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Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, October 18, 2023

Date	Wednesday, October 18, 2023
Place	Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length	3h 48m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUHdJJ1Vxb4
- Official School Board page (PWCS): https://www.pwcs.edu/about/school_board/

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

[00:00:01] I would like to call the Prince William County School Board meeting to order. Notice of electronic participation pursuant to school board policy 139. School board member participation in meetings by electronic communications. School board member Adele Jackson will participate in this meeting through electronic means from her home due to a medical condition that prevents her physical attendance.

[00:00:18] The clerk will so note in the minutes of the meeting. A motion is now in order for the approval of the meeting agenda. Vice Chair Wall. - Mr. Chairman. - Yes. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the meeting agenda as recommended. Do we have a second? - Mr. Chairman.

[00:00:33] - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion?

[00:00:58] Please vote. - The vote is six yes, one not present, a vote, one absent, Raulston. Motion passed. - Okay, moving on to motion to enter closed session. A motion is ordered by Chair Wall. - Mr. Chairman. - I move that pursuant to Virginia code section 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712, the Prince William County School Board enter closed session for the following reasons.

[00:01:18] One, to discuss with staff the appointment, transfer, release, assignment, performance, and promotion of specific officers and employees pursuant to Virginia Code section 2.2-3711A1. Two, to review

a disciplinary matter for a specific student that would involve the disclosure of information contained in the scholastic record for the individual student, and to receive legal advice regarding same as provided by Virginia Code sections 2.2-3711A2 and 8.

[00:01:48] to discuss with division counsel and staff actual or probable litigation and specific legal matters involving collective bargaining and specific staff and students under Virginia code sections 2.2-3711A 7 and 8 and 4 to discuss and receive briefings by staff members related to the security of school facilities, the safety of persons using such facilities, and actions taken to respond to such matters where discussion in an open meeting would jeopardize the security of such facilities pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711A19.

[00:02:21] Do I have a second? Mr. Chairman. Ms. Zargarpur. I second. Any discussion? Please vote. Oh, Ms. Jackson, my apologies. How do you vote? I vote yes, and I'll put it in board docs too.

[00:02:39] You're the best. Outstanding. Ms. Jackson votes yes, and she's putting in board docs. This is great. You can all do that when you're at home. The vote is seven yes. Seven yes. - One absent. - Okay, and at this time, the Prince William County School Board

[00:02:54] will enter closed session.

[00:03:59] Prince William County School Board will now re-enter open session from closed session. At this time, closed session certification is in order. Ms. Vice Chair Wall, 8.01.

[00:04:17] - Mr. Chairman. - I move that pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3712, the closed session of the Prince William County School Board meeting of October 18th, 2023, certified by adopting the following resolution now therefore be it resolved that the Prince William County School Board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge one only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies and two only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard and discussed or considered by the school board mr. chairman do I have a - Do I have a second?

[00:04:56] - Mr. Chairman? - Do I have a second? - We have an echo. - Yeah, okay. - I'll second. - Any discussion? Please vote. Can we have Jim, the feedback?

[00:05:22] - The vote is seven yes, one absent. Raulston, motion passed. - Seven yes, one absent, motion passed.

[00:05:42] - Okay, let me see if we'll move on to closed session action items. Ms. Wall. - Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the appointments and releases of specific employees as presented in closed session.

[00:06:03] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarfor. - I second. - Okay, any discussion? Please vote.

[00:06:23] - The vote is seven yes, one absent. Rawson, motion passed. - Moving on to 9.02, a motion is in order. Vice Chair Wall. - Mr. Chairman, I move that for the reasons set forth in the Student Management and Alternative Programs Department's SMAPD letter of September 20, 2023, the Prince William County School Board approve SMAPD's recommendation to reassign student SRH24-042 to the computer-based instruction CBI program via remote access only based on charges of unlawful acts in the community.

