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Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, May 3, 2023

Date	Wednesday, May 3, 2023
Place	Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length	3h 9m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jSv62zkAEKw
- Official School Board page (PWCS): https://www.pwcs.edu/about/school_board/

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-11-03. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:01] I'd like to call the meeting in the Prince William County School Board order. Pursuant to school board policy 139, school board member participation by meetings by electronic communication. School board member Diane Raulston may participate in this meeting through electronic meets from her home due to a medical condition that prevents her physical attendance. The clerk will so note the minutes of the meeting.

[00:00:19] And we do have Ms. Raulston here. Excellent, a motion is now in order for the approval of the meeting agenda. - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Wall. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the meeting agenda as recommended. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman.

[00:00:34] - Mrs. Argaport. - I second. - Any discussion, please vote. Ms. Raulston, how do you vote? - Yes. - Didn't go to the, no, no, yeah, go ahead, just put it up on my thing.

[00:00:56] Ms. Raulston voted yes. Okay, moving on to the motion to enter closed session, a motion to order, Ms. Wall. - Mr. Chairman, I move that, pursuant to Virginia code sections, section 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712, the Prince William County School Board enter closed session the following reasons one to discuss with staff the appointment transfer release assignment and promotion of specific officers and employees pursuant to virginia code section 2.2 dash

[00:01:32] three seven one one a one two to discuss with division council and staff actual or probable litigation and specific legal matters involving specific staff and students pursuant to virginia code sections 2.2-3711 a seven and eight and three to discuss and receive briefings by staff members related to the security of school facilities the safety of persons using such facilities and actions taken to respond to such matters where discussion in an open meeting would jeopardize the

[00:02:04] security of such facilities pursuant to virginia code sections 2.2-3711 a 19 and four to consult with legal counsel employed or retained by the school board to receive legal advice regarding collective bargaining and the Freedom of Information Act pursuant to Virginia code sections 2.2-3711 a 7 and 8 and 5 to consult with legal counsel employed or reached retained by the school board to receive legal advice pertaining to the access of individuals to school facilities pursuant to Virginia code sections 2.2-3711A8.

[00:02:44] - Do we have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zarabor. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote. Ms. Raulston, how do you vote? - Yes. - Ms. Raulston votes yes.

[00:03:06] Oh yeah, I mean, it didn't pop up. It's not popping up. - The vote is seven yes, one not present at vote. Motion passed. - At this time the Prince William County School Board will now enter closed session,

[00:03:19] return open session in one hour, thank you.

[00:04:25] - Prince William County School Board is now returning to open session from closed session. Moving on to agenda item 7.01, closed session certification. A motion is in order.

[00:04:42] - Madam Chair. - Yes, Ms. Jackson. - I move that pursuant to Virginia code section 2.2-3712 that the closed session, the Prince William County School Board meeting of May 3rd, 2023 be certified by adopting the following resolution. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Prince William County School Board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge, one, only public business matters, lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements were discussed in the closed meeting to which the certification resolution applies.

[00:05:11] And two, only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard and discussed or considered by the school board. - Is there a second? - Madam Chair, I second. - I second. - Thank you.

[00:05:26] Is there any discussion? Seeing none, please vote. Ms. Raulston, how do you vote? - Yes.

[00:05:46] - The vote is seven yes, one not president vote. Chairman Lateef, motion passed. - Okay, moving on to closed session, action items. A motion is in order for 8.01, approval of appointments and releases.

[00:06:04] - Madam Chair. - Ms. Jackson. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the appointments and releases of specific employees as presented in closed session. - Okay, is there a second? - Madam Vice Chair. - Ms. Williams. - I second. - Thank you. Discussion?

[00:06:20] Okay, seeing none, please vote. Ms. Raulston, how do you vote? - Yes. - The vote is eight yes, motion passed.

[00:06:40] - Okay, great, so thank you. At this time, we will be doing the Pledge of Allegiance and tonight we have our student representative Chance Williams with us. Chance, will you lead us in the pledge?

[00:07:15] Okay, so moving on to our Thriving Futures focus, it is time for one of the most enjoyable portions of our school board meetings, launching Thriving Futures. We dedicate this time during our meetings to recognize students, staff members, and schools who've earned an honor or award at the state or national level.

[00:07:31] We appreciate how these honorees have positively represented Prince William County Public Schools, and the school board is proud to recognize them publicly for their accomplishments. We begin tonight with the Brentsville Magisterial District. It is my pleasure to introduce school board member Mrs. Adele Jackson of the Brentsville District.

[00:07:52] - Thank you, Chair Lateef. It is an honor to recognize the Unity Reed High School Air Force Junior ROTC for their accomplishments at both national and state levels. The U.S. Air Force Junior Reserve Office Training Corps, AFJROTC, held its Open Drill National Championship competition in Dayton, Ohio, recently.

[00:08:17] Cadets from across the nation and some from across the globe arrived at Wright University to demonstrate their expertise and precision under pressure as more than 850 units performed in various competitions.

[00:08:37] Congratulations to the 33 cadets in the Unity Reed High School AFJR, excuse me, AFJR2C Unit Virginia 20065 program who took the eight-hour journey to compete in the unarmed division.

[00:08:58] Out of the 865 units competing, the unit earned fourth place overall and brought home the following additional awards. place unarmed inspection commanded by serenity frazier 11th grade first place unarmed exhibition duet serenity frazier and pho nguyen 11th grade and 10th grade respectively second place unarmed

[00:09:29] exhibition duet alexandra lobos and hashley peretas 11th and 12th grade respectively fourth place unarmed expedition duet ashley carrada rivers excuse me ashley carrada rivers and kate lang both 12th grade fifth place unarmed exhibition team commanded by Ashley Corrado-Rivers 12th grade the drill team program is much more than marching in a square creating a beat or spinning a rifle

[00:10:05] their motto is quitting isn't an option this year the cadets loan the value of dedication teamwork and perseverance while challenging themselves to set realistic goals and if you work hard you can achieve anything you set your mind to one team one fight lieutenant colonel daryl j robinson senior aerospace science instructor and technical sergeant tina m lang aerospace science instructor coordinated the trip and prepared the students who began practicing in

[00:10:42] may of 2022 for this competition after winning the 2022 air force association virginia state trail competition. The team raised $12,000 to fund the trip. The unit's next goal is to attend again in 2024 and compete in both the unarmed and armed division events. In addition to the team's outstanding results at the national level, the unit V Corps are the repeat Virginia State champions, breaking their own record. They are also the only team in the history

[00:11:20] of the competition to attain all first place trophies. It is my absolute pleasure to introduce Lieutenant Colonel Darrell Robinson and Technical Sergeant Tina Lange to introduce the students here tonight and please share more about the team.

[00:11:50] Thank you for having us. More importantly, earning these awards, while these cadets were busy focused on competing, they were being taught critical United States Air Force history. During our nationals competition, the team had the amazing opportunity to travel through the National Air and Space Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio, enhancing their in-class lessons, learning about the Tuskegee Airmen and the P-51 Mustangs.

[00:12:19] In addition to that, they learned about the infamous Memphis Bell and the B-24 bombers, and the challenges of completing 25 missions during World War II. They also learned the struggles of General Benjamin O. Davis in being faced with the first African-American four-star general, as well as General Janet Wolfenberger and her being the first female four-star general breaking the glass ceiling.

[00:12:44] This past week, I asked the cadets to send me a message on what this team has taught them academically, socially, and mentally. The three common words I heard in each response was confidence, trust, and safe.

[00:13:00] the cadets entered the program and lacked confidence in their abilities, is what they claimed. Most noted when they joined the team, they were failing their classes, but they happily reported they are now passing beyond their highest expectations. Several noted they would not have graduated high school had they not joined this team. Socially, the word I read repeatedly was trust. Many of our cadets prior to joining reported they felt isolated with little to no trust or ever feeling they had true friendships most members experienced being bullied isolated and defined

[00:13:36] happily i read from every cadet since joining this team they found friendships felt that they mattered and learned to trust their peers again mentally the cadets noted being depressed with severe social anxiety thoughts of suicide and one even attempted prior to joining this team twice today i'm proud to say all of our cadets have reported that those conditions have minimized been eliminated altogether and found a new love for life these cadets express this team has created a safe environment to share

[00:14:14] their personal struggles with one another and free from judgment there is one last word i heard from every cadet who wrote a testament this week it was family our team motto is we are one team and quitting is not an option although the cadets have taken home a significant amount of brass trophies this year and last the testaments of our cadets indicating their growth in academics with graduation in sight and a place where they feel safe is the true trophies that

[00:14:47] colonel robinson and myself take with us we are humbly proud and we are very excited on what they accomplish next year i think the cadets have one thing that they want to share with you

[00:15:01] please show the prince william county school board who we are i'll just say one word um i want to

[00:16:15] publicly applaud uh sergeant lane who has come along she is our our team coach and our publicist everything okay so she's done a great job and uh i just get to go along for the ride and make sure everything is good with her so we've done we've this has been an awesome two

[00:16:41] years and we look forward to the next 10 or 12. I think I can say without a doubt this room has never seen something like that so thank you all very much congratulations to the Unity Reed High School JROTC for your outstanding accomplishments at both the state and the national level it is evident your hard work is paid off congratulations also to principal dr. Richard Nichols

[00:17:17] assistant principal Kelly McDonald and she's here representing well no dr. Nichols is here I see him there we go and is our assistant principal here too Kelly McDonald yes all right wonderful let's give them a round of applause as well so I'll ask the students to in to stay for a few minutes for the next two recognitions and then we'll take group pictures with the school board mrs.

[00:17:43] Jackson Brentsville district please continue with your recognitions of of Patriot High School.

[00:17:59] - All right, thank you, Dr. Lateef. Our next recognition is also from the Brentsville Magisterial District. The Virginia High School League recently held the 2023 debate tournament at James Madison University. The Patriot High School team of Abenezer Vitao and Jonathan Meador won, am I pronouncing that right?

[00:18:21] - Yes. - Won the first place in the class six public forum category. The debate coach, Adrian Phillips, who is here this evening to say a few words about our debate champions. Please, Ms. Phillips. - For our debaters, either one, or both.

[00:18:39] Yes, as you wish, let's hear it. - Hey, I'm so sorry. I did not know I would be speaking today. So if it's gonna be a little off the cuff, hopefully Ms. Phillips has prepared us with that though, as we've proven at JMU, we can do this. So when the debate program started two years ago, after COVID year, it was a new adventure for all of us.

[00:19:01] Our president and our vice president, Yomini and Tony, ended up founding the club after it had been dissolved during COVID year. Ms. Phillips was one of the only people that believed in us as a debate team that we could go far and do it.

[00:19:19] We saw countless rejection offers at our school, but Ms. Phillips was one of the only ones who did it. Last year, we had a plenitude of teams compete at the Washington Arlington Catholic Forensic League and the Virginia High School League, And we ended up doing better than we ever believed.

[00:19:38] During that, we saw lots of national championship teams. We went against national level debaters. And we went against some of the best programs in the country, like Thomas Jefferson. After last year, we knew we could do better this year. And thankfully, me and my amazing partner ended up taking it all at VHSL this year.

[00:19:59] I just want to, of course, thank Ebenezer for being one of the greatest partners I could have asked for. We didn't even know each other prior to debate, and I made a great friend and had a great partnership and learned so many useful skills during this time.

[00:20:15] - I'd also like to thank Dr. Bishop again for preaching the values of leadership, integrity, character, and pride, which have helped us get here at this point. We couldn't have done it without his leadership skills. Thank you guys, I appreciate this.

[00:20:36] - Ebenezer, do you have anything to add? - I don't. - Coach Phillips? I mean, this could not be a better match. A public forum debate is two debaters debating another pair of two debaters.

[00:20:53] You have to have one who is doing the research and is preparing something very structured and is very comfortable in that role, and you also have to have one who is willing to anticipate whatever is going to come at them and respond off the cuff.

[00:21:09] Not that both aren't doing the research, but the skill sets are so very different. you can see how, you know, who's who in this scenario, but they complement each other so well. And it is the fusion of both

of these types of skills.

[00:21:24] I feel like so much of life is a dichotomy, right? And sometimes some people look at one skill set as more valuable than the other, but really when they complement each other, they work to achieve tremendous things. and so um if nothing else i'll i'll i'll see these two as the you know as as the epitome as the mold of what it is that we need to to continue to craft and put together as as we move forward so thank you thank you to jack and abenizer i didn't know that they told me that the other day that they they met at the interest meeting they just looked at each other and were like what do you think

[00:22:03] and and two years later boom they're state champs so yeah you just never know what can happen with with chance and fate sometimes fantastic another round of applause the only problem I see here is that you'll have to make it back here next year so the pressure is on dr. Bishop and Miss Phillips and in in the Patriot High School we we expect big things so thank you all very much congratulations Ebenezer and Jonathan on this prestigious honor we are proud of of you, congratulations to Principal Dr. Michael Bishop

[00:22:40] who comes himself from a state and a school that has one of the best debate teams in the country and I know that we're excited to see you bring that here to Prince Williamson. Now it's my pleasure to introduce Mr. Justin Wilk, well, are we doing pictures or are we doing another thing?

[00:22:58] Okay, Mr. Justin Wilk of the Potomac Magisterial District for recognition in his district. - Thank you for following up from, - Yes. - They were applauding for the state of Ohio, I'm sure, Dr. Bishop.

[00:23:16] Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Virginia Association of School Social Workers, VASSW, named Hara Funches School Social Worker of the Year for the Northern Region of Virginia and School Social Worker of the Year for the State of Virginia.

[00:23:36] Ms. Funches boasts 22 years of experience with our school system and is currently in her 20th year working at the Graham Park Middle School. Not only does Ms. Funches play an active part in the daily lives of her students, but she also prides herself in playing a vital role with school staff, administration, and parents at the school.

[00:23:57] In addition to her regular job duties as a school social worker, she has taken on the title of community outreach coordinator this year, which allows her to build relationships with community organizations, bringing much needed support and resources to the students and families at the school.

[00:24:15] In making this recognition, the VASSW seeks someone who goes above and beyond in their position, demonstrates the need of school social workers and education, contributes to their school or district, is innovative and creative, and who shows leadership within the profession.

[00:24:32] Once someone is nominated for the award, the VASSW completes a review process, awarding the nominee with the highest score, the School Social Worker of the Year Award for each region. Following that, each of the six region presents their candidate to the executive board of the VASSW and the board selects the state recipient.

[00:24:55] Congratulations, Tara Funches, VASSW School Social Worker of the Year. Please come forward and say a few words.

[00:25:13] - Thank you, thank you, thank you to all. Good evening. Thank you, Mr. Wilk, for pronouncing my name correctly. I greatly appreciate that . I bring you greetings from Grand Park Middle School, home

of the Lions.

[00:25:30] I am very blessed to be standing here in front of you this evening in celebration of my accomplishments representing the Northern region and the state of Virginia as your school social worker for 2023. but I did not get here by myself.

