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Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, June 21, 2023

Date	Wednesday, June 21, 2023
Place	Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length	3h 13m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LG-YkyG6yN0
- 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.

[00:00:02] - I'd like to call this meeting the Prince William County School Board to order. Motion is now in order for the approval of the meeting agenda, Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we approve the meeting agenda. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman, I second. - Mr. Zargarpur, any discussion?

[00:00:20] Okay, all in favor or just please vote. Okay, all in favor, aye. - Aye. - Any opposed? No, motion passes. Moving on, motion to enter closed session.

[00:00:36] A motion is in order, Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712, the Prince William County School Board enter closed session for the following reasons. One, to discuss with staff the assignment, appointment, and promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific officers and employees under VA Code 2.2-3711A.

[00:01:01] Two, to discuss with division counsel and staff actual or probable litigation and legal matters pertaining to the school board and specific staffs and students under VA code 2.2-3711A seven and eight. Three, to consult with staff and division counsel regarding actual litigation involving a public nuisance where such consultation in an open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body pursuant to VA code 2.2-3711A seven.

[00:01:29] Four, to consult with division counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice pertaining to school board policy 273.01, pursuant to VA code 2.2-3711A. Five, to review disciplinary matters for specific students that would involve the disclosure of information contained in the scholastic record for individual students and to receive legal advice regarding the same as provided by VA code 2.2-3711A, two and eight.

[00:01:58] Six, to consult with staff and division counsel regarding the terms of the contract for the acquisition of real property for a public school within the Potomac Magisterial District where such consultation and open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiation strategy of the school board pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3711A3A8 and A29, and seven, 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 and open meeting would jeopardize the security of such facilities pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3711A - I have a second.

[00:02:37] - Mr. Chairman. - Mrs. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote. And Adele Jackson votes yes.

[00:02:58] - Is six yes, two absent. - Prince William County School Board will now enter closed session

[00:03:05] and return open session in one hour.

[00:04:10] - Prince William County School Board will now re-enter open session from closed session. Moving on to agenda 9.01 closed session certification. A motion's in order. - Mr. Chairman. - Williams. - I move that pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3712, the closed session of Prince William County School Board meeting of June 21st, 2023, be certified by adopting the following resolution.

[00:04:31] 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 session meeting to which the certification resolution applies.

[00:04:47] 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? - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - All in, any discussion?

[00:05:03] Please vote. - The vote is six yes, two absent. Ralston, Wall, motion passed. - Moving on to closed session action item, a motion is in order for 10.01, approval of appointments and releases of specific employees.

[00:05:24] Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the appointments and releases of specific employees as presented in closed session. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman, I second. - Ms. Zargarpur, seconds. Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:05:50] - The vote is six yes, two absent. Raulston, Wall, motion passed. - Moving on to 10.02 approval evaluation of the Ombudsman 2023-24 goal setting. A motion is in order. - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - I move that the Princeton County School Board approve the evaluation of the Ombudsman and the goals for the office of the Ombudsman for the 2023-24 school year as presented in closed session and authorized the chairman at large to sign the summative evaluation.

[00:06:17] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman, a second. Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:06:32] - The vote is six yes, two absent. Ralston, Wall, motion passed. - Moving on to 10.03, approval of the evaluation of the school board clerk. A motion is in order, Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the evaluation of the performance of the clerk of the school board as presented in closed session.

[00:06:52] Authorize the chairman at large to sign the summative evaluation. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - Second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:07:12] - The vote is six yes, two absent. - Raulston Wall, motion passed. - On to 10.04, approval of evaluation of the Division Council. Motion's in order, Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the evaluation of the performance of Division Council as presented in closed session and authorize the chairman at large to sign the summative evaluation, execute an amendment to the Division Council's employment agreement in conformity with the terms approved in closed session.

[00:07:37] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I have a second. - Any discussion, please vote.

[00:07:52] - The vote is six yes, two absent. - Raulston Wall, motion passed. - And on a 10.05 approval of closed session consent agenda items, a motion is in order. Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the closed session consent agenda items as presented in closed session.

[00:08:08] - Any discussion? Or, I mean, I second. - Mr. Chairman. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:08:33] - The vote is six yes, two absent. Raulston Wall, motion passed. - Was there one other student thing? Did I miss a student thing? Okay, got it, all right. All right. All right, that concludes closed session action items.

[00:08:49] At this point, we will ask that everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Jessie, you wanna lead us, please, tonight? - The republic which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[00:09:21] - Thank you, Ms. Jessie. Moving on to Thriving Futures Focus. We begin one of our most enjoyable segments of our school board meeting, Launching Thriving Futures. We dedicate this time during our meetings to recognizing students, staff members, and schools that have earned an honor or award at the state or national level.

[00:09:39] We appreciate how these honorees have positively represented our school division, Prince William County, and the school board is proud to recognize them publicly for their accomplishments. As this is our last Thriving Futures presentation for the 2023 school year, we have a lot to celebrate and acknowledge this evening.

[00:09:59] First, I want to recognize the retirements of three esteemed individuals who've dedicated many years of service to our school division. Tonight, we bid farewell to Dr. Jarselyn Hart, Associate Superintendent for Western Elementary Schools, who's been a valuable member of our team for the past 30 years.

[00:10:19] I would also like to acknowledge the retirement of Mr. Bill Bixby, Associate Superintendent for high schools after 35 years of service. Last but certainly not least, we extend our gratitude to Ms. Rita Goss,

Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning for committing more than 32 years to pursuing excellence for students and staff.

[00:10:41] Each of these individuals has made significant contributions to our school and students' lives. Their commitment to excellence and unwavering dedication will be missed. We kindly request the families of our outstanding retirees to stand and be recognized for their unwavering support throughout their loved ones' careers.

[00:11:13] I would like to invite Mr. Bixby up first to make a few remarks.

[00:11:34] - All the families, staff members, and most importantly, the students that I've had the chance to work with over the past 35 years. I came here to the division in 1988 when, believe it or not, it was tough to get a job.

[00:11:50] The world's really changed and this division has given me tremendous opportunities. And it's been the pleasure and the honor of my career to serve the Prince William County community And I just wanna thank all of you for that great opportunity.

[00:12:06] Thank you.

[00:12:27] - Ms. Rita Goss. - Good evening, Chairman Lateef, school board members and Dr. McDade. Thank you so much for allowing us to serve this amazing community and work in this school division for really what has been a sincere honor and blessing to serve the students.

[00:12:53] all of our employees that we've had really a tremendous career here and there's not an employee in here in this school division that hasn't supported us over the years as principals and leaders and we've had the pleasure to serve alongside of so many giants and like bill i started here many years ago actually i did my student teaching here and so before i was even hired I loved this school division and will continue to love and support this

[00:13:29] school division in any way that I can we've stood on the shoulders of many giants including our amazing superintendent that we have now Dr. McDade and so many people to thank over the years it's been a wonderful journey so I I thank all of you.

[00:13:49] I thank the students and the teachers and the staff here and teaching and learning. At one time it was student learning and accountability and for everyone that's been a part of my journey. And I especially wanna thank a former board member like all of you, we've had people that tap us and see something in us that we don't even see in ourselves.

[00:14:12] So I certainly wanna thank Mrs. Betty Covington who used to be on the board, who was my principal at one time, and she was that person for me who tapped me and saw something in me. So I send my sincere thanks to her as well, but it's been a pleasure to serve, so thank you.

[00:14:42] - Dr. Jocelyn Hart. - Maybe one day soon I'll become a public speaker. But on a very serious note, Chairman Lateef and to the members of the school board and to our esteemed superintendent, coupled with the Madam Deputy Superintendent all my executive cabinet colleagues, thank you. I applaud you. You are here for the right reasons, you're here for children and families. We are here as a team to do whatever it takes, and I'm so thankful and blessed to have worked shoulder to shoulder with you all.

[00:15:22] I do want you to know that retirement is starting to feel real good, fantastic, outstanding, exceptional and I'm so blessed and thankful for a 41 year career that range from Maryland School for the

Deaf to Germany to Fairfax County oh I said the F word and then to Prince William County Schools but it's been a joy to serve and make a difference with folks the learning has been reciprocated and again I am humbled I'm thankful and I'm looking forward to something called R.O.P.

[00:15:58] ROP. I do want to say that perhaps the most significant person in my life next to my children is my mother. And I'm blessed to have my 81-year-old mother here with me. She's the first teacher. She's the first person that said, you can do this, girl. You got this, girl. Get up there. Do this,

[00:16:17] do this. And so, Mama, I love you and I thank you. Thank you. Okay, this time I'd like to invite our retirees to join us at the front for a photo and a small token of our appreciation and lasting memory from this evening.

[00:16:49] Thank you.

[00:16:50] We'll take a quick photo.

[00:17:56] - No, I didn't get mama's.

[00:19:16] - Okay. Now let's shift our focus to the outstanding achievements of our students, teams, and coaches. We begin by acknowledging the exceptional individual performances in track and field. From the Coles district, we start with Mrs. Lisa Zargarpur. Ms. Zargarpur.

[00:19:32] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. It is my pleasure to recognize Naomi Woolfolk from CD Hilton High School for winning the state championship in shot put. Naomi is here tonight with her family. Naomi, would you care to come up and say a few words?

[00:19:49] - First, thank you all for taking the time to recognize me. I would just like to thank, first and foremost, God, and all the many coaches that played a role in my success and the support of my family. Without this, it would not have been possible.

[00:20:04] It was definitely a long journey, and it was really nice to finish off my senior year of high school with a state win, so thank you. - Congratulations.

[00:20:22] I hope you stay with that, too. From Osborne Park High School, we acknowledge two state championship winners, Viviana Rodriguez in pole vault and Lena Gooden in long jump. Viviana is here, correct? Yes, with her mom. No, with dad.

[00:20:39] No, with mom? OK, sorry. Whom I would like to ask her to stand in recognition, sorry. Where is mom tonight? There you go. Thank you for supporting her. We also have-- ah, you're the coach, Jerry McAvoy.

[00:20:55] There you go, Mr. McAvoy, would you like to say a few words? - Yes, and Viviana said, "Be very few words." This was a really tough outdoor season. She got hurt back in April, and she worked her way back, oh my goodness, for months trying to get back into where she should be, and she persevered.

[00:21:22] So she's very tough, and this is her third state championship. So I hope to keep it going. And congratulations to the other athletes. I see how hard they work, and it's a hard achievement.

[00:21:43] Feel good about it. So thank you. Thank you. Now, I'm just going to add that one thing. You know, I think it's noted-- we need to note that not only are they-- they're going to be strong athletes, they're going to be strong academic students as well.

[00:22:01] They have a lot they have to juggle. So can we give one more little round of applause? because we know how hard they work. - Thank you, Ms. Argerpore. Congratulations to Naomi, Viviana, and Lina Mai. Mr. Wilk, I believe you wish to acknowledge track winners from your district, the Potomac Magisterial District.

[00:22:22] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Potomac District would like to acknowledge Forest Park High School Xavier Ogo for a state championship in the long jump. Xavier is here tonight with his family. I ask that they stand and be recognized. Xavier's family.

[00:22:42] Thank you guys. Also attending tonight with Xavier his principal Richard Martinez, athletic director Bricker, coaches Douglas Gilbert, and Deanna Wells. At this time, I would like to ask one of Xavier's coaches to say a few words on Xavier's accomplishment. All right, thank you for having us, and congratulations to everybody. Xavier is the hardest working person on the track, and since I met him two years ago, he's always shown that he wants to get better. Unfortunately, our jumps coach, Dorian Coates, can't be here today, but I know he

[00:23:18] would say the same thing. And over the last two years, the two of them have worked. X actually at the state meet, they get six jumps. He was in the lead the entire time. And because of that, he got to jump last. The kid before him jumped a quarter of an inch further. And with all that pressure on his last jump, X jumped another inch and a half further and won his first state championship and did a fantastic job. And that's a result of all the hard work he's done. Congratulations, guys.

[00:24:08] okay congratulations to our four individual state championships sorry we have a lot of folks here tonight and and i want to make sure we don't miss anyone so so my apologies if i do just raise your hand and say i think you skipped me congratulations for our four individual state championships in track and field before we take a few pictures may i please ask the family members and guests again of our champions to stand to be recognized okay um let's let's do

[00:24:34] a picture with our individual winners okay so it is now time to recognize our team's championships

[00:26:31] in track and field along with our soccer teams we will begin in the Brentsville district but miss adult Jackson miss Jackson thank you mr. chairman I am so excited and proud to recognize the state champions boys track team from Patriot high school the team has brought considerable pride to Prince William County schools by bringing home the class 6 state championship I understand that the team led by head coach James DeMarco accompanied by principal dr.

[00:27:00] Michael Bishop is here tonight. Mr. DeMarco, would you please, if you would like to, share a few words about your accomplishment of the team? Thank you, Dr. Bishop. - Good evening. Chairman Lateef, members of the board, Dr. McDade, Patriot High School has had a very successful school year and the icing on the cake was our first ever boys AAA state championship.

[00:27:23] Coach DeMarco and his staff pushed, prodded, motivated, and were able to extract the championship at the last minute from every member of our team. I'm very proud of these boys and want our school and community to know this is our best group of kids. All of these boys deserve recognition for their hard work and dedication, and I'm honored to be a part of that tonight.

[00:27:42] And I'm proud to announce here tonight, Henry Burge, a freshman member of the team, this weekend was recognized as a national champion in the 800 meter run in Philadelphia. Coach DeMarco.

[00:28:03] - Dr. McDade, members of the school board, thank you so much for having us here tonight. It's an honor to be before you. We'd like to thank Dr. Bishop, Mr. Qualls, our athletic director, and my exceptional coaching staff, Coach Gaskins, Coach Kalinda Hawk, Coach Fell, and then Jason Grant, who is not here tonight.

[00:28:26] But they have done an exemptually job getting us prepared this year. It was a lot of work. We came out from indoor track in fifth place, but we told the guys at the first practice that we gotta find 24 points, we gotta get a little better.

[00:28:42] And we went through those events and the kids took that and they kind of ran with it a little bit, not quite believing, but some of our guys had an Instagram account that just said future state champions that they had made.

[00:28:58] That was their group chat, the group that they had and they worked really hard, they pushed it every day. And then by mid season, we started seeing that, all the pieces started to fall together. We were getting a little bit better, a little bit better, inch by inch, second by second.

[00:29:14] And they were able to do it. They were able to pull off a state championship and do something that at the beginning of the season, I don't think they really believed they could do it. And then by mid season, the belief started seeking in and the hard work kept getting better and better. And the team's commitment to each other got better.

[00:29:31] And then by the end of the season, they were able to pull it off. So I'd love to thank their parents for all their support. And again, our exceptional school administration, my coaches I got to work with, just absolutely superhuman beings, putting all their time into the kids and then the kids themselves make it an absolute joy to come to practice every single day.