[00:06:57] - Do I have a second? - Ms. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:07:17] - The vote is seven yes, one absent Rawlson. Motion passed. - That wraps up closed session action items. At this point, we will have Fernanda Morante, our student, who's a senior at Forest Park High School, our school board rep for this evening.

[00:07:32] Student rep, lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Please stand. allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice.

[00:07:52] Okay, thank you. Moving on to the adoption of the consent agenda, 12.01, Vice Chair Wall. Oh, are we doing that? Yeah, we are doing that.

[00:08:07] I'm sorry. Why did I miss that? I'm sorry. Hold up. We're going to do our Thrivings Future focus, and tonight it is that time to do And tonight, our Thriving Futures focus, which is an opportunity to highlight the exemplary work being accomplished in our schools that fulfill our vision that every student will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[00:08:31] 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. We appreciate how these honorees have positively represented Prince William County Public Schools, and the school board is proud to recognize them publicly for their accomplishments. Before we begin, I wanna recognize the retirement of our esteemed colleague who has dedicated many years of service to our school district.

[00:08:55] On behalf of the school board and with our extended gratitude, we bid a fond farewell to Mr. John Wallingford for committing nearly 30 years here in Prince William County schools. In 2019, John was named the chief financial officer and has faithfully served as an integral part of our school community and success as a county.

[00:09:14] John's commitment to excellence and unwavering dedication will be greatly missed, and we kindly request John's family to stand and be recognized for their unwavering support throughout their loved one's career. Let's give him a round of applause and congratulations to our retiree.

[00:09:47] Congratulations, John. I invite you to share a few words with us. John, if you wanna share some words. - Dr. Lateef, members of the board, and Dr. McDade. Just a brief comment, 30 years is a long time.

[00:10:05] it's a long time. And I want to thank you, Dr. Lateef. I want to thank you for friendship and the relationship that I've had with all board members. Dr. McDade, thank you for all your support. And thank you to my wife and my younger daughter who are here with me tonight, who really supported me over the past 30 years. Thank you all very much.

[00:10:29] I noted this earlier at dinner, and I think it's important for the public to recognize. John took over as chief financial officer, probably during the most turbulent time in Prince William County history.

[00:10:49] We saw a transition in new financial systems. We saw the pandemic hit the school division like it did nationwide. We transitioned to a new superintendent after many years, 15 years with Dr. Walts and now with Dr. McDade, we have seen enormous improvements in our relationship with the Board of County Supervisors and the staff here at the school division has worked so closely with the staff over there to really create a pathway for successful relationships that have resulted in significant increase

[00:11:28] in funding for our school division. And then John Wallingford is a big part of that. And I think the school board, you know, can't be any more grateful and would be glad to call you a friend for life. And we thank you for everything, Mr. Wallingford, and for your family for sharing you with us for all these years.

[00:11:44] Thank you once again. - Thank you. - At this time, I'll just, Ms. Jessie. - Hi, John.

[00:11:59] I know you're gonna miss me because I asked all those stupid questions. And I recall when we were on during the pandemic, you were at the beach and I called you with one of those questions, one of those Lily Jessie questions.

[00:12:15] And you were so relaxed. I don't know if you were relaxed or just saying, "Why is she calling me?" But I just wanna thank you for everything that you've done. this financial system has always been an award-winning system, and personally, I just love working with you, and I just thank you for everything that you've done.

[00:12:33] Thank you. - Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I just wanna say, along with Lillian, probably the second longest tenured board member up here, and I appreciate your leadership and your service.

