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Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, May 17, 2023

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Place	Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length	2h 34m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YO6ov7xCXOU
- 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 this meeting of the Prince William County School Board to order. I believe Mrs. Wall has a motion she'd like to make. Vice Chair Wall. - Dr. Lateef, I move to amend the meeting agenda by adding agenda item 11.06, which will be recognition of internal audit month.

[00:00:19] - Is there a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Okay, please vote by show of hands. All in favor? Okay, any opposed? Thank you, that will be added to the agenda or you can put yes on here.

[00:00:41] - Thank you. Now a motion is in order for the approval of the meeting agenda as amended. - Mr. Chairman? - Yep. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the meeting agenda as amended. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion?

[00:00:57] Please vote. Are we doing it? All right, all in favor? - Aye. - Any opposed? No. Motion passes.

[00:01:12] Moving on to the motion to enter closed session. A motion is in order. Ms. Wall. - Mr. Chairman, I move that pursuant to Virginia code Section 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712, the Prince William County School Board enter closed session for the following reasons.

[00:01:28] One, to discuss with staff the appointment, transfer release, assignment, and promotion of specific officers and employees pursuant to Virginia code Section 2.2-3711A1. Two, to discuss with division

counsel and staff actual or probable litigation and specific legal matters involving specific staff and students pursuant to Virginia Code sections 2.2-3711A, 7 and 8.

[00:01:56] 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 security of such facilities pursuant to Virginia Code sections 2.2-3711A, 19.

[00:02:17] Do I have a second? Mr. Chairman. Ms. Zorgerpour. I second. Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:02:40] Good, that's excellent. So the Prince William County School Board will now enter closed session and return open session in approximately one hour.

[00:03:17] Prince William County School Board will now re-enter open session from closed session.

[00:03:53] A motion's in order. Ms. Wall. - Mr. Chairman, I move that pursuant to Virginia code section 2.2-3712, the closed session of the Prince William County School Board meeting of May 17th, 2023, be certified by adopting the following resolution.

[00:04:12] 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 this certification resolution applies, 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.

[00:04:37] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - Second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:04:56] - The vote is seven yes, one absent. Raulston, motion passed. - Moving on to closed session action items. A motion is in order for 8.01, approval of appointments and releases. Ms. Wall. - Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the appointments and releases of specific employees as presented in closed session.

[00:05:14] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:05:35] - The vote is seven yes, one absent. Raulston, motion passed. - Okay, moving on to the Pledge of Allegiance. everyone would stand. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[00:06:03] Thank you. Moving on to the our thriving futures focus and so it's the time for one of our most enjoyable portions of the school board meetings and that's 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.

[00:06:28] We appreciate how these honorees have positively represented Prince William County Public Schools and the school board is proud to recognize them for publicly, recognize them publicly for their accomplishments. We begin tonight with the Potomac District, Mr. Justin Wilk, Mr. Wilk. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef.

[00:06:44] It's with great honor that I recognize as outstanding student tonight, Besawit Ubote. I was at the event where this all went down. She is a sophomore at Potomac High School, and this is all about her being America's next great intern.

[00:07:03] Out of 16 national finalists, Besawit emerged as one of the best in showcasing top tier communication skills that are essential in an internship. More than 6,500 people competed across the country as, excuse me, more than 6,500 people across the country voted for the finalists, and Bezowitz's remarkable abilities earned her a spot in the first place tier.

[00:07:28] America's Next Great Intern Contest was held by Rubin Education, a company that offers online instruction for college and career readiness. As the winner of the contest, Bezowitz was recognized at a ceremony held at Potomac High, where Rubin Education awarded her with a stipend for professional clothing, professional headshots and a paid virtual internship.

[00:07:50] I also had the privilege of attending. As I said, it was a great ceremony and it was a remarkable event. Bezoit's business education teacher, Ms. Tiller, was also recognized and received a $250 cash prize to support her classroom.

[00:08:06] Bezoit is here tonight with Ms. Tiller, principal Brandon Bowles and Dr. Sarah Martin, director of CTE. Bezoit, please come forward and please share a few words. - Good evening, everyone. My name is Beza Itabata.

[00:08:22] I'm a sophomore in Potomac Senior High School. This is my teacher, Mr. Lahr, which is my economics and finance teacher, and this is Mr. Bowles, the principal of Potomac Senior High School. I'm very proud to be American Next Great Intern, and thank you guys for giving me this great recognition.

[00:08:39] Thank you again. - Thank you, Mr. Wilk, and congratulations to Beza With and Potomac High School. Next, we would like to recognize the outstanding DECA students from Garfield High School.

[00:08:58] And it is my pleasure to recognize the Garfield High School Distributive Education Clubs of America, or DECA, for earning a gold level recertification in retail operations in honor of their school store called the Wolves' Den.

[00:09:13] The school-based enterprise is the only one of its kind in PWCS and has been certified for the past 15 years. The store is open every other day during lunch and during special events. The school store sells spirit wear to staff members, students, and their families, keeping in mind the importance of providing quality merchandise at an affordable price.

[00:09:30] On average, sales are approximately $5,000 annually. Through the school store, students are learning how to handle money and create budgets, advertising, and marketing, including visual merchandising and cross merchandising. They also learn how to best build relationships through the power of excellent customer service skills.

[00:09:48] The DECA sponsor is Marilyn Clark, and she is here this evening with students. Layal Shamsadeen and Noor Huda Nasir, as well as business education teacher and department chairman, Patrick Hogan. Ms. Clark, can you come forward and say a few words?

[00:10:08] - Good evening, I'm Marilyn Clark, and I've been the business and marketing teacher at Garfield for 21 years, and my students and I would like to thank you very much for this recognition. Thank you. - Thank you.

[00:10:24] Congratulations again, Ms. Clark, and our Garfield High School. I wanna also share that Chuck Sullivan, a senior from Woodbridge High School, earned first place at the state level in sports and

entertainment marketing. We invited him to attend this evening, but he had a conflict. We've invited him to attend at a meeting in June.

[00:10:39] Now it is my honor to introduce Ms. Lori Williams, representing the Woodbridge district. Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I am so excited to recognize Freedom High School this evening for not one, but two national awards.

[00:10:55] Three years ago, our school board adopted a sustainability resolution and formed the superintendent's advisory council on sustainability, indicating a strong focus of the importance of reducing the division's overall carbon footprint, protecting the environment, and realizing cost savings with emerging energy technologies.

[00:11:17] A year later, the U.S. Department of Education named Prince William County Schools a green ribbon school district. Prince William County Schools is only one of five school divisions in the country to earn this award. This spring, we learned that the US Department of Education recognized our school division for a second time, thanks to the hard work of students and staff at Freedom High School.

[00:11:41] Freedom High School is one of only two schools in Virginia and one of only 26 in the nation that earned the Green Ribbon Award. Freedom was selected based on high achievement in three U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools pillars.

[00:11:59] Reducing environmental impact and costs, improve health and wellness, and effective environmental and sustainability education. Let's give Freedom a round of applause.

[00:12:15] In addition to the Green Ribbon Award, Freedom High School is among only 23 high schools selected by the American College Application Program, excuse me, campaign, or the ACAC, to receive the School of Excellence Awards for its, excuse me, its ability to assist high school seniors as they navigate through the college application and admission process.

[00:12:41] The award is presented to schools that support efforts to increase the number of high school seniors, including those who are systematically underserved in applying to college. The recognition stems from the celebration of the school's Virginia College Application Week, VCAW program held on October 25th through 28th, 2022, where students engaged in college and career related activities.

[00:13:08] The goal of the VCAW events is to remove barriers that help students see higher education as attainable and to prevent obstacles that may hinder them from applying for college. The following staff members are here tonight on behalf of both words, excuse me, awards.

[00:13:24] Chevelli Smith, principal, Corey Eaton, Director of School Counseling. Tasha Mason Dykes, Counselor. Angela Jenkins, Counselor. And Dr. Dewarren, Biology Teacher and SENS Coordinator. Ms. Smith, can you please come forward to say a few words?

[00:13:41] And before you do, I just wanna say, please come on to the, I just wanna say I was there when Freedom received the email notice for its Counseling Award, and it is so impactful as a first-generation college student myself. I understand how instrumental it is not only having someone be there to support you, but to do the things of learning how to apply to a program and successfully mentoring you through that process.

[00:14:05] So these awards are absolutely outstanding. Ms. Smith. - Thank you very much. Freedom High School is honored to be the US Department of Education 2023 Green Ribbon School. This achievement is

not due because of one person.

[00:14:21] We would like to thank Janine Jabrara from the Prince William County Energy and Sustainability Team for her guidance and support. We would also like to thank Dr. Duran, our SIN's specialty coordinator, and all the Freedom students and staff that do this wonderful work every single day.

[00:14:42] I would also like to say thank you for the honor of the American College Application Campaign School of Excellence. Again, we have a fantastic counseling department. I would like to thank Mr. Eaton.

[00:14:59] I would like to thank Ms. Jenkins, Ms. Dykes, and all the counselors. Thank you very much. - Congratulations, Freedom High School, for not only winning one national award, but two national awards, both tied directly to our strategic plan.

[00:15:18] Before asking Dr. McDade to say a few words, I'd like to first recognize our family members of honorees here. I'd like them to be stand and recognized. Any of our family members for our students here in the being honored. Is there anyone here?

[00:15:37] Thank you very much for sharing your kids, your children with us and making sure that they're on a great trajectory and path for success. Thank you all. Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Proud congratulations to Potomac Senior High School, Besawit, as well as Ms. Tilar, job well done.

[00:15:55] And the work, your story really speaks to the real work that's happening at Potomac around CTE and preparing students for post-secondary success. So congratulations to you and thank you, Mr. Bowles, for supporting and creating the conditions for CTE to thrive at Potomac High School.

[00:16:11] Garfield, DECA students, you amaze me. Congratulations, we're so incredibly proud. Same to you, the skills that you're learning easily transfer into post-secondary success. And Freedom High School, in addition to the 2020 resolution that Ms. Williams spoke of, the adoption of our strategic plan also includes a goal to have the first school designated a green ribbon school and you delivered on that goal.

[00:16:37] So congratulations to you. We are so excited for all of your accomplishments. All of the work that you each are doing represents what we believe students will be prepared to create a thriving future for themselves and their community in our strategic plan vision.

[00:16:54] Your work represents that. So we are PWCS proud. - Thank you, Dr. McDade. Let's take a short break for some photos. And beginning, we'll start with Bezuit and her teacher and then followed by our students and teachers at Garfield

[00:17:09] and then Freedom High School.

[00:21:29] - Okay, thank you for that. At this point, we will move on to adoption of the consent agenda. Motion's in order, Ms. Wall. - Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the public meeting consent agenda as recommended. - Do I have a second?

[00:21:45] - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Ms. Williams. - Thank you. - 11:03 is Women's Equality Day. It doesn't occur until August 26th, but it leads me to just make mention of how we often have items on our consent agenda that are either a month or a few months ahead of what our schedule is, so that we make sure that when the month starts that we're prepared to honor them, or in this case, it's after school is out.

[00:22:14] And I just wanted to make sure that our listening public is aware of that, 'cause sometimes I think people forget we do that a little bit in advance so that we have the proper time to celebrate whatever it is coming up. And also I'm just a huge fan of Women's Equality Day. Thank you. - Thank you, Ms. Williams.

[00:22:30] Ms. Wall. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I ask that item 11.06 be added to the agenda because it is a certificate of recognition and it's for recognizing May 2023 as internal audit awareness month in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[00:22:52] and I feel that the audit function is extremely important and I'm currently serving as the chair of the internal audit committee and Ms. Jackson of Brentsville serves with me on that committee. And I take the work of the committee very seriously and I appreciate the work of the chief internal auditor, Mr. Maness and the audit manager, Chris Migliaccio.

[00:23:13] So I just wanted to say thank you. They provide a lot of added value to our organization and help us with so many aspects of all of the internal audit performance indicators. So thank you very much.

[00:23:31] - Thank you, Ms. Wall. And I would just echo those statements, both by Ms. Williams and Ms. Wall, especially on internal audit, which serves to reassure the public on the work we do here in ensuring that everything we do is done with fidelity and integrity.

[00:23:46] Please vote. - The vote is seven yes, one absent.

[00:24:03] Ralston, motion passed. - Okay, moving on to citizen comment time. Those citizens who signed 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 meetings is one hour and citizens may speak on agenda items or other topics germane to the operations and policies of Prince William County Public Schools.

[00:24:24] 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, the board will recess and I will ask the room to be cleared to restore public order.

[00:24:44] Tonight we have 14 citizens signed up to speak. When I call your name, please come up to the podium and state your name and address for the record. I'll go ahead and announce the first five names and there are chairs up front if they'd like to grab a chair just to be close to the mic. We have Abigail Hahn, Sarah Bachman, Deanna Duarte, Erica Trendenic, Amanda Locklear, Abigail Hahn.

[00:25:17] - Good evening, my name is Abigail Han and I'm a seventh grade student at the Knoxville School. I want to discuss my concerns this evening regarding school security, specifically at my school. Under Virginia law title 18.2-51.6, strangulation of another penalty, any person who without consent impedes the blood circulation of pressure to the neck of such person resulting in wounding or bodily injury of such person is guilty of strangulation, a class six felony.