[00:29:50] And that's why we do it. So thank you so much and congratulations guys. - Congratulations again. And thank you for the news, Dr. Bishop, about Henry.

[00:30:09] Congratulations also to the Brentsville District high school girls soccer team for clinching the class three state championship. Assistant coaches Doug Silver and Holly Touche, along with many of our champions are here tonight, accompanied by principal Dr. Kathleen Meintz and head coach Scott Cairns, who is unable to be with us tonight.

[00:30:32] However, we do want to acknowledge that he received the coach of the year award. So congratulations to Scott Cairns.

[00:30:48] Mr. Silver or Ms. Touche, Would either of you like to speak on behalf of the team? And again, congratulations. - Thank you, board members and Dr. McDade. I am Holly Touche, and along with Coach Silver, we're here on behalf of Scott Kearns. He's sorry he couldn't make it. Our girls had a goal, right from pretty much last year's states.

[00:31:09] We had a lot of changes last year. Quite a few seniors graduated. And the leaders on our team knew that it was possible for us to win a state championship. And right from there, they started to get to work. They were in the weight room all winter long, starting the season really, really strong, zero seniors.

[00:31:29] And we had five junior captains with exemplary leadership and really fun practices, great focus. And they took every game as a piece, a step in the right direction. And we went into the post season very confident.

[00:31:45] Our girls are obviously very, very talented, but I would say some awesome things also about our team is that they have a positive climate, a supportive system, wonderful leadership, great academics, great kids just to have in classes and in the school.

[00:32:03] And they really were excited to practice longer than everyone else. It's hard to go into the post season. You're the last kids on the practice fields, but these girls that lit their fire. And I think that's really cool. So last year we did not get out of the state semis.

[00:32:20] So that was our big goal. Obviously we really, really worked hard and the girls knew they could do it. They truly believed. So we went to the state finals and we won 1-0 and really exciting.

[00:32:36] We scored over a hundred goals this season and we only had eight scores against us, which is I think a pretty cool highlight and super proud of these ladies. Coach Kearns just, you know, we had a really big hashtag and it was compete and that's what these girls did.

[00:32:56] Thank you. - Well deserved indeed. No pressure for next year, I guess. We don't have any seniors, but I won't.

[00:33:12] As our teams get in position so we can capture this proud recognition, I ask those families and friends here tonight to stand in recognition of these state champions and give yourselves a hand for supporting efforts. Can I have the families please stand?

[00:33:34] Congratulations to our student athletes. I invite our teams to join us up front for a few pictures and a small token of our appreciation for the lasting memory of this special evening.

[00:33:40] Thank you.

[00:36:18] - For me, she left my phone out there.

[00:36:21] Thank you.

[00:37:58] - Outstanding. That is fantastic. Okay, we move on to close our celebration of championships in the traditional athletics with Mrs. Zargarpur. Ms. Zargarpur of the Coles District. - Coles District is proud to recognize Colgan High School's Class 6 state championship in girls soccer, a well-fought victory.

[00:38:25] Our championship team is here tonight with head coach Tom Warziwak and principal Dr. Tim Healy. Would you two, one of you two like to share a few words?

[00:38:41] - Dr. Lateef, school board members, Dr. McDade, thank you for having us. It is an honor to come before the school board. The girls did win the Class 6 state championship for girls soccer. We're also the Cardinal District Champions, the Region 6B Champions, finished with a record of 21-1-1, scored 108 goals with only three against.

[00:39:07] Clearly, they are outstanding athletes, but I think the most important thing, especially in interscholastic sports, is every single one of these young ladies is an outstanding person, a fantastic student, and genuinely people of the highest quality.

[00:39:26] Thank you. - I wonder if the audience even knows that the day they graduated, they had to go and play their championship games.

[00:39:42] That was pretty interesting way to prepare for that game. Thank you. We also wish to acknowledge the incredible achievement of Colgan High School singles tennis player, Matthew Staton,

who clinched his third consecutive Class 6 championship. Matthew is here tonight with his parents and head coach, Travis Wedge.

[00:40:06] Wedge, would you care to share a few words about this outstanding athlete? - Good evening, members of the school board, Dr. Lateef, Dr. McDade, thank you for this opportunity again to acknowledge a fantastic season, not only one season, but three for Matt's consecutive Class 6 state championships, which is an incredible achievement.

[00:40:29] I have also with me today my assistant coaches, Patricia Villes-Mill, Kristen Misinchuk, and my mom, Carolyn Wedge, who could not be in attendance this evening. So I want to give them a lot of credit as they were there throughout the entire season.

[00:40:48] - I'd also like to take a quick second to recognize Reby Villas-Mill, who is Matt's doubles partner who is in attendance tonight. Not only his doubles partner, but his hitting partner. Because without Reby, there's nobody else who can hit with Matt and we wouldn't know what to do.

[00:41:05] So I wanted to thank Reby very much. Thank you. - Thank you, Coach Wedge. And congratulations to the Coles District. I can say that, you know, I think we were remiss to say that, you know, the soccer team beat another one of our county schools was Battlefield in the championship.

[00:41:30] Am I right about that? Yeah, so we had two in that tournament that, and I would like, since this is publicly on TV, there's no better place in the country than Prince William County Schools for girls soccer. Can we give a round of applause for that? You know, just wonderful, great three state championships in a row, Matt, that's amazing.

[00:41:56] I expect, hopefully we'll see you here next year, God willing, and we're excited to do that. So at this point, we'll invite you up for, we'll do a picture with the team, and then we'll do a picture with Matt and the school board. Thank you guys very much.

[00:45:55] - Right, fantastic for all of our on the field athletes. It is now our pleasure to acknowledge the success of students beyond the realm of traditional athletics. And for more, we return to Mr. Wilk of the Potomac District.

[00:46:12] - This one's really cool. As a child of the mid eighties, early nineties, we're recognizing video games. Since Pac-Man video games have had a significant impact on our society, our culture, and our lives. The rise of e-sports in our division is an exciting and growing interest for our students.

[00:46:31] The Forest Park e-sports program has gained recognition and respect in the state since the fall of 2021. The e-sports team recently won the National Playverse Cup 2023 in Mario Kart 8. Yes, yes.

[00:46:48] Earning a new high score for Prince William County Schools. The team is led by head coach, Nathaniel Fenson, and there are a number of team members accompanying them today. I also see Principal Martinez and Bricker again.

[00:47:03] Congratulations to our e-sports team on establishing your place as the best of the best. I'll still say, I think GoldenEye is the best game ever created. We now welcome our e-sports team to the front for a commemorative photo and a GIF. Congratulations.

[00:47:20] - Okay, we wanna make sure everyone,

[00:49:33] Certainly an exciting new space for Prince William County Schools to be leading in, and that is eSports. Speaking of leading, the board wishes to acknowledge the extraordinary accomplishments of our robotics clubs. We will begin with Mrs. Lily Jessie of the great Occoquan District, then Mrs. Zargarpur of the wonderful Coles District, and then Ms. Jackson of the amazing Brentsville District.

[00:49:56] Ms. Jessie. - Ta-da. - I'm sorry, but back to the deep, you gotta go. I am thrilled tonight to recognize the Woodbridge High School Robotics Team. For the VECS State Championship, I'm sorry, for the VECS State Championship, the Tournament Champions Award is given to the two teams alliance that came in first place in the final match alliance.

[00:50:17] This is an exceptional group led by Carlos Castro, also known as The Voice, who names all the, who gives, who reads off the names of every graduate of Woodbridge High School, and Tara Healy. While they could not make it here tonight, we congratulate them on another amazing season.

[00:50:41] - Thank you, Ms. Jessie. I turn the spotlight to Mrs. Zargarpur of the Coles District. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. We would like to acknowledge three schools that excelled in robotics field this year. Benton Middle School, who earned the first place Inspire Award at the VEX World Championship led by Mr. Liu and Ms. Erickson.

[00:50:57] The VEX World's Inspire Award is presented to a team that has inspired judges with their approach to the VEX robotics program. This team will effectively communicate their passion for the VRC program and maintain a positive attitude through the event. At this time, I would like to invite Mr. Liu and Ms. Erickson to speak on behalf of the team.

[00:51:26] - Hi, good evening. I was told to keep this short, so I will highlight a couple things, especially the folks that are behind me. First, our wonderful vice principal, Mr. Erickson from Benton Middle School. Thank you so much for being here with us.

[00:51:43] I'd like to introduce three of the six team members, From my right all the way to the right is Ryan Lou, my son. And then we got Ellis Kim and Sirwani Dahal. The three other team members could be here today, which is Sebastian Fester, Charlie Gardner, and also Izan Imbetiz.

[00:52:04] They are all part of the team of six from the team 1231C, the Astro Tankers. And they did a tremendous and wonderful work this entire school year. But in addition to that, not only did this team go to VEX Worlds Championship, we also had two other Benton Robotics team that went as well.

[00:52:26] We had 1231B, which is the banana boomerangs, as well as 1231F, the metal heads. They all work really hard. So we had three teams that went to VEX Worlds this year. One of our best season is completely wonderful.

[00:52:42] I do want to highlight that for the Inspire Trophy, besides reading off what the Inspire Trophy is, I do wanna highlight that at Benton Middle School was one out of 490 teams to receive, I'm sorry, one out of 50 teams to receive a Bex World's Trophy.

[00:53:03] They were the only middle school team at Benton, as well as Prince William County and the entire state of Virginia to win a trophy for us. So I wanna congratulate the Benton Astro Tankers for a job well done.

[00:53:19] And much to you and your success and your improvement for next year. Good luck. And I'm gonna say this at the end, coin from Benjamin Franklin. When in doubt, robot out. Thank you.

[00:53:38] - Parkside Middle School for their first place THINK Award in the US National Create Championship led by Marietta Soma and Stefan Solanski. The Think Award is presented to a team that has developed and implemented quality robot programming as part of their strategy to solve the game challenge.

[00:53:56] Although Ms. Soma and Mr. Solanski could not be here tonight, I do wish to recognize them for all their outstanding work with the Parkside Middle Schoolers. I would also like to recognize Colgan High School for both their Excellence Award at the VEX State Championship and their first place Inspire Award at VEX World Championship led by Dr. Troy Mink.

[00:54:19] The Excellence Award is presented to the top all-around team at the state championship. The VEX World Inspired Award is presented to a team that has inspired judges with their approach to the VEX Robotics program. This team will effectively communicate their passion for the VRC program and maintain a positive attitude through the event.

[00:54:40] Wait a minute, Doctor, it was Mink, right? Doctor Mink, yeah, the name's not correct on here. Doctor Mink of Colgan could not attend tonight, but I wish to congratulate the Colgan team and all of them on their wonderful work with our students, families, and community.

[00:55:00] - Wonderful, Ms. Agaraport, thank you, and Ms. Jackson. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. On behalf of the Brentsville District, I'd like to recognize the Great Gainesville Middle School for their first place in Innovate Award from the Virginia VEC State Championship, led by Dana Powell.

[00:55:24] The Innovate Award is presented to the team with a specific, unique engineering element that demonstrates out-of-the-box thinking. Mr. Powell, would you like to share a few words? - Are you sure? - Yes, please. - Okay. No, I want to thank the school board for their ongoing support.

[00:55:42] And I want to thank Ms. Carroll, who's not here. I want to thank my principal, who says yes to quite a few interesting things that I've asked for robotics. And I want to thank the team. This team has worked hard.

[00:55:58] They are a focus team, and they stay the course. And as the gentleman who spoke last, they said keep it short. So I'm gonna end with this part, and just to let everyone know that robotics is not a pastime, but a passion.

[00:56:15] It's not an obsession, but an opportunity. Not just hard work, but a lot of hard work. Not just fun, but a lot of fun. Not about luck, but about skills. You guys got that? Not babysitting, rule number four, which is what?

[00:56:35] And occasional crying is okay. But we wanna thank you guys again for recognizing us, for recognizing the robotics program throughout the county, And just, I'm sure you guys know, but Prince William County has the largest robotics program in the state of Virginia.

[00:56:54] And it's not going away, it's growing. So again, we wanna thank you for your support. I've seen quite a few of you at many of our competitions and I thank you guys for coming out and the kids appreciate you guys showing up. Thank you.

[00:57:15] - Thank you and I wanna take a quick moment to thank again our coaches. We have Mr. Ronald Liu and I see Mrs. Liu back there. Mr. Powell, Dr. Mink, who didn't come, you know, we don't pay you enough. I know you're not doing this for the money.

[00:57:30] And it is your commitment, along with all of our other coaches, who most of them don't do this for the money. They do this for the love of the work, the sport, the training, the teaching of the kids. And, you know, as a parent of students who participate in the robotics programs at Benton and Colgan, actually, and Marshall, but it's a great way to learn and it's a great way to teach our kids about innovation, discovery, critical thinking, and interview skills.

[00:58:04] And I can tell you, each of you, and for all of our parents watching, if you're not encouraging your kids to do it, think about it as Mr. Powell eloquently stated in his final remarks that it's an opportunity. It really is one of the great opportunities and Prince William County Schools is a powerhouse in robotics in all the different types of robotics that are offered around the nation.

[00:58:26] We are competing at the highest levels. And so congratulations once again. And if the parents of the families of the students who participate could stand up and be recognized, we'd like to give you a round of applause as well.

[00:58:44] Okay, before taking a few pictures with our robotics champions, I would like Dr. McDade to say a few words. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the entire Prince William County community, I wanna extend my thanks and heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Dr. Hart, Mr. Bixby, and Ms. Goss as you embark on this new chapter in your lives.

[00:59:09] As a member of the executive leadership team, I sincerely appreciate the countless hours that you've dedicated to our students, to our staff, to our schools, and our communities. I'm very happy for each of you. I wish you an enjoyable retirement, and you have left an indelible mark the hearts and minds of Prince William County Public School students, staff, and families.

[00:59:32] Congratulations to you. I would also like to recognize the outstanding achievement of our students and athletes. First, I want to recognize the exceptional individual performances in track and field. Congratulations to the state champions from Hilton, Osborne Park, Forest Park, and Potomac High School. Your accomplishments serve as inspiration to your peers and highlight the immense talent competing on our track and fields.

[00:59:57] Additionally, the Patriot High School Boys Track Team has also brought considerable pride to Prince William County by bringing home the Class Six State Championship. They should all be proud of their well-earned accomplishments as we are proud of each of our students. Congratulations to Brentsville District High School's Class Three State Championship in Girls Soccer and Colgan High School's Class Six State Championship in Girls Soccer.

[01:00:19] These are true testaments of our talented athletes and coaches and I want to acknowledge the incredible achievement of Colgan High School singles tennis player who secured his third consecutive class six state championship. What a legacy to leave behind. It is also my pleasure to acknowledge the success of our students beyond the realms of athletics.