[00:25:46] I have a lot of people to thank and I wanna take that time to do so right now. In the audience, I have my husband, I have some family members, and I have my principal from Graham Park, and I want to let them know how greatly I appreciate their support over the last 22 years of me being in the county.

[00:26:09] I'm also blessed to be working in a county that sees the value of social work, profession, and the unique knowledge and skill set that we bring as professionals to help promote the positive climate, social, emotional, and behavioral wellness, and to be the bridge between home, school, and community.

[00:26:29] This year's theme for Social Work Month is Social Work Breaks Barriers, and the theme for the School Social Work Week is We Rise. As School Social Worker of the Year, I plan to continue my commitment to recognizing the human dignity and worth of the students and families that I serve, advocating for the equity of underserved students of color in our work with Daly on the eastern end of the county along the Route 1 corridor.

[00:27:00] So just get a picture of that in your mind, what population I'm working with, and empowering parents and guardians to overcome barriers that hinder their children's emotional well-being and academic success. Thank you.

[00:27:22] - Thank you, Mr. Wilkin. Congratulations to Ms. Funchess for your important work and service to our students and their families. I can't emphasize enough the importance of your role and the role of social workers in our school division. It is absolutely critical and we just cannot ever thank you enough for the work you do.

[00:27:42] Congratulations also to the Grand Park principal, Yashika Walker, Superintendent Dr. LaTanya McDade. I'd like to say a few words, Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Congratulations to our national champions, Unity Reed, Air Force JROTC.

[00:27:58] First of all, that small snippet, what you shared with us, I mean, I was fired up, and I understand exactly why you're the champion, because you demonstrate excellence and achievement. We are so incredibly proud of you. Thank you for representing Unity Reed, as well as PWCS so well, job well done.

[00:28:16] For Patriot High School, Ebenezer and Jack, Congratulations to you on your state championship. I have to say as a former English teacher, I greatly respect the art of rhetoric, the competition of debate, and eloquence of speech.

[00:28:31] So you represent all of that. And I hope that you being here tonight will inspire other students, and even inspire other schools to have debate programs, because I think it's something all of our schools should have and students should be able to participate in.

[00:28:47] So not only congratulations to you, Thank you for representing the art of debate and the importance of the skills that debate brings to supporting your academic careers. I also want to congratulate Ms. Funches. Thank you so much for all of your service and commitment.

[00:29:04] You have had an impact on students, schools, and families that is immeasurable. I don't want to only thank you for your hard work, but I thank you for your heart work, because the work that you do is work of the heart. So thank you so much for your service. Congratulations to each and every one of you.

[00:29:20] We are PWCS proud. - Thank you, Dr. McDade. Before organizing for the pictures, I would like the family members of our honorees to please stand and be recognized.

[00:29:40] And let's give them a round of applause, everyone.

[00:29:55] Just the last word on this, the school board is excited and proud to continue to share the range of success, the tremendous range of success we see in our school division. And we can't thank you all enough for giving it your all here and the school board can't thank you enough for even allowing us to be a little bit of part of this that you share with us.

[00:30:17] So thank you and to the parents and families, we cannot thank you enough for sharing your children with our school division every single day. At this point, let's bring our Unity Reed High School group up front for a photo and then after that, we'll be followed by the Patriot High School debate champions and then our social worker of the year.

[00:35:24] - We'll take the pictures. - You made this thing, man. - Give me a phone, go ahead. - Keep on this, give me a phone, I'll hold it. - I'm good. - It doesn't ever say. - Yeah, go ahead so you can be in the picture.

[00:35:43] Yeah, go ahead.

[00:37:58] - Okay, very good. All right, so thank you all very much for that. And we are now on to 11.01, adoption of the consent agenda. A motion is in order. Vice Chair Wall.

[00:38:14] - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the public meeting consent agenda as recommended. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Argapora. - I second. - Any discussion? Ms. Williams, oh, Ms. Jessie, sorry.

[00:38:31] - Oh, hi. On the consent agenda, items 13, seven, and 17, school nurses day, I just want to take this time to say to Teresa Polk, who is retiring this year, I'm one of the senior members on this board, I was in the system when we did not have nurses in our schools and if you can imagine us not having a nurse in our school Teresa came in and she did a great deal to improve the number of nurses and she has been an outstanding person for this county and I just want to take this time to congratulate her as

[00:39:06] the supervisor of nursing the other item is we're getting windows at Woodbridge High School fenestration I think it's called that's the big term just want everybody at Woodbridge you know we're going to get windows and the last item item 17 is a workforce readiness award and i think this county deserves it and i want to take this time to give a shout out to douglas wright who has been with us for quite some time and i just want to say that you have done a phenomenal job in this county and i know that you you're there's some other leadership

[00:39:42] year but i have watched this man work without any help at all and he has done an outstanding job so i just want to take this time to say thank you douglas wright that's it thank you miss jesse miss what thank you mr chairman um thank you miss jesse for saying that i'd like to echo your statements um for most for mr wright and for teresa folk had a tremendous impact in our school division i would just like to

thank this board and um casa brumar originally i think it was in 2019 we did the first resolution to recognize lbtq plus pride month we missed a few years due to the

[00:40:19] pandemic but i am glad that it is back on our agenda i am happy that we are an inclusive school division and that we strive to do our best to be accepting of all both students and staff that's very important it's very important to me and it's very important to many of the families and individuals that i serve and call and i'm glad to call a friend i'd also like to recognize that June will be Mental Health Awareness Month I think it's very appropriate that I know it'll be mentioned several times Justin that Forest Park's having their suicide awareness walk and chance but as someone

[00:40:55] who's attended I don't think it can get mentioned enough and I just want to call out special attention to all the hard work that goes into mental health services not only from our social workers to our counselors to our teachers really every and anyone in the school division that takes the time out to ensure that either their co-worker staff member or a student has someone safe that they can call contact and talk to and just for all of our counselors and trained for mental health professionals there aren't enough of you to go around and I just want to take this time to recognize you for all the

[00:41:29] hard work that you do and thank you so much thank you miss Williams and miss Thank you Mr. Chairman. I wanted to speak to item 11.02. Jennifer McKee is my recommended appointee to the Career and Technical Education Advisory Council and I wanted to thank her for being willing to step up and serve in this capacity. Before coming to PWCS she spent time as a CTE supervisor in Florida overseeing culinary programs, hospitality programs, dental and Sports Medicine, Patient Care Assisting, and Experience with Workforce Boards, so she

[00:42:08] brings a wealth of experience. She's currently teaching at Gainesville High School in Family and Consumer Science, and I wanted to thank her for being willing to serve. Thank you, Madam Vice Chair. I'd like to echo Ms. Jessie's comments about Teresa Polk and Doug Wright, but specifically about Teresa Polk and the work she has done, and our former, her deputy, Gina Bellamy.

[00:42:38] When we took over four years ago, and this is really important, we're the first and I think still the only large school division with a nurse in every school. It's been a commitment. It continues to be a part of our commitment for safety and security and positive culture and climate.

[00:42:53] And it was led that charge by Teresa Polk. And as we say goodbye to her this year, I think one can look back and she served as president of the Virginia School Nurses Association as did Gina and their leadership has, you know, encouraged other school divisions in the state to follow Prince William County's lead.

[00:43:12] So we continue to, as a school division, have benefited from terrific leadership and our best wishes and on retirement and we'll always consider you all as friends of the Prince William County schools.

[00:43:28] Please vote. Ms. Raulston, how do you vote? - Yes. - Ms. Raulston votes yes.

[00:43:43] - The vote is seven yes, one no. motion passed moving on to citizen comment time those citizens who sign up in advance with the clerk may address the school board this evening when they are called to the podium the citizen comment period for regular school board means one hour and citizens may speak on agenda items or other topics germane to the operations and policies of PWCS please use proper decorum and manners while at the podium or you will be asked to step aside we ask that the

audience please be respectful of each speaker and refrain from any clapping cheering or jeering to avoid disruption of the meeting if you do not do so So the board will recess and I will ask the room to be cleared to restore public order.

[00:44:19] Tonight we have 15 citizens signed up to speak. When I call your name, please come up to the podium, state your name and address for the record. The first, and we can call the first five speakers up. You can grab a seat up front. And the first five will be Stanley Sverlinga, Amanda Locklear, Jalen Custis, Brandy Provenzano, Maggie Hansford.

[00:44:43] Stanley Sverlinga. - My name is Stan Sverlinga. My address is 13408 Classic Oaks Court.

[00:45:00] My daughter, who has autism, her civil rights were violated in this building this past Saturday. We were trying to attend the All County Arts Festival, which my daughter had a piece of art submitted, and members of the public were invited.

[00:45:15] As we entered, we were informed by Ronald Hebe of Risk Management and Security Services that my daughter's service dog could not enter the building. He stated he needed to provide a certificate to show that he is a service dog. He was wearing his leash and this service dog vest.

[00:45:33] I explained that under the American with Disabilities Act that there is no such certificate, he would not relent. Federal law prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities by public entities, including public education systems and institutions.

[00:45:52] Requiring certified ID or any other documentation is a violation of federal law, state law, and does not follow Prince William County school division regulation 271-2, dated March 12th, 2021.

[00:46:08] I asked Mr. Hebe to show me an example of what the certificate that does not exist looks like. He could not show me an example. He explained that he was told by his supervisor, William Desmond, to require all service animals to show a certificate before entering the building.

[00:46:26] I finally requested that he call his manager, and after some time, we were granted entrance. I have since received an apology from Associate Superintendent Rita Goss and Director Ronald Crow, but I believe Mr. Hebe isn't at fault because he was only doing what he was told.

[00:46:45] And I'm sure he wasn't the person who put up the sign at the entrance of this building, which said in very large font, no pets allowed, and at the very bottom in very small font, service dogs with harness with certified ID permitted.

[00:47:06] Now the sign has since been removed, but I lay the blame of this incident on Security Supervisor Desmond and Director Crowe, who had been in their positions for over three years. Now this wasn't a mistake or lack of knowledge, because on December 22nd, 2020, the Prince William County School Division agreed to fully implement a resolution agreement with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

[00:47:31] As required by the resolution agreement, the school division reviewed and revised Regulation 271-2 for service animals. Additionally, by October 1st, 2021, the division was required to provide training to all who are responsible for implementing Regulation 271-2.

[00:47:52] As staff responsible for implementing the regulation, we're also required to be trained. - Thank you, Mr. Sperling. Amanda Locklear.

[00:48:10] - Good evening, my name is Amanda Locklear, and my address is on file. One size fits all. If you're like 95% of those in this room, you're thinking I'm talking about clothing. I'm not, that's not why I'm here. I'm here because one method of teaching or one program does not fit all and does not reach all.

[00:48:32] The Individuals with Disability Act states special education means specially designed instruction at no cost to the parents to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. It further explains, specially designed instruction means adapting as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under this part the content methodology or delivery of instruction.

[00:48:57] In the short time that I have tonight, I want to express that it is very important that every member of the IEP team understand that the IEP stands for Individualized Educational Program, or in some cases, Plan.

[00:49:13] The IEP describes the plan for students' educational program, including current performance goals, levels and the educational placement and other services the student will receive. An IEP is a legal document. The IEP is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Special education is tailored to address and meet the unique needs of a specific child that results from the child's

[00:49:45] disability. The IEP creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, administrators, related service personnel and students to work together so that the student can reach their full potential.

[00:50:01] In addition to special education services we must ensure that the child has access to the general curriculum so they have an opportunity to meet the educational standards that apply to all children. The IEP is in place for a reason.

[00:50:19] If a student's IEP accommodations are not provided and service minutes are not given, this can lead to both acute and long-lasting issues. We're human. We make mistakes. Admit, correct, and move on.

[00:50:37] Thank you. - Jalen Custis. - Good evening, Dr. McDay, Mr. Chairman, and school board members.

[00:50:55] My name is Jalen Custis, and I reside in the Woodbridge District. I'm here in support of the Evolve Express Security Systems. This is one of many steps in order to keep our students and staff safe. However, this is just one small step.

[00:51:10] These detectors do not detect drugs. These detectors aren't always accurate. With this heavy price tag, there shouldn't be that many flaws. I'm a big supporter in securing our schools to the fullest, such as more armed police presence, random drug searches, and having alarms on the doors.

[00:51:29] Many people are afraid that this will be turning our schools into a prison. To those who believe that, do you feel as if you are in a prison when you go to the airport and have to go through TSA? Or how about when you go to an amusement park, a sporting event, when they ask you to empty your pockets?

[00:51:46] Does that make it feel like there's a prison? A student in our high school recently overdosed. We must act immediately. Securing our schools is not creating a prison. It's creating a safe environment for our students and staff.

[00:52:02] We must not act on feelings but on facts because feelings do not govern. I thank the board for taking this step. I hope you are all aware that this is just the beginning. I hope you all continue to your work in order to make our schools as safe as possible.

[00:52:19] Thank you for your time. My name is Jaylen Custis and I reside in the Woodbridge District. - Brandy, let me just remind the audience that we don't do the clapping, cheering or jeering. We're gonna go on next to Brandy Provenzano.

[00:52:35] - Good evening, my name is Brandy Provenzano and my address is on file. I am here tonight to ask for your support for open bargaining. For those of you who do not know, open bargaining would allow Prince William County School employees to securely and safely observe contract negotiations.

[00:52:54] PWEA has respectfully requested open bargaining. PWCS has denied its employees this opportunity. As many of you know, PWCS has a serious staff morale issue. Staff are quitting mid-year, taking early retirement, and leaving the profession altogether.

[00:53:16] That includes those special ed teachers that we desperately need to retain. Student learning is dramatically impacted by the endless stream of temporary, unlicensed, and inexperienced candidates replacing well-loved and well-experienced staff members, but there is always hope.

[00:53:38] The school board has the power to write, amend, and change policies and procedures. The school board supervises and directs the superintendent. The superintendent directs the board attorneys, all three of them, on the parameters of collective bargaining.

[00:53:56] I am humbly asking this board and Dr. McDade to allow employees the right to securely observe the bargaining of their contracts. Please do not pass the buck to the bargaining team. They are only following orders from on high.

[00:54:13] Please show your employees that there is nothing to hide and only good faith bargaining happening on their behalf. In closing, I would be remiss if I did not address the constant overwhelming and demeaning professional development requirements placed on the shoulders of your already overworked staff members.

[00:54:35] Adding three work days to the end of the school year and 2024 after our students are gone for the summer is demoralizing, confusing, and seems punitive. The last minute change to the flex day policy is an additional burden placed on administrators and staff without any reason or justification.

[00:54:57] There is a prevalent feeling that the board and division leadership have no idea what is actually happening in our classrooms, on our buses, in our offices, with our staff, with our students, beyond photo opportunities.

[00:55:12] When will this end? How much more can the employees, the families, the staff, and community take? I don't know about you, but I really do not want to still be here when my own children have to pay for the fallout.

[00:55:28] Thank you. - Maggie Hansford. - Good evening, my name is Maggie Hansford and my address is on file with the clerk. I come here tonight with, I'm gonna start with a quote from Chair Lateef.

