not a science teacher.

[00:25:49] But yes, and they're going to be able to use that information to incorporate a weather forecast in their daily student broadcast, which to me was very exciting. And to make it even more exciting, Mrs. Goldsung last year had a big dedication ceremony. And that top picture on the left, they were able to bring out, and I'm sorry, I keep forgetting his name, but he is the meteorologist for Telemundo. And he came out

and he talked to the kids both in Spanish and in English about what it takes to become a meteorologist. So that was a lot of fun. The other interesting project, and you

[00:26:24] can see there's a wide variety. They funded STEM robotics, and they also funded art projects. The Walk in My Shoes project came from the art teacher, Miss Saylor at Weems, and she wanted \$2,000 to order a bunch of blank white tennis shoes for her fourth graders. At Weems, they apparently have like a little parade of students at the last day of school, and she wanted these fourth graders to be able to decorate their shoes to represent who they are, and then be able to wear them with pride as they march through the school during that last parade. So those were some of our projects. For

[00:26:58] last year, the total amount we wound up funding was \$10,732.25. Pass-through funds, again, thank you Lockheed Martin and Micron. They always come through for us. Lockheed Martin gave us, in addition to sponsoring a scholarship for 1500, they gave us \$10,000 to be used for robotics textbooks. And we were able to buy new robotics textbooks for both Mets and Osborne and various

[00:27:30] STEM supplies. There are a lot of like the 3D printers and the CTE equipment uses up a lot of Consumables and some of the grants that they normally get for that doesn't always cover consumables. And we're very grateful that Lockheed Martin and Micron are able to step in and help us with that. Lockheed Martin also awarded 2500 to us for the monasticity public schools food pantry which is located at Mets and some of their employees. Once the food was ordered and thank you. Miss Murray. She was the one that took care of all that and once the food was ordered some several Lockheed Martin employees came out to help unpack

[00:28:08] it and load it up onto the shelves and there's some pictures of that at the bottom there. Micron again \$17,000 for the Newsella subscription in science and social studies at Metz but they also recycled a lot of scrap metal last year and very generously donated those scrap metal funds straight to us so that also purchased a lot of CTE and stem projects and supplies and then we had a new donor, a local company, IMEG, and they donated \$1,000 specifically so we could send home

[00:28:42] five free books with 20 of our pre-K students who might not otherwise have a lot of reading material at home. And the students worked with Ms. Bautista and Ms. McDaniel to pick out the books that they wanted, and then they were shipped. And Ms. Bautista said one little boy every time he saw her, when's the book coming? When are the books coming? They finally came, and the kids got to take them home with them to keep. I also started tracking our in-kind donations this year. Now, these weren't necessarily the only in-kind donations that we received, but some of the people who donated some

[00:29:17] things like gift baskets for the pancake supper, they didn't actually want to be given a donation receipt. They just preferred to be out there kind of anonymously, not a lot of attention drawn to them. So the items on this list are the things that I actually wrote donation receipts for.

[00:29:34] UVA Health helped us out quite a bit. They gave us 560 drawstring bags for our freshmen at our freshman orientation at a value of \$817.60. They also stepped it up again this year, thank you Ms. Giddens, with laptop cases this time, which are a little more sturdy than the drawstring bags were. And I got some pictures yesterday. The kids were very excited to receive their computers and they're nice bags.

[00:30:01] UVA Health also donated some CPR practice equipment that went to Osborne High School, and that was valued at \$175. And then the last ones are basically items that we raffled off at our pancake supper. Wind River Chimes, they've been a wonderful partner.

[00:30:18] Second year in a row, they gave us almost \$300 worth of stuff, a birdhouse, wind chimes, and I forget what the other thing was. The Art Factory raffled off \$100 worth of tickets to one of their shows coming up.

[00:30:34] I mean, Miss Bressi won that one, right? Yeah. And then the Northern Virginia Community College, Miss Karen Todd there, she put together a wonderful gift basket that was worth \$380 that contained a whole bunch of good Nova giveaways and spirit wear.