[01:00:39] Esports is an up and coming sport in our division and we have been promoting and supporting this exciting activity within our schools. And so I would like to recognize the Forest Park High School Esports program, which has proven to be one of the best in the state since fall 2021 and their recent 2023 national championship solidifies their position at the top of the leaderboards.

[01:01:01] Lastly, let us not forget the extraordinary accomplishments of our robotics clubs. The Benton, Gainesville, Parkside Middle School teams and Colgan and Woodbridge High School robotics teams have

consistently demonstrated excellence in their respective competitions.

[01:01:18] Congratulations to each and every one of you on our robotics clubs on your remarkable achievements and continued success. We are PWCS proud. As we conclude this evening, let us remember the incredible achievements, the dedicated service, and the collective spirit that defines the Prince William County community.

[01:01:39] Congratulations. Mr. Chairman. - Thank you, Dr. McDade. We'll take a moment to take our final pictures

[01:01:50] with our robotics teams, please.

[01:03:37] - Don't move yet.

[01:04:26] - Okay, well, thank you everyone for your patience. The last meeting of the school year is always one with lots of recognitions because of all of our spring sports and everything wrapping up. So I thank everyone for that. We are now moving on to 1301, the adoption of the consent agenda.

[01:04:44] A motion is in order. Ms. Jackson. - Thank you, Chair Lateef. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the public meeting consent agenda as recommended. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion?

[01:05:00] - Yes. - Okay. - Actually. - I had Ms. Jessie first and then you, she beat you. - Yes, I would like to remove item 1302 from the consent agenda and take it separately. - Does anyone have any objection to the removal of that from the consent agenda?

[01:05:17] Okay, as seeing no objection that we will vote on that later on. There's no objection so we can move it? Oh, right, right, fine.

[01:05:33] Okay, we don't have to vote on that. Okay, got it, so that's removed. So you'll be voting on this motion without, What was the number? - So Mr. Chairman, if you'll give me one moment, I'll move it and then it'll be correct when you all vote on it.

[01:05:48] - Yeah, you can do that. Okay, that's 1302, correct? Okay. - And if you all will refresh your computers, you should see it correctly on the consent agenda now.

[01:06:08] - Okay, okay. So everything was renumbered. - Yes.

[01:06:24] - Okay, so at this point, we'll put up the vote for this consent agenda. - I need a second on the approval of the consent agenda. I only had Ms. Jackson make the motion. - Oh. - And I didn't get a second on it. - I think Ms. Zargarpur seconded it.

[01:06:40] - She did. - Okay, yeah. - Yeah, yeah, and we had the discussion, and now we'll vote. Yeah, Ms. Zargarpur, oh yeah. - Yeah, yeah, I wanna just quickly speak to 1307, naming of Osborne Park High School Press Box. So, Mike Foley is a teacher who has been, well, he's been at Osborne Park since I was there.

[01:07:02] It's been a few years. He was an outstanding professional educator in the business department for DECA. He was a head coach for golf and wrestling, tennis, and assistant coach for softball. And in many ways, Mr. Foley is Osborne Park. And since 1986, he has served as the voice of the Yellow Jacket for all of the home football games.

[01:07:21] So I just wanted to say that, congratulations. - Okay, thank you, Ms. Zargarpur. Ms. Jessie, did you have your mic on? - Sorry. - Your mic's on, I didn't know if you had to say, okay.

[01:07:37] Okay, please vote if you haven't already. - So the vote is six yes, two absent. Ralston Wall, motion passed. Okay, those citizens, we're now moving on to citizen comment time. Those citizens who've signed up in advance with the clerk may address the school board this evening when they're called to the podium.

[01:07:53] The citizen comment periods for regular school board meetings is one hour and citizens may speak on the agenda items or other topics germane to the operations and policies of Prince William County Schools. Please use proper decorum and manners while at the podium or you'll 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.

[01:08:15] If you do not, the board will recess. I will ask that the room be cleared to restore public order. Tonight, we have 16 citizens signed up to speak. When I call your name, please come up to the podium, state your name and address for the record. Our first five, if they wanna grab seats up front, are Vita Carroll, Carl Greeton, Amanda Locklear, Kimberly Melman Orozco, Brittany Robinson.

[01:08:37] So Vita Carroll. - Okay, Vita Carroll, Brentsville District. Thanks to those of you up there who, I think McDade just walked out, but have been to, I just wanted to thank you guys for coming out to the I Can Shine swim program this week.

[01:09:03] My son is participating in it and I appreciate you guys coming out this week. 15 months ago, I spoke in front of this board regarding Dr. Lateef's public endorsement of the digital gateway. As I stated in this room last year, it was inappropriate that Dr. Lateef pinned a public written endorsement of this project where he cites his position as school board chair in the first sentence.

[01:09:25] I'm now back in this room to raise concerns once again related to PWCS's continued inappropriate involvement with this project vis-a-vis the QTS Data Center company, which is the primary developer. In May, an email went out from the Prince Williams County School's Work-Based Learning, in which PWCS and QTS Data Centers invited students to attend a training overview and tour of their campus in Ashburn.

[01:09:49] A bus was to take interested students on a Saturday to Ashburn. My husband and I requested information via FOIA for two things. First, a copy of QTS's completed application to be a work-based learning partner. And second, information for the bus cost for this Saturday event.

[01:10:06] Did QTS pay for this Prince William County Schools bus, or did the county pay for it? And if the county paid for it, what was total cost to the taxpayer? The county's FOIA office told us that these two very simple requests, both of which should be easily documented, would take five hours of work to complete and wanted to charge us nearly $300.

[01:10:26] This is not in the spirit of FOIA, and certainly makes one wonder if taxpayers are funding a bus trip to Ashburn for QTS, and if QTS even submitted a formal or written request to be a work-based learning partner. A few weeks later, the story broke that QTS was placing flyers and notes with the PWCS logo in food donations for Title I schools.

[01:10:48] The reality, even though PWCS staff did not authorize this, is that somebody knew what was going on, either behind closed doors or with task approval or a head turning in the other direction. Our school board should not be a political body. Our school system should not be allowing access to students, to children for purpose of political or financial gain.

[01:11:08] Our work-based learning partners application process should be transparent and consistent. Why is PWCS showing a pattern of preferential treatment for QTS and allowing QTS to pander to our students with taxpayer-funded field trips and handwritten notes and donated food.

[01:11:24] Email responses from many of you on this board have stated that you don't weigh in on land use decisions, but this is weighing in on land use decisions in the worst way possible, which is access to our children. Last night's elections for the local primaries made it clear that citizens are done with this pay-to-play style of politics.

[01:11:41] I see a lot of politicking from some of you, particularly a $10,000 donation from an electrical union to our chair, which is deeply entrenched with the data center company. Yeah, there's another one of you, a few others getting donations from, let me, can I finish my sentence? - Carol, thank you very much.

[01:11:59] Your time is up. - All right, well, can I? - Is next up, thank you. - Unfortunately, I don't think I'm gonna get as much applause for all those exceptional student athletes. I'm Carl Gretton and I live in the Gainesville district.

[01:12:15] I was planning a speech to help the school board have answers to the many deficiencies that have crept into our system during the last couple of years of Democrat rule. From last night's monumental election results, that has changed my speech immensely. Have you heard the news? Last night was the epitome of David versus Goliath.

[01:12:32] The incumbent Prince William County Board of County Supervisor Chair has amassed a financial war chest of over $329,000. She also has the backing of Virginia Democrat Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner. These Senators did not account for local opposition or citizen views.

[01:12:49] Prince William County citizens fought well-funded juggernaut who has used developer cash and shady PAC money to blanket the county with lies about her miserable record. As a statement goes, Ann Wheeler, do not let the door hit you on the way out. Not just thanks, but no thanks for your service. This primary election has started a change. The eventual winner has a little over $66,000 in her budget. This winner is a newcomer to this political environment on the Board of County Supervisors. The final vote count will be announced after Friday's tally yet there is over a thousand vote difference congratulations for this step DeShundra Jefferson

[01:13:27] Prince William County supervisors are not happy about Prince William County schools and decisions made by the school board we hope that you will find solutions and resolutions for the below problems and we'll be back at the next meeting on 6th September 23 to evaluate your progress our students have had many problems during the last two years so we do not expect you to simply vacation. You have work to do.

[01:13:51] Resolutions needed for change. Failing scores. Gender identity. Equity over merit. School security. Social ideology. School lockdowns. Budget increases without substance. Gender mutilation.

[01:14:09] Diversity, inclusion, and equity. Indoctrination. You are currently evaluating the superintendent, so perhaps the above items are a few to evaluate do your job evaluate the issues make corrections otherwise we have replacements for your position for the chair carrie wrist princeville district erica trednick coles stephen spiker gainesville jen wall nyabsco michael petko occoquan ryan kirkpatrick potomac mario beckles and woodbridge is coming soon thank you and enjoy your working

[01:14:44] summer. Thank you very much. Ms. Locklear. Good evening. My name is Amanda Locklear. My address is on file. Everything happens for a reason. Find the reason. This is what I tell my children all the time. I believe in the idea of karma where actions have consequences. It's important to remember that the energy we put into the world often finds its way directly back to us. We're all connected, bound by vulnerability and our shared potential for greatness the decisions we make not only

[01:15:22] impact our lives but they ripple outward affecting the lives of others the energy and effort i've spent navigating through the mazes of paperwork reading federal regulations on special education attending meetings training seminars and engaging and mind-boggling discussions have been nothing short of remarkable this year I want to thank you thank you for opening my eyes thank you for waking me up thank you for empowering me forcing me to face obstacles head-on has unwittingly reminded me how strong and resilient we

[01:16:00] all are in addition to the role you have played in my son's life you have inadvertently played a significant role in my life which will not only assist me with my children but with others as well you unknowingly became the catalyst for personal growth and self-discovery, unveiling hidden reservoirs of strength, resilience and determination I never knew existed. Understanding and addressing the issues within the special education system is of the utmost importance. I encourage you to take the time this summer

[01:16:35] to deeply think about the challenges that have been brought to your attention so far. You can bring about meaningful change and improve the experiences of students in need. However, it is essential to acknowledge the challenges and engage in open and honest conversations to foster progress through collective efforts we can create more equitable and supportive environment for all students in life we often find ourselves standing at the crossroads of decisions faced with choices that can shape our paths today I want to remind each and every one of you that you are

[01:17:15] just one decision away from a mistake life is full of choices and those Those choices should be approached with thoughtfulness, compassion, and a deep sense of responsibility. Life is filled with twists and turns as we navigate through a complex web of opportunities and challenges in these critical moments when you stand on the precipice of choice that your true character is revealed.

[01:17:41] Choose wisely. Thank you. Thank you. Dr. Melman-Orozco. Thank you. My name is Dr. Kimberly Melman-Orozco. My address is on file.

[01:17:59] I thought a lot about what to say today. This is my third time speaking this year, and I wanted to start off on a positive note. Launching Thriving Futures, we heard that a lot today. We saw some wonderful awards, we saw some accolades, and as a parent, as a person who supports all children, it is a beautiful thing to see.

[01:18:19] And it's a wonderful moniker, honestly, to have a slogan to have for a school, launching Thriving Futures. But in my experience and with my daughter and with many other children who receive

services under the special education department here in this county that slogan might not necessarily apply to them earlier this year one of the incredible teachers that we have in the county and i truly do believe we have some of the best teachers in the state in prince william county maybe even in the country we have some incredible educators in this county i had a teacher reach out to me and tell me that my daughter's rights were being

[01:18:59] violated, that her federal and state rights were being violated and she was not being provided services and in fact that kids were being systemically discriminated against in this county. Whistleblower teacher. Like any concerned parent, I reached out to you all. I reached out to administrators. I tried to get redress and at each and every opportunity I was denied.

[01:19:20] It wasn't until I wrote to the Virginia Department of Education and they wrote back and on June 1st they found that you had systemically violated the law, systemic discrimination against children like my daughter. And I was being told from this teacher, it's because the administrators did not think that she was cream of the crop.

[01:19:40] That should not be told to any parent. No child should be made to feel that way. Back in this audience back there, you have two 14-year-old girls here on a Wednesday night, the first week of spring break. They're not here to receive an award.

[01:19:56] They're not here for an accolade. One is here to speak, and I hope you will listen intently to her. The other is my daughter, who was brought to tears during IEP meetings while she was trying to advocate for her rights. That should not be the case for any child.

[01:20:12] First week of spring break, for summer break, to be at a school board meeting, wanting to advocate for their rights, for wanting to advocate for fairness. That shouldn't be the case. And I truly do believe change is coming, and I wanted to follow up by what Amanda said of thanking you.

[01:20:29] I do wanna thank you because of you, I have met so many other incredible mothers and children who have experienced similar things to my family. I've met justice-oriented individuals. I met people who really are inspired to effectuate meaningful change.

[01:20:44] And because of you all, I'm now on the ballot for the November election going for chair of this board. And so is one of the other mothers that will be speaking here tonight. Thank you. - Brittney Robinson.

[01:21:04] - Good evening, my name is Brittney Robinson my address is on file i have three children at prince william county public schools and a fourth who is a four-year-old preschool who is just got approved for her iep however there isn't a current provider available for her so we are patiently waiting for the county to find someone so she can begin services in the meantime she continues to accrue the services not being rendered they they informed me i am originally from utah that is where my husband and i were living when my husband got a job offer in DC. I clearly remember friends and family letting me know how amazing

[01:21:41] the public schools were in Virginia and what an amazing opportunity this would be. I was so excited and grateful that my kids would have such a good opportunity. I wasn't worried at all when we moved here. We were unprepared as everyone was for what would unfold with the pandemic and then enrolling our children to Montclair Elementary School after COVID was over. Two of my children at

Montclair have autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, and some learning difficulties. Both of my children were denied IEPs because the team claimed there was not enough data to support a need, even with a

[01:22:18] medical team advising it, along with a therapist. My son was doing half days since March because his autism, ADH symptoms, and school phobia was so difficult to manage. We requested homebound instruction in March as the school was not honoring my son's medical accommodations.

[01:22:34] the school denied our homebound request we continued our attempts to work with the school and drafted up a 504 plan which was implemented a few short weeks later my son's teacher was out for a week and he had several subs one sub took it upon herself to question and then threaten my son's accommodations he was allowed a working lunch she told him that she didn't think that he needed this working lunch and asked why he had such a problem with lunch she wanted him to work through this with her otherwise he would have a terrible life if he did it when the school was informed after I picked him up we sat down and had a

[01:23:11] meeting and the administration let me know that they failed to notify the sub of our students 504 plan whoops we are sorry not really a big deal to them at this point our son's medical team removed him from Montclair Elementary School as they could not even follow minimal accommodations and so now we we have requested an IEE and we received the approval we chose our IEE provider and the provider sent out forms before school ended last week to the teachers to fill out so that we have relevant data on how to best support him in school the teachers never responded back to me or my

[01:23:47] follow-up email or my doctor my provider's emails the school year ended last year and still no forms were returned I reached out to school board members Justin Wilk and he has been supportive in helping me to get to the right people to help my children they say it takes a village and we really need a school village to help my kids be successful thank you yesenia lassiter bella lassiter solitaire carol

[01:24:10] jen donnelly and sylvia becker the next five um up next yesenia lassiter hello my name is yesenia lassiter and my address is on file i'm a mom of two who both attend prince william county schools

[01:24:41] I'm here because over the last two years, I've had to fight tooth and nail to get just a sliver of services my daughter is entitled to under the IDEA. And because over the last two years, she has been discriminated against and denied faith. Over the last two years, I've watched my daughter lose hope that things will eventually get better due to the lack of accountability, transparency between our special education department within our county.