[00:12:48] Same response, all of the many questions, as many who have watched and followed me on my journey, finance was not my favorite subject by any means when I first sat on the seat but I can definitely say that I've learned a lot and I appreciate the time and your expertise and your guidance it is had a tremendous impact on my ability to govern and also I think the public's understanding your patience that you've had with the questions making answers easily comprehensible to people who are not familiar with finance and and just the guidance and I will generally miss working and collaborating with you and it's been a truly an honor and a

[00:13:26] pleasure to be able to call you a friend as well so I wish you well on your next chapter. Vice Chair Wallingford. I've only been able to work with you for the past four years or almost four years but my earliest memory is asking you a thousand questions about the budget because that was the first thing that you know we did as new board members and you were awesome in answering every question that I asked you and not only that you would often say that is an excellent question which I really appreciated because I knew this is a

[00:14:05] dumb question and I feel dumb but you were always so polite and you were always willing to spend the time especially in those early my early months as a board member to get me up to speed on budget everything budget so I you know that's my earliest memory of you but thank you so much I know your family's gonna enjoy having you around more and we're gonna miss not having you around but you know best wishes for retirement and thank you so much for the impact you've had on all the children staff and community members in Prince William County Schools. Mr. Argerport. Mr. Wallingford I echo the same

[00:14:43] sentiments as Ms. Wall when we first came on I remember we had a long conversation about budget and understanding the ins and outs and and I think it's it's been an outstanding career you've been an amazing part of Prince William County Schools you leave quite the legacy behind in the us I'm hearing things go up in the standards of excellence that you leave behind I'm gonna miss our conversations

because I learned a lot from you and I hope you pass that on to your grandchildren so I'll take a different angle because I

[00:15:21] think I'm the only one that also has a child who had your amazing wife as a a teacher and and you know from that perspective I often always say you know I am only who I am because of my wife who lets me go out all the time and I know your wife is a steadfast supporter of you our school system and the kindergarten students she took care of and cherished for many years and so as I got to know you I also saw another side of you through your amazing wife and family so I thank you and her for your service to our school system. Ms. Jackson. Thank you Mr. Wallenford

[00:15:58] i am so sorry i couldn't be there tonight to help send you off and celebrate you your kindness and you're willing to help i i really appreciate it um so much it helped me serve brunceville and all of princeton county better and i'm really grateful for your service and i wish you all the luck on your next chapter thank you again for your service thank you miss jackson and then last comment i'll make is they during the pandemic and you know it was you know I I have to say

[00:16:36] that you know John was one of the pillars that the school division was able to stand on and to get us through some of the very toughest times in in education in America and we can't be any more grateful for that John I invite you and your family up here we'll take a photo it'll be an honor and a privilege and then but but first superintendent dr. McDade thank you mr. chairman John I I want to congratulate you on your much well-deserved retirement my transition into Prince William County was that much more smooth and easier because of you you have led with such integrity and fiscal responsibility and service to

[00:17:13] students to families to schools in our community job well done we will certainly miss you I will miss you and all of our chats thank you for sharing your family with with me with us I remember when Matthew was born and you coming in as a proud papa and sharing all the photos when I learned that Mrs. Wallingford was retiring all I could think of when you announced your retirement is now that she gets to have you full-time every day I don't know if you know that's always what she might want she's looking at me she giving me the side eye but no seriously I know that I know how much

[00:17:52] of a family man you are. And I know that because of how much pride you have and how much you share your family with us. And so I'm excited for you to have rest and relaxation because you work so incredibly hard and you deserve this time and this new chapter to spend with your family and to enjoy it.

[00:18:11] So rest, have fun, enjoy because you earned it and we will truly miss you in Prince William County Public Schools. - Thank you. - John, you could join us up front.

[00:18:27] It'd be an honor for us to have a photo

[00:18:28] with you and your family.

[00:19:52] - Okay, well, thank you. Now let's shift our focus to the outstanding achievements of our schools. Tonight, the school board will recognize nine Prince William Public Schools that have earned recognition as the 2023 America's Healthiest Schools by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, a leading children's health organization.

[00:20:10] For over 15 years, Healthier Generation has worked with schools, youth serving organizations, businesses, communities, and families to promote health equity environments to support whole child

health. Their work has impacted 31.1 million children across the country by increasing access to nutritious foods, high quality physical activity, social emotional support and tobacco free environments.