[00:30:53] All right. And I told you, I've been trying to make it a personal goal to kind of increase our community connections. So in doing that, the foundation is a member of the Prince William Chamber of Commerce, and I have regularly been going to the Education and Workforce Council and also the Not-for-Profit Council.

[00:31:12] I was able to work on the committee for the Education and Workforce Breakfast, and we'll be chairing that subcommittee of the Education and Workforce Council next year. As I said, I also went through the Leadership Prince William Signature Program and graduated in June, and I plan to be heavily involved with that as well. I was actually elected to be one of our class liaisons, which puts me on one of their events planning type committees. So I'll be hooking in with them at least once a month and in other ways as well. I've been going regularly, let me

[00:31:46] try that again, regularly to GEMS, which is an entrepreneur group that meets at Centerfuse every Wednesday. And actually tomorrow I have signed up to be the coffee sponsor there because I thought first day of school, what a great time to remind them that we exist and that we could use their money. So I'll be doing that tomorrow morning. I've also been going to Team Wynn, which is a women networking group. I actually led a session there. It didn't really have anything to do with education, but I'm trying to just get out to all these local groups so that they learn to associate

[00:32:21] this lovely face with the Monassau City Schools Education Foundation, and that they know if they want to help out with their community, with education, they know to come to me. I'm also a member of our Virginia Education Foundations Connect. This is a very informal group made up of Education Foundation directors from around the state, and we meet once a month via Zoom. And then again, as I mentioned, we are members of the National Association of Education Foundations, And I was able to work with Mike Taylor, who is the CEO of that organization, and also with Rachel Kirkland, who runs the Manassas Park Education Foundation.

[00:32:57] We actually presented at the VSBA meeting on July 16th in Virginia Beach about what education foundations are and why a division might want to have one. And we were very happy to have Mr. Taylor from the National Association join us for that.

[00:33:16] Our supporters, our champion supporters, our Lockheed Martin, the Monassas Volunteer Fire Foundation, and Micron. The Fire Foundation donates \$20,000, this is the second year in a row, for four \$5,000 scholarships that we awarded.

[00:33:33] We have our scholar circle, the United Bank. United Bank, for the past few years, has been consistently donating \$5,000. This year, 2,000 of that went to a scholarship And \$3,000 was undesignated, which we love, undesignated funds. We also had several individuals, as well as UVA Health and Higher Ground, donating.

[00:33:56] All of the ones listed there are donated scholarships, which we're very grateful for. Then we have our golden apple and then our silver apple. And we were able to bump up our amount of silver apple donors because this year, when we were planning for our pancake supper, we had an option \$100 to sponsor a family of five and we had many, many people take us up on that and that's reflected in the amount of silver apple donors that we had this year. And then those are

[00:34:32] our friends who donate up to \$99. Some people didn't necessarily want to sponsor a whole family but wanted to contribute and they just contributed enough to sponsor a couple of tickets and we loved it. It was great having all of that support. So for FY27, some of the goals, board development, we do want to continue to add new members to the board. We are currently looking for a new treasurer. So if anybody knows anyone who might be interested, let me know. Chris Peden has been our treasurer, but his business has kind of expanded to the point where he just really

[00:35:07] doesn't have the time to devote that he would like to. So he's stepping down from our board, sadly for us um and we're also talking about developing a community volunteer committee looking for people who might want to help us out like at the pancake supper or any other events that we do but don't really want the commitment of full board membership so we're looking to develop that this year fundraising we do want to increase the amount of funds raised especially those undesignated funds especially since we have the the educator grant program back in place and and we're hoping that we get more than seven applications this year.

[00:35:45] We've decided next year, instead of a pancake supper, we're going to do a spaghetti dinner. And then, as I said, we're talking about an idea for a second fundraiser that would occur in the fall of the FY27 year.