[00:25:46] In a simple Google search, I was able to find only 4.4 pounds of pressure placed on the jugular is necessary to cause unconsciousness. The same amount of pressure a kindergartener uses to grab their backpack. Pottstown.org did a study in which it determined strangulation has recently been identified as one of the most legal lethal forms of domestic violence. However I also learned on Tuesday May 9th from

my principal at the Knoxville school that strangulation isn't a crime and therefore police would not be involved. I have so many questions now. How could choking someone and restricting their airway not be a crime?

[00:26:21] If that was the case, why do I know the names Michael Brown and George Floyd? The law says it's a class six felony, but the principal says it's not even a crime. Even worse, how is a student who uses deadly force on another student allowed to continue attending school? In case you were wondering why I'm discussing this issue, it's simple.

[00:26:39] This child was placed in my sister's class because the child's previous teacher quit over the issue. And since that time, this child has begun bullying my sister and nothing is being done. What has to happen? Does a child have to die for something that can easily be prevented? This school district has focused so much on attention and bullying.

[00:26:55] I have lost hours of my academics listening to my counselors talk about bullying and how it affects people. Teachers stop teaching class in order to deal with problem students, which takes time away from my learning. Now my sister is impacted. Her teacher is a full-time correction officer, and my sister is no longer in a learning environment and by no means a safe environment.

[00:27:14] Every student of my school is aware that this is the direct result of my principal focusing on protecting students with discipline issues Issues that police should be dealing with when the principal should be focused on educating the students that follow the rules Ironically, I still remember just a couple years ago when Governor Youngkin protected our rights to decide whether to wear a mask or not I remember my brother chose not to wear a mask It was subsequently removed from his class spent two weeks unsupervised in a room inside of my school without any in-person instruction and and still has issues from that trauma.

[00:27:43] Maybe he should have just choked the students so they would have left him in his classroom. In conclusion, if this board is truly concerned with school and student safety, you would immediately find the school a new principal, one who is diverse, equitable, and inclusive of all students, not just the ones committing violent acts.

[00:28:07] - Sarah Boffman. - Hi, good evening, I'm Sarah Boffman. My address is on file. And unfortunately, I'm back tonight to keep our county school board members accountable. Last school board meeting, I spoke up regarding some ongoing bullying issues that are continuing to happen in the Noakesville school.

[00:28:30] And following that board meeting, I did receive a very kindly worded email from Miss Adele Jackson. And I appreciate that. Thank you. You stated that you were keeping all of this, you know, at the forefront of your mind and you're taking it very seriously. And we appreciate that, that we are being heard.

[00:28:48] But unfortunately, the following Tuesday, when we were all invited to a open forum for kindergarten or parents, we were told that, again, our concerns are being taken very seriously, so seriously that we were given post-it notes about this size and told to write our concerns on the post-it notes, at which time they took all the post-it notes.

[00:29:12] and rather than addressing the individual concerns that the parents had come forward with, they grouped them together into like categories and broadly addressed those concerns. When one parent

asked about whether or not the parents could come into the school to support the teachers, Dr. Jack said, and I quote, yes, yes, yes, yes, I truly believe in having an open school.

[00:29:32] Safety, you know, safety, but with parents, open school. I want the parents to come in as much as you can be. We should have a welcoming experience for you when you do come in. Yet in an email to the staff sent earlier this week, Dr. Jack states parents and volunteers are not allowed to just hang out in classrooms to observe.

[00:29:52] Any type of observation or hanging out must go through admin. Admin then has to have a pre post meeting with a parent and one of us has to be in the room as well during that time. That doesn't sound very welcoming to me. Additionally, he goes on any volunteer or parent or otherwise that exceeds 15 hours in any given week must complete an online application, provide references, receive a background check, et cetera, like we do with hiring staff.

[00:30:17] Again, is this very welcoming? School Board Policy 926 states that parents and interested citizens are invited to the schools to observe the instructional program and related activities. So which is it? Are we welcome or are we not welcome?

[00:30:33] And by speaking out against the schools and the administrators, are we going to be prevented from participating in school-related activities or having lunch with our five and six-year-olds? tired of people telling me that they're taking our concerns very seriously because actions speak louder than words. Show us publicly that you are taking our concerns seriously. The other thing that we keep hearing is that kids are different after COVID, but disruptive and aggressive behavior was

[00:31:04] present before COVID and it wasn't acceptable then. Thank you. Deanna Duarte. Deanna Duarte, my address is on file. Good evening. I come here tonight as a concerned parent who has a child in kindergarten who was in the class with the teachers that suddenly quit i called the nooksville school to speak with the principal to get some sort of explanation on how this would impact my son's learning i was told by the principal that there was not much to tell and sometimes teachers sign

[00:31:38] up for a job that they didn't expect and they feel that it isn't a great fit later that day i found out some disturbing information about a student who has been assaulting and hurting other children in the class by the board meeting they held last time after i received disturbing information, I felt that I was lied to by the principal. There was in fact so much to tell, but nothing was told. I was in disbelief to find that there were assaults on multiple children.

[00:32:04] I went home and talked to my son, to which I found out that this little boy scratched my son on the playground, and I found visible scratch on his chest and stomach. I emailed the principal the next day asking why I was lied to, how this child keeps hurting children, and what is the school going to do to protect the children from a child who has shown repeated aggressive behavior.

[00:32:25] I went to go have lunch with my son on May 4, 2023 and spent the rest of the day in his classroom as helping hands. While on the playground, the principal confronted me regarding my email. I was not pleased with our conversation. I felt as though I was gaslighted by him and was asking him why wasn't this told to the parents regarding the abuse. He said, and I quote, "I believe you are being told things that aren't quite true and that everyone interprets things differently. I decided to speak tonight to let the board know that things are happening in our schools that you are not aware of and that the principal is

[00:33:02] responsible for keeping our kids safe. I am still waiting to a reply to my email from the principal with information on whether or not he's looking over the footage of my son getting scratched on the playground on Monday May 1st. I asked the school board to look into how the principal of the Noakesville school is handing child-related behaviors because from what I'm witnessing and hearing it is lacking in that administration as the board you need to hold your administrating staff accountable otherwise the schools will never be safe I ask that you figure out why parents concerns are not being handled and why I'm still waiting a month in for that email why is not why is it not a concern

[00:33:42] for the schools that my child is being hurt by a child that has repeatedly hurt others we also have and I quote we also have some squirrelly stuff with the parents that will need to watch out for most of our parents are awesome and very helpful. I am appalled that the safety of our children is being referred to as squirrely stuff with the parents and that somehow us parents who are speaking out are not awesome and very helpful. It is because we are finally shining a light on a principal that is not doing his job. This just reinforces that there are things going on in the administration does not want to be known.

[00:34:17] The cat's out of the bag. Thank you. Erica Trandenik. I'm Erica Trandenik and I live in the Brentsville District. I I have a few topics I'd like to address tonight.

[00:34:33] I know the school board likes to proclaim and celebrate different months and days, and I realize there are many to choose from, so you may lose track. I'm disappointed that the school system didn't choose to recognize Police Week, especially since you have so many here working, the four officers, undercover cops, CSOs, and not to mention the six other, or so, unarmed risk management personnel here.

[00:34:55] And there happens to be more officers and security here than at any of our schools each day. Is it more important to protect yourselves than our children? Recognizing Police Week helps educate our students about the sacrifices made by these brave individuals. We instill a sense of respect, appreciation, and gratitude for the men and women in law enforcement.

[00:35:15] This week would have been a perfect time for you all to show support for the men and women you asked to come here to protect you from us mean moms, dads, and parents, and teachers. Prince William County Police, I respect and honor you, and always hope our school system will do the same.

[00:35:31] I'm wondering why you all continue to over control the process of signing up to speak at a school board meeting. Why is it that you ask us to label the topic we're speaking about and then an admin reaches out to try and speak to people who signed up to talk about an issue that may not be something you want said, is that freedom of speech?

[00:35:48] Having your staff reach out to concerned parents who sign up to speak to get ahead of what they plan to say at the meeting? Why not have the sign up sheet here in person like the Board of County Supervisors does? For being a board and school division that says they want everyone's voices heard, your harsh rules and red tape around public comment time, say otherwise.

[00:36:07] Sounds like there's a major problem that needs fixing at the Noakesville school. I've been contacted by many people since the last school board meeting. I hope you can help address whatever the problem is. The main issue seems to stem from a lack of well-enforced expectations for student behavior. Little if any real consequences are discipline and zero follow through.

[00:36:24] When that's lacking in a school environment, it becomes a breeding ground for children to see what they can get away with. even if it puts the wellbeing of others in jeopardy. We need to have clear expectations for student behavior. Does zero tolerance mean zero? We need consistent enforcement of consequences and appropriate discipline.

[00:36:40] We need to make sure that all students are held accountable for their actions, which helps enforce safe and appropriate behavior with every student. I also hope that we don't continue to lose great teachers to neighboring counties and that we can support and value our teachers so that they want to continue to work in Prince William County schools.

[00:36:56] I hear a lot that the school division as a whole is not open to criticism, but I appreciate that the school board voted years ago to provide a venue for confidentiality to teachers and parents through the ombudsman. I hope that when others contact them, they will have a positive, unbiased experience without too much red tape.

[00:37:11] I'm excited for the future of the school board and hope to be up there with other moms and dads who made a promise to protect our children and make changes for better in Prince William County schools. November is coming. - Amanda Locklear.

[00:37:26] And then after that will be Elena Riffle, Jessica Lane, Anna Moyes, Magali Hurtado, and Kimberly Melman-Orazgo. Good evening. My name is Amanda Locklear and my address is on file. Special Education A.

[00:37:43] I had no clue what this meant until about three weeks ago when I was telling someone that my son received an A in social studies, yet he had only completed three out of ten assignments. Three. 30%. He had been excused from seven. 70%.

[00:38:03] Please understand it is also not the first time this has happened this year. I would love for someone to explain how that is a free, appropriate public education. I'm not sure what concerns me the most.

[00:38:20] The fact that my son has not participated in most of the fifth grade social studies curriculum this year. The fact that he received a special education A. The fact that I was not told this would be happening so it could be discussed as a team.

[00:38:38] the fact that if I had not asked, I would not know. Dr. Lateef, Chairman Lateef, if you only completed 30% of med school assignments, 30% of your residency, would you be a board certified physician and surgeon and own your own practice today? Dr. McDade, if you only had seven and a half years of your 23, or roughly 30% of your 23 years of experience as a principal, teacher, leader, would you be sitting here today? Board members, if 30% of your constituents show

[00:39:16] up to vote for you at the end of this year, yet 70% of your opponents show up to vote for them, will you be sitting here next year? My son is one of many special education students in Prince William County Schools, a county that has received federal state local funds for their special education program. My son has a specific learning disability.

[00:39:45] He has to work harder. My son is intelligent, eager, willing, and certainly capable given the opportunity. Our children do not need a free handout.

[00:40:01] Our children need to learn how to try their hardest. Our children need to learn that failure is okay, failure is not fatal, and that it is actually inevitable that at some point in your life you will fail what's most important is how you react to that failure our children need an opportunity our children deserve and need a free

[00:40:29] appropriate public education thank you elena riffle hi um i'm speaking on behalf of a teacher who uh wants to remain anonymous sorry i lost my voice today of all days i'm a concerned parent and and former teacher at the Noakesville school who along with my teaching assistant made the extremely difficult decision to resign recently.

[00:40:59] We both felt we could not in good conscious continue under the leadership at TNS. We were both physically and emotionally exhausted. I personally had lost 19 pounds since starting with many sleepless nights. If you know me, you know I'm a people pleaser and hate confrontation.

[00:41:17] I honestly wanted to try and forget this all and move on. However, I'm also a parent at the school and fear that good experienced teachers and staff will continue to leave, either by transferring at the end of the year, early retirement or sickness, et cetera. This is because as a teacher, once you break your contract, you become virtually unhirable, most likely ending your career in education.

[00:41:39] Teacher retention and morale is so important because it affects class size, student safety, a teacher's ability to teach well, quality of services provided, and the overall climate of the school. I've wanted to stay silent, but I kept thinking of my students and continued hearing personal stories of other students and their parents who have had serious bullying, both verbal and physical, not properly addressed, minimized or ignored, and have had to pull their student out of this school.

[00:42:07] I also know that I'm certainly not alone as a teacher. I know there are others who are suffering in silence and do not feel like they have a voice. As a former TNS teacher, I felt as if I did not, and when I voiced a concern, even if serious, it would somehow come back on me.

[00:42:22] I want to be very clear. This is not about a particular student and in no way should any student or parent be blamed or vilified. They need assistance and appropriate level of services. It is more about the lack of transparency or minimizing incidents and concerns with parents or having a clear systematic procedure for handling bully concerns, including physical incidents that are the issue.