[01:25:07] My daughter was born with a rare genetic mutation, and it causes her to have a medical disability. Part of her treatment over the last year, she was taking chemo meds. At the height of her pain, which was in her seventh grade year, she was absent from school the majority of the time.

[01:25:27] When I asked for home-based services, I was told that she had to be absent for three consecutive days in order to receive one hour of home-based services. I told them that this was not enough to cover the material that she missed and was continuously denied requests to increase this time.

[01:25:47] When I called to complain to our clusters administrative staff after my daughter had a medical emergency at school during her PE class where she was coughing up blood and was told to keep running because she was fine. After expressing concerns that she felt like she couldn't breathe, which ultimately landed her in the ER that evening the response was well it wasn't in her 504. I was shocked and I

responded back that it wasn't rocket science to call 911 if a child is having trouble breathing and is coughing up blood. When my daughter was

[01:26:27] put on chemo meds this year the school had trouble finding teachers to teach all the subjects that she missed which were language arts civics and about she maybe three-fourths of algebra. I still have not received a response on what the school plans to do about it despite me asking many times. They didn't have an answer as of recently as two weeks ago when we had our last meeting. Our daughter also applied to Colgan High School. She has wanted to go there since her artwork was displayed there when she was in elementary school. She was given no

[01:27:05] accommodations when applying. After being denied I appealed stating that they take her medical disability under consideration and I was told by dr. Healy that he felt that the prof that the process was fair and applied correctly in her specific situation I was stunned the school thinks it's more than fair to compare and judge artwork created by a student are they physical hopefully you guys will hear my daughter out because we'll go yep Bella Lassiter

[01:27:39] my name is Bella Grace Lassiter my address is on file and for the last three years I have attended Gainesville Middle School so I figured it would only be fair to pay a tribute and share all I have learned. I have learned it is okay for principals to lie over and over again with no remorse or consequences. I learned that it's perfectly fine for your teacher to publicly shame you in front of all your peers but is considered disrespectful to advocate for yourself in your own defense. I learned you can only receive medical

[01:28:17] attention for coughing up blood if it is written down as an accommodation in an IEP and/or 504. I learned that needing accommodations makes me an inconvenience to others. I know now that because I learn differently, others take priority over me. I learned that opportunities can and have been taken away from me because I am quote-unquote not cream of the crop. I learned I am not wanted unless I benefit the school. I learned that bullying will be dismissed as just girls being girls. But as far as useful education goes, I did learn one thing Newton's law and it states for every action there is an equal and

[01:28:53] opposite reaction so when the people in power do the action of abusing their power for self-benefit I am believing the people they hurt will have the reaction of removing them from power so tick-tock November's on its way moving on I would like to talk about homebound services one teacher came to my house gave me a packet told me to study then whipped out her phone and started to play Candy Crush for the next hour we had together may I remind you that to even qualify for an hour of homebound services I had to be absent for three consecutive days. By the way the whole three days equals one hour thing was

[01:29:27] completely made up by my IEP team and is found nowhere in PWCS policy. I hope that this small glimpse of my experience with PWCS comes as a surprise to you all. Hopefully I have tonight showed you something that you didn't already know.

[01:29:43] Hopefully you all weren't complicit in the failure to provide a safe learning environment for everyone, including those of us with disabilities, free of judgment and discrimination. However, if we are being completely honest, we all know when parents and students share our grievances of discrimination, nothing is ever done. But it's okay, because November just got three minutes closer, and we need a new board that cares for all children, not just able-bodied ones. So please vote for Kimberly Melman Orozco and Yesenny

[01:30:19] Lassiter for school board. Thank you. Solitaire Carroll. Okay thank you. Jen Donnelly. Good evening my name is Jen Donnelly and my address is on file. I am appalled by the stance that many on this board are taking on restorative justice practices. They do not work. Your claim to have a commitment to a positive climate and culture for all. Yet as is seen in most of our schools

[01:30:58] restorative practices are having the exact opposite effect. Children see that there are no consequences for bad behavior and is causing escalations of disruptions in the classroom and further hindering our teachers from doing their jobs. You and your policies are creating a hostile work environment for our teachers. Here's a portion of feedback that I got from one teacher. A teacher must stop teaching to take time during instruction to fill out a BARC form and get a student's signature. When asked to sign the form, students who misbehave typically argue about the offense, justify it, and disrupt the classroom more.

[01:31:35] There must be four BARC forms filled out before the student is allowed to be referred to the administration. And then at the end of every term they get a clean slate and then they just start all over again. So all the effort that the teacher had to fulfill the requirements of an administrative intervention, the classes back to square one and the disruption continues it's hard to be committed and diligent to the process when the end of term ends with without an intervention most teachers rarely use bark forms and misbehavior is rampant

[01:32:11] despite having engaging content rich lessons prepared admin refound frowns on referrals as the county thinks that there if there are less documented discipline issues the school is doing a better job of keeping kids in line to learn. Even turning in the BARC forms doesn't mean a referral is documented. The principal bragged at a recent faculty meeting that referrals were down, when in reality behavior is not better but far worse than it has been in almost 30 years. Fewer referrals is not an indicator that there is less disruption or that there is an environment conducive to learning and

[01:32:49] growth. Students continue to be disrespectful, entitled, and refuse to comply with simple expectations of classroom behavior every quarter these infractions are white I'm sorry the irresponsible policies of not reporting bad behavior and crimes in the classrooms results and they're not being a paper trail of a pattern of bad behavior every quarter those infractions are wiped clean there should be rules warnings and consequences none of which are effectively outlined in the code of behavior kids need adults to enforce rules not sit around and talk about their feelings about why they threaten

[01:33:27] disrupt bully and cause chaos this is an election year and I will make it my mission to support candidates who support the safety and welfare of our students and teachers Sylvia Becker Sylvia Becker okay the next five will be Avetta Scott Jennifer Rokowski Marty Weaver Jalen Custis Richard Jesse and

[01:33:55] then to wrap up Monique Cerruti so Avetta Scott all right good evening ladies and gentlemen of the board Mr. Chairman Dr. McDade my name is Oveta Scott my address is on file with the clerk as a member of the code of behavior committee I was disheartened at the comments made at the presentation of the revisions given to this board at the last meeting as stated in the presentation the code of behavior is a document that is updated yearly to keep in line with state mandates that

[01:34:34] are imposed upon the education process the code of behavior are the principles expectations and/or rules that are given to student and parents to ensure the execution of proper conduct for the school setting. When I heard someone say that they will not vote for the revisions of the document that outlines such policies and procedures, it was bizarre to me. The coded behavior provides clear communication to

both students and parents the consequences when a student violates a standard of conduct that is suspected of them. So when I heard someone

[01:35:11] said that this document lacks teeth. When it comes to processing of enforcing penalties to students, it is not the role of schools to discipline someone's child. That role belongs to the parent. However, parents need to actively engage to ensure that their child behavior doesn't disrupt the learning process for others. It was this board that welcomed the research program Positive Behavior interventions and supports, known as PBIS. School staff suffered tons of

[01:35:46] professional development, book readings, conferences, to establish the PBIS tiered approach to addressing students' behavior. Due to outcries from a section of the community, phrases like "zero tolerance" and my favorite "there's no gray area" were stated towards an updated code of behavior. We are talking about children who are growing and changing in a society that is now overwhelming thanks to the smartphone. There is no perfect rule, document, or way to raise

[01:36:23] children. There will always be a gray because behaviors are learnt and children are the product of the environment that creates them. Teachers want to be able to teach and have the support that their admin will enforce the code of behavior. Admin needs teachers to demonstrate they have exhausted redirection, coaching, contact with parents to process a referral. Parents want communications on the punishments that are being imposed on their child. As it states in our strategic plan, we are partners in education and we must commit to fairness

[01:36:58] and equity for all of our students. So I encourage the members of this board to vote yes to the revisions of the code of behavior. Thank you. Jennifer Rokoski. Good evening, Chair Lateef, school board members, and Dr. McDade. My name is Jennifer Rakowski and I reside in the Occoquan District. Thank you for passing the LGBTQ+ Pride Month resolution which says the month of June is recognized as LGBTQ+ Pride Month by the National Education Association. Prince William County Public Schools has proposed a resolution that encourages the belief

[01:37:38] that diversity, equity, and inclusion are our greatest strengths. I'm grateful that PWCS has this resolution and includes no discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation as a part of the non-discrimination policy. But more can be done to achieve strategic commitment to positive climate and culture for our LGBTQ plus students.

[01:37:59] I'm co-chair of VEA's LGBTQ plus ad hoc committee and a steering committee member with the NEA LGBTQ plus caucus. And I'd like to see PWCS offer training for staff on how best to support transgender and gender expansive students. VDOE is still reviewing the comments from the proposed changes to the 2021 model policies for the treatment of transgender students in public elementary and secondary schools, but that shouldn't continue to delay training for staff.

[01:38:26] VEA has developed a training we could help bring, and there are other organizations like Casa Brumar, Equality Virginia, the Trevor Project, Human Rights Campaign, and more that could offer training and help answer questions. fix what's called gang style bathrooms where it has the partitions they don't offer much privacy so let's have taller partitions and doors which would hopefully offer more privacy eventually let's replace them with gender-neutral single stall bathrooms this would create less stressful environments for students and perhaps reduce incidents of inappropriate behaviors like smoking or

[01:39:01] vaping or other misconduct locker rooms could be updated to consider creating a gender-neutral locker room or private changing rooms that have walls floor to ceiling. When you were a student, were you comfortable changing in front of your peers? There have been increased attacks on LGBTQ+ youth and adults, especially our transgender and gender expansive ones. You can help by using correct pronouns and names. If you make a mistake, apologize and correct yourself and move on. Educate yourself. I'm still learning. I grew up in a binary world and I've learn so much talking with gender expansive or non-binary individuals.

[01:39:37] Transgender persons have been documented in many indigenous Western and Eastern cultures and societies from antiquity until the present day. Yet some naysayers say the simple, simply genetics, but we're not talking about sex, we're talking about gender identity. I have two quotes I want to share. First from federal judge Moody who struck down a ban on gender affirming care in Arkansas.

[01:39:59] "Rather than protecting children or safeguarding medical ethics, the evidence showed that the prohibited medical care improves the mental health and well-being of patients and that by prohibiting it, the state undermines the interests it claims to be advancing. And to quote Tony Award winner, Brandon Urenitz, to anyone who is a parent, when your child tells you who they are, believe them.

[01:40:20] Thank you. - Marty Weaver. - Marty Weaver, Occoquan. Freedom is the topic. My husband told me that I needed to tell you what I'm talking about this time because last time I spoke about validating the delusions of Pride Month and that you are facilitating the 31 flavors of crazy, and he didn't think that you all figured that out on your own.

[01:40:47] I said that you were smart enough for that, at least I sure hope so. So freedom, freedom from oppression, freedom to try our hardest, our best, avail ourselves of all opportunities to succeed, maybe even make an opportunity for ourselves by moving out of our comfort zones, even in the face of resistance from our own selves or others.

[01:41:08] But we are absolutely not free to force others to demand results that are not merited. There is no freedom to oppress, to intimidate, to bully our kids, parents, teachers, using CRT and DIE, or whatever else you want to call it this week.

[01:41:25] We are not divided by factors like skin color, unless you force us to be, by what you're teaching and how you teach it. Now you expect equity, equal outcomes, because of historical ills in this country. I talked before about privilege.

[01:41:41] Well, my family, mine and my husband's, has had the privilege of serving in our military in every generation since the Revolutionary War, including the present. Our son serves in the Air Force, and four of our great-grandfathers and numerous uncles and cousins served in the Civil War along with many, many others who did the right thing, fighting for the freedom of some other families.

[01:42:05] I also had family who are part of the Underground Railroad, so my family says, "You are welcome for your freedom." And now some people still want to call me an oppressor, my son an oppressor, my grandkids oppressors. Some of my ancestors weren't even here in the U.S.

[01:42:22] until after the Civil War, so not a part of the ills. What more does my family owe someone? They risked their lives to right a wrong. They didn't cause the wrong. We today are not responsible that all people don't have equal outcomes.

[01:42:38] When is enough enough? We all have the freedom to try, but not to equal outcomes. America is not perfect, but I have lived overseas in West Germany, seen a concentration camp in Dachau, and I thank God when I came home.

[01:42:53] Thank God for all of the blessings that we have here. America is a work in progress, as always. How about instead of constantly bringing up the past ills, demanding reparations from us who didn't commit the crime, how about using that freedom that my great-great-grandfathers and relatives fought to get yours?

[01:43:12] How about using that freedom, working hard and moving forward, stop the victimhood mentality. God bless America. - Jalen Custis.

[01:43:27] - Good evening, Dr. McDay, Mr. Chairman, and members of the school board. My name is Jalen Custis, and I reside in the Woodbridge District. I'm here tonight to reiterate a few topics brought up this 2022-2023 school year. I want to highlight some few topics that I have heard over this year's school board meetings and topics that are near and dear to my heart.

[01:43:48] The first is safety and security. I would like to once again thank you all for passing the Evolve Systems, which is a great step in the right direction. However, we spent $10 million to solve one solution while drugs are another part of the issue. As I have heard from parents before, adding drug-sniffing dogs is a good idea.

[01:44:07] They did it when I was in middle school. Why did it stop? We must strengthen our security to ensure drugs are kept out of our school, to ensure that children aren't overdosing in bathrooms. We must continue to do more for our children. Bullying and accountability.

[01:44:23] I was stunned to hear several incidents from parents about their child being bullied and nothing being done. Students cannot learn in an environment if they are being bullied. Bullies won't stop if they aren't being punished. I don't know what has happened from when I was in seventh grade to now, but discipline has declined greatly.

[01:44:43] I was suspended from school before, I was written up before, and I had detention before. All in middle school. If I did not receive disciplinary actions while I was in middle school, or any at all, where would I be today? I learn and I have grown from my mistakes. That's what we must teach our students.