[00:36:00] I'm going to continue the codification of various policies and procedures. To me, I feel like things need to be written down. So last year, I focused on writing down the onboarding for new board members and the finances.

[00:36:16] This year, I'm going to focus on writing down the processes for scholarships and our grant program. And then I want to continue to improve the visibility. I'm going to keep going to networking events. I'm going to keep sending out the quarterly newsletter. And we're also hoping this year to add in some donor spotlights that will go on our social media accounts.

[00:36:36] And that is everything. thank you to everything you all do in support not only of the foundation but for the the educators and students here in the city of manassas public schools and do you all have any questions thank you so much miss hart you've been a busy lady and we appreciate you um to my right miss stevens thank you chair um if someone wants to make a donation can they specify that they want the funds to be undesignated and how would they go about doing that basically if basically if they don't designate anything then it's automatically considered undesignated so we do on our website

[00:37:15] site have a donate now button and anything that's donated there typically automatically goes into undesignated funds and if somebody wants to cut a check they can write a note on the check in the memo line or contact me or again donate via the website and what's the website address if anybody's interested it's w so there www i had to look too www.mcpsedfoundation.org okay thank you thank you

[00:37:46] my left any questions miss miles um i am interested in participating in a scholarship how would i go about doing that myself like do i come to you or yes you come to me and you know scholarships

are interesting because some people prefer just to go straight through osborne um a lot of people like to come through us because basically we do most of the work for you and then as a donor you have the choice you can select the recipients yourself in which case i would send you all of the

[00:38:22] information when the time comes or we have a committee that can make the selection for you and we have a good mix of people and companies who either want us to do it or would prefer to do it themselves and then anyone who donates we always invite them to actually come award the scholarship themselves at the ohs scholarship night okay that's awesome thank you just shoot me an email appreciate it okay um i think that we're going to move now thank you miss hart we appreciate

[00:38:51] you thank you um we will move to our action agenda and the first uh can i get a motion chair i move that the school board of the city of manassas approves policy section a foundations and public excuse me and basic commitments section e support services section g personnel section i instruction section j students section k school community relations as presented second i have a motion by ms sievens seconded by ms seberg that the school board of city of manassas approves policy section

[00:39:29] a foundations and basic commitments section e support services section g personnel section i instruction section j students section k school community relations as presented is there any discussion. All in favor? Aye. Any opposed? That motion carries 7-0. We will now move to board member comments and up first is Ms. Brown. Next Ms. Miles. So last week we welcomed all our staff

[00:40:08] for our annual convocation to kick off the school year. We welcomed the community to see our new Jenny Dean Elementary School and the community gathered on the museum lawn for the Manassas City National Night Out. I always look forward to the beginning of the school year, all the festivities. And I know staff has got all the classrooms ready. We had our open houses and tomorrow starts school. So hopefully everyone get a good night's rest, including the teachers, because you need to be energized for all those kindergartners, first graders, wherever you teach, you're going to need emotional energy and physical energy.

[00:40:43] So that's that. But I also wanted to share with the board and I'll be sharing during a work session later in next month about an opportunity that was given to participate in the Hunt's Policy Fellows. And I had such a great time connecting this past Sunday and Monday with fellow school board members, mayors, council members, and we spoke about different things, especially early care. And it was very ironic because I know we've been talking about the

[00:41:19] possibility of universal child care. And apparently that's everyone is seeing that the benefits of that. So I look forward to sharing more information about what I learned. I also learned about how we do our funding a little bit more detailed. I know when we do our budgets, as a school board member, you don't always may understand exactly how the funds come, but it was nice to have a layout of that. So I look forward to sharing that with the board soon. And that's all for me. Thank you.

[00:41:52] Have a great school day tomorrow. Bye. Thank you, Ms. Miles. Ms. Brescia. Thank you. It has been a strange summer. I ran for school board four years ago to make positive change for our kids. And I'll say that again, since it seems that some members of this body have lost the plot for our kids. I am proud of my service on this board and the movement towards academic excellence that we have built and the positive changes that we have made together. It has been the honor of

[00:42:29] a lifetime to sit here and work on behalf of the kids of the city of Manassas. Before I proceed, I will state clearly, I have a First Amendment right to speak tonight. And I will say what I have to say without illegal interruption or interference from any member of this body.