[00:42:45] It is also how staff is treated when they bring up these concerns. I appreciate Mrs. Porter Lucas's attention to this and her attempt at taking corrective action. I hope this continues and that the staff at TNS and all Prince William County Schools will have some sort of clear training and method for truly confidentially sharing concerns without reprimand.

[00:43:06] Teachers need a confidential third party in these situations. I think not only about how my career and family have been impacted, but also of other students, their families, and my fellow colleagues past and present. I hope it's not all in vain. I worry what more. Who else's lives need to be significantly impacted before there's a real change?

[00:43:24] I would like to add in my 17 seconds left that I am also a parent at the Noakesville school who has a child that has had constant issues of people putting their hands on her. The same child that hit my daughter in the ear is the same child that punched another girl in her stomach while I was chaperoning. They were told, I was told something was done, but not what was done.

[00:43:44] Thank you. - Thank you. Jessica Lane. - Hello, my name is Jessica Lane and my address is on file. Last week, I went to two parent forums at the Noakesville School, where I found that many parents share my concerns over the lack of discipline and teacher support at the Noakesville School.

[00:44:06] I'm the mother of a kindergarten girl, and so far this year, my daughter has been shoved, kicked, punched in the head, and choked by one of her classmates. I'm informed that this is now considered common behavior as my outcry for help has been met with complacency.

[00:44:22] I'm told that kids are just more violent and undisciplined since COVID. Why should my child be repeatedly attacked, unprovoked, in an environment that's supposed to be safe? Fix it. Please make school violence less tolerated.

[00:44:39] Sending a student right back to class who has just assaulted another student teaches the attackers that there is little or no consequence for their behavior and sends a message to our children, we don't care about their safety and cripples our unsupported teacher's efforts to maintain order in an overcrowded classroom.

[00:44:56] And this should not be the new normal. - Anna Moyes.

[00:45:14] My name is Dan Moyes and my address is on file. In January of 2021, Joe Biden signed an executive order that allowed students to use the bathrooms and locker rooms that aligned with their gender identity. This gave biological boys unlimited access to use the girls' bathrooms and locker rooms.

[00:45:30] This was the reason why I've taken health and PE online for the past two years, which cost $975 in total. I was lucky enough to have this option available to me, but a lot of other students are not. only is this option expensive it's also inconvenient instead of relaxing and spending times with my friends over the summer vacation I spent the majority of my summer sitting in my room on zoom meetings or working on assignments I took my laptop with me on vacation and every day we had to drive up to 30 minutes for me to have access to the internet many of my peers and I have experienced massive discomforts from seeing biological boys in our private

[00:46:06] facilities no student should feel uncomfortable or unsafe in our bathrooms and locker rooms. Take what happened in Loudoun County. A 14-year-old girl was raped in her high school bathroom by a transgender student. We have no way of knowing what their motivations are for using our private areas. No parent should feel as though they have to either risk the safety of their child or invest massive amounts of time, money, and energy to homeschool them or send them to private school. No student should feel as though their private facilities in their schools are unsafe. Thank you.

[00:46:40] - Magali Hurtado. - Good evening, I'm Magali Hurtado. My address is on file with the clerk. I am the parent of two Old Bridge Elementary students, president of RPTO, and an active member of my community beyond my kids' school.

[00:46:55] I'm here to talk about different issues, so we're in different hats, if you will. As a parent and member of the Old Bridge Elementary community, I want to recognize the division's efforts in planning the bell times for next year. They may not be perfect, but it is a vast improvement from the poorly planned and poorly communicated plan that was presented last year.

[00:47:15] So thank you for taking the steps to minimize disruptions to most of our schools. Now, speaking as a member of a larger community, I have heard from other Lake Ridge and Nocoquine district

schools that they may be considering removing guidance or counseling as part of the regular rotation so they can be available for crisis and students with specific needs.

[00:47:36] That need is evident, but also I am not sure if this is a site-based management decision or if it comes from central office. But for students to open up to their counselors during a crisis, I think they need to also have a relationship with them. I know my kids and kids from other families I talk to during our afternoon activities wouldn't qualify for those one-on-one counseling sessions, but they benefit from regular guidance lessons.

[00:48:00] They talk to me about the breathing or dealing with small and big problems. I think that's beneficial for them. I am a proponent of equity. And we usually say that given some students what they need, doesn't mean taking it away from others, but I feel this is exactly what would be happening if we remove guidance from the regular rotation for all students.

[00:48:23] This sounds like a staffing or scheduling issue that adults need to solve, not at the expense of our students. I don't think an occasional push-in would be the same. Pushing lesson would be the same. And in my opinion, removing guidance from the regular rotation may result in more kids not knowing how to deal with day-to-day issues, Ultimately resulting in more need for one-on-one and crisis services, and then what?

[00:48:48] Are we going to limit counselors to only the really bad crisis? I don't think so. Next, I understand this is hearing and speech month, and I would like to encourage the school division to review the policies for access to speech services. I understand staffing is an issue, but we owe it to our kids to be true to our value of equity.

[00:49:09] A little over a year ago, my first grader was assessed for speech services. The speech issues were glaring, but because he was performing at grade level, he did not qualify for services. He could read, we just couldn't understand what he said. After being well listed, he studied services in a private practice.

[00:49:26] He's about to be discharged from that, so we're happy with the progress he's making, but that's not an option available for all of our students. And it feels like a big equity issue to deny services just because the academic and behavioral impact is not evident, thank you.

[00:49:43] - Kimberly Melman Orozco. - Hello, my name is Dr. Kimberly Melman Orozco. My address is on file. I had prepared a well-formulated speech, but I think it's better for me to just wing it given the tone and tenor of what I've heard so far.

[00:50:00] I'll start by reading a quote from a whistleblower teacher that ended up calling me over a dozen times since March of this year. They have violated so many laws, you have such grounds. I wanted to play audio recording of what she told me on over probably six hours of recordings, 'cause I recorded every minute of it, detailing how my special education daughter was having her rights violated, detailing how she was being provided the answers on tests, detailing how they were omitting, as somebody else had mentioned, omitting assignments to create a fabricated record to show that she was progressing.

[00:50:35] I have it all on recording. this whistleblower teacher expressed everything to the letter and detail. And I actually sent an excerpt, one of many, to Mr. Welk earlier today. I know Dr. McDade, you've seen plenty of them. I don't know if you've listened to them or not, but they detail in audio recording how the rights of my child are being violated.

[00:50:57] So let's go through that for a moment. So first, your specialty programs here in Prince William County don't allow for any accommodations any child to apply regardless of their disability. This teacher in audio recording told me it's a well-known fact that it's because kids with IEPs are not "the cream of the crop."

[00:51:20] My child is not cream of the crop. How angry, how disheartened do you think that I felt hearing that from a teacher who's whistleblowing on what's going on in this county? That is not right. That in my opinion is discriminatory. And all these parents should know that Sussman Godfrey, the law firm that's filed a suit against Virginia Department of Education, they're currently only suing Fairfax County, but they're actually going to be looping in Prince William County after they defeat this motion to dismiss.

[00:51:49] And they're looking for a class action for multiple parents. So you all are aware of this. You know what's going on. This whistleblower is on recording. I've sent the recordings to your offices. You've known about it for months. What you do is a testament to your character.

[00:52:04] And what these people that might not know, I'm a very well-known and prominent social justice advocate. I've been published in Politico, USA Today, Baltimore Sun, Washington Post. I have two full-length books. I will be writing a book about what's been going on in this county. I will be exposing to the letter everything that I've gotten on recording.

[00:52:22] It's not just from this whistleblower. I've gotten your assistant superintendents on recording. I've gotten other teachers on recording. And because of all the evidence that I have, because of all the recordings I've obtained, now I'm on a communication plan. Not because I made a threat, not because I used any untoward language, but because I was able to gather so much voluminous evidence about what's going on in this county.

[00:52:45] Thanks so much. - The next speakers will be Kate Olson Flynn, Oveta Scott, Steven Spiker, and Yubo Zhang. Kate Olson Flynn. Kate Olson Flynn. Okay, Oveta Scott, Oveta Scott.

[00:53:11] - The Latif, may I?

[00:53:28] they have it now please okay oh i'm sorry thank you if she takes one i may not have enough for you go ahead and start oh okay i'm sorry uh good evening ladies and gentlemen of the board mr chairman dr mcdade my name is ovetta scott and my address is on file with the clerk

[00:54:04] tonight madam superintendent is going to give an update on the third quarter data for prince william county schools i would like to share my thoughts on the weight data is collected within in the K-8 grades. You have before you our testing schedules. Our testing schedules have passed PALS, WIDA, HM8, and other mandated assessments that are given in addition to teaching grade level content.

[00:54:29] The missing element in the testing schedule are curriculum summative assessments, which are given at the end of each unit for all subjects. So to me, this reflects that our students are being over-tests on various topics, which does not complement the instructional material.

[00:54:47] The testing schedule really affects our elementary grades the hardest because they are constantly interrupted on laying down the foundation of educational best practices for our students with some form of assessment. If you wanna have an assessment, bring back algebra readiness.

[00:55:04] That was the best math assessment that provided real data on the computation abilities of students. Now I would like to examine the current middle school seven-period schedule versus the

original six-period schedule. As I return to sixth grade math next year, since my coaching position was defunded, I've heard many of my colleagues say that the schedule is awful.

[00:55:30] How are more classes better for the middle child, especially fifth graders switching to a different model of instruction? How will 24, 20, no, sorry. How will 42 minutes enable me to have small groups and differentiated material for my students, especially when they are experiencing social and emotional changes as they transform into preteens.

[00:55:55] When I return to sixth math, I will be forced to chunk my lessons in numerous parts, meaning less time, but not less curriculum. And this does not include having time for technological enhanced teaching that student needs for the state exam.

[00:56:11] In my opinion, the data shows an increase in Title I schools which translate a need for more academic supports. The school board is so vocal on the mental health of our students. So how does multiple tests throughout the school year show proof of mastery of the curriculum that is needed to advance?

[00:56:29] How are 42 minutes of class time beneficial than a full hour of content and relationship building at the critical stage of the middle learner? I ask you to consider reviewing the testing schedule and returning to the six period schedule instead of seven to find a way for more time on what is important for our students.

[00:56:50] Thank you. - Steven Spiker. - Hi, Steven Spiker, my address is on file.

[00:57:07] In the past several months, we've discussed the budget and I've noticed that we've talked about learning loss and projections of how many years it will take to return to baseline. And that macro level approach risks overlooking the thousands of students who have graduated during those years. I've had the chance to talk with many of them heard that recent graduates who report being unprepared for college in part due to lax standards in Prince William County schools.

[00:57:32] Right now we have several policies adopted years ago allowing reassessments on assignments, on retaking tests, and for late or missed due dates. The policy states that this can be allowed on reasonable guidelines set by teacher teams or made at teachers' discretions, and between site-based management and individual approaches, this has led to widely inconsistent standards across the county.

[00:57:54] Now I support a focus on mastery of subject matter versus regurgitation of facts, and I also understand the lack of resources and other barriers that can prevent working on assignments or studying for tests. I believe in grace, and those of us with faith understand how much of a gift grace is.

[00:58:11] But when grace becomes the expectation, standards slip. And we know that this is happening. We know that there is an expectation that when students can turn work in late, it doesn't matter. off a test and it doesn't matter we know that many students say I don't need to study I'll just retake it later this is happening in classrooms today and I've heard reports of students comparing notes on teachers policies when they choose classes based on how little work they can get away with doing to get by that's not grace and constantly retaking tests are scrambling before the end of a reporting period to erase zeros or fix up a half-hearted effort on an

[00:58:48] assignment isn't mastery this is happening even as we seek to close achievement gaps and as we come back from learning loss from covid and as we're about to find out later tonight how our schools

are performing compared to others in the region this isn't an issue to be solved from the top down we have a bottom-up policy that's closest to the students and that can work i respect your teachers and the discretion that we give them that bottom-up approach that requires oversight and a minimum standard and the conversations and decisions about extending grace and understanding of students challenges must also involve parents to have an informed perspective.

[00:59:22] It's the only way to equip parents to provide the needed accountability at home as well. As we review third quarter data, I encourage the board and site-based staff to have a critical evaluation about how discretion is used at their schools and have an honest assessment about its impact on kids.

[00:59:38] Not just on the grades, but on the preparedness for the next grade up and the next phase of life. This will take effort, but it's worth as we aim for the highest achievement for our students and to accomplish our stated vision of students graduating on time with the knowledge and with the skills and with the habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and for their community.

[00:59:58] Thank you. - Yubo Zhang. - Good evening, school board and everyone. My name is Yubo Zhang. I live in Prince William County with my husband and two school-aged children.

[01:00:17] This month is the Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islanders Heritage Month. Today, I'm here to represent my community and urge the PWCS central offices and school teams to increase available curriculum resources on AANHPI contributions and history.

[01:00:35] Our goal is to ensure that all AANHPI students see themselves in American history through formal school education. This is a long overdue inclusive action to our AANHPI community. Kathy Hong's book, Minor Feelings and Asian-Americans Reckoning, highlights systemic barriers to our AANHPI community's sense of belonging in this country.