[00:20:34] This highly regarded annual distinction is awarded for demonstrating exceptional efforts to prioritize the essential health needs of the school community. These nine schools meet or exceed best practice standards in one or more topic areas related to the physical, mental and social emotional health of students, teachers and staff.

[00:20:56] We begin our recognition in Miss Adele Jackson's Brentsville district. And because she's at home, I will read her remarks this evening. The Brentsville district is proud to recognize Buckland Mills Elementary School, Piney Branch Elementary School and Victory Elementary School.

[00:21:15] When I call your name, please wave so we can see you. We have Buckland Mills Elementary School represented tonight by Menakshi Oredra. No, no, did I say that right? No, Odidra, Odidra.

[00:21:34] I was better just reading the name than the thing. Okay, Menakshi Odidra. Piney Branch Elementary is represented by Principal Stephen Thorne and Assistant Principal Monica Sobers.

[00:21:49] And Victory Elementary School is represented by Principal Chad Ray, Jessica Kaiser, school counselor, and Carol McQuillan, fifth grade teacher. Congratulations to all of you. Okay, now next, the Coles District.

[00:22:07] Ms. Lisa Zargarpur, please introduce our award-winning schools. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Coles District would like to recognize Bennett Elementary School and Parkside Middle School. Bennett Elementary School is represented by Principal Michelle Pozell, Administrators Candace Schwartz and Stephanie Barron, and fourth grade teacher Kristen Thorpe, yay.

[00:22:31] Parkside Middle School is represented tonight by Principal Aaron Merica, SEL Lead Coach, Ms, hold on, I had to turn the page, Gaspari, and the Director of School Counseling, Carolyn Young. Congratulations to both schools.

[00:22:47] - Thank you, Mr. Zargarpur. I invite the Woodbridge District Representative, Ms. Lori Williams, to speak on behalf of her schools. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With great honor, Woodbridge would like to recognize Kilby Elementary School. Representing Kilby Elementary School, we have Assistant Principal, Amy Tuhill, and School Counselor, Jennifer Hart.

[00:23:06] - Right. - Congrats. - Thank you, Ms. Williams. Mr. Justin Wilk of the Potomac District. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my behalf of the Potomac District, it is an honor to recognize both Ashland Elementary School and Montclair Elementary School, two schools that my own children attended.

[00:23:25] Ashland Elementary School is represented tonight by Principal Anna Houseworth, Shana Robinson, Assistant Principal, and SEL coaches, Crystal Watt and Elizabeth Rigney.

[00:23:41] Montclair Elementary School is represented by Principal Tim Slater and Assistant Principal Danny Miller. Congratulations, both of you. - Wonderful, thank you, Mr. Wilk. From the Occoquan District, Mrs. Lilly Jessie.

[00:23:56] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Occoquan District would like to recognize Marshall Elementary School. Marshall Elementary School is represented tonight by Dr. Cindy Camitas, I think I got that right, and by Assistant Principal Michael Dugar, Katie Sharp, school counselor, and Cynthia Coles, fourth grade teacher.

[00:24:26] - Congratulations and wonderful to, and congratulations to all our award recipients. At this time, I'd like to ask Ms. Denise Huebner, Associate Superintendent for Student Services and Post-Secondary Success, to step forward and share a few words on behalf of our nine distinguished schools.

[00:24:42] Ms. Huebner. - Thank you, good evening, Chairman Lateef, Vice Chair Wall, members of the board, and Dr. McDade. I'm actually really excited to be here to celebrate this group. So what you see behind me are people who stepped up when the call came to say we need our children to be well and that starts with staff being well and they took advantage of this awesome opportunity.

[00:25:01] So I have some remarks that I'm gonna go ahead and read but I just wanted to recognize that you are very much appreciated. So on behalf of the nine schools being honored for the recognition as America's healthiest schools, we thank you for the opportunity to come before you this evening.