[00:42:48] any illegal interruptions or interference are actionable in court this is relevant because earlier today members of the board received a correspondence from my privately retained attorney outlining there are many violations of state and federal law including violations of civil rights particularly the first amendment that have occurred this week and over the summer this board's conduct of having secret meetings and secret votes has also been a blatant violation of the rights of the citizens of this community to you. Your rights have been violated because you

[00:43:23] have the right to have a school board conduct business in public for all to see. Today, I stopped by our local courthouse and I filed a petition for writ of mandamus. This means I am asking the court to order the school board to follow the law and to throw out the results of an illegal vote conducted this week by the majority of this school board in violation of Virginia FOIA.

[00:43:49] This illegal vote was to improperly direct the superintendent to become a political weapon and conduct a baseless investigation into my private speech for no legitimate purpose and certainly having nothing to do with student academic success.

[00:44:05] Our court date is Tuesday, August 18th at 11 a.m. The sheriff's department will serve the papers tomorrow, and I hope to see some of you there. Members of this school board have also received or will shortly receive litigation hold notices for preservation of evidence. The school division's FOIA officer has also received FOIA requests for any public records regarding this matter that are stored on any school-issued or personal device.

[00:44:29] And finally, this matter has been referred to the United States Department of Justice's Office of Civil Rights because abusing state power to suppress political speech is a violation of federally protected rights. Wow, so let's back up, shall we? What a doozy.

[00:44:46] some members of this board and their allies have brought our community to a new low. I have been a subject of a defamatory viral TikTok, which is debunkable by hard evidence. I have seen a local school board candidate attempt to weaponize the police department by filing a bogus and false internal affairs complaint, presumably as a political ploy to silence or intimidate.

[00:45:10] The internal affairs process determined this complaint, of course, to be unfounded. And I have the documentary evidence right here to prove it. Nevertheless, I have seen a school employee publicly connected to that local school board candidate continue to spread provably false lies regarding this episode.

[00:45:29] I have seen a school board member threaten the existence of the Baldwin PTO in writing in an apparent act of naked, ugly political retribution. I have endured threats to my children and threats to my physical safety, the latter of which I had not previously publicized, but it has been reported and investigated by law enforcement.

[00:45:51] I have had to take measures to protect my home, protect my kids, and finally to protect myself from this board by retaining private counsel. All of this culminated this week when a specific board member insisted on an investigation with no legal basis to do so.

[00:46:09] She was apparently upset about complaints received from two parents regarding unflattering comments I allegedly made about a local candidate for school board and his publicly described partner. This board then secretly voted to illegally order the superintendent to investigate me for these alleged remarks.

[00:46:26] These complaints are frankly bogus, and neither the school board nor the superintendent has any legal authority to investigate anyone for privately expressed opinions. I will say this another way. Instead of following common sense and the laws of Virginia and these United States, the majority of this school board commissioned an illegal meeting and an illegal vote to convene an illegal investigation because they did not like what I allegedly had to say about their preferred political candidate. I have repeatedly pointed out to members of this board both the absurdity and the illegality of the course that is chosen. One would think members

[00:47:04] of a school board of all people would be familiar with the first amendment the foundations of our democracy and the laws governing the school board itself but one would be wrong weaponizing the power of this board to suppress political speech and to intimidate any citizen with whom a school board member disagrees is a bridge too far this is not a small mistake this is not a mere procedural or technical matter this is nothing less than a violation of civil rights and an undermining of our democracy, and it must stop. Everything I said tonight is supported by documentary evidence,

[00:47:43] which I will be making available for those interested, including the media, following this meeting. Instead of spending taxpayer dollars on educating our children, the board is choosing to break the law and spend that money on high-priced lawyers on this folly, which will only result in a verdict against the board. That, again, will be paid for by the taxpayers of this community.