[01:01:00] Data analysis of Virginia Elementary Social Studies Curriculum Standards 2015 also reveals a complete absence of AANHPI community contribution to this society. A recent national survey by the Pew Research Center indicates that the rich Asian American history is largely unknown even among Asian adults.

[01:01:22] For those who are familiar with Asian American history, informal channels like the internet plays a bigger role in knowledge dissemination than formal school education. Zooming into classroom level data, I noticed that famous Americans who made significant contribution to our society often include representatives from various ethnic group, but not Asian Americans.

[01:01:46] These raises questions, have AANHPI's individuals never made any significant contribution to our society that was written into history, or there are no role models for our AANHPA students. Such omission sends a negative message to all students and affect not only AANHPA students' self-perception, but also how students perceive them as well.

[01:02:09] At the high school level, Asian American history is limited only to a few events, negative events such as Vietnam War, Chinese Exclusion Act, and Japanese incarceration, leaving little room for our students to relate, position themselves within broader historical events on discussions.

[01:02:27] To foster inclusivity and equity, we request the following action. Audit existing teaching resources to ensure representation of all ethnic groups, develop partnerships with the AANHPI

community for curriculum and professional development resources, encouraging cooperation of these resources into formal school education.

[01:02:49] Last but not least, review PWCS staffing and the various committees representation to include ANHPA members and amplify their voices. I appreciate your time and consideration. Let's work together to create a more inclusive and equitable community.

[01:03:06] Thank you. - Thank you. And that concludes citizen comment time. We will move on to the next part of the board meeting. That'll be student representative time. Tonight we have our Danya Sharifi from the Gainesville High School.

[01:03:21] Senior Danya Sharifi, soon to be graduate Danya Sharifi. - Okay. - Ms. Sharifi. - I apologize 'cause my printer didn't work, so it's on my phone. But good evening to the school board, Prince William community, and students. As you know, the year is wrapping up, so students are well underway with exams, SOLs and finals, which is a bit of an overwhelming time, but we're getting there to the home stretch.

[01:03:44] Seniors with graduations are starting within the next two weeks, and it feels like the year flew by. I would just like to highlight in action on the agenda item about August 26th being the Women's Equality Day for Prince William County. This is something that I really like to see because I'm really big on women equality.

[01:04:00] So I hope that this can help educate students about the inequalities for women and then the significance of the holiday falling on August 26th as an ode to the implementation of the 19th Amendment on this day. I'm happy to see Prince William County adopting this recognition.

[01:04:16] I encourage educators and students to get involved in teaching and learning more. My only concern I'd like to point out that's just applicable to this upcoming school year is that for the 2023 to 2024 school year, the 26th falls on a Saturday. So I know that that previous week will be filled with icebreakers and students getting adjusted to going to the first week of school.

[01:04:37] So I would just like to see that during that following week from August 28th to September 1st, students are definitely going to be able to reach material and teachers will explore the accomplishments and teach about female equality. Onto something, I'm excited for the new representatives are going to be announced June 7th, which I believe is at the next school board meeting.

[01:04:58] I'm excited for what they have planned and for those that are chosen, feel free to contact me or the other student represents from now or the previous years. And along with those student representatives, which will serve on the school board next year, we do have a group of student leaders in the student senate.

[01:05:13] While the student representatives represent the students on the school board, the student centers each present one from each of the county's high schools and serve as a connection between the superintendent, students, and student reps. Best of luck to those important students. It's been a great experience.

[01:05:29] You're gonna learn a lot. I also wanna highlight, I do believe that AAHPI and other Eastern literature and education history needs to be more implemented in the curriculum. Growing up, I didn't

really see representation within my own South Asian culture until I got into later 11th and 12th grade high school literature, and that was through AP curriculum.

[01:05:49] So I would like to see that, you know, just growing up, especially in the middle school level. That wraps up my portion of tonight. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out. Thank you all and have a great rest of your night. - Thank you, Miss Donnie, I appreciate it.

[01:06:04] Moving on to superintendent's time, Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May is better hearing and speech month and our teachers, certified interpreters, and speech-language pathologists are fulfilling the theme Building a Strong Foundation by ensuring students with hearing and speech impairments are identified, learning, and achieving at high levels.

[01:06:25] The wonderful and transformative work of our specialists do every day for our students reflects the commitment PWCS has made to learning and achievement for all. So thank you to our speech, language, and hearing staff for your transformative work. National Physical Fitness and Sports Month in May brings awareness to health, activity, and consistency for a better life.

[01:06:45] I encourage everyone to take just one small step toward improving your health and wellness for yourself and others. As the school year wraps up and families begin planning for summer, I encourage our students to take advantage of the many learning opportunities available to students this summer.

[01:07:00] PWCS offers both Launch, an academic recovery program, and Discover, an enrichment program for students in grades kindergarten to grade 12. Registration for both Launch and Discover are in high demand and selection is limited to one enrichment program per student.

[01:07:18] Registration concludes May 26th, so please visit our website at www.pwcs.edu. Select Academics and Programs and then Summer Programs in order to register. As a reminder, our summer school-age childcare, also known as SAC, provider is Alphabest Education, which provides two summer programs, specialty enrichment and excursion.

[01:07:44] Students can balance the relaxation of summer with the excitement of discovery, and I encourage families to take advantage of this program. As we prepare for the next school year, PWCS continues to actively recruit bus drivers, teaching assistants, finance specialists, craftyria workers, custodians, substitutes, and teachers.

[01:08:03] Filling our current vacancies with highly qualified candidates requires the support of the entire community, and you can help by spreading the word about available opportunities or registering for our upcoming virtual instructional job fair, which will be held June 3rd. Registration can be found on our human resources webpage.

[01:08:22] Please refer your family, friends, recent graduates, or consider applying yourself. Next, it is my pleasure to welcome Dr. Tim Neal, our Director of Research Accountability and Strategic Planning. He will present our 2023 quarter three overview report.

[01:08:41] Dr. Neal. - Thank you. Good evening, Dr. Lateef, school board members, and Dr. McDade. And tonight I'm gonna provide a quick overview of third quarter performance data and attendance data as well. So this is a presentation you are all familiar with the general format for.

[01:09:00] We're gonna look at enrollment very briefly to establish a little bit of context. We'll look at some of our attendance patterns and then we'll conclude with an examination of our performance data. So

when we look at enrollment, what we see is fairly consistent with how we started the year.

[01:09:17] The numbers are pretty similar, but we do see some fluctuations up and down across various groups. But overall, the total number of students has remained relatively the same. In terms of attendance, this table shows the percent of average daily attendance for each quarter.

[01:09:38] And what you can see is at the very bottom, see the total attendance for the school division for that quarter and you can see starting in the fourth quarter we had or the first quarter rather we had 94% average daily attendance by the third quarter it was down to 93% which is up a percent from the second quarter so there is a lot of volatility in this and it becomes much more apparent when we look at the line plot which shows the average daily attendance rates from the very beginning of the year to the very end of the third marking period and so what you see here is the day-to-day fluctuation of

[01:10:15] average daily attendance rates as we discussed in the second quarter it was much more volatile largely due to holidays and you can see that that volatility is somewhat reduced in the third quarter that stark dip at the very end was the Friday before spring break which was the last day of the quarter so consistent with what we saw in quarter two right before a holiday we saw a drop in our average daily attendance rate when we look at this by patterns when it comes to the number of absences this table shows the percent of students each

[01:10:50] quarter that have missed one two three four or five or more days in that quarter five or more days would be considered more than 10% and that would be a high absentee rate for that quarter and so what you see in quarter one we had about 18 percent of our students that were missing that that 10 percent mark or more we had a pretty dramatic increase in the second quarter to 29 percent of our students missing a high number of days and by the third quarter that had dropped again closer to the first quarter mark although

[01:11:25] it was still slightly higher now this becomes important because the attendance rates the number of days that are missed contribute to the chronic to chronic absenteeism and so briefly want to to cover what chronic absenteeism means and differentiate it a little bit from attendance.

[01:11:43] Chronic absenteeism is a state-defined metric that basically says if they have missed 10% or more of the school year, regardless of whether those absences are excused or unexcused. So the reason for the absence doesn't matter, it's have they missed more than 10%.

[01:12:02] There are some caveats to this. on homebound instruction, students on home-based instruction are removed from the calculation, and students who have been a member less than 50% of the school year are also excluded from the calculations.

[01:12:19] So this graph shows our chronic absenteeism rates by quarter for 21-22 as well as 22-23. So 22-23 is the gold, 21-22 is in blue.

[01:12:34] From what you can see, the general shape of chronic absenteeism patterns, and when this is cumulative, is pretty similar. There is a smaller rate in quarter one, a peak in quarter two, and then a decrease in quarter three. What is interesting about this data is the decrease from quarter two to quarter three was much steeper this year as compared to last year.

[01:12:57] So you can see last year in quarter two, we had a high of about 19, almost 19 and a half percent and it dipped very slightly in quarter three to eighteen point nine percent this year the peak was higher at

twenty three and a half percent in quarter two but the the decrease was much more dramatic to eighteen point roughly eighteen point seven percent so there was a much sharper decrease from quarter two to quarter three this year when we look at these chronic absenteeism patterns by various groups a couple of patterns emerged we've seen these

[01:13:34] patterns before high school tends to have the highest chronic absenteeism rate so if you look at the table in the upper left what you'll see is there has been a decrease from quarter two to quarter three across all levels but the decrease at the high school level in chronic absenteeism rates is smaller than the others we also see similar patterns of high chronic absenteeism rates for our english learners our special education students and our hispanic students and those patterns are consistent with what we saw in prior presentations so

[01:14:09] this is a different breakdown we've done in the in previous presentations these are the chronic absenteeism rates by grade level and what you can see as we got have gone throughout the year there has been a decrease from quarter two to quarter three across all grade levels with the exception of our 12th grade students where we had we did have a small decrease but it is substantially smaller than all other grade levels moving on to grading just as a reminder for our for context Prince William County does use a standard based grading

[01:14:48] practices which means that students can score a mark subsequently demonstrate master and have those marks replaced this means there can be changes after the fact in those grades so the next two slides are showing our elementary grade distributions so as a reminder this is grades 3 through 5 and what we see when we look across the entire grade distribution the patterns are pretty similar to what we saw in previous quarters there are small fluctuations up and down across all subject areas and across all grade distributions so this

[01:15:26] is reading writing and math and this shows science and social studies again the same patterns manifest mr. Neal on the reading for quarter three that's a big drop on A's not a small drop. In third quarter from 34.7. 41.11 to 33.6 the number of A's or my third quarter elementary student three to five. So for third quarter under reading I am looking at

[01:16:05] 34.47. My slide presentation that's in my deck is different than what you're posting here. Is there a reason? Can we get the right one up? All right so carry on. Mine's different than what's your slide so that that's fine stick no i mean so no it's right here the slide you have up on reading a's for quarter one is 41.11 uh yes sir in quarter one seven yeah quarter two is 34.47 and quarter

[01:16:42] three is 33.60 is there a reason any any idea in the drops in a is from quarter one to quarter three yeah so i would maybe if i were to speculate they all became b's and some of the c's if i were to to speculate, the drop came in quarter one to quarter two, and I would hesitate to guess as to why that could be.

[01:17:07] It could, there could be a variety of reasons for that. However, when we look from quarter two to quarter three, it's very little change. - It's hard to, Dr. Lateef, it's hard to, when it comes to student grades, it's so individual by, you know, content coverage in a class and pacing, it's hard to say, for us to say concretely, exactly why a student's grade might drop.

[01:17:34] Everything we would deposit here tonight would be speculation. Of course in the first quarter is typically review. So a lot of the content that's covered in the first quarter when students are coming back

from a summer break is a lot of material that they've seen before. So the first part of the quarter is a lot of review work.

[01:17:52] So you probably would see higher achievement there. And then as the year progresses, students get into more complex content that they have not seen before. So, and again, that's all just, you know, theory. - And the only reason I'm bringing it up is if you look at all the blocks of this, you know, the numbers are really very much the same, except that one area for Q123 for A's on reading.

[01:18:18] Every other set of blocks is pretty much the same percentages all the way through. So that was the only reason. I was just pointing that out as an aberration. You know, something you may wanna dig deeper into. - Yes, something that we should explore. - Thank you.