[01:45:00] Students must be taught that their actions have consequences. If not now, then in life they will have a very hard time succeeding. Finally, I spoke about this last meeting. We must go back to pencil and paper learning. We are relying too much on these laptops, which are a distraction.

[01:45:17] I remember seeing students in my class playing Minecraft, watching YouTube, and doing other things besides their work. We are straining students' eyes by having them look on a computer eight hours a day, five days a week. Also, if they forget to charge their computer, or if the computer goes out for some reason, they have to sit there and just wait, because all their work is on one space, Canvas.

[01:45:38] So while my computer is down and the teacher has assigned me to work on my laptop, I have to sit there and wait for my computer to act right, missing vital learning time. We must return to how it used to be when I was growing up. That seemed to work out pretty well, if I do say so myself.

[01:45:53] I bring these topics up to stress the fact that just because they were talked about months ago doesn't mean that they aren't still important today. I hope you all have heard my concerns and take action

come the 2023-2024 school year. Thank you again and my name is Jaylen Custis and I reside in the Woolbridge District.

[01:46:09] - Richard Jesse. - My name is Richard Jesse and my address is on file. I really this evening just want to make a request.

[01:46:28] We have probably in this room right now six candidates for the school board and we have six members of the board. Most of them are running again. I looked at the policy that you're going to discuss tonight, I think it was 9:56 or 26.

[01:46:49] And I was trying to figure out what can a candidate or somebody do in the school system and what shouldn't they do. And that led me to another policy to look at, and I looked at that.

[01:47:05] What I would like and recommend is that it's going to be a lot of folks running and a lot of folks going to schools a lot of folks doing things it would be nice and I think appropriate if we had a simple easy to understand explanation of this is what you can do as a candidate on school board property and so forth can you talk to kids can you do this can you do that and I think would be useful for that consistency so that everybody knows what they should and should not do because

[01:47:43] i tell you right now you can't find it in your policy it is too confusing and does not make sense but it is a problem i've been uh this is my third election in the school board on the school board working with my wife and i know there's been candidates that did things that they shouldn't do and your principals and administrators do not always know what they need to do so i just ask you to take that in consideration and i hope that you have a good

[01:48:14] summer thank you. Monique Cerruti. Cerruti, correct. So I know I'm last so I'm gonna try to go through this quickly. So I am here because of my athlete. Originally I thought I was here on the on a bad evening because of all the children that were here but it actually supports why I'm here. My daughter is a figure skater and it is not a sport that is supported by the school system and I understand that she has gold medals silver medals bronze

[01:48:52] medals she's fallen and hasn't gotten any medals but the challenge is she's a competitive individual skater but she's also a member of a synchronized skating team the competitions for competitive skaters tend to be in the summer months and so that doesn't conflict with school but the problem is with synchronized skating. Our school system only has excused and unexcused absences. US figure skating will provide a letter identifying that the skater is

[01:49:29] participating in synchronized skating. The majority of the competitions that we go to are in Boston area which means that's not a day trip and they tend to be in the during the week and on partial weekends. One of the challenges is I don't want to have to say my child is sick and she's not sick so she can go to synchronized skating and just so you know how how challenging it is and how hard they work spring training we were at the MedStar Center in Arlington at 6 a.m. on Saturday morning till 8 a.m. for eight weeks my daughter is nine

[01:50:06] years old and she wants to do this from 6 to 8 a.m. every Saturday we were at the skating rink and that was just one practice she practices five days a week as a nine-year-old a rising fourth grader I don't want to have to have unexcused absences on her official record and she's not playing hooky she's not pretending like she's sick so she can participate what I'm asking for is some kind of other qualifier because all of these children amazing children that we're here this evening,

[01:50:42] they are in school supportive activities. Well, she's an athlete as well. And I would ask that even if it's an unexcused absence, if there can be a qualifier, because if she's going to have 10 unexcused absences on her official record every year, people are gonna think she's playing hooky.

[01:51:05] She's not showing up for school. This happened last year and I got the nasty gram about come talk to us because we want to find out why your child is not in class. Every time my child was out of class, it was because it was for ice skating, figure skating.

[01:51:21] And it's not like she can, at 16, well. - Okay, thank you. - Thank you. I just want to qualify her, just something, so they know she's not skipping school. - Please email and we'll follow up with that.

[01:51:38] At this point, we are moving on to the Office of Associate Superintendent for student services and post-secondary success. Ms. Hebner, we're gonna move on to 1501, proposed 2023-24 code of behavior. This item is on for action this evening.

[01:51:55] After we receive an update on the revisions, the code of behavior, I'll turn it over to Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So tonight we are bringing forward for final consideration the code of behavior. This follows our extensive conversation at the last board meeting where we took time to consider feedback from the school board and the public.

[01:52:14] And so as a result of that feedback, since the last meeting, we have made some revisions. It's important to note that these revisions do not compromise the body of work that was brought forward by the committee that developed this document. What we have sought to do is to bring some clarification based on questions and concerns that families had, that board members had, that brought to bear the fact that there were some consequences in the levels one through three in categories for more serious offenses where principals, administrators would not use those lower level consequences

[01:52:54] for more serious behaviors. And so in the document, we've made some revisions to clarify that, to make sure that all of the consequences in each category are appropriate for the actual infraction. And we believe doing that will resolve some of the concerns that were brought forward around confusion as to whether or not a level one or level two consequence would be applied in a situation when you have more serious infractions.

[01:53:23] So we are going to present to you today the revisions that were made that aligned to practice that's already in place, but ensures that the actual documented policy matches the practice in the school division. So I think you'll find that it'll bring great clarity and it's responsive to the feedback that we agreed with when we got feedback from parents and from the school board after reviewing.

[01:53:50] We saw where there could be greater clarity to ensure that there was no confusion in how we're applying the consequences in the code of behavior. So I'm gonna have Dr. Ms. Huebner come forward, our Associate Superintendent for Student Services and Post-Secondary Success.

[01:54:06] She'll review the changes. She will also share with you what some of our parents had to say about the Code of Behavior in terms of needing more clarification. So we'll bring some direct feedback and then our response to that. We also have here our Associate Superintendent for Special Education, Dr. Ashley Ryer, who will address any additional questions around the components of the Code of Behavior beyond the infractions that we're gonna cover.

[01:54:33] So Ms. Huebner, if you wanna start out and then we'll entertain questions from the board. - All right, thank you. Good evening, Chairman Lateef, members of the board, Dr. McDade. I think Dr. McDade captured it very eloquently, so I will jump right into the revisions.

[01:54:49] For those who are watching or would like to access this, these are posted in board docs and available for viewing. So first you'll see, to capture some of the concerns that we heard, a community concern about the consequences may be inappropriate for potentially dangerous actions for some of our students. And just to clarify, Prince William County Schools, for the most serious offenses, We do not utilize the lower level consequences, and so in the final version that's proposed in the Code of Behavior, we've revised those to reflect this practice and to ensure the clarity in that.

[01:55:17] Another community concern that we heard brought forward was around category E and F, noting that the majority of these behaviors should result in automatic expulsion or higher level consequences, and that a student shouldn't be allowed to do most of them in those categories and not to expect some severe consequences such as arrest or expulsion.

[01:55:35] So our response is that the Final Code of Behavior has been revised for Category E and F to remove the lower level consequences to create clarity. A summary of those can be found on this slide. So I'll give you a moment just to review. So we have added Level 4 administrative responses to Categories B and C.

[01:55:56] We have removed Level 1 responses for Category D. We've removed Level 1 and 2 administrative responses for category E and level 5 B administrative response and tiered response from category F so category F has been updated which includes the most serious behavior such as assault with a firearm malicious wounding the only option now for that is expulsion that does require us map tearing so I hope that you can see that we do value the input of our stakeholders and value the partnership of our parents and I think that these changes will provide clarity to the implementation of the coded behavior thank you we will take any

[01:56:35] Any questions that you have about the revisions? - I have a question. Thank you, Ms. Huebner, for providing us with the update. With the removal of the tier one and tier two, my concern is if elementary school students, and I know there are other provisions in the code of behavior, obviously there are students with other impairments.

[01:56:58] Could you just speak briefly to that? I don't want our general public thinking if there's some sort of a fraction where a five-year-old has done something they don't understand or has a documented history that there are other places in the code of behavior that address that and then in addition to that I appreciate the update to F I think one of the things it's not mentioned is those behaviors also we have have consequent legal consequences and there's a state requirement that when a student breaks the law if they're in jeopardy if you could talk a little bit about that as well correct I'll

[01:57:36] start with that one because we're ending on that one so in category F which are persistently dangerous those do require referral to law enforcement and there is additional consequences and sanctions that would go in place not just under Virginia code for the schools but also from the law as far as addressing behavior it is complex it's not a one-size-fits-all but we do take into consideration the age of a child the developmental ability but consequences are consequences and do need to be put in place when severe and and violations of the code of behavior do occur.

[01:58:08] In suspension, you can look on page 39 of the draft and it will outline at what grade level, pre-K through three, there are limitations on suspension. That is for certain circumstances. There are egregious situations such as weapons, drug offenses, or aggravating circumstances where safety is a concern that with appropriate documentation we are allowed to suspend beyond the three days.

[01:58:33] But in all situations, we expect all those developmental things be taken in consideration for discipline. - Thank you, I appreciate that 'cause I think that often time it's looked at as like a black and white issue, but we don't discuss enough the requirements that the state puts on us with regards to that and the fact that we do have to be sensitive to each situation and I just again want to appreciate, thank you and appreciate all the hard work that's gone into the updated code of behavior.

[01:59:00] I think the thing that we've heard most loudly from the general public is that there isn't any consequences for actions, but we know that that is not the case, and really majority of these updates, when it comes to discipline, there's not a tremendous change from what we've had in the past several years.

[01:59:20] A lot of it has to deal with either legal requirements of the state code, General Assembly has passed new laws, or trying to find more effective ways to correct and address student behavior, because we know behavior consequences of the past, like zero tolerance and things like that, do not help students and actually hurt marginalized communities.

[01:59:41] So I'm happy that we're able to be in compliance with the law of the state of Virginia, but also to be very forward thinking and understanding that children need consequences, but they also need the ability to change course for their behavior and be provided a pathway to do that.

[01:59:58] So I appreciate that, thank you. - Ms. Jessie. - First of all, I wanna thank you for responding to the outcries from the community.

[02:00:13] As a principal, when I inherited the school, I had 600 discipline referrals. And the referrals were kids walking down the hall, getting out of line. And then I walked in a library one day and I saw 26 kids who had had minor discipline referrals being kept away from school because they had discipline referrals so they weren't allowed to go on field trips.

[02:00:39] I think to me it's a matter of balance. And each school is going to be different. I remember the worst discipline situation I had was a child who screamed 45 minutes every single day and it was disruptive for the classroom and it was disruptive to bring him into the office.

[02:01:00] So as a principal, you've got to make a decision of what you're going to do. Teachers want you to support them, but at the same time, they don't want their classrooms disrupted. I think my concern has always been do our teachers going to really get the restorative practice elements of that and how is the training is going to be done so they actually, there is some fidelity and consistency in what we're doing.

[02:01:31] Zero tolerance by itself does not work and we know it does not work. If it did, all we'd have to do is just be more strict with our kids and we wouldn't have the problems that we have in society. but the balancing act. So the balancing act for me is whether the culturally relevant practices that needs to be defined a little bit more, I think, and the restorative practice.

[02:01:55] Tell me again, because the last time I think I looked at you and I said, and everyone looked at me and is that Mrs. Jessie is not getting it. And if I don't get it, I don't think other people get it. Tell me about the research or restorative practice and what it's going to look like.

[02:02:12] So, Ms. Jessie, I'm going to invite Dr. Ryer and one of her team members, Dr. Darwin Barker, who is our Director of Tiered Intervention and Supports to speak to restorative practices because that does fall under intervention and prevention.

[02:02:29] - Good evening, Ms. Jessie. I can address your question just in emphasizing that restorative practices as part of a multi-tiered system of support, namely the positive behavioral intervention and support is really to get ahead of student behaviors occurring in the sense that we are encouraging and working with schools to teach students the expected behaviors so that students don't then in turn violate the code of behavior.

[02:02:54] So it's working with schools to teach students ways that they can demonstrate the expected behaviors, positively be members of the school community, and in a way that prevents violations of the code of conduct from happening. So it's very different than replacing consequences when students do demonstrate those behaviors.

[02:03:16] - Dan, can you tell me how it's going to be implemented? for the public, who's going to train these teachers, and how is it going to be done? And when is it going to be done? - Absolutely, so I have Dr. Darwin Barker, who's our Director of Tiered Intervention and Supports, and as part of our strategic plan, we'll be rolling out training for schools on MTSS and positive behaviors.

[02:03:36] He has a team of staff who have undergone training and will be working directly with schools. So I'm going to ask him to come to the podium and share those details with you briefly. - Good evening. As the Director of Tiered Interventions and Supports, I am responsible for leading a group of 13 behavior specialists and 23 MTSS coaches.

[02:04:01] We have been trained as trainers to provide proactive intervention supports and services in the area of restorative practices as we embark on the 23-24 school year. I guess my last concern is that I've been in a school system and we looked at the disproportionality studies and the previous code of behavior I guess nationwide we have this problem where there are more African Americans more lower-income kids who get discipline referrals have we looked at the disproportionality in Prince

[02:04:37] William County schools at present and do you expect to have a change in that because you look at zero tolerance when we look at it the research on it shows that there's an increase in those students who are marginalized and in those communities that are lower income in African-American and ELL.