[00:48:03] but it is not too late this is the time to have the courage and the basic sense to stop this board needs to get back to focusing on what we are allegedly all here for our kids our schools our community and most importantly our student academic success it is not too late for the board to do the right thing and stop reverse course and let us get back to the business of supporting our

[00:48:36] kids. May God bless us and have mercy on us all. Thank you, Ms. Brescia. Ms. Stevens. Thank you, Chair. I wanted to share a message to parents and families and teachers about the first two weeks of school. As a mother for the past 33 years, I've experienced a lot of first days of school. Since my oldest child's first day, I've been through 27 years of back-to-school meetings, and with each one came some level of anxiety, stress, and nervousness. Like many children,

[00:49:11] my own kids always experienced back to school jitters. For many years, my response was to try to reassure them with statements such as, it's okay, you'll be fine, you've done this before, you can do it again, or the first day of school isn't a big deal. While those comments were well intentioned, I eventually realized they weren't helping. My children were still anxious, had trouble sleeping, and often seemed irritable as the first day approached. Over time, it dawned on that my words may have been unintentionally sending the message that their feelings weren't valid or important so i changed my approach instead of minimizing their emotions i began

[00:49:49] acknowledging them i told my children that it's perfectly okay to feel anxious nervous scared or uncertain about the start of a new school year after all they are not alone many of their classmates and even their teachers feel worried about the significant changes in routines expectations and environments that come with a new school year i wanted them to understand that those feelings are not bad wrong or

something to be ashamed of they are simply feelings and they are real it is okay to not feel completely okay about going back to school one strategy we use in my house is what i call the two-week rule during the first two weeks weeks of school we

[00:50:28] give ourselves permission to struggle a little with the adjustment we recognize that our bodies and brains need time to adapt to new schedules responsibilities and expectations most often as the days pass and routines become familiar the anxiety begins to lessen however we also acknowledge that if those feelings do not improve after a couple weeks it's important to have a deeper conversation about what might be going on and what support may be needed one of the most valuable lessons i've learned both as a parent as in an educator is the importance of granting ourselves grace when we acknowledge and accept our feelings instead of fighting them we often

[00:51:08] reduce their intensity we become more in tune to what our bodies and minds are telling us and we are better able to navigate challenges in healthy ways as we begin this school year together i encourage families to remember that some nervousness is normal the adjustment back to school can take time let's give our children and ourselves the grace to experience those feelings knowing that growth often begins just outside of our comfort zone we're excited to partner with you during these first few weeks of school and look forward to a wonderful year ahead so have a wonderful first day of school tomorrow and remember grant yourself grant your family members grant your

[00:51:47] teachers grace thank you miss stevens miss seabird thank you chair i'm going to share something from the public school apologist that is an organization that unapologetically defends public schools and the people in them. Public schools and the people who make them run are both a security blanket and a safety net for our communities. They're just there every day waiting to catch our kids when they need them. For most kids, most days, it's pretty simple. They go to school, they learn,

[00:52:22] they eat lunch, they see their friends, and they come home. But when it's not simple, there's an entire network of people waiting to help them. When a child is hungry, someone feeds them. When they can't see the board, someone notices. When they show up without a coat, somebody starts looking for one. When home isn't safe, somebody has to figure out what happens next. When a child has a disability, people build supports around them. When they're grieving, scared, homeless,

[00:52:57] angry, sick, struggling, or simply need an adult to notice that something isn't right. Somebody at the school usually does. And then tomorrow morning the bus comes back again. We spend an enormous amount of time discussing public schools, test scores, curriculum, discipline, funding, politics, phones, books, and a hundred, a million other things. Those conversations matter.

[00:53:26] Public schools aren't perfect. Nobody who actually works in one would tell you they are. but sometimes all that noise obscures something pretty remarkable. Every weekday morning, communities across America open their doors and essentially say, "Send us your children. We'll take care of them today."