[01:18:34] - Dr. Lateef. sure if it's helpful in my my household I have a third through fifth grade student who experienced exactly what is on this slide I may be one of you but it was due in part to for us new material deeper material that is being presented and then some little bit of just mid-year fatigue I'm sure it's not the same replicating all households but that is exactly what my fourth grade students grade reflected as well so not for lack of trying but definitely from change in

[01:19:05] material and that nature one of many households though I just wanted to say that dr. back days observation is very true my experience of 20 years of being a principal and many of my friends the first quarter is a great deal review I'm not sure there's research on it but there's enough data on it from observational data that teachers tend to review the first quarter and then they hit the more difficult work as I would get so many honor roll students the

[01:19:43] first quarter I thought my god what's going on so I asked the question are these kids going to be five hundred on the SOL but they said it's just just we do a lot of reviews so I'm not sure the research is on it but there's a lot of observational data that says that that does happen so when we look at the third quarter reading you might recall in quarter in the quarter two presentation we presented mid-year pals as well as HMH literacy those benchmarks are not done again until later in this spring so what is reflected on this slide

[01:20:23] is just teacher reports based on their multiple assessments given during that quarter and what we see from quarter two is a small uptick in some grade levels and relatively low changes in others moving on to our middle school grade distributions similar to our elementary school we see very small fluctuations from quarter two to quarter three across all subject areas and across all grade

[01:20:55] distributions and coming through to high school recall that high school also has semester grades in here so in addition to quarter two we also have the semester and then quarter three. Our quarter three grades are more similar to the quarter two grades than the semester grades, although we do see some small, again, some small fluctuations across all grade

[01:21:26] levels, content areas, and across the entire grade distribution. So the other analysis that we did consistent with other quarters is a failing course analysis. So here you see our high school and our middle schools on the same table. At the top of the table see our middle school students, quarters one, two and quarter three and for middle school students you do see a small uptick in the number of students failing one or failing two or more courses at

[01:22:05] the high school level when compared to quarter two you see a small decrease of students failing two or more courses and a very small increase in those failing one course when we break this down

by race and ethnicity at the middle school level similar patterns occur to what we've seen in prior presentations where our English learners and our Hispanic students tend to have a higher percentage of students that are failing one or failing two or more courses we

[01:22:43] also did analysis by grade level for this presentation and what you'll see here is the is the percent of students in grades 6 7 and 8 who are failing one or failing two or more courses grade eight stands out as having a higher percentage of students that are either failing one course or failing two or more courses these same patterns are replicated at the high school level so this shows the percentage of students that are failing one or failing two or more courses broken down by race and ethnicity and student group again the

[01:23:19] same patterns manifest where we see higher percentages of students failing one or failing two or more courses that are English learners or Hispanic students and we also did a breakdown by grade level here and what you see is at grade 12 we actually see a smaller percentage of students that are failing one or failing two or more courses.

[01:23:43] In terms of the support strategies in the quarter two presentation we shared several strategies that are long-term attempts to address the issues and so the division is continuing to implement our unfinished learning plan and the continuous improvement plans across all the schools there is consistent and persistent engagement with our families and students at both the middle school and the high school levels one to engage students and families so that they understand what they need to do to make progress and understand the academic supports that are available this can be anything from tutoring to extended

[01:24:20] learning opportunities to before and after school help at the high school level there is a focus for all students but also a focus on our 2023 cohort to make sure that they can get back on target for graduation and this again can include things like credit recovery high dosage tutoring and after school remediation in terms of grading practices the division work group that was started to look at our grading practices and norm them across the division is continuing every school is continuing to have specific and targeted attendance plans and and really focus on getting the message out

[01:24:59] that students need to be in schools to learn. The attention to attendance, which was in its early phases in quarter two, has been amped up and so more schools are implementing that to help improve notifications to families about chronic absenteeism and the importance of attendance.

[01:25:14] And our multimedia campaign is continuing, especially with a special focus on schools with high degrees of absenteeism rates. And to address some of the challenges with helping our English learners, there has been more focus on helping develop the academic language necessary for success with our English learner.

[01:25:38] And that concludes the quarter three overview. - Thank you, Dr. Neal. Mr. Chairman, that concludes and we are open to any additional questions that the board might have related to the quarter three grading. - Ms. William. - Thank you.

[01:25:54] First, I thank you for the presentation and for all the work that has gone into this presentation. When it comes to attendance, I just want to, since we're on the topic, give Featherstone Elementary a great big kudos for having a 6% absentee rate.

[01:26:10] I love my title in schools, and they continue to be a shining star. They were all over every media outlet talking about the success that they've had. One of the things that I don't understand enough, even,

and I think maybe our general public may not also know when we look at information like this, is regarding our English language learners.

[01:26:33] Like, how is the impact to them when they have to, and not only attend their regular classes, but then, you know, receive pull-out services or be in special classes to learn English? Is there maybe in the future some deeper dive that we could do to educate ourselves more as board and the public?

[01:26:52] Because when we see numbers like this, it's very hard, and it almost makes it appear as if, you know, English language learners are just struggling amongst, out there flailing by themselves, and I know that not to be the case, because I've been in schools and I've seen them in their different level of English classes, but I also know that there's a lot of barriers that aren't put on specifically for us, like the state requires them to graduate within a certain period of time.

[01:27:17] They have to take SOLs in English within a certain period of time, and all of that impacts their ability to perform well in school, and I think that that's something that we don't talk about enough, and I think it would be very helpful if we could maybe spend a little time the future discussing that because if we can be some more more educated as a community I think we can be more supportive of that and I think it would also give the teachers and the staff who have to assist special education students a little bit more breathing room on exactly what it is that they do and they're not often spotlighted and I'm particularly sensitive it to it because in my district I think I'm one of the few people who does not speak

[01:27:55] multiple languages so I think it's always good to continue along that education process in looking at these grades do we have any comparison to to say if we're sort of normalizing are we still seeing trends from last year and returning to school is there anything that maybe isn't quite explained in here that we should be sort of delving deeper into or providing a little bit more depth to I think the only thing that to address to the two questions that you We had the first one around our English learners.

[01:28:27] We have a lot of supports that we've been putting in place for our English learners all the way through the continuum into 12th grade. We have, our high schools have hosted EL parent sessions this year, which we definitely wanna see more engagement with those, so you'll see more of that coming up in the upcoming year.

[01:28:45] We've increased the number of the parent engagement series to educate our English learner students' families around what supports are available. And then we've also, especially at the secondary level, have put a lot of changes in place to support our English learners around scheduling, check-in, check-out processes, one-on-one conversations with counselors.

[01:29:10] So there's, and then we did the district-wide training on seven steps, which will also continue into next year as well. So quite a bit has been done, but we certainly can, at the start of the school year, do a deep dive into the supports that we're providing and the work that we're doing for our L students.

[01:29:27] The only other thing that I would say in regards to grades, you know, this is a snapshot. I would caution taking too much stock in this because, you know, the grading policy, I do believe needs to be amended.

[01:29:43] We do need to take a look at the grading policy. I know that there were changes that were made during, you know, COVID and we do, we're out of that now. It's time to take a hard look at that of the practices that are occurring we also do need to look at how we're ensuring that we're norming practices across the school division so from you know one school to the next you making sure that there are some

consistencies around you know grading practices so i would just caution the board this is one snapshot of a student's performance and so we can't put all of the eggs in grades because i do think that there's some norming that needs to be done around grades i do

[01:30:22] that we need to, and we have a task force now that's looking at that with the goal of updating and making some changes to the policy. - Thank you, and I just, my last comment is I do, I was able to see at Freedom High School the special evening they had to bring in parents and family members for students who were failing two or more classes, and the attendance was high, but I do think that those type of programs bring that special extra sort of needed attention.

[01:30:51] It's sometimes it could be hard to make parent-teacher conferences. They're also not sort of lengthy in time if you have something else to discuss. So I wanna appreciate that focus and seeing it live in action. I was there, ample time was given to be able to explain how our grades work, how it's cumulative and the extra supports that are put into place at a high school level.

[01:31:11] So I do appreciate that being rolled out. That was something new and I think as a parent and as a board member that just sort of gives you the extra time needed with your school staff and having them all on site at one time is extremely helpful. So I valued some of the feedback that I received from the parents for that as well, because we do need above and beyond time for, especially at the high school level for those 15 minute conferences, so thank you.

[01:31:32] - We do have a tiered approach for looking at students who may be off track for graduation. And the high schools have been utilizing supports from our post-secondary office under the direction of Ms. Huebner. This year, they created a robust tiered process for really tracking cohort graduation.

[01:31:53] Students that are off track from freshmen all the way, not just looking at the 2023 cohort, but also looking at our students from the time they come into high school. I get a regular update on that to show if we're moving the needle for students moving from tier three to tier two to tier one or getting back on track.

[01:32:09] And we also can see all of the conferences, the one-on-one conferences that have been held at schools with counselors, with students. So a lot of work has been done. I do want to just acknowledge the post-secondary office and all of the work that's been happening out of Rebecca Slater's shop, working with counselors and giving guidance around, the best way to approach students who may be off track to get them back on track towards graduation.

[01:32:40] - Mr. Wilk. - Thank you, I'll be succinct. Yeah, no, thank you, Dr. McDade, for mentioning the consistent practices. I know there is a big discussion and a committee task force looking at site-based management. And I hear throughout, I'm gonna resonate with what you were saying, inconsistent policies with standards-based grading, even from like department to a department, building to building, sometimes discrepancies with teachers to teachers.

[01:33:05] And I think that's something if we could better standardize across the board, I think that would be something very helpful with overall grading and success with these students. One area, and I'm hearing this more and more when it comes to like the chronic absenteeism.

[01:33:23] You know, outside of, well, getting the law involved or something, there are a lot of families and students that I'm finding out more through my conversations with teachers and stuff where there's really no accountability at the home.

[01:33:39] Kids are not being sent to school. And for whatever reason, maybe, you know, again, people are working multiple jobs. I'm not gonna discredit that or something, but just kids are not coming to school. what can we, or what have we done as a division to really try to get those kids in?

[01:33:58] I mean, for the ones where we're having trouble reaching the parents, you know, who I think have the onus to have their kids go to school, of course, but in the responsibility, but what can we do further, I guess? - Yeah, there's limitations to what we can do as a school.

[01:34:13] So we are doing everything that we possibly can to prioritize attendance, push attendance, and get students in school. We do have attention to attendance now, so that's taken some of the burden off of the schools with all of the documentation and paperwork. So families are now receiving regular notification, the 10 day notices, just making sure that parents are aware of the impact that lack of attendance has on students' education.

[01:34:39] We're doing incentives. We're doing everything humanly possible within our locus of control. but as a school system, ultimately there's a limitation to how much we can do to get students actually in seats in the classroom, but we've exhausted all of the possibilities.

[01:35:01] - Thank you. - I was interested in just following up on this excused versus unexcused absentee. Are we still looking at accreditation tied to the attendance or has something been done to modify that response from at the state level?

[01:35:28] - So the state, the Board of Education did discuss chronic absenteeism and they have decided to keep it as a factor for the accreditation process. So it will be included in the calculations for next year. - So a school could have SOL data that's high, but if they have a poor attendance, they would get a conditional accreditation, is that how it will work?

[01:35:55] Without looking at all the specific indicators for a school, I'm not gonna answer that with a yes or a no, but that would be a factor. So a school could have high performance data and still have an indicator for chronic absenteeism, that would be a level two or a level three. - Have you looked at attendance and the impact on grading the student's grade?

[01:36:16] Have you done, I'm not asking you to do it, but have you done that, have looked at that? - We have, we have looked at correlations between attendance and grades. - What did you find? So as would be consistent with what is in the literature, we do see a moderate association between attendance rates and academic performance.

[01:36:35] So the adage is we can't teach kids if they're not in school, our data supports that. The better attendance kids have, that is associated with a higher grade point average. - I was looking at the attendance of African American students and they are like 14.36, They have the lowest, you know, problem in terms of that.

[01:37:02] But when you look at their failing grades and the two failing grades there, there doesn't seem to be a correlation. So I think Dr. McDade said it best when you say you can't really draw conclusions from all of this data, but sometimes you can look at it.

[01:37:18] I'm wondering, have you looked, when are we going to get the preliminary data? Have you gotten any SOL data? I know you don't have it in it. Have you seen any trends or are we improving just based on your preliminary?

[01:37:33] I don't want you to make a major, but have you looked at some of that data? - So thank you for asking that question. We are currently in the process of testing across all of our schools. So it's really too early to look at an aggregate level to see if we have any patterns across the division at this point.

[01:37:52] - When will we get the preliminary? As a board, will we get a chance to look at the preliminary data? So, the first testing window will close in the next, I want to say week or so, and then there'll be expedited retakes after that, and then there'll be some additional processing with some preliminary from data available in June.

[01:38:13] Okay, thank you. And have you -- what's going on with 12th graders? I guess they're just seniors. Let's add Donia answer that one. I don't know. I think we were just -- Donia and I were just sitting here, you know kind of looking at the data and she said to me you know senioritis you know at some point once they're kind of submitting final projects and things like that um you know attendance will take a hit have the last question i have have we looked at why kids stay home you know when i was a kid

[01:38:49] there was nothing to do at home so who wants to stay home but i i just think that there's something with the social media where you can stay home and still be active because students have interactions outside of school so i'm just wondering if that has some correlation when you do your root cause analysis would you look at that so our department has not done any investigation of that i'm not aware if that has occurred in any of the attendance checks that have have been done denise why are you standing do you have something you'd like to share i will say that our team in student health and

[01:39:28] wellness has conducted some focus groups talked with students and we don't have any formal we we can't answer something like that. There's a lot of different reasons, but I think the best thing that we can do is continue to encourage parents and adults in the building to encourage students to come and be engaged in the academic.

[01:39:44] So we have talked with students and we will be doing that, but there's not gonna be one size fits all answer. It varies from kid to kid. - And I'd like to also remind, I think I talked to Dr. McDade about this earlier at some point, that there appears to be this perception that there are just so many tests that it is impacting instruction.