[00:55:44] I don't have the energy to think through collective bargaining, let somebody else do the work. We're tired, we're doing the work. Collective bargaining means two teams have to show up to the table in good faith. We have asked you all to care, care enough to understand what collective bargaining is.

[00:56:05] I need each of you to do that. I wanna talk to you about what collective bargaining looks like on your team and our team. We just won joint bargaining. Joint bargaining is great for both teams. It's fiscally responsible. It has both teams coming together to build contracts for all employees in both groups.

[00:56:26] That is good. We did that together. Now we're at an impasse over open bargaining. We came to you when you all were adopting the resolution and we said add binding arbitration. And you all said no.

[00:56:43] This school board said no. You didn't put binding arbitration in your resolution that you adopted. I need you all to understand what that means is, is that now you hold the responsibility, you do. If a tax dollar is wasted, if any time is wasted in collective bargaining, it's on you.

[00:57:02] If you would have put in binding arbitration, it would have been on me, it would have been on our team, and it would have been on the manager's team, but you chose not to. I ask that you learn and understand what collective bargaining is and learn the resolution.

[00:57:19] We don't have time to waste, we don't have dollars to waste. I know Dr. Lateef mentioned meet and confer last night during a meeting. We've spent so much money on an election to be the agent to negotiate.

[00:57:40] You can't do that. There is no meet and confer. We are the agent. We are moving through collective bargaining. It is time that you all work with employees and work with the union. What is a union? It's a group of teachers and school employees.

[00:57:57] Don't be scared of us. Don't work against us. Work with us, understand collective bargaining, and help us move this forward. I've enjoyed getting to know the bargaining team of management, I've enjoyed working with Wade, I appreciate you sharing condolences with me regarding my family, Dr. McDade, I appreciate that.

[00:58:16] We're able to come together and make good decisions, but right now we're at an impasse without time or money. We need you to understand to make people trust us, to make employees trust us, that takes transparency, open bargaining.

[00:58:34] - Tammy Fick, Tammy Fick. Okay, next five will be Beverly Thompson, Jessica Quinn, Brandy Peacher, Jared Gay, and Jeffrey Fuller.

[00:58:54] Beverly Thompson.

[00:59:13] - Good evening, school board members and Dr. McDade. My name is Beverly Thompson and my address is on file. Tonight, I respectfully ask this board to listen, really listen to your employees. We are here to ask for open bargaining.

[00:59:30] We believe that we have an amazing opportunity to work with the division to repair these broken trusts and to show everyone that we are in this together. We are still here because we all love and care for our students in this county.

[00:59:48] But there are many people who can't be here. They have second and third jobs or children at home, or they're taking night classes in hopes of building a better future for themselves. Later, they can watch the meeting, hear our speeches, Listen to the debate and watch and re-watch the events of this evening.

[01:00:11] As a matter of fact, folks are watching tonight at home in the comfort of their own homes. We are asking for the same transparency. We want employees to be able to observe their contract negotiations. We want to offer them the same opportunity you are offering citizens tonight.

[01:00:31] The opportunity to be engaged, to observe their tax dollars at work, and to form their opinions after observing whether whether by a link in person or both. Educators didn't have a choice to hide behind these closed doors. We didn't have the luxury or privacy. We had to pivot and even open our homes to parents and students alike. Tonight we ask for that same transparency. This board has the authority to direct superintendent, to direct the attorneys, all three of them,

[01:01:09] to allow for open bargaining. Finally, we asked the school board and Dr. McDade to consider the inundation of professional development requirements they are replacing or placing on already overwhelmed staff members. Furthermore, the change to the flex day policy and addition of teacher work days after school is out for summer, has many employees concerned about the direction we are headed we can't continue at this place and sadly many will not stay if things

[01:01:42] do not change they're already leaving in droves we have to stop this madness now thank you Jessica Quinn good evening my name is Jessica Quinn and my address is on file do you see this child here he is a student of PWCS someone you claim to care about however the way you the board and directly treat his mother along with other employees in this county shows me and him that you in fact don't care about our students

[01:02:22] this year he doesn't have much of a mom i like many other teachers across the country are bombarded with pds that don't help us become better teachers we're forced to stay later or come in earlier than contract hours due to late buses or other duties as assigned i among countless teachers and tas have had to endure a lot in our classrooms this year that i have never faced in in my eight years of teaching.

[01:02:46] You say that SEL is important, but we can't even take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health, and it doesn't appear that you care either based on this board's conduct, which is funny because our SEL directly correlates with how effective we are as teachers, which directly impacts the students you claim to care about.

[01:03:04] All of this leads me to collective bargaining. I voted for it because as a teacher, a parent, and a member of the community, I know how important it is for all staff to have a voice and to no longer be treated poorly by the people of this board. We were forced to have an unfair election, and of course, we won, because voting is powerful.

[01:03:25] We again voted that we wanted to have open bargaining, and again, you are trying to fight it. Why do you have something to hide? Seems to me like you do, because otherwise you would listen to a vote. You would listen to a group of people that voted you in.

[01:03:41] We have a right to see how our contracts are being negotiated, how the next year of our lives will be constructed, how the students we love and teach will be affected, and how we can recruit and retain amazing teachers for PWCS. Actions speak louder than words, so now is the time to back up what you say.

[01:04:00] - Brandy Peacher. - Good evening, school board members and Dr. McDade. My name's Brandy Peacher and my address is on file. Tonight I am here as an excited member of the PWEA bargaining team.

[01:04:16] As a school bus driver for nearly 20 years, I don't know if I've ever felt I had a real say in very much, but I finally have the opportunity not to speak up, not only to speak up for myself, on behalf of bus drivers across the county as you know we have a significant shortage of bus drivers and the problem is only going to get worse bus drivers sign their cards for collective bargaining because they finally believe

there was hope for change now these same bus drivers want the opportunity to see and hear the contract negotiations imagine imagine feeling for the first time in your career that you may actually matter you may actually have a say you may actually

[01:04:52] be heard but then you are told that you can't see or hear anything going on you are again treated as a second-class citizen. PWEA is asking for open bargaining. They want employees to be a part of the process. They want to empower bus drivers and other classified and certified staff.

[01:05:09] They want us to stay, but without open bargaining, how can there be trust? They know that bus drivers are the very first people to greet the kids in the morning and the last ones to say goodbye to in the afternoon. They know that without us, many students would have never made it to school. For these reasons, I am respectively asking the school board and Dr. McDade to agree to open bargaining the school board and superintendent the school board and superintendent both have the ability and the authority to make this happen i'm just a bus driver but for the first time in my career i am a bus driver who has hope for a more transparent and fair contract if we were asked and we weren't we'd tell you that the worst thing for employees morale is the endless

[01:05:49] professional development and the flex day changes not to mention requiring staff to report the last day of school after kids are gone for even more work when will it end thank you for your time Jared Gay. My name is Jared Gay and my address is on file. So just to start off, it was nice to hear recognition for LGBTQ Awareness Month and Pride Month, that is, and Mental Health Awareness Month,

[01:06:23] School Nurse Awareness. That's wonderful. It does seem kind of odd that Teacher Appreciation Day or Week, which depending on which particular week you choose to observe it, would either be this week or next week and is being observed at schools across the division.

[01:06:40] So that would have been nice, but of course, that would have brought up the question how appreciated teachers currently feel by Prince William County schools. So I want to list a few things that might complicate that picture slightly. So first of all, as of right now, there are 909 vacancies in Prince William County schools.

[01:06:59] Let that linger for a second, 909 vacancies. Remaining staff is, of course, trying to pick up the slack as best we can, but often feel completely overwhelmed and incapable of fulfilling the roles that we should have in our school with fewer and fewer staff members who are able to address all of the needs that that is creating.

[01:07:24] Should we feel appreciated by all the off-contract work that's required of us? As other speakers have mentioned, flex days, teacher work days that are being added to the end of the school year. And of course, principals being told that it is mandatory that we come in on those days, even if all of our duties are already done.

[01:07:42] Not having any particular authority to be able to hold students accountable academically or behaviorally. More and more testing every year. Second lowest pay in Northern Virginia. A 2% raise which is lower than any other county employee this year. Previous raise of course didn't even keep up with inflation despite the fact that it was desperately needed.

[01:08:01] And this one even less. I mean if we're speaking of appreciation, let's face the fact that as much as you might say are appreciated if you go to the store right now you'll see that there are lots of other things that have appreciated a lot more than teachers apparently are by our division it seems to me that a

carton of eggs should not appreciate more than our teachers and of course our health insurance is going up at the same time and then with collective bargaining we've had school board members fighting against this from the very beginning requiring a lot of work that frankly should not have been necessary if we were truly appreciated

[01:08:36] and now we're having to fight for the right to have a transparent process that all employees are able to be privy to. It seems to me that if we actually appreciate our teachers and staff that we should trust them to be able to witness what's happening with something that affects their very livelihoods. If we're not going to recognize teacher appreciation in the agenda, let's try to recognize it going forward with our actions and words. Thank you. Jeffrey Fuller. Mr. Fuller,

[01:09:16] Next four, or last four, will be Heather Oberle, Sarah Bachman, Julia Biggins, Jared, or Gerard Moore. Heather Oberle. Greetings. My name is Heather Oberle, and my address is on file.

[01:09:41] I seem to be repetitive here, seeing that I'm now 11th, and the topic is pretty common. Prince William County employees are entitled to have open bargaining with our contracts. contracts. We now have the option to debate, to come to consensus about our contracts.

[01:10:00] It needs to be transparent. Some examples of transparency that would have been appreciated so far up to date, as others have stated, the flex day regulation. Flex days were put in because teachers said, we need time to do our rooms, we don't have it during the teacher work week. The board said, okay, come in two extra days over the summer. So we could work it however we wanted, but now it has to be in increments of three and a half or seven hours. It has to come from this approved list. It has to be signed off. It had to be signed off. We had to put it in before. But now you're putting more emphasis and pressure on our

[01:10:37] principals who have to go through this process. It also would have been nice if staff had been warned of this before it came out in the communicator. Concerning P796, sexually explicit content, your policy is not clear. It needs to be clarified. As an English teacher, I have been told by other people in other departments, that doesn't pertain to me. That's just an English in a library thing. No, it says all instructional materials. It's also a little foolish in the fact

[01:11:12] that I can have a picture of the statue of David up in my classroom, penis fully exposed, as long as I don't teach about him. But if I wish to teach about him, say in art class, there needs to be a 30-day notice to parents. This is not a clear policy. You are stressing teachers out on top of all of the other stresses that have been added to our workload. Next, I think there needs to be transparency in the collection of data that Ken Bassett did this past week.

[01:11:46] He is creating information for Dr. McDade. When I personally asked him to see the information that he was pulling from all of the teachers, he said we could talk later. He left the meeting. I emailed him asking, how is this data being used?

[01:12:01] We did not know we were gonna be used for data when we attended our department chair meeting. No response. And then transparency. I'm sorry, Lateef, but you made a quote that you were too tired to deal with collective bargaining when we were working for it, but you're campaigning on having brought collective bargaining to Prince William County Schools.

[01:12:21] Thank you. - Sarah Boffman. - Hi, good evening. My name is Sarah Boffman. My address is on file. I came here today as a parent of a kindergartner at the Noakesville School.

[01:12:39] I'm sorry, I tend to tear up when I get upset, but hearing all of these wonderful staff members you have here in this county fighting for these kids, I can't help but get even more upset. This last weekend, we lost my daughter's kindergarten teacher and her teaching assistant.

[01:13:00] They repeatedly asked the administrative staff at the school for help in managing aggressive students, students with behavioral issues and not only were they denied the help that they requested but they were gaslit and everything was flipped on them and they were made to feel like it was their fault that they weren't doing enough for these kids you guys have to do better I know all of you were up for re-election this year or up for election your spots are empty and this kid that just came up and talked he's going to take your spot we have to do better by our teachers by our support staff by our

[01:13:37] children. We're talking kids who are entering their first year of school. My daughter I will be fully transparent and tell you I fully considered homeschooling my child or paying an exorbitant amount of money to send her to private school so that she wouldn't have to put up with bullying issues and then one of her classmates was choked on the playground last Thursday by the same child who has repeatedly assaulted her and I'm here backed up by multiple parents from students at our school. I was looking so very much forward to sending my daughter to Nooksville School because the reputation that it has had in our

[01:14:13] community. And I am sorry but I am very disappointed. My daughter was forced to change classes right after Christmas because the classrooms were just overcrowded. Now here we are again. My daughter has 31 classmates in her class.

[01:14:33] We are failing these children. They are our future. We just saw these beautiful Air Force Junior ROTC cadets and they told you that they dealt with depression and anxiety and suicidal ideations. Do you want these kids to grow up feeling the same way? They're in kindergarten. Do better by your teachers. Instead of sending them trinkets or asking the PTO to organize something to show appreciation do something that matters give them the support they need thank you

[01:15:05] and and I was one of the people that was clapping sorry Julia Biggins good evening mr. chairman school board members dr. McDade and mr. Williams my name is dr. Julia Biggins I am the parent of four Prince William County students and I live in the Coles district before I get to my main remarks I would like to support the educators that are here tonight I'd like to congratulate them first on their perseverance and hard work to achieve collective bargaining for more than 11,000 Prince William County school

[01:15:43] employees. What an accomplishment despite the hurdles that neighboring school districts did not have to face. As they begin to set in place the process for their upcoming contract negotiations, I urge the school board and Dr. McDade to agree to open bargaining with the 11,000 aforementioned employees. It would be a simple but meaningful gesture to provide a zoom link to allow these employees to know what is being said both on their behalf and by their employers during negotiations that affect their contracts. After all, if the school division has nothing to hide, then why not allow open negotiations? 11,000

[01:16:21] people are a lot of people to not know what is happening to their employment contract. With regards to my main remarks for tonight, as the school board prepares to vote on the weapons detection system, I implore the board to make the mental health of our students as much of a priority as these expensive technologies. The mental health of our students directly ties to not only their success, but also to the chronic absenteeism in our schools. If they do not feel safe from bullies, that adequate counseling

opportunities are not available, or that uncomfortable topics like suicide, self-harm, and depression are not discussed in the classroom, then why would they make the effort to go to

[01:17:00] school at all? We need to make sure our students are engaged in their education and one way to do this is with a robust mental health curriculum. Mental health issues affect students in many different ways. Even your own student representative was brave enough to speak about this topic a few meetings ago. We must move beyond a one-size-fits-all approach and think outside the box to address this critical issue. This past Saturday, I held a mental health roundtable with educators, legislators, students, and parents. Our discussions were clear and heartbreaking. Prince William County Schools is not doing enough to support our students mental health at all levels of our schools. And

[01:17:37] speaking of roundtables, Mr. Chairman, when was the last time you held a dedicated listening session for parents and teachers thank you Jared Gerard Moore sorry if I mispronounce it good evening superintendent McDade and members of the board thank you for allowing me to speak for you today I am dr. Gerard Moore a father of fifth grader who attends Patti elementary school and a grader who attends Potomac Shores middle school my address for the record is on file and is confidential social promotion is the practice of promoting a student from one

[01:18:16] grade to the next regardless if they acquired the necessary learning objectives or were torrent for majority of the school year. Grade retention is practice of retaining a student due to failing grades or low test scores. Researchers reveal that neither grade retention nor social promotion are effective strategies for improving student outcomes. Rather researchers contend that what is most effective is a targeted approach that addresses students academic social emotional issues as they arise with specific

[01:18:49] evidence-based interventions. Before attending Potomac Shores, my daughter attended Ashland Elementary School under the stewardship of Dr. Andy Jacks. Dr. Jacks embodied the doctrine of in local parentis, which means that he stood in my place and assumed parental authority while my daughter and son attended his school. While I was away serving my country and finishing my studies, both stateside and abroad, he ensured that my daughter and son were safe at school learning. Despite being a non-custodial parent, he ensured that all

[01:19:27] of my concerns as a father were addressed. For the record, since the end I have transitioned and moved from Texas to Virginia because of concerns. Today, however, I stand before you as a concerned father, educator, and citizen.