[02:05:01] - Absolutely, Miss Jessie. So the research on PBIS absolutely shows a reduction in discipline of students in those groups that you're referring to, but it's due to them responding positively to the relationships that they're forming with school staff, demonstrating a greater understanding of what the expected behaviors are and feeling a part of that school community in a way that will prevent them from then engaging in negative behaviors might result in the need to issue a consequence finally i will say this that 20 years of working with kids i have found that when kids are learning at a higher level my discipline referrals just went

[02:05:39] nowhere i mean they were it was drastic i went from 600 to 100 but those kids who needed to go home those kids who disrupted a classroom they were never allowed to disrupt a classroom or to be bullied and when i look at what the superintendent has done i think she's a zero tolerance when it comes to guns because she has the evolved system so I don't think you could say that we're going to be tolerant of

kids who bring guns and knives and fight kids and create physical physical problems for kids when in terms of their safety so I want to compliment you on the making the changes

[02:06:18] I think that you know you could have ignored the parents and presented this again but I think I appreciate the fact that you came back with the second and and listen to the parent and the community input thank you jackson um the last few years our schools have been kind of microcosm of like what is going on in society from like the you know the division the pandemic hunger discrimination all of that seeps into our schools and i we benefit as a school system when we support families and stakeholders to keep everyone safe and i that's

[02:06:54] why i appreciate the conversation they're having tonight and the time that the division is taking to collect feedback this as a division we've added security we added involved added social workers but none of the change will work without a partnership because we are limited by funding impacted by what's happening on neighborhoods and online and granted a limited authority because of the dental law state so we have to comply with state laws and ensure that our code of behavior reflects these laws while being transparent and listening to the varying concerns of our communities so my questions tonight and I can I don't need to ask

[02:07:30] all of them now I can ask them and then okay so my questions tonight are for clarification and to address maybe some behavior concerns that relate to me by staff and students and families that were addressed it may be to be you know said a little bit more so my first question has to do with as it pertains to bullying and I know I've mentioned it before in this boardroom and a little bit last time and in preparation this meeting I just would like to talk about bullying of students with some call invisible or hidden disabilities because I know it's hard to combat this for a variety of reasons these disabilities

[02:08:10] include like health conditions ADHD autism and I know I've asked before and as a special educator I know that sometimes your your ability disability differences impact one's ability to recognize when you're being bullied and what to do when you're being bullied. Can you please speak to some steps we're taking to address harassment and bullying towards students with disabilities? Can you please speak to how we're helping students self-advocate? I've seen firsthand the impact that a deficit, a difference, and interpreting behaviors can have on a student, so I want to make sure that we take the opportunity either now

[02:08:49] or later to clarify the difference between bullying and harassment and then if you could please also explain the difference between bullying and harassment right now especially as it pertains to students with disabilities thank you we do have excuse me we do have regulation that clearly outlines our bullying and it is found in the back of the code of behavior on page 45 and 46 if anyone wanted to dig into that a little bit deeper so when we talk about bullying harassment ongoing repetitive imbalance of power these are there are bullying behaviors but it becomes bullying when it is repetitive in nature and there are a lot of different things that we do we will be training

[02:09:27] administrators again again digging into how we create an inclusive environment but also helping teach our children appropriate and proper behavior and how to respond when a situation is occurring so when the child is being bullied they can tell the bully very firmly stop you know I'm uncomfortable they can seek the adult that can help them a trusted adult in the building any adult in the building and you know we do have multiple ways to report it doesn't have to be, that it's a written form, that any adult in the building is able to help the child respond, and awareness of what that looks like in

monitoring the situation for all children, not just children with disabilities, but in particular making sure that our children

[02:10:07] who may not have the ability to communicate in the same way that they are also monitored and heard, and we have avenues for them to communicate. And that's through teachers, forums, counselors, but really awareness of those students in the building and supporting that inclusive environment.

[02:10:25] Did you also, did we address some of these concerns in the revisions and moving the harassment to? So on the chart of changes, I believe what you're possibly referring to is we did have in category A some different types of behaviors that could be categorized.

[02:10:49] We did move those into a different category to allow for higher level responses. yes I'm just emphasizing that our expectation is safety and focus in the classroom hey I appreciate that and then so it sounds like there's some work coming about helping students with IEPs about bullying and harassment my other concern and then I'll pause for other board members is regarding recording a fight so taking photos of classmates without their permission I think that was also addressed in some of my questions I just wanted to give you an

[02:11:25] opportunity to speak to that because it's I know it's been a concern from some parents sure so absolutely you'll find in the front of the code of behavior we list a lot of things as almost definitions if you look under the use of electronic devices you know really it's not about the device itself it's about the behavior that accompanies it accompanies the device and how it is used and so it does clearly outline that use of electronic devices to take pictures video record and engage in appropriate behavior on the school is strictly prohibited and that extends to the school bus as well if I can take a

[02:12:04] pause I also part of my questions were in regards to that I you know asked about where it regards the implementation and that media did you want to touch on that before I ask my questions the like dr. Flannard oversees the level associates and so she will share what the level associates will be doing around implementation good evening mr. chair members of the board dr. McDade colleagues

[02:12:39] and community we are beginning right in July actually part of our legal hot topics that is a required training for all of our administrators will be on the code of behavior from that point we also already have on the books and training that will begin August 7th where we're really looking at the actual implementation of the code of behavior and the changes within and so that is also a required training for all of our administration and then we're also adding an optional the keyword was optional teacher component for the code

[02:13:14] of behavior so they have an opportunity to really deep take a deeper dive into the code itself and the practices that they should be experiencing within the school the as we are continuing to do those trainings we're also going to be expecting that all of the level associates will be gathering discipline data on a regular basis so that they can be monitoring what's happening at the school level and then we could be acting accordingly based on that that data itself so I have one follow-up question it has to do with what families and also

[02:13:54] staff what they can do if they feel that the administration and administrators are not following the code of behavior or not having the supports they needed to to follow the code of behavior, like what steps staff and families can take, and I know that it would be different.

[02:14:12] - Certainly, and thank you. I think that's a really important question. The steps are really to, depending on who they speak to, if it's a teacher, then they certainly can bring that to their assistant principal, as well as a principal if they've already spoken to their assistant principal, as well as families.

[02:14:28] They certainly have the opportunity to speak to the teacher first if it's a situation that has occurred in the classroom. And then, of course, they have the opportunity to raise those concerns to the administration. Beyond that, they also have the opportunity to speak to their level associate.

[02:14:44] It would be absolutely appropriate for families to follow the chain of command to say, I need further clarification or I need support and understanding the why behind certain discipline procedures.

[02:14:59] - Okay, I appreciate it, thank you. - Ms. Zargo. - First of all, I wanna thank Dr. McDade for, when we received a lot of feedback, having that conversation with me about the concerns that I was hearing was really helpful.

[02:15:19] And I know behaviors, they were rough this year, right? I believe this is an adult problem. It's parents, it's teachers, it's administrators. We all have to work together to make sure that our kids are getting the best instruction, getting the instruction academically, but also behaviorally.

[02:15:41] And I wanna just kind of make one suggestion. I know in where I work, one of the things we do in our CLTs is we reserve a little bit of time for talking about behavior if we're seeing something so we can share across classrooms or grade levels or whatever ideas for support for our students.

[02:16:01] So it's kind of collegial and working with other adults but also in support of our students. I do encourage, for all the adults, for the teachers, I know how it can be when you have some interesting challenges in your classroom.

[02:16:19] I'm the one who will just be like, I need help. So I don't think that's a bad thing. I think doing what's best for our kids is what we should be doing. So I wanna thank you for being real receptive and making these things more clear to parents and making sure that we're all on the same page so that we can do the best for our students.

[02:16:42] - Mr. Wilk, okay. So I prepared a few words and I shaved for this. So it's important tonight, this topic. So first of all, I'm profoundly grateful.

[02:16:59] I feel heard. I think a lot of people with this revisions and the changes are going to feel heard. I feel a lot of teachers who have talked to me and expressed some concerns will be heard. I literally at one school had, not a teacher, a staff member come out and literally pull out the code of behavior and show all this chart in these different tiers and saying like, you know, you can have a talk to if a kid brings a gun as an option.

[02:17:21] I was like, no, that doesn't make sense, you know? And so I think this is a great step. The revisions and modifications I think implemented since our last meeting have played a pivotal role in dispelling the perplexity I previously experienced and others regarding the tiered interventions and the underlying concept of punishable acts.

[02:17:42] I'm not gonna ask any questions. you guys are like ready to go, punishable acts. My primary objective, again, remains unwavering to ensure that any transgressions committed by students are met with the appropriate and proportional consequences, even if it inconveniences parents.

[02:18:02] As substantiated by the longstanding code of behavior, grave offenses, such as those involving weapons, arson, and related matters have allowed and showed the possibility of a defined tier one intervention. However, nevertheless, when it comes to instances where students commit violent acts against their peers or staff members, I do hold the firm conviction that tier one interventions are ill suited and I believe we've all established that.

[02:18:28] The gravity of such actions demands an alternative approach that unreservedly places the safety and wellbeing of our entire school community at the forefront. I'm equally delighted to observe that in the cases such as fighting and persistent bullying, Our tiered intervention system promptly escalates to what I perceive as a more fitting course of action, namely a tier two or three intervention.

[02:18:53] I firmly hold the belief that students who engage in repeated acts of bullying or participate in physical altercation should not be subjected to lower tiered interventions. I wholeheartedly endorse the modifications outlined in the updated code of behavior. The previously perceived misalignments between the severity and the act and its corresponding consequences no longer perplexes me.

[02:19:18] So I've done some reflecting and in my personal investigation, so I looked at some facts and did some research that, for example, the Institute of Education conducted an extensive analysis of approximately 2,400 public elementary, middle, high and combined grade schools, focusing on school behavior in the post COVID period.

[02:19:38] The findings published in this recent report indicate that over 84% of surveyed individuals either strongly agree or simply agree that behavior development has been adversely affected by the pandemic. Moreover, the report highlights a concerning trend within the sampled schools, revealing a staggering 30% increase in bullying incidents and a troubling 33% rise in physical attacks or fights amongst students.

[02:20:04] This is amongst the entire country. These statistics underscore the significant impact of the pandemic on the school environments and emphasize the urgent need for effective interventions and support to address these growing challenges. In January, the Brookings Institution conducted a survey that shed light on the challenges surrounding student discipline amid the impact of COVID-19.

[02:20:26] The survey revealed that 62% of schools surveyed, like our proposed code of behavior, employed strict disciplinary measures exclusively for the most serious school infraction, such as carrying weapons or possessing illegal drugs. Conversely, when it came to minor offenses, the survey found that the alternative approaches to exclusionary discipline in line with our coded behavior were prevalent in US public schools in previous years.

[02:20:53] For instance, 78% of the analyzed schools utilized positive behavior intervention and supports for minor infractions, while 77% had implemented a multi-tiered system of support. I firmly believe that programs like these are appropriate for addressing the minor offenses outlined in the code of behavior, and we should strive to continue their implementation throughout our school system.

[02:21:17] Adopting a strictly punitive approach and resorting to immediate suspension should not be the default course of all action and disciplinary matters. Last month, the US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights issued crucial guidance to address the escalating disciplinary challenges faced by America's public schools.

[02:21:36] Within this comprehensive document, the department highlighted recent disciplinary cases that have resulted in the denial of equal educational opportunities for students. Numerous studies have underscored the adoption of discipline policies across the nation that have perpetuated discrimination based on race, color, or national origin.

[02:21:57] For instance, an investigation conducted by the Office of Civil Rights in 2022 revealed pervasive patterns of harsher and more frequent disciplinary actions against African-American students compared to their white peers at Victor Valley Union High School District in California.

[02:22:14] The guidance also documented a case involving Madison County Schools, not Virginia, Alabama, in 2022, where barriers were imposed that impeded equal opportunities for African-American students. Similarly, the Davis School District in Utah faced scrutiny in 2022 when the Department of Justice determined that African-American students received harser disciplinary penalties than their white counterparts for comparable offenses of equal severity.

[02:22:44] As a division, it is imperative that we remain vigilant about our practices and consistently analyze our disciplinary data for the purpose of review and reevaluation. In conclusion, it is paramount that we convey unwavering support to our principals and all staff, assuring them that they have the complete backing of our school system in implementing the updated code of behavior.

[02:23:08] I extend my heartfelt gratitude to those who reached out to me throughout the year, sharing their concerns and insights, which have been invaluable in shaping our approach. Thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Wilk. I just have a few brief comments.

[02:23:24] You know, when I joined the school board, it was a few years after I think Prince William County was found to have the highest expulsion and suspension rate for minority students in the Commonwealth.

[02:23:40] And that was a problem. And as Mr. Wilk nicely elucidated with very good evidence that, you know, discipline historically has been, and in this county even, not applied fairly and justly.

[02:24:03] In any school division, large school division or large organization, I think the greatest frustration for the customers or the students or the parents is the real and perceived lack of consistent application of rules.

[02:24:22] And that's frustrating. My wife reminded me of my son, my oldest, who was, when he was in sixth grade, and I think there's a principal here who was his principal in sixth grade, sitting there, over there. He was bullied persistently on the bus and reported it, and principal, and the assistant principal.

[02:24:48] I think the student who was the one doing the bullying lost bus privileges for a couple of days and the parents had to bring the kid to school. That was something that we could see actually happen, right? So we saw that the student who did the bullying consequences.

[02:25:07] I can't say, you know, in other instances, with him, my kids, or their friends, that we were able to see the consequences of actions of an offending violator student, someone who does something wrong, because the law requires that we cannot reveal you know, what was done.

[02:25:27] So then it becomes frustrating to us as parents when we can't see what happens. When I got elected, I felt like, you know, the biggest thing we had to do was ensure that the leaders in the school

division were acting in a way that they were doing the best they could to implement policies and regulations evenly across the division and applying them fairly and justly.

[02:25:55] We have probably 300 or so assistant principals. There, many of them are the ones in charge of applying the code of behavior. And as Dr. Flannard nicely stated, that each year we have updates to that and each year there's gonna be training with the principals and the assistant principals.

[02:26:15] And it is bound that the new rules and regulations, because the old rules and regulations and followed with fidelity and consistency across the division, it'll probably continue to happen in some ways.

[02:26:30] I can tell you that in conversations this week with the school board, and I wanna thank Lisa Zargarpur specifically, who's gone through the code of behavior line by line and really committed some time, and each of the board members who brought up their issues to Dr. McDade.

[02:26:46] Dr. McDade is committed to, I think me certainly and to others on the board, a commitment to fidelity and a commitment to making sure that whatever changes we do, we really do the training to apply these things consistently so that there is less perception or less real lack of fairness and justice.

[02:27:12] And I think that's really important. And so I appreciate Dr. McDade's commitment to that. We have come a long way. It is better than it was. Is behavior bad? I think Mr. Wilk pointed out nicely. And one of the reasons we implemented the Evolve system is weapon carrying is up something like 60%, 70% since the pandemic return.

[02:27:36] And we continue to pick up the pieces from that pandemic and what happened and the choices we made there. And that does require some flexibility, some new training and a commitment to working through that.

[02:27:57] But the one thing that I do appreciate the most as we are closing out on two years of Dr. McDade's leadership here is a commitment to a strategic plan that was developed by parents, by teachers, by input from all aspects of the community.

[02:28:15] Did we all agree what ended up in the document? No. Did we all, were we 100% in agreement with different portions of it? No, but was it a document that embodies the broadest core values of our community and our commitment to those?

[02:28:35] Absolutely. And the disciplined implementation and commitment to the words in that document, I think you are seeing here in the code of behavior modifications, along with following the law and what the governor's changes are and what the Virginia Department of Education have recommended.

[02:28:57] So we continue to do that. I have the full trust and faith in our administration in their commitment to really try to apply this new code as evenly as possible.

[02:29:13] And I, like you all, over the years, have found episodes where I may be frustrated where I felt like things were not done appropriately. But I think on average and on even, you know, on Kiel, the division is working hard.

[02:29:32] And I wanna ensure to the public that this board is committed to making sure we work closely with the superintendent, her administration, to really have some fidelity to the words on the document. You know, the changes in the document really aren't that big, you know, massive change over last year.