[00:53:46] And millions of families build their lives around the assumption that those doors will open. Before daylight, a bus driver starts a route. A cafeteria worker prepares breakfast. A custodian opens a building. A teacher prepares a lesson.

[00:54:03] an assistant gets ready to help a child who needs them a nurse prepares for whatever walks through the door a counselor gets ready to listen and a principal is about to discover a problem at 7 42 a.m that nobody on earth knew existed at 7 41. and a superintendent will walk the halls of every school in our

city most of it isn't glamorous most of it never makes the news bring us the kids the ones who read three grade levels ahead and the ones who can't read yet the ones who have

[00:54:40] everything and the ones who show up with almost nothing. The easy ones and the ones who will test every ounce of patience we've got. Bring them all. We'll teach them. We'll feed them. We'll keep them safe. We'll make mistakes and we'll try again tomorrow. And we'll keep the doors open. So as another school year begins, maybe this isn't the week for arguing about public schools. There will be plenty of time for that at a different school board meeting. Maybe this is the week to notice them. Notice the yellow buses rolling before sunrise. Notice the lights coming on in buildings

[00:55:16] all over your community. Notice the people standing at the doors waiting for children who aren't even their own. Tomorrow morning, millions of families will send the people they love through these doors and thousands upon thousands of people will be there waiting for them. That's a pretty extraordinary promise for a community to make. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Seberg. Vice Chair.

[00:55:39] - The first week in August was busy. The African-American Festival on the 1st was outstanding. The class of 2039 laid the Pledge of Allegiance at the Convocation on August 3rd.

[00:55:55] Mr. Goodfellow reviewed the strategic plan and I suggest you review the plan occasionally to keep the focus in mind on Monastery City Public Schools. Dr. Newman asked us to serve with purpose, serve with unity, and to serve with courage. Remember, rise forward.

[00:56:10] The ribbon cutting was on August 4th. I wanna thank all past and present school board members, Dr. Newman, Mr. Goodfellow, and all that played a part in the execution from start to finish with the new Jenny Dean School. The ribbon cutting ceremony was outstanding. We all need to remember the words from Mrs. Sloan to care and to make a difference in someone's life.

[00:56:31] The school board is now tasked with presenting a plan for the existing old Jenny Dean building. I believe that each school board member can see possibilities to include a possible CD center or universal pre-K program. money is the barrier but i want but i would like to continue but i'd like to continue to hear your opinions i encourage all citizens to come to the school board meetings and or city council meetings for us to hear what you think the school board will work to present a proposal to the city council within the deadline stated and the special use permit i made it to osmond ballwin intermediate

[00:57:06] and mayfield intermediate for open house last night students and parents were excited to see the teachers and friends. School starts tomorrow, August 12th, so don't forget to set your clocks. I also want to give a special thank you to C.F.H. and Helen Servato for the donations of more than 350 backpacks this evening. Our students will be happy to receive them. At the pledge of attending the International Black Theaters Festival in Winston-Salem a couple of weeks ago, two songs from a play "Cross That River" about an enslaved man escaping to freedom have stayed in my mind.

[00:57:42] the one song i must believe and the second song i do believe i want you to remember these words i must believe that all students can succeed no matter where they start once again i must believe that all students can succeed no matter where they start and then i do believe that we will meet all students by name and by need to show they will all show growth and they will meet the standards we will continue to work with all our students that's vibes forward in this 26 27 school

[00:58:16] year thank you thank you dr jones um i think i'll cede my comments just by saying happy new year to staff and students we're excited for you tomorrow and i'll meet you at the bus at 6 a.m or seven

seven was when we'll be at the schools to meet you um is there a motion to adjourn chair i move that the school board meeting adjourn i have a motion by miss stephens seconded by miss brown that the school board meeting adjourn all in favor any opposed that's 7-0 thank you everyone



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