[01:19:46] I'm concerned about the direction Potomac Shores Middle School has taken since its inception, those concerns are centered on actions and inactions that I believe have done a grave disservice to my daughter's learning experience. Potomac Schwarz Middle School administration failed to hold my daughter and her parent, mother accountable for Prince William County School's behavior, attendance, and academic expectations.

[01:20:09] While Potomac Schwarz Middle School's six parents' attendance issues that was excused without supporting documentations, behaviors were limited to no consequences for disciplinary conduct, academics, failing classes, no summer school requirement or any other remedial programs.

[01:20:30] Social reproduction is the passing on of social inequality access generations, across generations, and it's usually evidence along racial and class lines. Your educators can serve as a great

equalizer disrupting social inequalities. Sadly, the diversity of the admin staff is not reflective of the student body.

[01:20:49] My child as well as well, My child, as well as all children at Potomac Shores, deserves an administrative staff and is diverse and would uphold the doctrine of a local parentage training every student as they were their own. Thank you.

[01:21:05] - Okay, wrap up citizen comment time. At this time, we're gonna move on to 1301. Office of the Chief Financial Officer. This will be to authorize the four-year lease of Evolve, which is the Express Weapons Detection System for implementation at all secondary schools and non-traditional schools.

[01:21:29] A motion is order, Vice Chair Wall. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I recommend that the Prince William County School Board enter into a four-year subscription of the Evolve Weapons Detection System in the amount of 10,698,388.91 for implementation at all secondary schools and non-traditional schools beginning in the 2023-24 school year and further authorizes the supervisor of purchasing to execute all documents necessary thereto.

[01:22:08] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - I second. - Ms. Williams seconds the motion. Do we have discussion? Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just would like to thank the superintendent for her leadership on the Evolve system, working with our procurement office to spread the finances out so it's not a heavy burden to our division all in one year, to our facilities department for all the hard work and research, I feel still very privileged to have been able to view it live in person because again, as a student, I experienced metal detectors in my schools,

[01:22:47] drove sniffing dogs, and it did very much feel and give off the impression as a student that I still carry with me today that I was less than. And I would never want any student to ever feel like that, especially now that we are in the 10th most diverse county and nation, I feel like this is as good as it gets as a compromise for that.

[01:23:11] I feel it's been 100% acknowledged that this is not a 100 proof fail-safe system with no margin for error, we've thoroughly discussed that. No system is foolproof, but I feel as if, I know as if we implement this along with the other security measures that our division has put in place and continues to put in place, This is one of many, a very important, but one of many tools, and I would just like to take this time out to really applaud the board for all of the hard work and research that we have all done, and the division

[01:23:50] and the collaboration that has gone on between this board, the division, and the members of the public in trying to ensure that all of us are fully educated and aware, not only about this safety measure, but all the other additional safety measures, and I'm really pleased by the amount of comments that we've received from the public and all stakeholders involved.

[01:24:11] I feel like when you make a decision this important, it's impacting all of us, it's important to have everyone's perspective. So, thank you. - Ms. Jessie. - I would like to share those comments that were made by Mrs. Williams.

[01:24:27] I've been here since dirt, I guess, but I've seen everything. I've seen teachers who left the doors open and we fight back and forth trying to take care of that. But I want to thank Dr. McDade and Ron Crow.

[01:24:42] Ron and I have been here for a long time and we've seen everything and now we have an opportunity to at least take care of one aspect of safety. I agree with the people who spoke earlier about the fact that it can't take care of everything.

[01:24:58] You can't take care of everything, but you can take care of one major thing. And school shootings are one of those major aspects that we can take care of and I wanna thank all of the members of facilities and safety and security for what you've done to make this a project that I think is needed in the school system.

[01:25:18] Thank you very much. - Ms. Zargarpur was next. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I believe our school should be a safe place where students and staff feel safe and secure and we just heard some people addressing bullying which is obviously another layer of things we need to be looking at.

[01:25:39] And tonight we are talking about Evolve, which is a different problem. In recent news, we hear about school shootings almost daily. I am a teacher, so I have had to practice with kindergarten all the way through sixth graders on some level, a form of securing my room, my space.

[01:25:59] And for the record, my room is completely dark when I have to turn my lights out. So I guess you might imagine what it's like to have five and six-year-olds who are worried about why the lights are out. This is bringing a measure of safety and security to the hearts and minds of our staff, our students, our families.

[01:26:18] I'm fully supportive of it. This technology can play an essential role in creating a safer school environment. It can detect these weapons. We will have staff, not necessarily teachers. We are looking at how we are using our SROs to help support this equipment in our schools.

[01:26:42] The only other thing, I'm grateful for all of the research that has gone into this, the time that it has taken to have the community look at it, view it, learn more about it, ask questions, receive answers, listen to presentations.

[01:26:58] I think we've done quite a bit for due diligence on this, and I am proud to vote yes for this. Ms. Jackson. First, I want to extend my gratitude to all constituents, staff, students, and families for their feedback and attending the sessions.

[01:27:17] Secondly, I appreciate the division for their transparent presentation. Last week, outlining the FAQs, the benefits, and the concerns. One of the main concerns listed from constituents last week was cost.

[01:27:32] So I appreciate the county taking this into concern and looking into the lease option. I also appreciate the stipend for staff. All the votes we make require research, feedback, and input from constituents and reflection. last week's presentation provided all of this and I'm thankful for the time constituents took us took time to write us and speak to us and I'm thankful to the safe schools committee the board members that serve on it dr. McDade for listening engaging in the recommendation I would like to add that we please or advocate that we continue to please consider elementary schools and as we

[01:28:10] reflect as we roll out this is not a vote to be transparent that I saw myself making in 2019 when I ran for school board and it is a heavy one when I was a classroom teacher I learned to design my classroom in preparation for an active shooter it was a small classroom and I needed a place for my students to hide and to be comfortable during a lockdown the teacher assistant would not let me stand by

myself stood by the door and every teacher who's still here knows why we stood by the door because when you send your babies to school we love them

[01:28:50] and we'll protect them literally with our lives. Lockdown drills, the additional personnel, the new crisis plan, the growth mindset, now the Evolve added layer in effect will help keep our students and staff safe.

[01:29:08] If there's anything I can do from this seat to stand by the door, I will do it. I fully support Evolve and I will continue to stand by the door. There are no second chances. Thank you. Mr. Wilk.

[01:29:26] So, yeah, I mean, I echo a lot of the comments that have been said. Thank you all for sharing those. You know, it's crazy when we look at kind of the evolution of school security, as Ms. Jackson talked about, her own experience as a classroom teacher.

[01:29:42] Ms. Jessie mentioned some stuff when she was a principal. I agree, as a classroom teacher, I still remember the drills and the procedures and stuff like that and having all the lights off and even the monitor wasn't supposed to be even glaring and stuff, and they were important things. I still can remember when many teachers and staff had copies of the school key.

[01:30:04] I still remember doors being cracked open when people went out on recess or outside on a learning activity. But as we've seen kind of in the news daily, the horrific acts that are occurring throughout our country, we as a school system have evolved.

[01:30:23] It was only four years ago, I still remember when I did that, a board brief with the previous superintendent boasting about getting all the Potomac schools, the secure entrances. That was a huge thing back then, the secured entrances and the vestibules, and that is still a big thing now and having those resources and protection.

[01:30:43] But we have adapted to the challenges of what we're facing, not only as a school system, but as a society as a county we know that our police department do not have enough police officers to provide an sro to us in every one of our buildings let alone our secondary schools everyone having one we have one at every high school and we have ones rotating throughout our middle schools but we have adaptive and we as a board we as a division have added more security personnel and specialists in our schools in the last two years than i think any other board has

[01:31:18] done before. Beyond adding the staff and the support and security specialists, we are now moving to a system. Again, as many have kind of articulated, it will not be perfect, but it is a further deterrent and an added protection to our students. And I see promise as I see news stories of a system like Evolve detecting a gun in Buffalo schools. Again, not a perfect solution, but it does help save lives and it can detect weapons like that so the school system

[01:31:52] has my full support to adopt the Evolve system did chance did you want to say something miss Jesse I didn't see what the note did you have anything you wanted to add when we first discovered the Evolve systems as a student I was quite worried over time I have grown and I've researched I've informed my peers and I have to say though the students will be weary of it at first and implement an and implementation will be rough and rocky, these devices do save lives.

[01:32:27] For the betterment of our students and the safety of our school staff and students, I have to say the students are in full support. Thank you. - Thank you, Chance. Ms. Chessie, did you have something

else? Okay, okay. Did you want to speak now?

[01:32:45] Ms. Wall. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. Over the last couple of years, we've really leaned in on security, and I think rightfully so. I just want to speak first. I'm pleased with the process of how the division went about investigating weapons, screening technology, and engaging the community.

[01:33:06] The listening sessions, the communications, the data gathering, the surveys, the questions and answers, the presentations, all of that helped us figure out where people were on the issue of school safety in general and security screening in particular.

[01:33:25] Parents have expressed to me many times that they want us to do more to prevent weapons being brought into our schools. And I believe families want their children to be safe at school. I think this is a universal desire. This is a practical concern on the minds of families and students.

[01:33:44] I know my own high school students were very concerned and have always been concerned when they're in a high school, when a high school shooting happens somewhere else in the country. It suddenly makes high school students feel unsafe. I think that the weapons technology that we have been learning about and studying and researching will be a valuable tool in our toolbox for strengthening our security posture on the prevention side, while still maintaining a welcoming environment for our students and staff, which is very important.

[01:34:15] Importantly, the scanners will complement the many layers of security that we have added in recent months, and there are many layers that we have improved in recent months, and this will further help us reduce the risk of weapons making their way into our schools.

[01:34:31] So my feelings are that this technology is impressive. We're looking for the latest as technology advances, as it will continue to do, and I think that's appropriate. And I believe at the end of the day, people were telling us, hey, my kids are worth it, please do it.

[01:34:48] And so for that reason, I am in favor of this. - Thank you, Vice Chair Wall. Dr. McDade. - I would just like to say, I think, I mean, I've said so much about the need to do this. This is a critical next step for the school division to ensure that we are doing everything within our power to keep our students, our staff, our schools safe.

[01:35:11] And I just want to thank the board for your support of this effort, for your support throughout the entire process of trying to investigate what's the best way and trusting me and the safety and security team to do the research to come back and bring forward a solution that we think is viable in supporting our schools.

[01:35:32] It's already been said tonight that there is nothing that is going to stop everything, but I do believe that this is a critical next step for us and the right step for us to take. So again, I just want to thank you for your full support. I think that our schools will definitely be safer with this in place, and I want to reiterate and double down on our commitment to continuing to pay close attention to best-in-class research around national practices for safety, and as newer innovations come forward, we will continue to bring forward additional protections that we believe will help us in our efforts to keep schools safe.

[01:36:09] So this is one layer of protection, but as other things become available, you should expect that I will be bringing those things before you as well. - Thank you, Dr. McDade. Well, let me wrap up by saying

that I want the public to know that this board is under, we are very clear on what the causes and why we are here.

[01:36:33] We are here because, we're taking this vote because of increased weapon carrying to school. It's simple as plain as that. And it's been an increased weapon carrying in our school division. On top of that, what we see around the country and in the Commonwealth with violence and school shootings has not helped the situation.

[01:36:54] There are folks out there saying, well, why don't we stop the causes for weapon carrying? And what are the causes for weapon carrying? I've read every academic paper and newspaper article on weapon carrying in the last 25 years. The most common causes of weapon carrying, and the school board is very clear on what those are, as is our superintendent, is that there's drug use and drug dealing, bullying, being a victim of a bully, and lastly, it's the mental health of our students.

[01:37:26] These are three of the common risk factors for increased weapon carrying. Now, society has failed in managing each of these things. We failed in the war on drugs that's been going on since the 1980s. We have failed in addressing adequate mental health facilities for our children, our students, and for our loved ones.

[01:37:49] We have failed at providing appropriate rehabilitation for people who are on drugs, including young people. We have failed at keeping weapons that are so prevalent in our society out of our schools.

[01:38:07] This is a series of failures that society has had, and it has been dumped on schools around the country to solve them. We are supposed to solve the mental health crisis. We're supposed to solve the drug problem. We're supposed to solve the weapons problem.

[01:38:25] We don't have the resources to solve the root causes of increased weapon carrying to school. It doesn't matter how many psychologists we hire, how many social workers we bring in, how many counselors we have, and we've done each of those things each of the last four years that this board has been together, each of them.

[01:38:45] Each year we've addressed mental health. Each year we have expanded programs to do it. Each year we're trying to do more, but we can't fix that. So what the public has demanded, and has demanded near unanimously, is that we do something about this right now.

[01:39:03] And what we need to do right now is this weapons detection system, we will be implementing this fall. The community spoke strongly at community halls, extensive surveys, and to each of us and to the superintendent. We take our safety and security survey and climate surveys very seriously, and this is where we've ended up. We will tonight be voting on adopting, procuring, and implementing a weapons detection system for all secondary schools. I fully support this action. I'm disappointed that we have arrived at this point, but we are here now,

[01:39:42] and this is what we're going to do. And you heard very eloquently and emotionally from Ms. Adele Jackson, who was a teacher in the classroom, about the kinds of things that teachers face when thinking about safety and security. They're not thinking about their math lessons or their English lessons. They're thinking about locking down and securing a room, protecting their students and doing what it takes. And so anything our board can do to further the safety and security of the school division, we will continue to do. And this, I'd remind the public, is upon multiple

[01:40:20] layers of work that this board has done each of the last four years. And that includes adding SROs, expanding security assistance to every elementary school. We have adopted best practices, used applications that are on phones and technologies in the schools to have more rapid responses, committing to build a command center and other practices that we continue to adopt as Dr. McDade mentioned.