[02:29:50] Fidelity to the document, whether it was last year this year and really the training that goes into it is really the most important thing. And so, you know, it's not easy, it's hard work, but I appreciate all the work that's gone into this. And so with that, I will be supporting the changes and modifications in the code of behavior.

[02:30:08] I thank you, Dr. McDade, for the work you did over the last couple of weeks to continue to work with the board, hear the parents, listen to the concerns. Did we get to where everybody in this room or outside the community want? I'm not, I highly doubt there's not a single vote that I've taken that we've received outside of Evolve, which was pretty darn close to unanimous, but we do commit to listen to the community and we are working hard on that.

[02:30:35] And so I want, as we wrap up the school year and this final vote on this, I think it is important for the community, whether they agree with me or not, to understand that we have and we do listen. You know, it's awkward citizen comment time. It's awkward in sort of this, well, we can't respond and you don't hear anything back, but we do listen.

[02:30:57] The folks up here take notes, they're committed to having discussions about what we hear, whether and what emails we get about what our community is saying. And that's whoever writes to us and whatever side they're on. And there are always not just one side to an issue, not just two sides to an issue, there are multiple sides to an issue.

[02:31:16] And it's our job to try to assimilate all of those and appreciate all of them and weigh all the perspectives. So with that, I'll stop talking and let's take a vote on this code of behavior. Please vote. - We didn't have a motion yet. - Oh, didn't we have a motion? Oh, Ms. Williams.

[02:31:32] - I moved to the Prince William County School Board approved the proposed 2023-24 code of behavior. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman, I second. - Mrs. Argapur seconds. Any discussion outside of what we just did? Okay, please vote.

[02:31:57] - The vote is six yes, two absent. Ralston and Wall, motion passed. At this time, a number of members have asked me to just do a recess for 10 minutes, just 'cause we've been up here a while. Just 10 minute recess and then we'll return for superintendent's time and board matters.

[02:32:12] Thank you. Outstanding, if we can sort of collect back up here. Yep, excellent. And then we will reconvene and we'll go straight to superintendent's time.

[02:32:31] Dr. Latonya McDade.

[02:32:46] - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As another remarkable school year ends, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our students, teachers, staff, and families for their unwavering support and commitment throughout this year.

[02:33:02] Our collective vision is to see every student graduate with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community. This vision cannot come to fruition without the belief and commitment of the entire PWCS community.

[02:33:20] Together, we have emerged stronger than ever, and the future is bright for PWCS. This year has been a testament to the resilience and adaptability of our school community. We have remained steadfast in our pursuit of excellence.

[02:33:36] Our students have continued to learn, grow, and thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. I am immensely proud of the dedication and creativity displayed by our teachers and staff. They have gone above and beyond to provide quality education and support to our students.

[02:33:57] Their unwavering commitment to our students' success is truly commendable. I would also like to recognize the engagement, collaboration, and partnership we have fostered with our families and community businesses. Your involvement and support have been instrumental in ensuring the continuity of learning and the well-being of our students.

[02:34:19] Let us celebrate the milestones we have reached, the challenges we have overcome, and the bright future ahead. Now, it is my pleasure to introduce our end of the year video. This video is a celebration of the moments, accomplishments, and memories we have created together throughout the school year.

[02:34:39] It displays just a fraction of the talents, achievements, and spirit of our incredible students and the dedication of our exceptional staff. - Morning, I'm so excited for the first day of school. - Woo!

[02:34:55] - This is always such an exciting time. - My philosophy on education is building a good relationship with students based on mutual respect and trust and setting the tone for the thriving future that they will have.

[02:35:12] Good morning. I'm so excited for the first day of school. This is always such an exciting time. My philosophy on education is building a good relationship with students based on mutual respect and trust and setting the tone for the thriving future that they will have ahead of them.

[02:35:37] The future is not just going to be college. The future is also going to be what type of technical skills can other children accumulate as they go throughout.

[02:36:02] Congratulations to all of our finalists, all of our winners. This is absolutely the best school division in this country. Also to all the students who decorated this boardroom, wow, this was quite the explosion of color and gratitude.

[02:36:35] are some kids that have a really hard time communicating, and the two speech teachers that I do have are great and the best. I'm really happy and I'm

[02:36:54] really amazed at what they're doing in the school. I'd like to wish everyone a safe, relaxing, and rewarding summer break, and I look forward to seeing everyone August 21st. For those attending summer enrichment programs, we look forward to seeing you over the summer and for those attending the high school

[02:37:33] launch program we look forward to seeing you on Monday June 26 thank you mr. chairman this concludes the superintendent's report thank you dr. McDade so just we will move on to board matters and and then once board matters is completed the board has to reconvene in closed session for we'll have a motion for that at some point so we'll start with board matters with Miss Jessie we'll do five minutes today it's the last meeting of school year just like we normally do every year.

[02:38:01] Thank you. Miss Jessie. - Good evening, I think I have some slides. I always have slides, of course. These slides are nothing but gratitude for Mrs. Jessie.

[02:38:19] This represents, first of all, Mr. Walker. Mr. Walker, you know you've gone to schools where you have no parking at all. This man meets me every time I go to Woodbridge High School and I asked the

principal, I said, if Mr. Walker didn't come to work versus you not coming to work, which one do you think you would miss most?

[02:38:40] And the whole idea is that we need to show gratitude to everyone, including teachers. And we need to recognize the meritorious performance of teachers. And the young lady on the left is Taryn Woods. She's the conductor.

[02:38:56] She does a phenomenal job. And I think she's gonna be nationally known. This is Mr. Burnett. He is the ROTC person at Woodbridge High School. And of course, they got 398, the highest score, I think, in the region for the ROTC.

[02:39:14] He's retiring, and this is, I hate to say, this is my Sarah, Sheila Coleman, who has been a principal, assistant principal in this county for more than 30 years. So these cups of gratitude were given to them, and earlier I gave cups of gratitude to the three persons that are leaving.

[02:39:33] May we see those slides? These are Ms. Jocelyn Hart. Jocelyn Hart was one of those people that I found and picked her and just kind of nurtured her and realized that if you just give people that one little ounce of encouragement, because someone gave me that ounce of encouragement, and she is one of my picks.

[02:39:59] She started the, we had a building leadership capacity, and I want to say to the superintendent, we need to grow our own administrators in this county because there are lots of people in this county who want to be administrators or they want recognition. Bill Bixby, love Bill Bixby, have known him for quite some time I gave him a special cup because Bill Bill is just honesty when I think about Bill Bixby and everything he's done for the school system so when I said why are you leaving he said I'm tired he said he said I just need to rest and then of course there's Rita Rita and I have been

[02:40:33] together forever and Rita has gone through all the various programs everything we've tried in this system and never really held on to anything so I'm hoping that you will stay with us and create this consistency in one program and one feature that we can all buy into.

[02:40:51] In closing, you can take the slides down. In closing, I'd like to say to everyone in the school system that I have been in the school system for quite some time and I've seen things change.

[02:41:09] Dr. McDade, I call you a miracle and you are a miracle to me because you have brought consistency to the system. I laugh when we talk about your organizational coherent. not sure I'm always organizational coherent and I sometimes break the rules and you remind me but you have done a phenomenal job in this system and to all the teachers the custodians the cafeteria workers the bus drivers all of those people again when you look at the classified personnel who've done so much in this system who would you miss the principal or the guy who cuts the grass first I think you'd miss the guy who cuts the grass first so I want to make a give a shout out to

[02:41:48] the people in this system who has made the system work and I will be back next year and I'll be here for until the end of November I guess and then my time will be up but I cannot I can't say anything more than nothing but gratitude for the opportunity to serve this county to serve this community and to to find leaders and to find students who can learn.

[02:42:18] When I said earlier that discipline referrals do drop when you have high levels of learning, because I didn't have discipline referrals at Vaughan. They said, "What's your plan?" My plan is for all the

kids to learn. When kids are learning at high levels, you don't have those problems, but you do have those problems that you can't manage.

[02:42:36] And I think our responsibility as leaders is to make sure that every child has a right to learn without a disruption. My little screamer would scream for 45 seconds, 45 minutes straight, and then he would just stop. We didn't know why, and we called his mother.

[02:42:51] And I said, he said to me, Mrs. Chazza, I can't tell you anything. I told you my mother's the queen of the castle. Don't call her. But at some point, we had to put him in a situation, and we had to put him in a special program. Sometimes kids need special services, but most kids just need high levels of learning.

[02:43:07] Thank you. - All right, I guess I'll go next. Wait for our timer. I just want to end the school year by piggybacking again on what Ms. Jessie and Dr. McDade said by thanking all of our Prince William County school families, staff, students, admin, but I wanna give a very special shout out to our virtual school families and participants.

[02:43:36] In my home this year, we are wrapping up our final year of virtual school, and I cannot speak more highly for, and so thankfully for the elementary virtual school teachers and staff and our virtual school principal, Mr. Gillespie.

[02:43:52] The programs that were held throughout the year were extremely inclusive and educational. I know from my home, I had a student who was so anxious that he didn't want to return to a building that now has learned to self advocate, has come up in his reading grade level and can't wait to be in a building next year.

[02:44:09] And that's all a testament to the staff that helped him all throughout the year. And that is also to include his base school because it was a collaborative effort. While my own little elementary schooler was home doing virtual school, I had plenty of other family members in school for what really was truly a first full year in the building full time for over 97% of our student body.

[02:44:38] And I just think that really and truly we all need to give ourselves some grace for coming through the conclusion of the school year. It was at times trying for some of us and at times we're celebrating. But I think the mental health situation and coming out of the pandemic just was not spoken of enough in the fact that it really truly was our first full year for the majority of our students.

[02:45:01] And I really want to extend my deepest gratitude to everyone that made that happen. I think we really should be thankful that we came through it together. At the end of the year, myself, and I'm sure almost every board member here, as well as other elected officials throughout the county attended graduations.

[02:45:21] I know I attended 11 of them myself. I wanted to give a special shout out to Independents. This was the first time that we had judges attend our Independents non-traditional graduation. I thought that was a nice upgrade. I also attended plenty of promotion ceremonies from fifth grade and eighth grade.

[02:45:38] They're always a fun time. And to our retirees, I wish you all the best, especially to some near and dear in my heart, which is Dr. Hart, Mr. Bixby, and Rita Goss. There are other division staff that are retiring as well.

[02:45:54] I can honestly say in my time served here, those named and a few others have made an indelible mark on my life as a parent and also made me a better board member and I appreciate them for their service. I also want to send a special shout out to all of my Title I schools who continuously go above and beyond every single day for their students and their families.

[02:46:21] I can't tell you how often it is that I pass by a school and they're doing something special and extra because our families need it. The extra dedication it takes to have food banks and watch families line up across the block, some of them in cars and vehicles, and some of them who walk over a mile get to the school so that they have extra food for their so they have food for their family's needs and that's not something that we are responsible for as a school division but it goes to speaking to our strategic plan and meeting the needs of our families and meeting them where they are and I just cannot extend enough gratitude to all of my title one schools and really all the schools in my district whether you're a title one or not because you are more than likely right on the line

[02:47:00] but they all do exceptionally well I also want to make mention as dr. McDade said we are having our thriving our summer school programming whether it's launch or academic based high school again starts on Monday but K through eight starts in July July 10th and then also we will have a summer school graduation which I think is a fantastic event so I wish all those who are not attending a summer break I hope you sign up for the library reading program and I want to extend a special thank you to our clerk and the entire office this year we've had so many changes and upgrades for the better and

[02:47:39] I appreciate all the work that you do to support us to enable us to do our job and how much you work with the rest of the division and our individual schools as well we don't speak on it enough and I just want to take the time out to appreciate you I will be attending the VSBA conference on education in July I I will also be holding office hours throughout the summer.

[02:47:57] And I just want to, again, thank this board for bringing in our pride resolution as we bring June to a close. I think it's important that we continue to make our schools a safe environment for all of our students. And I am especially proud of this board for including our pride resolution, our commitment to DEI, cultural competency, and things that make everyone feel safe and welcome in our schools.

[02:48:22] And I look forward to seeing most of you in September. - Thank you. - Ms. Jackson. - All right, thank you. I wanna send another congratulations to Brentsville District High School girls soccer, Patriots boys track team for both of those state championships and to Henry for his success at nationals and of course to Gainesville Middle for the success with the VEX team.

[02:48:45] Thank you for all of them coming tonight to be recognized. Viving Futures is a wonderful time to recognize the exceptional work being done by staff, students, and celebrate the partnership of family and stakeholders who support these efforts. Yesterday, the board received the annual SEAC Special Education Advisory Committee report, and I wanna take a moment to thank Brentsville SEAC representative Beverly Hicks, who is leaving and replacing her.

[02:49:13] I really just appreciate her time, her advocacy, and her service these past few years in bringing her knowledge as a former special educator. I'm excited with the new addition to the SEAC representing Brentsville who is a parent and a former special educator.

[02:49:29] I sincerely wanna thank all SEAC Advisory Council members for sharing the special education recommendations, and I just wanna review some of the highlights that they included on this briefing. For

the 2022-2023 school year, this school year, PWCS has structured leadership in the departments of special education to target goals set forth in this strategic plan and to increase the focus on compliance with state and federal regulations.

[02:49:55] So we have approximately 12,000 PWCS students who have an IEP, and I just wanna say, I've been a proponent of this construction for a long time, and I'm excited to review the long-term impacts. PWCS hired a full-time audiologist and increased assistive technology specialist.

[02:50:11] There's a four-year strategic investment to add support, including 100 teacher assistants added for 2022-2023 and 75 additional for this coming school year. They added two full-time positions to support a growing need for specifically related to services in early childhood special education and then the unified sports that we talked about during budget which was a direct result of advocacy from conversations with Ms. Van Echo who was on the SEAC committee and something that I also advocated for which also SEAC did which is the thousand dollar stipend first in a staff at IEP caseload

[02:50:51] management responsibilities changes that this board is collaborated on specifics that I've advocated for the goals and the strategic plan that the community worked with and the stakeholders and document date the work of the superintendent and her team I believe are in recognition this student school systems commitment the change is and wise still needed we can can and should continue to build on existing and developing systems we should always be striving with the goal that every student has a fundamental right to a thriving future and I believe that we are we have that value this journey this commitment to educational equity and inclusion is

[02:51:28] incredibly important to me as a current special education teacher I left the profession not only to bring my knowledge and experience but also to be an advocate for all students with special needs so I was excited to read the accomplishments documented in the annual report and I look forward to learning about new steps and next steps, I believe the restructuring and the recommendation of the full briefing is needed in the future.