[00:25:16] The Alliance for Healthier Generations is a prestigious annual recognition program which honors schools for implementing best practices to support mental, physical, and social emotional health needs of their learning community for both staff and for students. Awardees must meet criteria in the Thriving Schools Integrated Assessment, which is an evidence-based information-informed tool that helps schools identify strengths and opportunities for improving policies and practices to advance health and learning with an integrated approach.

[00:25:44] Prince William County Schools Awardees were recognized in eight categories. Ashland School for Staff Wellbeing, Bennett Elementary School, Physical Education, Physical Activity, Social Emotional Health and Learning, and Staff Wellbeing.

[00:26:00] Buckland Mills Elementary, Family and Community Engagement, as well as Staff Wellbeing. Kilby Elementary School was recognized for Family and Community Engagement, Nutrition and Food Access, Health Education, Physical Education and Physical Activity, Social Emotional Health and Learning, Staff Wellbeing, and School Health Services.

[00:26:22] Marshall Elementary School was recognized family and community engagement, health education, physical education, and physical activity as well as staff well-being. Montclair Elementary School is recognized for social emotional health and learning. Parkside Middle School was recognized for social emotional health and learning as well as staff well-being. Piney Branch Elementary School was recognized for family and community engagement, nutrition and food access, local wellness policy, health education, physical education and physical activity, social-emotional health and learning, as well as staff well-being.

[00:26:55] Victory Elementary School was recognized for family and community engagement, health education, physical education and physical activity, social-emotional health and learning, staff well-being, and school health services. Additionally, on October 13th and 14th, Healthier Generations gathered school representatives in Washington DC for the America's Healthiest Schools Leaders Summit to honor awardees who met criteria in four or more of the topic areas. We're very proud to recognize Kilby Elementary School that had seven topics awarded. Piney Branch. Yeah, you can clap for that. It's like a really good thing and not to be

[00:27:33] left behind Piney Branch Elementary with seven topics as well. Victory Elementary had six topics awarded and Marshall Elementary had four topics awarded. The amazing work that's happening in our schools across the division in implementing best practices by supporting the physical, mental, and

social-emotional needs of our staff and students is being led by our social emotional learning coaches. These coaches are dedicated instructional staff members who believe in creating a positive and inclusive learning environment for our staff and students, that it's a building block for creating

[00:28:12] academic success. We must recognize several of our important team members, all of our team members are important, but a special recognition to Vaughn Thomas who's our Prince William Heals administrative coordinator who supports our coaches and as she continues to work collaboratively with our Kaiser Permanente and the Alliance for Healthier Generations to enhance best practices in supporting the mental health of our staff and students. I also want to recognize supervisor Heather Wines who is also a leader in this initiative. Thank you so much for recognizing these nine America's healthiest schools this evening. Their contributions to support a social emotional stewardship helps the division move forward toward meeting its goals

[00:28:48] for inclusivity, wellness, and belonging. Together we are all launching thriving futures by providing a welcoming and supportive and safe environment for of teaching and learning. We are moving from healing to thriving. Thank you.

[00:29:03] - Thank you, Ms. Ebner. Will all those involved in supporting our nine schools, including family members, stand in recognition of their support. We have any family members here? Okay, anyways, I'm gonna clap again. Congratulations again to our nine recipients of the 2023 America's Healthiest Schools by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

[00:29:22] Before taking a few pictures, Dr. McDade would like to share a few words. Dr. McDade. - Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. I am incredibly proud to recognize our nine PWCS schools as 2023 America's Healthiest Schools by the Alliance for a Healthy Generation. And since only 10 schools were recognized in Virginia, it is truly an honor that our schools claim nine of those 10 spots.

[00:29:53] For each of you, your work reflects the important and outstanding work of social emotional learning coaches and staff throughout the school division as we work toward ensuring a positive and caring environment in every single school. Thank you so much for your hard work. Thank you for your leadership. Thank you to all of our building leaders, our principals for being here and supporting your coaches that have been working so incredibly hard and your entire staff, we salute you.