[01:40:51] So here we are. At this point, I will ask the school board to please vote if there's no other points, no other discussion, please vote on 1301, the authorization of the four-year lease of the Evolve Express Weapons Detection Systems for implementation at all secondary schools and non-traditional schools.

[01:41:12] Ms. Raulston, how do you vote? - Yes. - Ms. Raulston votes yes of the Neabsco District. - The vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed. - The vote is eight yes, unanimous, the motion passes. Thank you all for all the hard work and everyone on the staff who committed to working on this over the last few months.

[01:41:32] At this time, we'll move on to 1401, the naming of Rosemont Lewis. This item is on for action this evening. I'm gonna turn this over to Dr. McDade for a brief overview on the process that has gotten us here to this vote. Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[01:41:48] I am excited to share that we do have an update on a name for our newest elementary school, temporarily named Rosemount Lewis Elementary School. On February 15th, the board voted to approve the recommended attendance boundaries. In addition to the open form for name recommendations posted on our website, The naming committee conducted two virtual community input sessions on the naming of Rosemont Lewis Elementary School, which was held on March 22nd and March 29th.

[01:42:16] And at this time, I would like to invite our Chief Operating Officer, Mr. Vernon Bach, to present an update on the Rosemont Lewis Elementary School naming process. Mr. Bach. - Thank you, Dr. McDade. Good evening, board members. I wanna ask Matt Townsend, please, our supervisor of CIP and planning to join me at the podium.

[01:42:35] First, I want to thank our board members who served on the naming committee. We have Matt here just to revisit some of the board policies and procedures for naming, and also to provide to you an update on the suggestions that were provided to the naming committee from the community.

[01:42:54] So Matt, if you'd please update the board, thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Bach, and good evening, Chairman Lateef, members of the school board, and Dr. McDade. My name is Matthew Townsend, supervisor of CIP and land acquisition for the facilities department.

[01:43:11] And I have the pleasure of facilitating the school naming process on behalf of the naming committee for our newest elementary school, as mentioned, currently referred to by its temporary planning name as Rosemont Lewis Elementary School. This evening, we're excited to provide a recap of the process, as well as share a summary of suggestions that we've received throughout.

[01:43:35] I wanted to start off this evening kind of showing off our new school. can see here these are pictures from just last month and they are making final touches to the exterior of our three-story building and construction continues to come together nicely and in fact I hear we recently got occupancy which is a big step in the construction process so we're very happy about that it goes without saying that we're well on track to continue to open for the 23 24 school year next I wanted to highlight the applicable policy and

[01:44:10] regulation for anybody who may be seeing this presentation for the first time policy 854 calls for the creation of a naming committee to develop naming recommendations and notes that the responsibility of ultimately approving a name is the responsibility of the full school board regulation 854-1 stipulates the composition of the naming committee to include the chairman at large the school board member whose district the facility is located as well as any school member whose district boundaries overlap any portion of the attendance area of the new school. So that's how we got to our composition of the naming committee being

[01:44:49] Dr. Lateef, Ms. Jackson, and Ms. Wall. This regulation also requires community input to be collected electronically and that at least one community meeting be held throughout the process. Regulation 854-1 also provides some non-exclusive naming criteria for the naming committee to consider while it's developing its recommendation.

[01:45:14] These include geographic elements, historical items or significance, as well as names of living or deceased persons who have made significant service contributions with the notation that if a name selection preference shall be given to those individuals who've made significant contributions to the field of education, especially within Prince William County.

[01:45:37] I mentioned this at the beginning of the process, but we put together a robust process aimed at maximizing community engagement. So this formally kicked off at the March 15th school board meeting where we highlighted the process that was about to begin as a school board information item.

[01:45:57] Following that, we held our two community input sessions, the first on March 22nd and then the second on March 29th. I wanted to highlight the effort we made here to ensure access to these meetings was available to everybody in our community.

[01:46:13] The meetings and overall process was marketed and assisted by many departments within Prince William County Schools, and so I'd certainly like to thank them for their support along the way. The naming process was shared on our scoop newsletter, the PWCS webpage, PWCS social media pages, our superintendent's Friday emails, multiple communications via translated text and emails directly to the contributing schools which is the schools that had a portion of its of their attendance area of reassigned to Rose Mount Lewis school parent liaisons are at the affected schools were notified engaged with and

[01:46:53] asked to share this information with their community specifically for our community input sessions translation services were offered in all of our PWCS supported languages including sign language and while we didn't have any requests, we weren't taken up on any of those requests or those offers, we still provided simultaneous Spanish interpretation services at both. Closed captioning was provided in English and Spanish and these meetings were live streamed in English on our PWCS YouTube page and in Spanish and on our new

[01:47:29] PWCS and Espanol Facebook page. Then of course we broadcasted on our channels on Verizon and Comcast. The next step in the process was the last school board meeting April 19th where we shared the suggestions and feedback that we've collected to that point and finally we are at tonight's action item we are where I'm about to share how our community collection ended up. Throughout the entire process we've had an electronic form that was translated in all of our PWCS

[01:48:04] languages available and a phone number to collect feedback from our community. Yesterday at noon, so May 2nd at noon, we stopped accepting feedback in preparation for tonight's meeting, and we

ended up with 149 total suggestions, 148 of which were email and one was a voicemail.

[01:48:26] And of those 149, we had 49 individual unique different suggestions given to us. Of the total, the following names received more than one suggestion. We had Ashley Gwenden Elementary with two, Ashton Elementary with four, Barack Obama Elementary with six, Crestwood Elementary with two, Encanto Elementary with four, Innovation Elementary with 69, Liberty Elementary with two, Rosemont Lewis Elementary with 15, Stephen Waltz Elementary with four, and Stonewall Jackson Elementary with two.

[01:49:05] So with that, I want to thank the board for its time and allowing us to provide our one final update prior to turning it over to the naming committee. - Thank you, Mr. Townsend, I appreciate it.

[01:49:23] At this time, a motion is in order. Ms. Jackson. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve Inner Vision Elementary as the name for Rosemount Lewis Elementary School.

[01:49:39] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - I think, I'll go to Ms. Williams, I think beat it. Oh, Ms. Jessen. All right. Ms. Zargarpur. I thought I heard something over here. Sorry about that. Ms. Zargarpur seconds a motion. Discussion. Ms. Jackson. Thank you for the presentation tonight and for all of the work behind the scenes. And I attended both community meetings. Thank you to the interpreters. They did a great job. And I really appreciated the dual language closed captioning.

[01:50:13] InnoVision means a new idea, introduction of something new. It indicates high expectations and a strong connection to the science and arts. The community overwhelmingly supported the name innovation. Reading through the comments, one point resonated with me.

[01:50:31] This is an elementary school, and this name will promote students to be innovative from the very start of their education. Part of PWCS mission is that we prepare our students and quote, we prepare our students to be critical thinkers, responsible digital citizens, innovators and visionaries, resilient individuals and global collaborators.

[01:50:52] This name demonstrates our commitment to the goals outlined in the profile of a graduate in the strategic plan, a person who is "a critical thinker, questions, analyzes, uses information technology responsibly, an innovator, creator, or collaborator," as summarized.

[01:51:08] This school design and usage of space for collaboration and learning, along with the playground designed for all learners regardless of ability to access, is innovative. This is a space for innovative leaders, students, and staff.

[01:51:24] I fully support the name of Innovation Elementary School. And thank you again. Ms. Wall. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to begin by saying that a significant number of students in the district that I represent, the Gainesville district, will attend this new school.

[01:51:46] And it was a pleasure serving on this naming committee. And I also want to thank the people who weighed in, people, students, families, parents, community members who weighed in with their naming ideas we got a lot of ideas we heard ones that got more than one suggestion but we got a lot that just got one suggestion and they were they were great so thank you everybody it was nice to hear a variety of ideas and it was great to have everyone participate innovation is a good name I like it it ties the school to a larger name for the area which is Innovation Park and it locates the school geographically so

[01:52:24] when people hear the name of the school hopefully they'll think of the Manassas area of Prince William County and that'll put us on the map I think that's important the name innovation is inspiring it captures a vision for a new and innovative school such as this such as it will be it's innovative in design it's a landmark design for us in Prince William County it's going to be innovative in function the way that the spaces are going to be used and hopefully it will be innovative in educational programming I really am looking forward to this I think the name will inspire our students as has been said and to

[01:53:02] place a school such as this with this name in an area where all the schools are title one I think that sends a message that we are investing in this community we are investing in these students and these kids and we want them to succeed we want them to be innovative curious inventive inspired inspiring. It's my sincerest hope that the students who entered this school, many of whom do come from schools in my district, Mullins, Sudley, and Sinclair,

[01:53:34] that they will go forth as graduates, be proud PWCS graduates. I have no idea what class they'll be in but I hope that they'll go all the way through and live up to that potential that the name innovation inspires. Thank you. Thank you Ms. Wall. Ms. Argerport. Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I think the name innovation is, it's a fantastic name. It inspires new ideas, new ways of thinking, new solutions to problems. It's a word that

[01:54:07] celebrates progress and embraces change. As an elementary school, I think it's a unique name for our youngest children, and it'll spark their, hopefully will spark their curiosity and encourage them to dream their biggest dreams. I think every child has the potential to be an innovator and by creating an environment that encourages exploration and experimentation, we can help our children develop their own unique approaches to learning, problem solving, and critical thinking. So as we embark on this new school, this innovation elementary school, we're committed to fostering

[01:54:46] this culture of innovation that empowers our students to be lifelong learners, critical thinkers, and problem solvers. We believe, I believe, and we believe this board believes, that with the right tools, mindset, and environment, anything is possible.

[01:55:02] Thank you, Ms. Jarrett. Ms. Jett. I support the naming of the school. I wanted to talk about the fact there's something very unique about the school also, that there are three stories in this building.

[01:55:20] And it's unique because when we were trying to define, trying to determine where we would place our schools on the eastern end, there was a land problem. And so, if you remember, we talked about the need for vertical structures.

[01:55:37] And I did not realize that Mosley Architect, I was at the Virginia School Board Association, he said, you know, you guys talked about this idea of vertical structures. And they were very proud of the fact that they designed this school for a vertical with three stories.

[01:55:53] And I think it's something that we need to look at in the future because we're always going to have land problems not only on the east, but we're going to start to have land problems on the west. So I want to thank you, thank the committee for the work that they've done. And for those people who were named educators, I think in our regulation we talk about people who are, who make contributions.

[01:56:17] It does not mean that we don't want to do this, but I think that the name of Innovation is a good name for the school. Thank you very much. - Thank you, Ms. Jessie, and you know, I'll just echo sort of the comments already made. I fully support the name Innovation Elementary School.

[01:56:33] I'm very excited. I think consistent with the Governor's School at Innovation Park, Innovation Park being close by, innovative design, I love the fact that, you know, in our new language and our slides that we put out with some of our, you know, regarding our strategic plan, will have, you know, in English and in Spanish, you know, in this community will be a majority of Latinx students.

[01:57:00] And so, you know, when you think of the word innovation in Spanish, innovation, it really is something you can go back and forth with. I applaud Dr. McDade in her desire and plans to make this a STEM school, to concentrate to focus on science and technology engineering and math that's exciting I think you know this the the strategic plan which was developed with you know talking to over 4,000 5,000 people students staff community members engaged regularly is what you know we developed our strategic plan from community

[01:57:39] engagement and parental involvement parental engagement and in that plan if If you look at the strategic plan, innovative, innovation, and innovator appear 14 times. Six times for innovative, five times for innovation, three times for innovator, and that's really cool.

[01:57:59] We believe that this is a characteristic of a profile of a Prince William County graduate, and I can't think of a better place that we begin that profile than at the elementary school level. And I wasn't around, I'm not sure, Ms. Jessie, were you around when they named Enterprise, or was that before your time to? Okay.

[01:58:18] I was here when Stuart Bevel was here. Does that answer your question? So in the theme that, you know, we've done at some schools where we've chosen inspiring words like enterprise, I think this falls with that and is consistent with the themes used in prior namings.

[01:58:35] And so I fully support this and I'm excited and I can't wait for the opening this summer. And we are very excited as a school board, I think, to support this name. So with that, I'd ask the school board to please vote. Ms. Ralston, how do you vote?

[01:58:54] - Yes. - Ms. Raulson votes yes. - And the vote is eight yes unanimous, motion passed. - Excellent, thank you very much. The vote is eight yes unanimous. We now have the Innovation Elementary School.

[01:59:09] Thank you all very much, it's fantastic. All right, round of applause. Okay, next we're gonna go to our student representative time and I wanna thank Chance earlier for weighing in on one of the most important issues of the day. And I think Chance, I should say you spoke very eloquently and represented the students of this school division extremely well.

[01:59:30] You've done that all year. And as we're getting close to, this is not your final meeting, is it your final meeting? Wait, no, no, as we're getting close, I can't thank you enough for the work you've put in on behalf of the students in this county. So we will now move to your time this evening to hear from Chance Williams, our senior at Forest Park High School on the dais, Mr. Williams.

[01:59:54] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. Good evening. We are rapidly approaching graduation season and I'd like to congratulate our Prince William County high school seniors as they launch into their thriving futures. May 1st was decision day and many of my peers announced their next steps.

[02:00:10] Whether it be college, military service, apprenticeships, internships, or jumping right into the workforce, I'd like to wish them well on their new path and look forward to hearing about all the

wonderful things our future world leaders will do. May is Mental Health Awareness Month, an issue that is very, very important to me.

[02:00:30] On February 8th, 2023, my 12-year-old sister suffered a mental health crisis while at school. My parents and I have always supported my sister with getting her treatment, helping her with social anxiety, and advocating for help both in school and outside of school.

[02:00:45] However, due to bullying and an increasingly toxic environment at her school, she began engaging in harmful activities. It is a day my family and I will never forget. She was hospitalized in a mental health facility approximately six weeks. She is now homebound and alienated from the teachers she loves, her favorite class, chorus, and a few friends. Despite this, she is a consistent honor roll student, an artsy kid with a love for musical theater and a strong desire to get better, make friends, and enjoy being 12. I urge the school board to support kids like my sister, families like mine, and hold teachers and administrators accountable for ensuring vulnerable

[02:01:25] kids and kids experiencing mental health crises are safe from bullying from students and teachers all should have a healthy environment to learn my sister had a 504 plan which was not followed leading to her situation this crippling disability may be invisible but it is there these kids deserve to have the thriving futures all of our students are entitled to we appreciate the pwcs staff who have supported my sister and my family during this difficult time we hope our story can encourage other families to seek help seek support and keep fighting as a senior i often deal with

[02:02:02] my own mental health as it relates to activities clubs volunteering and academics i am constantly on the go and my mom often reminds me to slow down rest and make sure i'm taking care of myself taking care of yourself means mind and body if either of these is out of whack you'll soon run on empty and your body will soon let you know just remember to check in on yourself and make sure you check on others. Mental health days aren't made up and it's important to advocate for them. I encourage our Prince William County community to join us at Forest Park High School on Saturday, May 6th for our suicide awareness walk. This walk aims to raise awareness and

[02:02:42] end the stigma involved in seeking help from mental illness. If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, please reach out. There are those who want to help. Today, our board authorized the four-year lease for the metal detectors throughout all Prince William County secondary schools.