[02:51:50] So I would just like for consideration that we have a full presentation perhaps in the fall to discuss SEAC and recommendations on special education successes and challenges. I'm thankful for the conversations that we had tonight regarding the code of behavior and for the time that the superintendent and the team and the board took to like listen to all points of view and to make some changes I was able to also attend I think over a dozen Brentsville and PWCS graduations and I want to wish all graduates a happy graduation kindergarten eighth grade all you know

[02:52:30] fifth grade for seniors it's my absolute privilege to watch all of you celebrate your success and listen to your former teachers, listen to your family, listen to your friends and share in their excitement. I want to echo that there are update on free meals over the summer. I was excited to read their post that was very informative and I think there were sites listed and how like the times that it would be served on a first-come first-served basis. So have a A wonderful summer and safe, wonderful summer and safe summer to everybody.

[02:53:06] Congratulations to Dr. Hart, Ms. Goss and Mr. Bixby. Again, I am truly thankful for their service and wish them well on their next chapter. Love and respect to everyone. Thank you.

[02:53:23] - Good evening. As I start tonight, I wanna recognize Mr. Bixby, Ms. Goss and Dr. Hart's time, attention, dedication to Prince William County Public Schools. My children benefited from it.

[02:53:40] Thousands and thousands of children benefited from it. And I hope you have a great retirement. I hope you come back and visit us. Bless you to whoever sneezed in the room here. I also wanna thank my board members for, we've been through a lot with the pandemic and I really enjoy working with the folks up here.

[02:54:03] Everybody has something really unique to contribute. I just wanna thank my board members for their ear, their voice, their thoughts, their prayers sometimes, whatever it may be. But thank you for all the work that you guys do. I wanna also thank the staff who come in and do the work behind the scenes to create all the presentations that we get throughout the year.

[02:54:23] The executive cabinet for all of their hard work that they're doing. Dr. McDade, all the work that you do for our students. I also wanna thank Liliana, Ana and Bea for all of your support of us. I always, I don't remember to thank people. I'm very thankful, but I just don't.

[02:54:38] so I wanted to try to make sure I got these in tonight. So the night we were supposed to recognize you, I was like, oh, hey, so. But I do appreciate all of you. You know, it's summertime, and I'm a geek. I went back, I'm going back to get a doctorate, so I'm taking two classes for the summer, and I am taking a training for my own job.

[02:55:01] But yesterday, I wandered over to Colgan High School and just took a dip at their DIP conference, and I got to see Dr. Salva. This is somebody that I read some of her work and follow her on Twitter and I got to watch one of her sessions and I learned about the seven steps.

[02:55:19] So I'm very excited about that for my classroom next year. So I'm appreciative to Prince William County for having these great presenters and things that I can learn. Also learn some great things that I can do with my objectives as a teacher. So that's gonna deepen my practice. I echo all of the stuff that Ms. Jackson just talked about with special education.

[02:55:43] I love that you mentioned everything. Thank you so much for bringing the attention to that. We have so many programs here in the county that benefit our students and we do need to take a look at what we're doing well and also what needs work and iterate and make sure that we're doing better each time we do this work.

[02:56:03] As I think about this as the end of the school year for all of us, some of us are graduating moving on in the world. And I have a little-- that's not a poem, it's the lyrics to a song. It was sung at one of our graduations as an extra.

[02:56:19] Mr. Iso did this at Osborne Park's graduation. So I'm going to read some of these lyrics. It's called I Hope You Dance. I hope you never lose your sense of wonder. You get your fill to eat, but always keep that hunger. May you never take one single breath for granted.

[02:56:37] Lord forbid love ever leave you empty handed. i hope you still feel small when you stand beside the ocean when one door closes i hope one more opens promise me that you'll give fate a fighting chance and when you get the choice to sit it out or dance i hope you dance have a great summer everyone see you in the fall mr wilk uh thank

[02:57:14] you uh everyone uh we are at our last meeting so uh just some highlights of um events these last The last couple of weeks, it's been for everyone, the last couple of weeks have been extremely busy

and it was filled with kindergarten, graduation, promotions for fifth graders, graduation ceremonies for our high school students.

[02:57:36] So I was trying to be as many places as I could be. On June 8th, I attended the Montclair Elementary School kindergarten graduation night. On June 9th, I first started off at Covington Harper for their kindergarten promotion parade.

[02:57:53] From there, I went to the Potomac High School has an annual tradition called the Grill on the Hill where the seniors before walking at graduation, there's a big cookout, inflatables, games, a whole bunch of great stuff. I was able to be there for that event.

[02:58:10] Ashland also had their kindergarten graduation ceremony on that day that I attended. And then lastly, the Potomac Shores Middle School had another one of their eighth grade dances. It was really nice, it was catered by Olive Garden, so your ticket got you like a catered dinner and a dance, so it was really nice.

[02:58:26] So those were, that was on one day, June 9th. On June 10th, three months ago, it seemed like a great idea to sign up for a 5K fun run. I was like, yeah, I'll train. And the time came around and we were at our Husky fun run and someone said, not only does a board member come, he runs, and I was like, oh boy, lucky me.

[02:58:45] So I was like, pulled the Band-Aid off. So, you know, I did it, I finished and under 30 minutes for a 40 year old, I guess, you know, most of my buddies in high school would not have done that. So I'll take it. So anyways, after that, we went a number of my colleagues and I, we were at the Potomac Senior High School graduation ceremony.

[02:59:07] That was a great event. June 12th, the Triangle fifth grade promotion ceremony occurred, I went there and then also was able to attend Swan's Creek for fifth grade promotion ceremony that same night. On the 13th, I was able to attend the triangle kindergarten promotion ceremony in the morning and then the evening split my time, went to the Henderson fifth grade promotion night.

[02:59:32] It was really cool. They do an outdoor one and the kids walk over like a bridge as symbolic and the parents hand the kid the baton and that was a promotion from fifth grade. And then I made it to Mary Williams fifth grade ceremony that night as well. The 14th, the morning of, it was nice, at least the ones that were able to space these out.

[02:59:53] Patty Elementary had their fifth grade ceremony during the morning at 9:00 AM. That evening was special 'cause Ashland Elementary had their fifth grade promotion ceremony and I attended there as a school board member, but also more importantly, as a parent.

[03:00:10] It's remarkable to think two years ago, my son, who's nonverbal on the spectrum, was putting his head through the wall in our house all the time because of anger. And it got to a point where it was so frequent that instead of patching it every other day, we just literally waited till the end of the week. And we did it all at once after he went to bed, if he went to bed. And so, you know, when people talk about the pandemic and a big reason why I always fought for the option of in-person learning is that was my

[03:00:45] struggle that was my world and dominic has come such a long way for him to be at the um under the balloon arch when he came out to stand there to wave and to come down it was it was really a

really special moment um and it really goes to show the growth of two years um with behavior and just as overall improvements for Dominic.

[03:01:13] So it was a very special night for us as a Wilk family as well. Last things, I was proud to be on the Juneteenth planning committee for this past weekend in Dumfries. For those who don't know, Juneteenth celebrates the end of slavery in the US and honors the indomitable spirit of African-Americans past and present.

[03:01:36] It was an honor to be on that committee to work at the parade, I have so many participants, it was great. Thank you, clerks, our team. Oh my goodness, Bea, Ana, Liliana, you guys have done an amazing job of bringing things like my calendar idea to fruition.

[03:01:52] I know you guys have thousands of things you have to book for us. So really appreciate that and all the work you guys do. And then lastly, as I wrap up, time flies in five minutes, wanna thank Mr. Bigsby, Ms. Goss and Dr. Hart for their years of service, their ineffaceable impression that they've left on this school system.

[03:02:14] So thank you very much. - Thank you, Mr. Wilk. Just one reminder from Ms. Williams. We didn't have a committee meeting discussion on the agenda this time. We'll have an update on the Racial Social Justice Commission in the fall and their meetings will start up in September again.

[03:02:32] Okay, well folks, we are done with another school year. It's been a terrific school year. As noted in our commencements this year, we had a record number of scholarship dollars won. Each of our schools really worked hard and our students worked hard and they received a lot of rewards and they were very excited about that.

[03:02:55] We had some terrific commencements that we wrapped up with and very excited. So now we're onto the summer and our juniors need to start thinking about applying to college and getting their common application essays worked on now. Colleges will start accepting your applications in August.

[03:03:12] Meet with your counselors. You know, you can email, you know, I'm sure that each of the counselors in the school division have sent out information about what kinds of things we could do in the summer. And then also start thinking about what to do in the fall. And as we go into our senior year, we expect all our seniors to have a post-secondary plan and meet with their counselors to talk about, you know, what am I gonna do?

[03:03:37] Am I applying for college, community college, military, getting a job, finishing my career tech ed requirements, getting an apprenticeship, getting an internship, so many different things. I want our seniors to take advantage of those and even our juniors to start thinking about taking advantage of those.

[03:03:57] For all our other grade levels, as Mr. Wolk pointed out, graduations, promotions, coming up. Take this summer opportunity to read. The public libraries are wide open. Get in there, get some good books. there's museums here locally, you don't even have to go into D.C. to go to them.

[03:04:13] Get on your bike, take a walk, get on your skateboard, and get out away from your devices. Last week I made a, my board matters, sort of talk about the case for public education.

[03:04:28] This week I wanna spend a little minute or two talking about dispelling some of the myths that exists about public education. And this week I'd like to dispel the myth that parents don't matter, of course they matter.

[03:04:44] I'm a parent of four children and before I became a school board member, I was very active and still am involved in the PTOs at all of my children's schools, my wife and I, and we committed to work hard with those PTOs, like many of our parents to build out after school programs, before school programs, robotics programs, volunteer with the different teams, the coaches, the Odyssey of the Mind, the debate practices.

[03:05:10] And you saw a little bit tonight of all the parents that have helped build our athletic programs, that have helped built our robotics programs. You saw that in Launching Thriving Futures. So parents matter. And they are an integral part of our schools and our principals and our counselors and our teachers, welcome them in and they make this community go.

[03:05:33] And it's why Prince William County Schools is one of the best places to school your children. And so parents do matter. and every member on this board is a parent or a grandparent, and six out of eight of us had a student or grandchild in the school year, school this past year, or in last year, and then, and during this term.

[03:06:00] And so we are parents, and we have a say, we're at the seat, we have a seat at the table, and we advocate for parents. And so this board has included parents ever since I've been on this board at every different level.

[03:06:16] We have advisory councils, we have committees, we have special ed PTAs, we have school PTAs and PTOs, we have task forces, we have superintendents advisory councils and each of these councils include parents. We have book review committees, we have parent liaisons, which is a new thing that we started where we actually hire parents now to help work and get into our communities and help us engage even more because we believe parents matter.

[03:06:48] Our strategic plan, which I believe is really a strong document that outlines where this division will go, will go, was put together by parents, teachers, and many of our teachers are parents, I might add, many of our principals are parents, I might add, who are actively having children in the school division.

[03:07:09] And we all take this seriously and we took parents' opinions very seriously. I'm gonna give you a couple examples where this board really listened to parents. And let's rewind to the beginning of the 2020 school year when this board met in August to vote on whether we would offer in-person learning to our special education students.

[03:07:35] It was a tough vote. Many of our board members chose to take that vote, and I think it was near unanimous, where we opened the schools for special ed students. And we have, we're the only school division in Northern Virginia to do so.

[03:07:52] And we are the only school division not sued in a class action lawsuit for restricting FAPE in special ed. Because we listen to our parents. You know, we did the modification on the code of behavior tonight, we listened to parents. We implemented the Evolve system, we listened to parents.

[03:08:09] We are evaluating our grading practices because we hear from our parents and students. So these are all great examples how this school board believes parents matter and incorporate everything they say and do in the work we do, whether it's listening to them, reading their emails and all of that.

[03:08:28] And so I think it's important that everyone understand that and I'm excited to be a part of a board that, and a school division and a superintendent and an administration who does that so well. And I

wanna thank all of you for this great school year.

[03:08:44] And I know I went a little bit long here, but at this point I will entertain a motion to re-enter closed session. Ms. Williams, I think it's written.

[03:09:21] - Mr. Chairman, I move that pursuant to Virginia code 2.2-3712, the closed session of Prince William County School Board meeting of June 21st, 2023. That's the certification, sorry.

[03:09:37] 18.0.01, right. - Excuse me, Mr. Chairman, I move that pursuant to Virginia code 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712, the Prince William County School Board enter closed session for the following reason. To consult with staff and division council regarding the terms of a contract for the acquisition of real property for a public school within the Potomac Magisterial District where such a consultation and open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the school board pursuant to Virginia code 2.2 section, Virginia code section, excuse me, 2.2-3711A3A8 and A29.

[03:10:18] - Second. - Mr. Chairman. - Mr. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Okay, all in favor, please vote. Anyone? Okay, aye, yes, all in favor, any opposed? Okay, we will reenter closed session and hopefully come out in a few minutes, I don't know.

[03:10:39] - All right, Mr. Chairman. - Motions, we're now reconvening in open session And Ms. Williams, will you please read the motion to certify closed session? - Sure, I move that pursuant to Virginia code 2.2-3712, the closed session of Prince William County School Board meeting of June 21st, 2023, be certified by adopting the following resolution.

[03:11:01] 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, excuse me, convening the closed meeting were heard and discussed or considered by the school board.

[03:11:25] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Okay, please vote.

[03:11:50] You vote yes, Ms. Jessie, to certify. - The vote is six yes, two absent, Ralston and Wall, motion passed. - That was a certification. That was closed session. - Oh, it was certification. - No, no, no, we didn't get to the motion yet. Now we'll move on to the closed session action item for 2201, Ms. Williams.

[03:12:08] - Thank you. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the agreement for purchase/sale of real property that includes the purchase of six acres from Harbor Station Communities, LLC, for the construction of the Potomac Shores Area Elementary School. Further, the chairman at large and the clerk are authorized to sign any necessary documents pertaining to the agreement or settlement subject to approval as to from only the division council, only by the division council.

[03:12:35] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - I second. - Any discussion? Okay, please vote.

[03:12:55] - The vote is four yes, two no. Jesse Williams, two absent. Ralston Wall, motion passed. - At this time, without further business in front of this board, we will now adjourn. - What?

[03:13:13] - Oh, hey, yeah, I'm sorry. So, well, I just wanna thank all of our IT folks and everyone for helping us with the meeting. I wanna thank the clerks and everybody, you're the best. I wanna thank our security team, Ron Crow, Director of Risk Management Security, providing support.

[03:13:28] And we'd like to thank Jim Lep, Supervisor of Interactive Media Creative Design, his team for all they do in the meeting. That includes Mike Davis, Raul Rosado, Jimmy Davis, John Jimenez, Marco Salinas. And last but not least, thank you to our IT support for meetings, which includes Kevin Seragioli, Andrew Choi, Asail Fuentes, Tony Ocasio, Chris Steinbeck, Alajuan Sims.

[03:13:52] We cannot do with all of you, appreciate all that you do to support us. There being nothing further, we now adjourn.