[00:30:18] - Thank you, Dr. McDade, great remarks. At this time, I'd like to request our honorees come forward for a photo with the school board and receive a small token of appreciation. We'll start with the first photo that includes Piney Branch, Bennett, Victory, and Buckland Mills. The second photo will be Ashland Montclair Kilby, Marshall, and Parkside.

[00:30:35] So again, the first one, Piney Branch,

[00:30:37] Bennett, Victory, and Buckland Mills.

[00:33:50] Okay, at this time, we'll move on to 12.01, Adoption of Consent Agenda. Motions in order, Vice Chair Wall.

[00:34:07] - Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the Public Meeting Consent Agenda as recommended. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chair. - Ms. Williams. - I second. - Any discussion? Okay, please vote.

[00:34:33] - The vote is seven yes, one absent. Motion passed. - Okay, very good. Moving on to Citizen Common Time. The citizens who've signed up in advance with the clerk may address the school board this evening when they're called to the podium. This is a common period for regular school board meetings is one hour and citizens may speak on agenda items or other topics germane to the operations and policies of Prince William County schools.

[00:34:54] 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. If you do not do so, the board will recess and I'll ask the room be cleared to restore public order.

[00:35:09] Tonight, we have 20 citizens signed up to speak. When I call your name, please come up to the podium and state your name and address for the record. I will call the first five and they can grab a seat up front. Jared Gay, Carl Greeten, Sophia Cruz, Amanda Locklear and Michelle Rupert.

[00:35:27] Jared Gay.

[00:35:47] - My name is Megan Landis and my address is on file with the clerk. Okay, my name is really Jared Gay. Megan Landis is my wife. I feel like I needed to state that explicitly since the school board and their clerk denied her request speak tonight insisting that the request form that she filled out with her name her phone number and her email address was obviously an accidental duplicate request by me they insisted it was a duplicate after she called and verified that she was in fact not me pretending to have a wife so that i could sneak back up here and speak a second time but then again perhaps if the school board

[00:36:22] were afforded adequate staff and by adequate i mean like more than one then mistakes like that wouldn't happen as a matter of fact I was just talking about this with Justin Wilk last week when we were handing out candidate flyers and sample ballots during early voting I even told Justin and I mean this I told Justin that school board members should be paid a full-time salary so that they can fully direct their time and professional energy towards their elected roles I fundamentally believe that all elected officials should if that were the case maybe Justin wouldn't have been so obviously miserable handing out flyers last week cursing under his breath about how he had just come from his full-time

[00:37:00] job and didn't want to be there. Then maybe he also would never have to field questions about conflicts of interest considering that the divisions purchased educational materials from his full-time employer. But you know what that's a side point. My point is I know that you can relate, Justin especially, I know that you can relate to the negative effect that being overworked has on a person's morale. So imagine how you'd feel if you did not receive the $26,000 stipend that comes with being on the school board. That's how your employees and our schools feel every day. But just like you put a smile on your face the other day and shook hands with voters despite being tired and miserable, the educators you employ suck it up and try with

[00:37:40] all of their might to greet students with a smile day in, day out, hoping against all odds and outward appearances that you'll take pity on them and stop forcing them to work without being paid, trusted, or respected. After all, Lisa Zargarpur receives a stipend from Fairfax County Schools for the after-school duties that she performs in Fairfax, not to mention the $26,000 stipend for her seat on our school board, yet the contract proposed by the highly paid lawyers on her bargaining team denies stipends for after-school duties to the majority of her employees. Honestly, I'd love to know how she can justify that. I

don't even know what else to say at this point. For two years, we've tried to make you care about your employees,

[00:38:20] your students being chronically underserved or about even your own political prospects for re-election. None of it has moved you. Carl Greton. Good evening. I'm Carl Greton of the Gainesville District.