[02:03:01] I have consistently advocated for school safety and this is a great step forward in ensuring our students are indeed safe. I know that with AI and the constant collaboration between Prince William County Schools and Prince William County Police Department and our SRO officers, we can continue together to keep all students safe.

[02:03:20] I have personally met with Prince William County Police Chief as well as Dumfries Police Chief and I know they are dedicated to keeping our students, our schools, and our communities safe. While many students and I actively disagreed with the implementation of these devices at first, it is hard to ignore the reason behind their installment.

[02:03:38] Our schools are becoming increasingly unsafe, and it is time to stop reacting and start acting. The more safety measures we can implement with the support of our students and staff, the better. Students are the first line of defense to keeping us safe.

[02:03:53] Let us continue to advocate both in school and in our communities. A few months ago, I went with Nutrition Services and I know they are dedicated to providing fresh, healthy meals to thousands of students each and every day. It is important to remember our cafeteria staff serves thousands of students within a two hour period, each morning and afternoon.

[02:04:15] We have a very diverse population of students with various nutritional needs and with anything, there is always room for improvement. It is crucial that the quality of our food stay consistent. Personally, I don't eat school lunch as the quality can sometimes vary. Many of your students are in the same boat, but the issue resides when students develop eating disorders due to low food quality.

[02:04:36] Before the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act, school food was astounding. I genuinely look forward to it. But recently we've seen a negative trend in food quality. I would encourage our students to speak up as well as encourage the board to visit schools during lunchtime to see for themselves.

[02:04:52] Speaking of visiting schools, I heard from a fellow student today that Dr. McDade visited my high school, Forest Park. I would like to acknowledge the importance of in-school appearances. The more present you are in school, the more you learn. The more you learn as board members, the more our county improves.

[02:05:09] Lastly, I want to wish all students success as we enter SOLs and testing seasons. Make sure to get plenty of rest, eat a healthy breakfast and take your time. It is fourth quarter, it is not the time to slow down, it is the time to finish strong. And despite this cold weather, I swear summer is loading.

[02:05:28] - Thank you. - Ms. Jessie. - You know, sometimes you meet a person and you're so impressed by that person. And I met Chance and I told the mother I fell in love with this young man because he's done so much for the board.

[02:05:49] And my daughter does these college, she has all these relationships with these colleges. The Jessie family is a community service group. So she talked with Grant, with Chance and she collaborated with Chance.

[02:06:06] But what Chance did not tell you tonight is that he has been accepted to an HBCU Alabama A&M. Now, of course, I'm a researcher, so I looked it up.

[02:06:26] It is highly ranked, it is one of the highest ranking HBCUs in the United States, and it is also close, collaborates with NASA.

[02:06:41] What he didn't tell you is that he was selected to receive the FOSSE scholarship. The American Chemistry Council is proud to be the founding partners of the Future STEM Scholars Initiative, which is FOSSE, with the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and HBCU Week Foundation.

[02:07:06] FOSSE is a national chemical industry-led program that aims to increase the number of underrepresented students entering and succeeded in science and technology, engineering, mathematics, STEM field. FOSSE provides a $40,000 scholarship to incoming student freshmen pursuing preferred STEM degrees at historically black colleges and universities.

[02:07:34] Importantly, FOSSE is not just a scholarship program. It connects students to more than 60 chemical and affiliated industry sponsors, enables students to access to mentoring, leadership training, internship opportunities, and networking.

[02:07:51] FOSSE aims to bring together the Chemical Industry Collective might to make a significant impact on the future of the chemical industry workforce. And my daughter was in -- she went to Tennessee and she dropped by and she talked to you about it.

[02:08:14] - This young man, he didn't want, he's talking about everyone else, he didn't talk about himself, so I decided to take that opportunity. Congratulations, Chance, and I'd like to .

[02:08:34] - Thank you, Ms. Jessie. It is one of the great privileges for this board to have student members, and to have a student member with such incredible set of accomplishments, we're just very lucky, and we're excited for you, and the future is certainly bright, Mr. Williams, and congratulations to you and your family.

[02:08:59] At this point, we'll move on to the superintendent's time. Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Commitment one, learning and achievement for all in the PWCS vision 2025, launching thriving future strategic plan, includes preparing every student for post-secondary success.

[02:09:15] Our goal is 100% of graduates launching a thriving future. May 1st was college decision day. This week is a special time for our seniors as they share their future plans after graduation and congratulations to you, Chance, on your future, which is looking really bright.

[02:09:34] I have seen many posts and announcements from members of the class of 2023, and I'm excited and celebrating along with them. I got an opportunity to visit Gainesville High School and celebrate with the first graduating class of Gainesville High School, class of 2023, and just the sheer excitement and energy was palpable.

[02:09:54] We have students heading to colleges and universities across the country and across the world. Some of our upcoming graduates have committed to military service and many will be entering the workforce. To our graduating seniors, I wish you enormous success on your next chapter and I know that you will continue to do great things and create a thriving future for yourself and your community.

[02:10:17] As part of commitment to positive climate and culture in our strategic plan, PWCS prioritizes student health and wellness. May is Mental Health Awareness Month, which builds awareness of those living with mental or behavioral health issues, and helps reduce the stigma so many experience.

[02:10:35] It is also a crucial time to raise awareness of suicide and its devastating impact on our families and community. I commend our school counselors, social workers, and other staff members as they work collectively with families to address mental health issues to proactively prevent suicide.

[02:10:53] As a reminder, the seventh annual, which you've probably heard three times tonight now, The seventh annual Suicide Awareness Walk will take place on May 6th at Forest Park High School between 8:30 and 11:30 AM. And I personally want to invite every community member to join me at this meaningful event, which I'm looking forward to attending in my second year.

[02:11:15] If you or someone you know is in crisis, for those of you who are watching, I want to give some information. Call or text the new national three-digit dialing code 988. You can also visit 988lifeline.org to chat with a trained crisis counselor or text the crisis text line at 741741.

[02:11:44] Also, please visit the PWCS suicide prevention webpage for additional resources. In the spirit of Commitment 2, I would like to acknowledge Friday, May 5th, as School Lunch Hero Day. The dedication

and service of our school food and nutrition professionals ensures that our more than 90,000 students receive nutritious meals every school day.

[02:12:07] Their work is foundational to the health and wellness of our students. Chance talked about food insecurity, and oftentimes our schools are the place where many families look for support and make sure they get a well-balanced meal. And so I want to thank our school lunch heroes.

[02:12:23] PWCS recognizes May 10th as National School Nurse Day. the past several years the importance of a nurse in every school has become abundantly clear our nurses are often first responders for medical conditions in our schools checking for fevers caring for tummy aches bandaging cuts icing bumps and bruises and administering critical medication and our nurses got us through the pandemic i sincerely appreciate our school nurse heroes for their service and commitment to providing a healthy and positive climate and culture for our students and our staff. Next week is teacher appreciation week. Thank you to all of our

[02:13:02] teachers for all that you do. There's not a professional more deserving of our appreciation than our outstanding teachers. I'm grateful to many of my teachers who genuinely cared about me and even changed the course of my life. I want all teachers to know that you are the key to creating thriving futures for our students. Across the division, our school communities will show their appreciation for an incredible educators in a variety of ways let's make it a point to thank your child's teacher not just during teacher appreciation week but all the time throughout the year as we know bus transportation has had some

[02:13:39] challenges this year and we've continued to hear from our parents in and our schools for various different reasons some of those reasons require us to take a hard look at opportunities for greater efficiencies and some of those reasons may be out of our control as we've continued to grapple with the national bus driver shortage that is affecting districts across the country.

[02:14:02] And so throughout this year, our transportation team has taken a hard look at all of our practices in transportation, particularly around scheduling. Despite our best efforts, we found our current scheduling simply does not, under the circumstances that we're in today, experiencing today, it is not helping to ensure efficiencies in the way that we are running our routes.

[02:14:29] As such, our transportation team has done a thorough assessment to include looking at scheduling, on time rates, as well as bus driver coverage. I want to note before I go into what the team is going to present tonight, I want to make sure that I am expressing, on behalf of the entire school division, our gratitude to all of our bus drivers and our entire transportation team oftentimes you know they only hear about the problems the concerns rightfully so but very rarely do they hear the appreciation for the fact that if it weren't for our bus

[02:15:06] drivers some of them you know doing double routes having to do overtime if it weren't for them our students would not get to school and so I want to make sure that as we talk about you know improvements that we need to make in transportation that our drivers and our staff understand that we value the work that they that they do we know how hard they are working and we are deeply grateful for them making sure that all students actually can create a thriving future for themselves in their community by being able to come to school every day because without them we wouldn't be able to get over 90,000 students into

[02:15:45] our classrooms every day so I really want to make that point and I have some our transportation staff here and I know how deeply they take this responsibility to get our students to school on time which is why the team came to me to say you know we have to do an analysis and we have to make some adjustments because what we have been doing in the past will not sustain us today or tomorrow we have to make adjustments to address some of the challenges that we're experiencing today that we did not experience in the past

[02:16:17] And so based on the assessment that they've done, we have identified a root cause for why it has been logistically challenging to ensure sustained practices and consistency throughout the year. We've identified complications with logistics as we have numerous bail times that exist across the school division that we have to take a hard look at.

[02:16:40] These complications make it impossible with the numerous bail times we have to run efficiently scheduled routes. And so, while I'm sure there are other things that we need to shore up in transportation, this is one major or critical problem that we face in the number of bail times that we have.

[02:16:59] And we believe that identifying this, a solution to this problem, yes, it will impact our current bail schedules, but it will relieve some of the stressors that we've experienced this year and show significant improvement in the year to come.

[02:17:15] So at this time I do want to invite our COO to present a proposal for a four-bell schedule for elementary schools for the 23-24 school year. And he'll share what this shift can do to improve the current state of how we are scheduling and routing for schools so that we can improve our on-time rates and reduce, you know, some of the complications or eradicate some of the complications that we've experienced this year.

[02:17:44] Dr. McDade I'd good evening again board members I'd like to ask our director Shirley oh she's here I didn't know they came up Shirley Posey and and we also have Heather Hansen here our supervisor of bus operations and I want a second what Dr. McDade said the Herculean effort that our transportation team has has just put into getting kids back and forth to school this year I want to also thank Shirley and Heather and the team for coming to me with a proposal because you know we we've been faced with pretty significant challenges this year with transportation so obviously one of our core focuses in our strategic plan is

[02:18:23] that positive and climate culture and we teased out resiliency here because again you know we we do believe in the process of adapting well in the face of adversity we've been facing some significant adversity in transportation this year and despite all those adversities I think our transportation team has done all they can this year to respond to that and I think the plan that we're going to present to you you'll see some potential for real significant improvements so again a big thank you to the team you know dr.

[02:18:52] McDade's hit on some of this and here are some of the challenges in front of you here that I'm presenting that our students family and staff have been dealing with this year as it relates to bus transportation at the start of the school year we had 103 vacancies in transportation and as of the time of generating this report we still had 69 vacancies our average daily driver absence rate was is about 76 on any given day and that doesn't include 29 drivers who are currently on long-term leave with that you know that that

[02:19:27] compounds with us having to implement double and triple runs so and what that means is that drivers complete their first route and then they go out and do a second and even third run sometimes because of the significant driver shortages and and you can imagine how that caused that just compounds in making students late to school we think you know all of this has contributed to a lot of uncertainty for our students and families I've even had parents call me and say I've taken my child home from the bus stop and they're gonna miss school today because we've been waiting for 30 minutes and that's unacceptable

[02:20:03] to all of us obviously our core mission is getting kids to student or getting students to school on time and we believe we contribute significantly to positive student attendance to school you know our elementary run there 558 of our 657 buses are on the roads for our elementary run that's our heaviest lift for the day and you can see there just about 90% of our buses are on the road during our elementary runs I think all of us were very surprised when we started to tease this out that yes we have nine different elementary bell times or start times and end times

[02:20:39] so that in conjunction with the significant driver shortage is is really it compounds we also have seven elementary schools that are currently on a middle school schedule which obviously poses to even more of a challenge over the course of the past several years we've grown and this is exciting we've grown our daytime specialty programs in prince william to include pre-k middle school math shuttles increased cte programs there with culinary cosmetology and firefighting and also with that have increased our cross and out of county routes and then you know this also

[02:21:18] has a heavy burden on our drivers because having to pick up double and triple runs in addition to their normal schedules really contributes to a lot of our drivers staying past contract hours and really overburdening our drivers and so some key points i think that are important to mention in the presentation we are proposing a two-tiered bell system so going away from those nine element different elementary start and end times to a two-tiered system where our first tier of elementary schools would start at 845 to 325 and our second tier would start from 920 to 4 and so there would

[02:21:55] be this pairing of elementary schools so all of the buses so one elementary school has six buses dedicated to it the tier two has five now we have 11 buses in the mix to perform transportation for tier one go out and pick all those students up drop those students off then they go out and do transportation for the tier two elementary school so we have twice the number of buses in the mix which will lead to shorter shorter time on buses shorter routes and and much more reliability and even in the case of a driver shortage we may only need nine buses for those two elementary for the

[02:22:32] transport for those two elementary schools so now we have some drivers in reserve that can help us through the driver shortage the impact here you can see no changes for 21 schools. We'll have 12 elementary schools experience a five to ten minute shift in their current start time and end times. 23 of our elementary schools will experience a 15 to 20 minute shift. Eight elementary schools will see that 30 to 35 minute shift and we'll have two elementary schools with a 40 minute shift. Just one I think it's important to mention we do have a few some elementary schools that are not paired and that's because those

[02:23:11] are some of our more rural elementaries that already have longer runs and if we were to pair that with an elementary school that would put us well outside of our desired times so moving forward you know we think there are significant benefits to this four bell schedule it's going to offer real consistent reliable transportation times to and from school decreasing really decreasing that uncertainty in parents

and students waiting at bus stops for significant periods of time it will obviously increase the number of buses for schools and drivers available for substitute runs and I mentioned that we have eight

[02:23:48] elementary schools currently on a middle school schedule all of those buses now go into the middle school runs so we're adding an additional 35 buses to our middle school runs which will enhance middle school transportation as well obviously it's gonna I mentioned this earlier it's gonna decrease total time that students are on buses shortened routes because we have more buses available for each school we'll eliminate having to schedule the double and triple runs we think we will significantly contribute to increased student attendance to school or improving student attendance attendance to school lessens the chance for lost instructional time students waiting at

[02:24:27] the bus stop and missing school decreased need for staff to stay at after school dismissal currently where we have teachers and staff members who remain after school sometimes as long as 45 minutes to supervise students waiting for buses so that eliminates the need for that we will have fewer students on buses obviously because we have more buses for each elementary school which we believe will also decrease some of the behaviors that we're seeing on buses and decrease some of the management issues for our drivers and then it will significantly increase the reliability of the here comes the bus app because we won't have to be combining runs and that's where we