[01:40:07] And I know you guys are looking at it. I really would like you to look at that because I see that I consistently get this concern about the amount of testing they're doing versus instruction. Testing is good when that test data changed your instruction, but all that testing, the testing, some of it I think is overwhelming.

[01:40:25] So I'd like you guys to look at that. - We do have a working group that is representative the entire county across section of the county I'm looking at assessments a lot of assessments we can't eliminate but just looking at where there are redundancies where for example with the VGA which is a growth assessment HMH also is a growth assessment but with VGA we don't have and I don't know if is Tim still there I don't see him but oh I we don't have just correct me if I'm wrong Tim and we don't have readily available data

[01:41:02] that teachers can use for real-time determinations of next level of instruction, and so that's where HMH comes in. That is a redundancy, so things like that, we are looking at where we can streamline. There is a lot of assessments that are required that do overlap in terms of the timing of when they're given that can be burdensome, and so this working group is looking at developing balanced

grading grading and assessment system for the county that gives guidance to all schools and norms practices not just for assessments but also for grading so when you hear and we

[01:41:41] heard a teacher tonight talk about you know end of unit assessments and you know formative assessments in the classroom how does all of that play into the assessment cycle so looking at the full range of assessments both formative and summative to make decisions that we can give schools guidance on on how to create balance in the assessment assessment system which goes hand in hand with grading so we we also need to at the same time not just look at adjusting or making changes to the assessment cycle but also looking at improving grading practices as a whole across

[01:42:15] the county i think that's that's great i think that i've heard so many consistent concerns about the overwhelming testing that if you are looking at ways of modifying or relooking at what we can eliminate i think that needs to be somehow conveyed to the teachers i'm not sure teachers know that we're really looking at it so if you guys could let teachers know in some way that we are really looking at it it would i think it would help with uh some of the concerns that teachers - Ms. Wall.

[01:42:53] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I had some questions that I wanted to ask. Do, first with attendance, do we have additional evidence that our efforts to encourage students to attend class are working?

[01:43:10] I know we have a pilot, right? And we're gonna expand, we're expanding the pilot. I know, and we saw some of that, but what we saw is that we had the second quarter, a big jump in absenteeism. And then it seems like it's returned to baseline, but I just wondered if you could speak just a little bit more like to some of that data that we have that to the programs that we have recently implemented, are we seeing that it's helping or do we need to do it?

[01:43:35] And my second question would be, what are we doing to combat the high rates of chronic absenteeism in that in high school and specifically with our Hispanic population, which seems to be an anomaly or an outlier? - I'll, Denise, I don't know if you have something to add here, but what I will, what I do want to impress upon the board is that - What we're seeing and Denise does share, I get an opportunity to see a regular update on what's happening by elementary schools, middle and high schools.

[01:44:03] And what we see sometimes is a mixed bag or like uneven results, right? So you'll see some schools that are continuing to improve in their attendance rates while others, you know, may get some movement and then all it takes is a few holidays to fall on a Friday and then that shifts, right?

[01:44:22] So what you see today, looking at the whole system, it probably would be beneficial to look at individual school movement because it tells a more detailed story of what's happening in terms of whether or not something's working or not working.

[01:44:40] But I do know that a lot of support has gone out from Ms. Huebner's office to schools on how to address attendance, from whether it be, you know, even home visits, phone calls, parent meetings, incentives, like I said, around the documentation that's being sent.

[01:45:03] Everything humanly possible for us to do around attendance is being done, but there are limitations to what we can control when it comes to attendance. Ultimately, you know, families are responsible for getting students to school.

[01:45:21] And so we can provide support. We can have our parent liaisons find out what barriers might exist and offer resources and support. But then there's a point where the school system no longer has

control over the situation. So that's what's happening with attendance and it's happening across the Commonwealth, across the country.

[01:45:42] Even in our superintendents meeting today, that was the big topic around attendance. So I'm not sure what more we could be doing in this space, but for some schools they're seeing a return on the meetings with parents, the phone calls, the home visits, the incentives, the notifications, and then others may get some results, but then they fall backwards from quarter to quarter.

[01:46:10] So it's really uneven results. I don't think that the needle is moving as sharply as we need it to. So we're seeing some incremental movement and then we get excited and then I get another report and it looks different and it fluctuates from school to school.

[01:46:29] - Thank you, that gives me a greater depth of understanding of what we're up against. And I do know that we face a lot of challenges in our communities, economic struggles, other problems, social problems, drug abuse or drug acceptance, violence, social media, et cetera, things that are kind of fraying at the social fabric.

[01:46:50] and in homes and communities, and those do affect our students. And those external factors, we can't necessarily control for those. And so all of those kinds of stresses in children's lives or in their communities do make it difficult for students to show up, stay focused, and get their work done and make that academic progress.

[01:47:16] So I suppose it is a very significant challenge that's gonna require a lot of effort. So I do appreciate the additional knowledge that you shared. I wanted to go to slide 11, where we, the one that discusses how we will be at the task force to, I think it's, yeah, we'll get there.

[01:47:38] How we're evaluating, and my question is how are we, I'm glad to hear that we are evaluating the grading policies and regulations. And I would include maybe even the philosophy and approach that we're currently using for standards-based grading from, because I guess my question is what, as we look at those things, if we can evaluate some of those key indicators and anecdotally, I've heard that a number of concerns about our current philosophy.

[01:48:11] We heard about it a little bit tonight. I've heard about it from my schools and from teachers that I talk with. To be honest, I'm not really sure that the switch that we made five or six years ago, I'm not sure how many years ago we did make the switch. I'm not really sure that it's, yielding the results that we thought we were gonna get i think we're getting a lot of especially at the secondary level a lot of gaming the system students who are smart and lazy maybe you know not quite getting the work done i and as evidence you know i'd say looking at slide 18 you know almost 30 percent of our high schoolers are getting a d or an f in math and a quarter of

[01:48:49] them are getting a d or an f in science if you add up the d and the f categories together and that's with our philosophy of allow allowing liberal remediation and grade replacement we're getting those kinds of grades so to me that's concerning um you know where we have this liberal philosophy where you can change that grade and here we are third quarter and we still have that many d's and f's i'm very concerned um you know that 34 of our high schoolers are failing at least one course and only 66 percent are passing all their courses so i don't i don't know if i get

[01:49:23] the philosophy that we have in place but i don't know if it's actually working for the teenage brain um and that we might be reinforcing the wrong um set of behaviors anyway i i know there that's a

conversation from another time but i would encourage the task force to to really ask some of those hard questions and really look into that um because i i just don't see this moving in the right direction um i would say you know part of what has to happen is evaluating implementation um you know standards-based grading is a research-based approach that a

[01:50:03] lot of school systems are moving towards however we have to start with what's happening with implementation across this you know it like anything we can't say whether something's working or not working if we don't evaluate the effectiveness of it and part of effectiveness comes with implementation with fidelity.

[01:50:22] So we would need to first start by looking at, you know, the fidelity of implementation throughout the school system to then evaluate whether or not it is the actual approach or is it the implementation. But either way, I agree with you that, you know, we do have to, and it is a part of the task force for balanced assessment and grading to take a look at that implementation, to take a look at the policy and practices and to make sure, 'cause implementation consistent or inconsistent depends on, you know, from one school to the next in the system.

[01:50:57] So we have to look at those things and then make sure that, you know, schools do have norm practices that they're following. So that's all a part of the work of the task force and it is representative of, you know, teachers are on there, you know, central office folks in teaching and learning, administrators, so there's a diverse body of stakeholders that are on the task force really taking a look at what is actually those individuals that are in the schools doing the work, implementing the practices, coming back to look at this to see what needs to be done.

[01:51:31] And so the hope is to first do that evaluation, provide you with an update on what the current state is, and then identify what the problems of practice are and how we move forward with both making changes to practice as well as to policy.

[01:51:48] - Okay, I appreciate that. - Ms. Wall wrap up and then I'll go to, I think Zargarpur was up, and then Jessie, or you have some topic, same topic. - I want to follow up on standard-based. - I just wanted to follow up on the standard-based grading. It's not a philosophy, it's really research-oriented. I remember when Bill Bixby brought in the trainers, and we learned a lot about standard-based grading, and when you look at the retakes that kids are allowed to take, it's like you take a driver's test, if you fail it the first time, the whole idea is that you learn how to drive.

[01:52:21] I think we need to look at it, but it's not a philosophy, it is research-based, and I think that maybe we need more information on why, what research, what standard-based grading really is, but maybe that's what we need, I'm not sure. Thank you. - Ms. Wall.

[01:52:37] - Yeah, I was reading off of slide 11, where it said that it's been developed using the philosophy and approach of standards-based grading, so I just borrowed that from that. but I guess maybe one thing that might be helpful is to look at where we were before.

[01:52:55] Also, I mean, I understand the implementation piece. I understand, like, we have to see, like, are we actually implementing this fidelity? And then what, right? So let's say we are and we still see that we're not moving the needle. And so I've had kids in Prince William County Schools a long time, and I do see a difference between my 2018 graduate and my now 2023 graduate.

[01:53:16] So some of this is probably just my experience, but anecdotal thing and I'm not really a research scientist or anything like that, but maybe this is something that George Mason or one of our other university collaborators could help us with. And I think one of the things that might be interesting, again, I'm not a research scientist, but to take some of that hard data like the SAT data maybe, or the SOL data, things that don't change a whole lot and compare it to how our students performing on those really broad assessments now cohorts and how did our students used to do and is there a difference and and

[01:53:52] how do our graduates go on and succeed in college now as opposed to how our graduates like before 2018 went on and how did they succeed right because I mean this is the span that I see in my students and I do see a difference in their commitment to getting things done on time you know the high the quality of the work their dedication to even doing homework you know my 2018 graduate was really those kids you know they were they had to get their homework in or their grades would fall but that's not necessarily the case with the 2023 graduate there a lot of them aren't even doing the homework because it's only worth 10% of their grade so they know like well anyway they're playing their

[01:54:30] game in the system as smart high school first do but I'll let it rest but I do appreciate the this topic and I am glad to hear that we are going to be that we have a task force of diverse learners who are going looking into this because Because at the end of the day, these are really important questions, and I think if we're going to move the needle on student achievement, then we do need to really look into this.

[01:54:55] And again, I would encourage us maybe to reach out to our university partners and researchers to help us. Thank you so much. Ms. Zargarpur. Thank you, Dr. Lateef. Actually, Ms. Wall said a lot of what I was thinking about. She and I have had this conversation a lot too, and I've said that my own child would game the system.

[01:55:14] would figure out exactly what she needed to do or not do and then decide from there and she was not motivated by grades different child anyway so I mean so this stuff is pretty complex because we know our kids are motivated differently they we know that they have different goals for themselves but I do like the idea of if you want to use that word philosophy maybe just using our own strategic plan where we talk about having the habits of mind and skills to be successful when they leave us that's really really where we want to head toward I think so that's all miss Williams thank you I guess I think we

[01:55:52] also just need to keep in mind when discussing this that no matter which way we go there will be students who will game the system my son was in school when you had to do a lot of homework and busy work in order to account for most of your points in your system and then it switched over to where your tests were weighted differently so then he was like I'm not doing homework when I was in we had a completely different system trust me I spent hours as someone who was not grade motivated to figure out the best way that I could expend the least amount of energy and still pass so I think that there's always going to be some of that and I don't say that to minimize what we should be doing but as

[01:56:30] someone who has an elementary schooler assist with the middle schooler and two high schoolers I think it really depends upon the student and I think it also depends upon the goals that we have for those students but the level of understanding of the topic since switching I think has been most impactful especially in the students that I run across and again it's not every student but then for them to be able to explain back to me what they have learned in class and and in a way using their own words which demonstrates mastery which I think is the goal is what I'm seeing more and more frequently and I do think that language and how we describe this is very important what

[01:57:10] Miss Jessie said about, you know, this being research-based is critical. We don't want to unduly influence the public in thinking that this is something that we're not using best practices for. There hasn't been an extensive amount of research. I know Alexandria City Schools just switched to this style of grading.

[01:57:29] So I think it's very important to respect the researchers and the hundreds and thousands of hours that went into making this determination about how we grade students. I don't wanna sweep it under the rug with incorrect language as well. So no matter what the outcome is, I think that it's worth being respectful to those who develop this practice and that we respect it as such.

[01:57:55] - Ms. Jackson. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. How we have discussed data has changed considerably since I joined the board, and I just wanna say I'm thankful for the different data, but I also wanna recognize that it doesn't tell the whole picture of a student.

[01:58:13] So since we were talking about standard-based grading, I'm just gonna start with that question and then go backwards. So referring back to 11 and going back and revisiting the standard-based approach grading, are they discussing how homework, as part of the task force, are they discussing homework and the-- - Well, they'll be looking at the entire policy and so homework is a part of the regulation, I should say.

[01:58:40] The full regulation is being reviewed, will be reviewed. the task force just got started. They started looking at all of the assessments and doing inventory, just kind of collecting data from schools to do some mapping across the system. And so the stage they're in now is, all of that has been synthesized.