[00:38:41] Hot off the presses from the Associated Press is the Virginia Beach School System has adopted Governor Youngkin's proposals. We hope that Prince William County will do the same. Attending school board meetings I've heard many complaints. There have not been many solutions. If there have been solutions to the progress to that end, please let the public know. With the emergency of low staff numbers and low student scores it is unfathomable that the school superintendent and school board cannot come up with a way to raise money in a county of five hundred thousand people there must be financial gurus that will help with the situation here are a couple of my thoughts fungible money and

[00:39:18] data center equity funds are sources of income regarding the Board of Supervisors fungible money after talking with Lori Williams of the Woodbridge district I decided to search for funds Prince William County funds have been reallocated from the remaining balance of the american rescue plan act why do we not see money allocated to the school system which was directly affected by covet and mental issues does the board of supervisors talk to the school board would the realotment have been better served given to the school system since february the 28th of february 23 the prince william county board of supervisors

[00:39:53] had resolutions to spend $4,864,000 on the Neabsco holiday lights, an emergency operations center renovation, purchase of one bookmobile, construction of a segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, a judicial center HVAC project, and purchase of a piece of equipment for the community accessible vivarium. That's an animal observation. A municipal utility relief.

[00:40:20] in fairfax county the amazon housing equity fund has invested 118.2 million dollars into affordable housing in total over 1 billion dollars in loans and grants have been committed to affordable housing initiatives in the northern virginia and washington dc areas through their housing equity fund a list of projects can be found on the amazon housing equity funds website why can't we set up this type of fund for teacher pay related to data center proffers regarding burning books why do people want to get rid of books on the 20th September 23 Prince William School Board comment time the Occoquan district Democrat

[00:40:59] candidate mr. Jesse said some want to tell us what we can and cannot read you as parents can determine what your kids are allowed to read the problem occurs when teachers read books that are not in the program of study is this same mr.

[00:41:15] Mr. Jesse does not want to get rid of indecent books from the school libraries What parents align with this nonsense who chooses what types? Topics of murder rape violence racist and pornographic topics that are allowed in school. What is next supporting barbarism?

[00:41:31] Florida law because we've already heard about Virginia law requires that all library books selected be free of pornography and material prohibited Thank You mr. Gregg. No, sorry next time Sophia Cruz. Hi, my name is if you Cruz and I'm and my address is on file I signed up to speak tonight because I am basically an expert Not only am I a student in Prince William County. My mom is a teacher of Prince

William County schools I see with my own eyes how the the choices that the school board and superintendent make

[00:42:08] impact life at school in my life at home and I am here to tell you that both have been harmed by the changes over the past couple of years Students see that so many of the teachers they loved are no longer there. They have either quit teaching or gone to a different district.

[00:42:26] Students see when their class is way bigger because there aren't enough teachers. Students see when their buses are always late because there aren't enough bus drivers. Students see when their teachers are always tired and frustrated because they don't have time to do all of the new stuff that they are making them do.

[00:42:46] Students see when their teachers are wiping tears their eyes after school meeting students see when their teachers don't get there to eat their lunch because they're either pulled to a meeting or trying to finish paperwork students see when their bookcases are empty in their classroom because the teachers aren't allowed to have books unless they censor them students see all of this please try to put yourself in my shoes i spent spend all day with teachers who are too exhausted too stressed out because of all the new work they have to do i I spend all evening with a parent who is exhausted and stressed out

[00:43:23] because of the new work they have to finish. I keep hearing the teachers should accept all of this because they should do it for the students. Stop saying that. This doesn't help us. Students, it doesn't help. It doesn't help us at school and it doesn't help us at home.

[00:43:41] Please give our teachers and our parents their lives back. If you won't do it for them, then please do it for the students and me. - Amanda Locklear. - Good evening, my name is Amanda Locklear.