[02:25:04] lose the the reliability of the app. I want you to want you guys to know we we have done our due diligence there are five large divisions in Virginia they're currently engaging in this four bell system and you can see those divisions here all you know several that are Loudoun County our closest neighbors engaging in this and when we've talked to these districts they've seen a significant improvement in all of their transportation times and a significant increase in customer satisfaction. And they all have the same driver shortage issues that we're dealing with

[02:25:38] currently. Our scheduling technicians in transportation have run two successful simulations, each for the central or the eastern central and western portions of our districts with a high rate of success and significant improvements in arrival times and start times for each of the school pairings in that it did include our current staffing shortages in the simulation and I just want to point out we do have two or four schools that are actually in a two-paired

[02:26:12] system right now currently Cedar Point and Chris Young are operating in this type of schedule and Bristow Run and Piney Branch and in that kind of pilot or model has showed a much more consistent arrival and dismissal time and increased satisfaction. I do want to point out here that we have shown you here's our proposed pairs simply the the times that are highlighted in yellow in this pairing for the central elementary schools just shows that we have nine different start times and and that's the point of highlighting that for everybody

[02:26:50] and and here's pairs for the Eastern elementary schools and finally our pairings that we have accomplished for our Eastern elementary schools and just want to here's our proposed what you have in front of you now is our proposed bell times by tier looking at a little bit differently with our pairings and who would be on a tier one schedule and what schools would be on a tier two

[02:27:21] schedule i'm sorry i do want to add a caveat this is not the pairings this is just showing who's on a tier one tier two i'm sorry i wanted to correct that and we did develop some faqs or frequently asked questions just to address some things right out of the gate you know how does this impact our students

who are receiving special transportation in the district and who require specialized transportation it's not going to impact students receiving those services that all those students

[02:27:56] will continue to receive the same high-level transportation and same high-level support there how will this impact our drivers hours we this won't impact our drivers hours requiring them to work outside of their normal six to seven and a half hour day and we believe this will significantly decrease the overtime required for our drivers if we were to have a weather delay what would be the impact on the tiered system well every everything would just shift to uh by two hours. I just want to make a note here as a reminder that we have not been able to use the two-hour delay because of the the transportation concerns that we've

[02:28:35] had these past two years and so if we institute this this allows us to return to the two-hour delay as opposed to having the full day of instruction lost because we are unable to get students to school during inclement weather. Thank you dr. McDade I did realize I skipped over Alphabest there are partners that provide outside of the school daycare we have worked with Alphabest they're very willing to work with the the adjusted bell schedules they're very flexible and so just to share with you some factors that will monitor for success of this in the implementation of the four bell schedule we're obviously going to be

[02:29:13] looking and we monitor this very closely now are consistent on time arrivals and dismissals we'll continue to do that that student family and school and staff community will be satisfied you know we do believe this will impact significantly improve our driver absenteeism I will just want to share with you that we are implementing a driver incentive currently and a monetary incentive and when we announced that to our drivers immediately they were calling our transportation office canceling their leave for the for the later part of this year so we've seen an improvement there uh we believe it's going to improve student attendance to school

[02:29:52] uh we'll see uh an improvement in the number of students assigned per each bus we'll see we're going to monitor the length of our bus routes and monitor behavior and discipline concerns and so next steps obviously to move this forward with the standardized elementary bell schedule we'll be working very closely with our communications department to roll out an enhanced communication plan which will you know begin very shortly with postings on the pwcs website inclusion in the superintendent's weekly letters in the scoop and elementary schools will

[02:30:28] be provided and asked to share information information with families in may late july and early august and bus routes will be published as they've always been two weeks prior to the start of the school year and mr chairman that concludes my presentation i'd like to invite shirley and heather to join me for any questions that you might have mrs williams thank you i want to uh first congratulate uh mr block for your opening statement which um is not worth skipping over one of the first things you said is the transportation department provided your office

[02:31:07] with the proposal as a long-serving school board member i cannot tell you how much joy it brings to hear that our transportation department had a front row voice and a seat to this solving this problem that we've been having with bus drivers it has been a long known fact under our previous administration and for years that bus drivers have not been provided the much needed space at the table and with the input because they are our first line and they are our eyes on the ground and and i am just very appreciative and thankful that that is how you opened this proposal

[02:31:42] for information for us acknowledging them they do not get acknowledgement enough i have several friends who've been bus drivers i have a few currently my mother's best friend growing up was a bus driver i think i'm usually the one behind the scenes going did you ask them about what did you i see you nodding because i usually i'm trying to be low-key about it but it's important um i really respect this administration's dedication to honoring the voices of all of our stakeholders when we make a decision in a way that it is impactful and not just hearing what they have to say um miss posey and i'm forgive me because i'm i forgot your um ms chin yes thank

[02:32:20] you yeah nancy i i appreciate both of you staying so late in the evening but even more for really putting the time and dedication into solving a problem and help well helping to solve a problem that plagues just about all of us in in the school division and for really um being a leading voice in leading the way and for our division for for honoring that i'm i'm very grateful i'm very impressed with this proposal i would like to ask we had a few clearly you said elementary schools on rotation and my understanding they were on rotating bell schedules and all these adjustments

[02:33:00] that we've had to make coming out of the pandemic and trying to do our best for servicing our students as i am so overjoyed our transportation department was consulted have we talked to our elementary school principals have we had feedback from them and how they feel like this will impact their staff as well I appreciate you posing that question and I was remiss in not mentioning that in my presentation we did engage with our elementary principals and and first we engaged with our level associates to run this proposal by them and there was unanimous support from our level associate superintendents and then we did present this to our elementary principals in an elementary principal meeting and laid

[02:33:39] this out to them and and and after that I got a lot of response from the principals saying how supportive they were they this has been a real challenge for a lot of our principals and trying to manage this and our teachers and so we've gotten some pretty positive feedback well thank you I'm very impressed as one who always champions having a collaborative coach and bringing all stakeholders to the table I think this is a shining example of that and I really appreciate the divisions dedication to doing just that and I I think this will be very impactful for all of our school families, so thank you.

[02:34:12] - Thank you. Ms. Jessie. - Buses, oh my God. Shirley, you and I have been here for a while, and to answer your question, Dr. Lateef, I was here for 45-15, and I was here for the two kindergarten runs.

[02:34:35] That was fun. So I've done everything with these buses, and I'll tell you, the worst thing that can happen to you as a principal is when they say something like, have a double run and we're not coming to pick up your kids and I see you had triple runs and you've worked that whole thing out I think that this is a work this is a working document I like the input from principals from bus drivers and I've been an advocate for bus drivers and Shirley knows that for years I've been an advocate for teachers because our teachers live in Stafford at various places and when those buses are late it some of our teachers are

[02:35:14] driving an hour to school at an hour back and forth so this bus schedule really affects everyone I want to say something else because earlier tonight I heard people talk about teachers leaving Prince William and bus issues and all these things this is a national problem it's not just Prince William we are in a situation where nationally and I've read the research on it I read the research and I know that this is not just a Prince William problem is a national problem there was an article in Education Weekly I think this month about an incentive program in some county where there are some incentives

[02:35:53] that are being developed and so I want to thank you because I know that the superintendent in your office you're trying to solve a problem that we did not anticipate but I'm glad that you did solve that problem because when Kenny Bodie and I were doing the doughnut tour in the morning we were going back and forth from school to school looking at those schedules I went to one school their teachers didn't come until 9 o'clock another school and there's no rhyme or reason so when the superintendent has this organization coherence I think that's what she's doing what you guys are doing you're coming in with systems you're looking at this thing in a systematic way and I

[02:36:31] want to thank you for anticipating and looking at the problem what most people don't realize that the middle school schedule affects the elementary schedule so when you have a triple run at middle then those buses don't get to elementary unless it's changed but everybody's schedule the bus schedule depends on the number of drivers and whether or not your high school middle or elementary so I think you've looked at all of the problems that could be looked at and I appreciate everything that you've done and I know the principals love just the

[02:37:09] fact that you asked them and transportation and bus drivers just love the fact that you've asked them and thank you Shirley for staying in Prince William County schools you've been here a long time I appreciate you thank you Ms. Jackson also want to echo what Ms. Williams said about collaboration it is beautiful and I just really appreciate it and I appreciate the presentation and because I know that listening to all stakeholders are very important to this administration I just want to take a moment to advocate and I'm sure you will

[02:37:45] consider this anyway to listen to the schools who have had historically late file schedules I think I have a couple that have been concerned they might feel a little better about this but maybe we could encourage consideration and community input you know later after this is rolled out revisit it and see what the community thinks and to also and I think you're probably considering this but to also please consider scheduling conflicts that staff and families might have with middle school and high school sports and that's I just

[02:38:22] appreciate the presentation and thank you thank you I want to say buses bathrooms behavior those are the three big B's and you're tackling one of them which was which is awesome it's music to my ears I appreciate that the division has given a lot of thought to this and this this shows this is a courageous move but I think it's a the right move I'm I thought it was good presentation it was very detailed I had a bunch of questions but you answered them in your

[02:38:58] presentation so great job for anticipating my questions I know transportation is a challenge and it has has been that way for a long time and so I do really applaud the effort I'm glad to hear that transportation staff was involved in like hey let's try this let's do this and that you know you've run a pilot already to see how it would go I really think that's great you know analyzing the problem kind of identifying a root cause and then running some simulations to see if we can fix it so I look forward to the results next year I know it's been kind of a rough year so I'm hoping we are going up like

[02:39:38] I don't know if we have a whole lot of room to go down not that we're not bad but it's been a rough year and everybody I think can agree and we're all really happy that it's May so um you know clearly we want kids to be able to get to school and being in schools is a that you have to be in school in order to really learn yeah to learn and for our amazing teachers to do their their jobs and so this is just so good for

our outcomes I really think it ties in nicely with the strategic plan you've also shown responsiveness to the needs of families thank you for listening to me and my concerns I'm sure other board

[02:40:17] members have brought their concerns, you know, thank you for listening to the concerns that have been raised about buses. And to everybody, I would say please be patient. We are working on it. We know we have challenges. We're trying to make this work.

[02:40:33] So thank you for the comprehensive presentation. You gave us a lot of information, and I look forward to learning more about this and going through the slides in more detail. Ms. Dargampore. Thank you, Dr. Lateef.

[02:40:50] Yes. All what they already said. to add a couple comments because when my constituents have reached out and they usually don't do it the first second third they are very frustrated by the time they reach out to me and i don't always know what's going on until they get to that point which is not where we want to be um but i've had a couple of constituents recently who have been very frustrated with some things and whoever they are talking with in the transportation department they were happy with being heard they were also very happy that something positive did you know occur

[02:41:28] after that that said one of my favorite parts about this entire presentation was how we not just talked about getting to school but why it's important behavior how it impacts schools teachers principals families so I am anticipating this is going to solve a lot of problems and then we'll be have a little bit more space to work on some maybe bigger different things in the future but one last thing I want to just make sure is on your radar is I did have some constituents reach out over the course of this year every once in a while talking about behavior on buses and just from parent perspective they're not sure if the

[02:42:07] bus drivers are not taking care of things or if things aren't getting taken care of after the bus driver report something so I'm just leaving it there because every time it's been resolved you know that that closes that case I have no way of knowing if it's is a problem once in a while or it's a bigger problem but I just want to put it on your radar that that is one of the the more consistent pieces that has come up generally thank you thank you mr. Wilk yeah thank you I'm kind of rounding this out a lot of comments have been said yeah this is definitely you know very personal to me I know one of the big things we've been talking about

[02:42:47] you know the last year and then going into this year was this lovely here's the bus app so every morning I get the pleasure of being with my kids that's when I spend my time typically since I'm at events every night so I get up and do the first two hours in the morning with them and so I'm the dad at the bus stop and it's always fun to get these alerts and then wonder where it is and stuff like that but you know i know one of the biggest issues as you said was the double runs right and it would require a bus driver to have to physically almost pull over and update the system because they are doing the double run correct so i love the fact that this is going to alleviate

[02:43:27] a lot of that because i know a lot of parents have the frustrations of the bus isn't even appearing or now the bus is nowhere in the you know so i i a lot of people rely on this you know i hear positive things about it but then of course you know there are the occasional glitches and it is technology right so it's not perfect um but uh that's a big thing i think a lot of people will be excited about of more consistency with this app that so many families and parents rely on to monitor the bus and know when it's coming and such so thank you thank you thank you mr wilk

[02:44:04] mr williams yes sir thank you dr latif um i just want to echo what mr wilk said about the here I think it's Here Comes My Bus app? Here's the bus? Yeah, Here Comes the Bus. It's Here Comes the Bus? Okay. Thank you.

[02:44:19] My sister is an elementary school student, and there's been times where after school, I'm waiting in my car in the rain with no idea where she's at, and I think if we can make improvements to this app to increase the reliability of knowing where our students are at, where, for me, where my sibling is at, for many parents, where their kid is at, I think we'd be doing everybody a great service.

[02:44:39] I think this is a great idea. Personally, it's not much of a change for my sister, and I think that's pretty consistent all across the board as you displayed in the presentation with only a few schools having major changes. Yeah, I think this will really help all our students, all our families, and really alleviate a lot, a lot of what's going on.

[02:44:56] Thank you. - Thank you. You know, conferring here with my vice chair, I just will say I cannot leave a conversation about bell times without sort of offering my thoughts on, I hope this paves the way for starting high school later.

[02:45:17] There are a number of school divisions that we were given an example of who are on this schedule who do do high school later. So this could pave the way, maybe a Trojan horse for getting the chairs and the vice chairs sort of a, you know, initiative through.

[02:45:34] But anyways, in jest, thank you all for the great work. We really, truly appreciate it. Thank you, Dr. McDade for taking this issue very seriously. Thank you all. And then does that conclude your remarks, Dr. McDade? - That concludes Superintendent's report. all right well that is fantastic and then looking at our schedule here we now move to board matters miss Jessie would you like to start this evening or yeah you good with that yes sorry about that first of all we celebrated to the two celebrations that I'd like to put on next to next agenda I know other people

[02:46:11] will speak about them that's the naming of the gym by for Bob I corn and the Future Kings event, which was a celebration of these young men, young students, middle and high school students who are in this technology program.

[02:46:27] I didn't get my slides together tonight, so I'll bring it in to the next meeting. I went to a Woodbridge celebration and it was really about this new play that they've done.

[02:46:42] And I say a celebration because it was really an edgy topic. The title of the actual play was "The Prom" and it dealt with the very personal issues of a high school student not attendance at a prom because of her sexual orientation.