[01:58:58] And so the next phase would be looking at what the next steps are, and one of those next steps is evaluating the full policy and regulation that goes with it. - Okay, thank you. And then when we go and we discuss the supports students it's i i hear that it's been extensive at the high school level and um that um i can't see what i've written i'm so sorry the high schools are providing family information nights tiered student supports for the 2023 graduation cohort does does that mean that its entire families are joining and if so are there exit slips to gain to gathered feedback feedback to improve that's a

[01:59:36] - That's a good question about exit slips. I'm not sure. I can't say every school may do something different in terms of how they're capturing feedback from families. Some schools are using QR codes for family engagement, some of our pilot schools, but I'll have to, that's something we'll have to explore what each school is doing to capture feedback on the actual engagement event that they host.

[02:00:00] - I appreciate that. And then I was looking through the slides in preparation for the meeting, and I think we've talked about it before, but the data on the duly identified students, the ones that may be both special ed or English loaner, give multiple demographics.

[02:00:24] When we revisit this again for the fourth quarter, could we get data on how that specific group has changed? - Yes, ma'am, we can include that. And then I think I know the answer to this, but last time I briefly discussed the VGA and my concerns that there weren't any, like, wasn't guidance yet from the VDOE and how to read it.

[02:00:50] I haven't missed any memos, right? Has there been any guidance on how to read the VGA, specifically as it correlates to reading the SOL scores, so that as a parent I can look through and see how people did progress, you know, the point of the test? So they have, the VDOE has published their winter portiles, but it is still considered, or what I would consider their beta year.

[02:01:19] Once we get through the spring testing, there'll be a more complete analysis, and that will give us a better picture of how the VGAs can be used to guide instruction at the macro level. Again, at the teacher level, there are the student detail reports that they can look at and say, okay, here are the specific areas we need to address with this student.

[02:01:40] But as a big picture yet, that guidance is still coming, and we're still working in that direction. - Okay, thank you for the update. And again, thank you for the presentation and taking the time to answer my questions. - Okay, thanks. Just a couple comments. Dr. McDade, I think it's correct to say that at least as far as I know in the five years I've been on this board, they implemented standards-based grading probably eight, nine years ago.

[02:02:04] There's never been an evaluation or a look back to see how it's been implemented, the fidelity and integrity of it across the division. And so with your efforts on site-based management, looking at that, and then also this task force to assess where we are, how are we implementing it?

[02:02:21] This is the first time we're really looking at this. Is that correct? - Well, for the two years now that I've been here, I don't know what happened before me, but this is our first-- - So I can reassure you that this is the first time. Okay, if this is what we're doing. But we appreciate this and I think it's really important to have the task force look at, I know Mr. Wilk had brought up homework a few meetings ago.

[02:02:44] That's a real concern, you know, that there may be a lack of at different grade levels and I'd be interested to know what the task force sees and thinks about that. And then, you know, and I asked this before, you know, can you break down the absenteeism by GPA, especially at the high school level?

[02:03:05] Can we do that? - Aside from the correlation. - I don't care about the correlation. I just wanna know that, do we have like a group of kids who are up in the 375, 3842 ranges who are just skipping school left and right 'cause they figured out how to game the system with Canvas?

[02:03:23] - So we don't have broad clusters of kids now. So when we look across the GPA distribution, we see it is consistently across all of those groups. - Oh, so you're saying that there's no peaks and valleys, meaning like you're seeing absenteeism across all groups?

[02:03:43] - I see. - I see absenteeism across all groups, yes. - Okay, all right, well, I mean, that's good to know. Okay, and then just, again, Dr. McDade, I really do appreciate this. I think this is long overdue, some of the work that needs to go into just making sure we are doing the right things, right?

[02:04:00] And while it is a research-based practice, and I recognize that and you're hearing about Arlington looking at moving forward with standards-based grading last week, they talked about it. I think it is important with any practice that we do that it be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

[02:04:16] And so for the first time, we're gonna do this and I think it's critical and I really do appreciate this. Thank you all for the great work that you continue to bring forward to this board and Dr. McDade for your commitment to making sure that we're doing the best we can across the board.

[02:04:32] and whatever Featherstone is doing, let's export that all the way across the division. Thank you very much. I think moving on to the next topic is gonna be just the first reading tonight. What are we doing? Oh, committee updates, all right, sorry.

[02:04:49] Yeah, so what do we got? Who's up first for this? Ms. Jackson, you will update us on, what are you updating us on? Joint Environmental Task Force with Prince William County.

[02:05:06] - All right, thank you. I serve as a school board appointee to the Joint Environmental Task Force with Ms. Zagobor as the alternative. Alternate. When I'm out there, you're the alternative. The mission of JET is that Prince William County School Board and the supervisors have created a Joint Environmental Task Force with the design to collaboratively unify the political, operational, and administrative capabilities of the county and school, division proactively and equitably across climate change, to address climate change and environmental sustainability.

[02:05:42] The JET will provide a forum for informing, advising, collaborating, and addressing county-wide issues and aligning institutional policies and practices pertaining to climate change and environmental sustainability through an equity lens being continually applied by both the county and the schools.

[02:06:00] The Joint Environmental Task Force has met three times, so I'm just gonna provide a brief update. The meetings have been mostly organizational in nature. The first meeting of the task force, we reviewed FOIA and the conflict of interest, drafted bylaws and discussed the history behind the task force.

[02:06:19] During the second meeting, a more in-depth discussion of procedure and priorities was held. And during the April meeting, the team worked further on narrowing down a list of topics that JET, Joint Environmental Task Force, would cover, and the county and PWCS provided a report.

[02:06:36] Ms. Wymer provided an update last meeting for PWCS or on PWCS, including Freedom High School, owning their green ribbons achievement, partnering with members of the community to host every part of events at expo or exhibit.

[02:06:52] She also discussed major projects including environmental literacy, sustainability education, and the energy, climate, and LED conversion upgrades. Ms. Monner, who's with the county, provided an update on the community energy and sustainability master plan, which I believe is holding a virtual town hall tonight to receive feedback from the public on what should be prioritized.

[02:07:14] The task force is scheduled to meet every third Thursday of every month and the next meeting is tomorrow. Ms. Mano tomorrow will be providing a presentation of the Community Energy and Sustainability Master Plan and Ms. Weimer with PWCS will be presenting on the compost program.

[02:07:33] So all of the minutes and the agenda is posted on the web PwC County website. So if anybody has any questions, they can also email me. And again, we're just getting up and running. Thank you.

[02:07:49] - Thank you. The second committee update is an update on the Governor's School at Innovation Park. And it says Chairman Lateef, and he's not here. - I'll take it. - Do you wanna say something, Ms. Williams? Okay, thank you. - You're welcome. So both Dr. Lateef and I serve on the Governor's School Innovation Park board.

[02:08:09] At the last meeting, we continued with our student presentations. There were four groups of students who presented their end-of-year projects. In addition to that, we had informational updates on current students enrolled in their acceptance, they received their acceptance to college.

[02:08:29] I did bring my little highlighted list. Over 83 schools were represented. We should have the annual scholarship dollar totals coming forth shortly. We also talked about student updates for the 23-24 school year, as well as the calendar.

[02:08:48] Prince William County Schools will, again, have the most amount of students attending the Governor's School. And with that, there's very representative from all of our high schools across the county. We voted on updates to the Governor's School at Innovation Park Policy Manual and Constitution and Bylaws.

[02:09:06] This was the first time in 10 years that this was done. I am very proud to say that I made a motion to have the non-discrimination policy updated to mirror Prince William County schools and be more inclusive for all of our students and staff at the Governor's School.

[02:09:21] Then we talked also about school calendar highlights. The research symposium was held on May 12th. And just a little update on that. The research symposium this year was moved to the Freedom Center Gymnasium because we ran out of space at the location where it used to be.

[02:09:39] There were over 95 projects that were on display from students. They ranged from behavioral animal sciences, behavioral social sciences, chemistry, sustainability, and then there were innovation, plants and astronomy, plant sciences, robotics and intelligence machines, and then of course, my personal favorite, 'cause I'm a little biased, but the innovation project displays where students are given a set amount of money to solve a real-world problem.

[02:10:11] I highly encourage anyone to make this event. It's usually held in May, and it is open to the public. It's just mind-blowing. A lot of these projects, students have received patents for over the year. I think we're up to maybe seven or eight student groups which have received patents.

[02:10:29] I know Dr. Lateef's son was part of a group last year that either received a patent or is in the process of receiving a patent for their work with concussions. The Gov School's graduating class will graduate on May 20th, this Saturday at 10:00 a.m. at Osborne High School.

[02:10:46] Every year, the location rotates between the three school divisions. And that's pretty much it. - Thank you. - Thank you, Ms. Williams. We are going to move on to item 16 on the agenda, board matters.

[02:11:07] And agenda item 1601 is on for information tonight and is the revision of policy 180 office of the ombudsman. This policy has been updated to reflect the administrative oversight of the office of the ombudsman by the board chair and vice chair of the school board.

[02:11:26] Is there a presentation or anything on this tonight? It's just on for information. So I suppose if you have any questions, reach out to staff or we'll have it again in the first meeting in June for action.

[02:11:43] And so now moving on to 16. two board matters so last meeting we started with mr. Wilk I believe at least that's what it says here did we okay did we start yes we shall and so we'll start with it would be miss Jessie okay in the in here it says that mr. Wilk started the last meeting so miss Jessie can we go ahead with you okay I

[02:12:17] appreciate not following mr. Wilk first of all I want to congratulate Carradale Elementary, it received a national certificate for a Visible School Award, and that's John Hattie's research on what works in school, and he does meta-analysis, which includes longitudinal and cross-sectional studies, and they were selected as a national model.

[02:12:46] I visited aviation maintenance program, a specialty program at Woodbridge High School. There are two specialty programs in the county, aviation maintenance. One is at Woodbridge, and the

other one is at Stonewall. And they have over 100 applications, by the way, for next year, very successful program.

[02:13:02] And I was instrumental in bringing that program to the county, and I'm really pleased with it. The art show I visited, Midland High. Colgan had a dance performance, and it's like a Broadway production. They are so good at what they do, so I went to see that.

[02:13:20] Decision Day, my daughter's involved in that, but I also visited Woodbridge High School's Freedom Day, Decision Day and Decision Day at Freedom. and i think i have some slides for my next part of my presentation okay so this is the committee of people who put together the naming of of uh the traditional school non-traditional school ad for dr robert icorn he was a founder and then i think i have another slide of those

[02:13:55] persons no i have the slide of the persons attending that okay we we had several people attending that particular program, superintendent of staff, VOC, Kenny Bode, Victor Angry, me, Justin Wilk, and Lori Williams, and if you look at the mural in the back, you'll see that the wolf is really prominent, but in that first slide, you'll see the actual muralists also attended.

[02:14:20] I don't know, Bita, we'll get the one with the next slide with, you know, this was done, we didn't see this, but the muralists did this entry into the hallway, so I wanted to show that. The second item I want to share with you is the, hold on, I think I've got it here.

[02:14:48] Future Kings, and I just want to say this is a phenomenal group, and these kids are involved in all kinds of science projects, and they are middle schoolers and high schoolers, and it is designed by, it was founded by Dr. Eric King, the ninth annual scholarship program there. These kids to learn cyber security, computer game design, and bio science, drone engineering.

[02:15:19] And I think we had a picture of persons attending, but it was attended by Dr. Carol Bernard, Justin Wilk, and several people from the Board of Supervisors. So I'm gonna stay within my time, thank you. - Ms. Williams.

[02:15:36] - Thank you, thank you. That was a great award ceremony, I was there as well. It's nice that we have so many different organizations outside of our own school division that come and support and celebrate our students. Future Kings is one of them.

[02:15:53] That leads me right into my program attendance. I was able to attend Featherstone, my newsworthy title in school for 6% absentee rate. Fourth grade, Pink Space Theory graduation that was held, the program is GREAT, G-R-E-A-T, Math Minds, Great Math Minds is a program that brings in bright young students and exposes them to STEAM.

[02:16:22] It was started by, excuse me, by Miss Monica Nichols. Miss Kane, a fourth grade teacher at Featherstone hosted the event and it was held with most of her students. Dr. Nichols was a student who struggled with math who now is a IT professional and is paying it forward by having this program at Featherstone and also at Neabsco.

[02:16:44] Last year I was able to attend the event at Neabsco. Families are celebrated and brought in. They are encouraged to participate in these activities with their students, and this year celebration was just as amazing as last year, and I'm always excited when students create games for the things that they are

learning, and it was really impressive to see some of these handmade board games that have woven in Steam Topics.

[02:17:12] Outstanding event. Thank you to Ms. Nichols and Ms. Kane for hosting. I did attend the Forest Park Suicide Awareness Walk. On the 8th, I was honored to also attend the Kathleen Seafeld Awards. Typically the teachers are celebrated at this award ceremony in the vein of art.

[02:17:32] On the 12th, I did mention in our Governor's School update that I attended the Governor's School Symposium. It is absolutely amazing to look at all the different projects that the students come up with. My favorite project this year was a clothing design project.