[02:46:58] It was done tastefully and well received. I also attended the Secondary Art Festival and it was fabulous. The display of arts were beautiful as you see on this podium here today. I just wanted to remind people that there are students who love art and then there are students whose gift is art that they are artistic learners and musically gifted students so I wanted to remind you of that. Signing Day. I went to Freedom High School Signing Day. I went to Freedom High School for the changing of the garden. One of our students that

[02:47:35] we're working with at my home is Star Angel and she was accepted to Royal North College and during that signing day's activity was in my home but this was a big day I didn't realize they had these big

signing days Woodbridge High School signing day we attended my husband and I and my daughter attended the signing day there she set up the displays for them and of course we've already talked about chance but and these kids are are going to major colleges and some of them are not the names that we would the harvests and the yells but there are some schools out there that are doing wonderful things I

[02:48:15] also attended the juvenile detention graduation and you know what was so unique about it was that first of all you had to lock your keys and everything you couldn't go in you couldn't hear anything inside they had to do everything but this is a graduation ceremony agenda and guess what it had all these people in the tables and the cakes you know how many students graduated one one student and that one student was given a graduation ceremony

[02:48:50] ceremony that was similar to a graduation ceremony for 50 kids, so I know that Justin will also talk about that. And then I went to a festival at Spring Woods Elementary, and they had displays, they had hot dogs, everything was there.

[02:49:09] And I went to the NAACP celebration, first time they've had a celebration in several years, and there was a student there by the name of Eugene Bartholomew who received an a prize but I wanted to tell you that Eugene Batholomew was a student that came here and gave a presentation and introduced Anthony Muhammad without ever knowing this guy.

[02:49:37] He came in and presented to all these people, teachers and principals. And I just want to say that these students, given an opportunity, they can do anything. Thank you very much. Thank you, Miss Jessie. Miss Williams. - Thank you. Also attended a lot of events since we've been here last.

[02:49:58] I want to give a special shout out to our virtual elementary school with Proximity. They have hosted a lot of virtual programs this year. One of the favorites that I know of is the 3D printing class, which I'm excited to see what comes in the mail to my house for my students, 3D printing experience, and just really appreciate all the hard work that goes into that and a big shout out to our special our gifted advisory teacher miss gun or goon who led those led that program for our virtual students like many other school board members and attending a lot of events I

[02:50:36] was at the naming of the gym for dr. I corn our former independence non traditional principal and legendary principal I might add attended the nature bridge program I missed dinner with Featherstone because I got lost going for Prince William Forest Park but it was a lot of fun and of course the students were out there in nature taking they took three days out to spend in nature when they may not otherwise do so and it was just really nice to see students who aren't normally in that type of environment most of them according to them out playing and enjoying nature and understanding how

[02:51:11] vital it is to our mental health and to just respect nature I was able to attend the sparks award business dinner that same night so went from suits and sneakers in the woods to suit and some heels and with our special guest of the evening Miss Allie Krieger who is also a Prince William County Schools graduate I also attended the girls fast pitch softball this would be my third year in a row and my first successful pitch much to my nine-year-old's dismissive over the plate I did not make Lieslvania's multicultural inclusivity night but I do

[02:51:47] want to make special note of that because they have made an extreme effort to not only view this night through a lens of multiculturalism but inclusivity for all of our special education students that school is a shining example when it comes to including special education students in programming and

just leading the way in every every way possible for being an inclusive environment. I like Miss Jessie and Mr. Wilk attended the NAAC and many of our other board members NAAC Freedom Fund and scholarship banquet, the

[02:52:21] Future Kings annual scholarship banquet. I'm excited to visit the girls pink space theory graduation at Featherstone tomorrow and just to provide a little update on the governor's school their research symposium will be on 5:12 which is open to the public and is so cool if you're a nerd because I am and I can't wait but I also want the public to know I led the way and add in excuse me and adding to a motion to update our governor schools non-discrimination policy it will now match Prince William County schools this is the first opportunity that we've had to do this in ten years while they updated their

[02:52:57] policy as well as their manual I'm gonna wrap up by saying I want to thank the Woodbridge Women's Club and all of the other community organizations that will be in our schools next week to celebrate teacher appreciation day and last but not least I would like to give a very special shout out to my best friend of almost four years it is her birthday today and congratulations to her daughter my favorite goddaughter on signing with Hampton University for soccer thank you Jackson hey thank you I was fortunate to attend the all-county fine arts also here last weekend for secondary students I also attended T Claywood's wonderful

[02:53:36] steam night remember 22 which is a baseball game at Patriot a softball game while I was there and a field hockey game. Next week is Teacher Appreciation Week and tonight's Vote for Evolve caused me to reflect on the way educators work to keep students safe in the midst of instructing or mediating behaviors or preparing for state tests or taking state tests or various other testing behavior and data collection. I know I've said it before but I just want to say it again to advocate for all state elected officials to consider the impact of all

[02:54:13] bills on staff, including workload. Nothing I say here will ever fully express how thankful I am to all educators, so just thank you. So thank you to all school nurses for everything they do to keep all students and staff safe. This beautiful artwork that is in front of us is from Gainesville High School, a high school that Miss Wall also has a number of students that attend. They have curious create creators creatures and these works are inspired by an object objective

[02:54:50] excuse me it's getting late noun and verb I like for example a fancy goose singing or a happy panda bathing okay over there there are mugging mugs animal and I am done I'm sorry anamorphic vessels that were made into a part animal students who are challenged to create all features from a 3d perspective quail containers which are very intricate I think I saw some over there inspired by a theme that students chose to hand build using a mold and a variety of techniques and these are presented by art teachers Jennifer Marshall Griesen and Julianne Huddelson and Amanda Miller these are really

[02:55:29] talented and I'm just really grateful to sit here and be able to look at the artwork I'm going to wrap up by saying may the fourth be with you and love and respect to all y'all very good mrs. are thank you dr. Lateef yeah teacher appreciation week is coming up and really a week is not sufficient I hope that that if you've got a little kid have them make a card draw a picture write a note but please make sure you reach out to your your child's teachers

[02:56:05] and thank them I will be attending the suicide awareness walk and I know there's a big thing about end the stigma I'm looking at you because I think in ending the stigma I think we need to hear

stories so I'm going to share a little bit of mine maybe not um it is very hard to watch somebody struggle with mental health it is

[02:56:41] hard to find the right help and support and if you are a parent or a family member a brother or sister who is watching someone struggle with it makes you feel so alone and you're not it might be hard to show up on saturday it might not be the easiest place to be but i recommend it you need to know that there are other people there who have walked this walk literally trying to help themselves out

[02:57:19] of a very dark place or watch a family member struggle with a very dark place i don't wish it on anybody but i have a feeling that most people know someone all right so let's end the stigma together uh in more happier news i was able to get out to see some international nights in the coles district i went to lock loman benton and colgan all in one night which was really fun they all had different things going on lots of food music not costumes outfits that

[02:57:55] people would wear it was really fun colgan invited students from other schools to come and share their cultures their songs their music and it was great it was and i'm telling you i had a rough friday that was really uplifting so um that that was great one other thing i want to make sure i mentioned is we have some amazing CTE programs and one of them prepares future teachers. Jack Gaston from Osborne Park won a scholarship. He's in the grow our own scholarship program through the Virginia Teachers for Tomorrow. The

[02:58:32] scholarship was awarded to three county students and two from Osborne Park and one one girl from Colgan. I just happen to know about Jack. The recipients got three thousand dollars in a scholarship and they will work for PWCS during their summer and Dr. McDade has also awarded them priority hiring letters after graduation so I think that's amazing and last thing I'll leave with you is tomorrow is May the 4th so may the 4th be with you Mr. Wilk thank you everyone Ms. Zargarpur thank you for that statement about the suicide awareness

[02:59:09] and the stigma I won't add any more to any of this but I will say the event is This is Saturday at Forest Park High School. I've been going since 2016. It's a phenomenal event. I do have to thank our regular attendees every year, Congressman Conley, State Senator Jeremy McPike.

[02:59:30] They will all be there again. I'll have the distinct pleasure of introducing all the electeds, but it will be a great event. Dr. McDade, I remember last year we did that walk, or we did part of it. But so thank you and everyone and my colleagues for coming to support Forest Park on this Saturday.

[02:59:47] I think a good chunk of you, if not all of you, are coming. So thank you. And of course, Chance, thank you. So I did 18 events in 14 days. So I'm going to pick a couple things to highlight. A couple good events.

[03:00:04] One that I really, well, they're all great events. But on 422 on Earth Day, back in the summer, I had this vision with a conservationist in Montclair as we walked around the back practice fields of Forest Park that we were gonna plant some trees and give some natural shading and help with the environmental impact and the runoff and all that.

[03:00:26] And it came to fruition thanks to the help of, I'm not gonna take a lot of, and barely any credit for just having an idea, but I wanna give a lot of credit to James Bricker, the activities coordinator at Forest Park, did a phenomenal job, Chance, Miguel, the student groups that all participated in it.

[03:00:47] It was just a phenomenal event. I think we planted over, I forget how many, how many trees were there chance? It was a lot. Yeah, over 50 and a bunch of different varieties of trees. It was nice. Supervisor Bailey came and helped plant. It was a good event, so thank you.

[03:01:03] And it was a perfect event. I'm happy it came to fruition. A lot of great things are happening. Of course, school visits are always important. I was able to visit Covington Harper Potomac Shores on the 25th.

[03:01:18] On the 26th, a young lady, Ms. Abate, she was recognized for a national competition. Speaking of career tech ed, she won a career readiness award. She's a Potomac High School student. It was great to be there with that honor to see that happen.

[03:01:36] Attended the NAACP event, the banquets, the, oh my goodness, Tiny Tots Performance Forest Park, Great program put on the band and the arts program to promote their arts and get elementary kids come.

[03:01:51] Mary Williams had an autism program where students expressed in their story, whether using bubbles, flying kites. Dr. McDade was there again, a great event. Sorry, so much to talk about, but anyways, yeah.

[03:02:09] - Thank you, Mr. Wilk. Ms. Raulston, she dropped, okay, Ms. Wall. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm gonna begin by sharing a quote Winston Churchill he said attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference and I want to commend all of our amazing staff members for their great attitudes and especially at this time of year when we're so close to the end but there's still so much to do I know for our students that's also the same and

[03:02:46] especially for our seniors as you hang in there and finish your finish your Prince William County education strong also I want to begin by or continue by saying I want to sorry appreciate all of the teachers and educators that we have this is coming up I encourage all parents and family members to get involved in showing appreciation to our hard-working and so very valuable

[03:03:18] educators I also have been to a number of events in the last two weeks or so on Monday April 24th Bull Run Middle School commemorated its 20th anniversary as a school and all three principals in its illustrious career were there Mr. Bixby Dr. Stevenson and Mr. Fithian and so all three of my kids were Bull Run Eagles and that span they span the years 2011 through 2019 so I also was happy to be there and there were so many teachers that are still there that my children were greatly influenced by so congratulations to Bull Run Middle

[03:03:55] School I'm on the 25th I attended as an invitee and a participant the Prince William Committee of 100's event on safety in our schools and this was a really good community event it brought people together in a nonpartisan educational format to discuss school safety and I know that's a topic that we all care about and that has been driven home to me over and over again as I have been out in the community and I asked people what's on their mind. On the 26th I was able to serve on a disciplinary committee so the others on this board could attend the Independence non-traditional gym dedication to Dr.

[03:04:32] Icorn so I'm really happy to hear that was a really awesome event. Last Thursday I went to the Sparks corporate partnership reception. Spark is awesome. I want to thank our community partners and businesses and organizations from across the county for your generous contributions your investments donations and internship opportunities for our students it really does make a big difference in helping us

accomplish the goals of our strategic plan Wow I'm losing time on the 29th I went to the high school arts county high school all County Arts Festival the art was great the kids were amazing I met a lot of students there it was awesome battlefield had an international night

[03:05:11] on the 29th which I went to and the food was amazing and then performances were also amazing, I couldn't believe the level of talent, it was so great. And with that, here we are, and this is the way. Very good, very good.

[03:05:29] All right, so I think that leaves it up to me. I was remiss in forgetting to thank Chief Newsham for his support of the work we're doing in the support of Dr. McDade and the efforts we're doing to improve safety and security along with the Evolve Systems. I wanna thank Chair Wheeler for her steadfast support in the Board of County Supervisors and their support for us to adopt and implement this system.

[03:05:51] And I wanna thank Commonwealth Attorney Amy Ashworth for her counsel and advice as we worked through this for the last six months as well. I wanna thank Dr. McDade, Superintendent Michelle Reed in Fairfax, Karen Corbis Sanders, Fairfax County School Board member, and the George Mason University's Regional Elected Leaders Initiative.

[03:06:11] They hosted and co-hosted along with us an event where we invited nine regional superintendents, chairs and vice chairs of the school boards in those nine regions and staff from, the communication staff from all these divisions to meet and talk about regional challenges that school divisions in our region face that might be unique or particularly problematic for us and safety and security, mental health, you know, working together to, you know, advocate for what our needs are in Richmond were some of the topics and some brainstorming that went on.

[03:06:49] It was really a first of its kind meeting, and so I was very thankful for Dr. McDade to help co-host that and Chair, Vice Chair Wall for joining me in that event, it was terrific. Teacher Appreciation Month, we are truly excited.

[03:07:04] I wanna thank all our parent-teacher organizations, our PTOs, our PTAs for all of the work they're doing to celebrate our teachers and appreciate them and everything this board continues to do to try to make this place a better place to work for everyone, including our teachers.

[03:07:22] Spark did a terrific job, I understand. I'm sad to say I missed the event and thank to Allie Krieger for coming and working with our school division. Spring is a wonderful time of the year. We have signing days, we have students committing to college, military and careers. We have commencements, we have proms, we have baseball.

[03:07:40] You know, and we have international nights, and I would say there's two tickets in this town, you know, region that are hot tickets to get, and that's the Cappies event, which celebrates our fine and performing arts theater programs at the John F. Kennedy Center, which is fantastic.

[03:07:55] Impossible to get a ticket, but if you can secure one, great event, don't ever miss it. Second is iNight at, and I'm glad a lot of our schools are doing iNights now, Benton, Colgan, I got to attend theirs, but Thomas Jefferson does have the hottest ticket And the best iNight in the region, four years one of my children went there, I could not get the ticket, I was not able to get it, you have to sign on, I tried to use my chairman credentials and the principal told me to pound sand and it is, it was a hard, and I still haven't been able to attend one and so I would ask Dr. McDade that if she can throw some

[03:08:34] weight around to see if we can get a ticket to that, but I challenge our schools to continue to develop their i nights their exciting nights we have the most diverse county in the commonwealth and the 10th most diverse county in the country and so we ought to be having those terrific celebrations like our board members attended this week at you know all of our high schools battlefield colgan and they did just such a great job last i'll leave you with this for those who are about my age dr flanard dr mcdade's a little bit younger you know this artwork here is terrific but in our

[03:09:07] day we used to make ashtrays for our parents and and and and and and so I hope we're not doing ashtrays anymore are we is there someone here no sorry we okay thank you dr. McTeeve no ashtrays we even did them in industrial arts with metal so you know we are health conscious yes the world has changed quite a bit since 1981 82 all right all right thank you all very much meeting adjourned