[02:17:47] It's an app students are working on where you'll be able to input the type of clothes that you like down to the fabric. And it's made right now tailored to stores. And so you would walk in and essentially with your app, plug in what you like, and whatever is in the store's inventory, it would find it for you and match it up, whether it be a trend or a particular outfit that you're looking for.

[02:18:07] For someone like me who absolutely despises shopping in malls, I thought that was fantastic. And then the other projects ranged in everything from school safety to environmental sciences. Again, it's one of my favorite things to participate in. On 5:13, I spent all day at the first Lego League Fun Day.

[02:18:27] I want to thank all of the coaches and the teachers and the staff and the parents and the volunteers who were there for over eight hours to celebrate elementary school robotics. Big shout out to Chance, who was there with the Yellow Jackets team for robotics. They made elementary schoolers shine and especially thanks to Ms. Denise Carroll who was there planning the event.

[02:18:50] And then last but not least, I just want to encourage all students to maintain their school attendance, get proper rest. The school year is almost over, but we're not quite there. So hang in there. - Ms. Jackson.

[02:19:07] - Thank you, Ms. Wall. The end of the year is fast approaching with many school activities and graduations. Last night, I was fortunate to attend the spring concert at Unity Reed High School. Congratulations to all the students last night who won awards and to those who received their varsity letters.

[02:19:24] Thank you to Mr. Malachak for all of his hard work and dedication. I always enjoy hearing the Lions play, including the marching band. This past weekend, I was fortunate to attend the first Lego League fun day. It was a great morning. Thank you to Ms. Carol for including me and Ms. Williams here in the fun at the start of the day.

[02:19:43] The excitement was contagious and I'm so grateful for the students with, excuse me, so grateful to schools with robust robotic programs. I know it's a lot of work and I'm just beyond grateful to staff, families, and mentors. I also attended the Joint Audit Committee yesterday morning and the Internal Audit Committee last night.

[02:20:04] So I just wanna make sure that I take a moment to thank all internal auditors and those who work in collaboration with them, like finance staff and risk and all of that. They play a vital step in safeguarding our schools.

[02:20:20] Last week, I attended Outstanding Educators Award Night and I wanna congratulate all those who were nominated, including Madame Frame, the Patriot Pioneers, for winning Secondary Teacher of

the Year. Happy Teacher Appreciation Week again. I know it said last meeting and Ms. Agapur said it a little while ago, like a month ago, that every day should be Teacher Appreciation Day.

[02:20:40] So I just, again, thanks to all educators. Thank you to Forest Park High School for inviting us participate in the annual suicide awareness walk it was a poignant day which I firmly believe took concrete steps to bring awareness to mental health and reduce the stigma associated thank you to audiologists hearing itinerants speech pathologists for staff for all of your work good luck to all the students that are taking the SOLs these past few weeks I know firsthand the stress these tests placed on students and teachers alike I want to just take a moment to recognize that these tests are heavy burden placed on

[02:21:16] our youth soldiers and advocate to the state to consider that when they're rolling out new standardized tests and also when we are selecting summative tests and diagnostic tests and I appreciate the formulation of the working group lastly as always thank you to those who came out today to share your concerns and feedback I've appreciated hearing the many voices from my community over the last few weeks I followed up on all concerns I have received either through email meetings or phone calls I know the division has taken all input into consideration and has a plan for follow-up. The division has kept me informed on developments and actions taken to remedy the situation

[02:21:56] and I have confidence that this will continue to work towards improving a positive climate and culture that supports all students and staff at the Norrisville school. Thank you and have a good night. Ms. Zahra. Good evening Prince William County. I want to talk a little bit about the Outstanding Educators Award Ceremony. We had 38 educators who were recognized as national board certified and these were the ones from the coles district we had audrey baldwin from loch loman michelle bordelon from colgan susan boden from westgate winter gannon from yorkshire and elizabeth marlow and i did not write where you were from i'm so sorry

[02:22:34] um but national board certification is a rigorous program it was created by teachers for teachers it's relevant and impactful on student learning so the work that these folks did wasn't just a little course it was like doing like a mini degree like a degree program it's it's a lot of work so they should be congratulated and if your students are in their classes you're very very lucky uh there were five outstanding lead mentors honored as well as 13 outstanding mentors we had 11 novice teachers who were nominated and our coles teachers were janelle brown from osborne park and michael kim from hilton there were 12 teacher of the year finalists and our coles finalist was

[02:23:12] was Claire Gillespie from Colgan. And of the six principal finalists, both the primary and secondary winners were from the Coles District. That was Catherine Forgus from Coles Elementary and Lisa Marie Kane from Osborne Park. So congratulations to everyone who was nominated.

[02:23:28] That was a great night. I also got to attend the Suicide Awareness Walk. And one of the things I wanna make sure I mention here tonight is there's an organization called To Write Love on Her Arms. I learned about them last year when I was at Hilton High School.

[02:23:44] And this organization does, if you look up their website, they have a lot of information about mental health, but one of my favorite things they have on here is that they really work to connect you to resources and they offer scholarships. And those scholarships are for therapy, to pay for therapy for a significant amount of time to help people see that there's help available.

[02:24:08] There's an application process, but take a look at it. It's on twloha.com. So I think that's an outstanding organization. And if you take a look at our student services on the Prince William County website, we have many things listed there as well.

[02:24:24] Want to wish everyone good luck on their SOLs for whichever ones are left for you. And just hang in there. We've got a few more weeks of school. Thank you very much. - Mr. Wilk. - Thank you. A couple things I want to highlight and just a lot of great things I've seen, not all my visits and things I've done in the last two weeks, but just some really exciting things.

[02:24:45] On Friday the 5th, I did go to get to four different schools that day during the school day. And, you know, I went to Swan's Creek. Dumfries had the American Legion Riders attend. The students thanked them for their patriotism and service. I went to Covington Harper that day, went to rooms.

[02:25:03] Kids were playing with the mud, you know, the chocolate pudding and the worms. That was fun. It was like a flashback. in a fly swatter game and ended up at Grand Park for a Cinco de Mayo event. So it was really cool to see engaged learners all across the spectrum from really the morning to the afternoon in all those schools, kind of in that corridor or route one.

[02:25:25] The next day went to, you know, of course the suicide awareness event was phenomenal, hosted at Forest Park. Thank you to the students, of course, the sponsors, the community members, Ms. Jessie, Ms. Williams, Ms. Jackson Walls, all of you actually, I think the first time every board member was there.

[02:25:42] So at one time it was a great event, all the elected two came, great there. That evening, Potomac High School relaunched their Athletic Hall of Fame event, their dinner. They had put it on pause since the pandemic, but it was great to see alums from Potomac High School, I don't know, 20, 30 years come back to, you know, be a part of that event and induct people in.

[02:26:07] That evening, wow, Potomac High School's theater program had kind of been disbanded for a number of years. And I went and saw Adam's Family that night, the musical, and it was phenomenal. I love seeing that because yes, we have the Colgan out there, but I love the fine arts programs in all of our schools.

[02:26:25] And it's great to see Boris Park, Potomac thriving and bringing back their programs there. Five eight, I went, a former colleague of mine who I taught with at Woodbridge Middle School, She's now the varsity head coach of the Forest Park boys team.

[02:26:41] She was the one that worked with me in partnership to get those new courts for those kids. And she invited me to the senior night and it was really nice to go back and be there and see those courts in use and see kind of just the overall morale boost for those students to have those state-of-the-art facilities.

[02:26:57] Thank you. And 512, let's see, visited Patty, where I want to congratulate Mr. Luciati for his nominee. Ms. Kerbal, the outstanding educator was not there that day. So I have to go back and see her again. I went to Montclair that afternoon too and principal AP Miller took me around.

[02:27:16] Last thing I want to highlight 513, the A Street prom. It was a great event. Forest Park High School does it for our special needs community. Puts on a prom for those students promoting inclusion and just giving them a night to really shine.

[02:27:31] And it was great to be a part of that and be in attendance that event last Saturday. So thank you very much. - Ms. Wall. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to, first of all, begin by congratulating Emily Sayer from Unity Braxton Middle School on being named the Novice Teacher of the Year at the Outstanding Educators Awards Night.

[02:27:58] I think that is a great accomplishment and a big shout out to Emily Sayer. I want to highlight some of the events that I have attended. I also attended the Suicide Awareness Walk and the students there did an amazing job. There were so many great community resources there, and I think it was a really positive message, so great job, everybody.

[02:28:18] I also attended the Seafelt Arts Council Awards Night on May 8th. I always loved to see the arts promoted, and there were a number of students who were in a couple of groups that performed that were our Prince William County students, so that was really fun. I attended the Battlefield High School Spring Choir concert.

[02:28:33] They called it This 70s Show, and it was awesome. Fantastic, so fun to hear. some really great songs from the '70s, and I will have to say their costumes were amazing. So good job to Mr. Bernie and everybody in the choir program over there at Battlefield.

[02:28:49] The robotics first Lego League fun day was, as usual, a sensory overload with so many kids just enjoying the day so very much. There was so much STEM learning going on and so much excitement. I love that we have robotics at all levels of our schools.

[02:29:09] that I enjoyed seeing Tyler and Gravely there. Those were the two Gainesville schools that came to this event. Good job to the metal jackets for putting that on. The internal audit committee was last evening. I'm excited about the work and the value that the office is adding, and I'm happy that we could commend them for May being Audit Awareness Month.

[02:29:30] Today I attended Battlefield Senior Award Ceremony. It was a very nice ceremony. Students who had received scholarships and academic awards were honored. one individually, one by one. It was an honor to be on that stage with such a distinguished group of students.

[02:29:45] And they in total received over $11,900,000 in scholarships which was like a pretty high number. And it was really impressive. I'm looking forward to attending spring musicals at Mountain View and Haymarket Elementary.

[02:30:00] I have a golden ticket for Wonka this weekend and Governor's School graduation this Saturday. Looking forward to that. so i wanted to say um my i appreciate the third quarter update tonight i thank you very much everybody who worked on that i know i sometimes ask hard questions but i really just want to help things improve my goal is a great public school system not just for the benefit of individual students but for the strength of our entire community so despite my concerns i do remain committed to making sure our schools are supported and that we prioritize academic success and in

[02:30:38] In closing, I leave you with this thought. Be not weary in well-doing, for you are laying the foundation of a great work, and out of small things proceeds that which is great. What is required is the heart and a willing mind. And thank you, and have a good night.

[02:30:55] - Thank you, Madam Vice Chair. All right, congrats to all the outstanding nominees and winners for Outstanding Teachers of the Year and for our national certified teachers. Congratulations to all

of them. I also had the opportunity to go to the Arts Council annual event and see those awards and our students perform there.

[02:31:13] The suicide walk as always is a very well done event by our students at Forest Park and our faculty and staff they're put on a, this year was a tremendous program, very moving and I recommend it for everyone each year if you have a chance to go.

[02:31:30] You know, in line with our, you know, this is Dr. McDade's, she'll be closing in on two years here on the school board. She's in, I think it should be said that we've, she's outlined an ambitious strategic plan.

[02:31:48] We have some movement in the strategic plan already. If we take a look at creating positive culture and climate, there's a lot of work that's gone into making our school division a better place for our employees. There's commitments around the division on efforts to do that.

[02:32:06] we have made a strong commitment to safety and security, so much so that, you know, there was tremendous coverage on the work that we're doing last week with the weapons detection system. The governor's office actually announced a similar program in grants for 16 and a half million to school divisions who would like to pursue similar programs.

[02:32:28] So, you know, I think, I appreciate the fact Dr. McDade's arrived, she's worked hard, and she's a leader in the division and a leader in the state. She attended and hosted an event for the nine regional superintendents a couple of weeks ago at George Mason University to work on issues that may require collaboration across divisions, things like mental health and drug addiction, very important.

[02:32:58] Again, raising the level of Prince William County Schools as a leader on some of these things. while we have our challenges, we should not shy away from those. Those are critical, but we are a great school system. I moved here because of it. It has been good to my children and the children in the school division.

[02:33:17] We will continue to make it better. And the strategic plan is there for that. Other highlights in the strategic plan. You know, we have even specifics down to winning more awards at the National Science Fair and International Science Fair. This week alone, there's, I think about a dozen Prince William County students participating in the International Science Fair in Dallas.

[02:33:39] I expect to see some winners. We have the Virginia Junior Academy of Science, which actually specifically stated in our strategic plan that we're committed to putting out more winners and more students and schools competing in that. And their award ceremony is tomorrow and many Prince William County students participated in that.

[02:33:55] So we're hopeful there. And then, you know, last, as we talked about earlier today, You know, there are significant efforts and concerns underway on looking at site-based management, looking at, you know, our grading system and just doing a good review.

[02:34:13] All of that's in line with the strategic plan and the effort we are doing here to make sure the school division moves in a positive forward direction. It's being done in a thoughtful, methodical way. Sometimes it may not be fast enough for some and for others it may be too fast, but it's the way change goes.

[02:34:34] So with that, I wanna thank Dr. McDade for her two years so far. We look forward to many more years. And I think with that being said, I think we can adjourn tonight. Thank you all.