[00:43:56] address is on file. I'm here today with another real-life situation. You see, I wholeheartedly believe in being judged by a jury of my peers. Last school year, my son was excluded from 22 out of 43 social studies assignments, aka lessons. 22 excluded from over 50% of the curriculum, and he earned an A. When this was brought to my attention, I brought it to the state after waiting for Prince William County to self-correct the issue. Prince William County was found non-compliant with federal and state regulations and told to create a corrective action plan to ensure that

[00:44:33] my son receives any compensatory services to which he is entitled excluded from 22 out of 43 assignments what is he owed you would think it would be simple right what do you think he was offered 10 hours you see according to someone he only missed 17 not 22 even though the gradebook in a four-year quest showed that it was explained that out of those 17 four would be covered in sixth grade and three would be covered in seventh grade so there was no need to compensate him for those

[00:45:07] lessons a total of 10 hours to make up 22 lessons i'm having trouble making sense of this 43 lessons in the fifth grade curriculum took a school year to provide to all of the students in the gen ed classroom there were 178 school days last year i'm going to use 160 days for my purposes because of holidays and parties and stuff like that let's say social studies lessons are 45 minutes to an hour using simple math divide 160 school days by 43 lessons this would equate to 3.7 days spent on each lesson now i'm going to go faster some go faster than others so i'm going to use 2.7

[00:45:42] days for my mathematical purposes if i multiply 2.75 by 22 lessons i'm faced with a total of 60 days. Take the 60 days, multiply it by 45 minutes, I get a total of 2,700 minutes. Divide the 2,700 minutes by 60 minutes, I get a total of 45 hours. My son was offered 10. Can someone please make that make sense? I

told one of your KLC employees many months ago that I like to help people, teams, organizations in the background. I like to fly behind the scene. I really do. That does not mean

[00:46:17] that I will not and cannot fly in the forefront. What I didn't tell you last time I was here when I buried my mom is that I buried her on top of my dad that was murdered when I was five. Both retired DC police officers we were raised to help always err on the side of what is right no matter who what where when or why justice will prevail. You see some of us come from humble homes with sad stories. We are not trying to impress or be better than anyone where you just

[00:46:48] want changed want to change the storyline of those coming behind us thank you Michelle Rupert my name is Michelle Rupert and my address is on file on September 20th we witnessed a moment of celebration as you extended your congratulations to the Osmond Park madrigals and the Colgan High School Philharmonic for their remarkable achievement in earning repeat performances at the VMEA conference in Richmond next month these students have undoubtedly participated in numerous extra

[00:47:27] musical activities, and their directors rightfully receive a stipend of $2,745, which, though lower than surrounding counties, is a recognition by you of the additional hours they invest in these extra activities that extend not only beyond regular school hours, but even into weekends. But what most people probably don't know is that there's another group of directors who are just as dedicated and invest just as much time as their high school counterparts. These are the middle school band orchestra and choir directors. They participate in the same events but without the support of parent booster organizations to share the workload.

[00:48:05] Parents, do you know what the stipend for a middle school director in Fairfax County is? Lisa does. It's four thousand six hundred and ninety one dollars. And do you know what it is in Prince William? It's zero. It's important to acknowledge that while some directors receive a club level stipend from their principals, this is yet another inconsistent and site-based decision across this county.

[00:48:32] These stipends fall significantly short of recognizing the extensive hours we middle school directors invest inside and outside of our workday as well as the fact that we're not merely running clubs. We continue to provide comprehensive music instruction during our personal time, easily averaging 125 hours annually. Even at the uninstructional rate, that would be $4,000.

[00:48:58] We agree that winter and spring concerts are to be expected, but all county auditions, all county event, district audition, event, assessment, solo and ensemble, junior regional auditions, etc., these go far beyond the scope of duties as assigned.

[00:49:16] In response to this inequity, middle school directors are uniting collectively, with the majority refusing to work for free any longer. It is important that the parents listening understand that we care deeply for their children and want them to make amazing musical memories during their time in middle school. but we also believe that the school board is taking advantage of us.

[00:49:34] It's time for a resounding call for fairness and equity for your middle school directors. Thank you for your attention, and I hope that our concerns regarding compensation will be addressed this fiscal year, or this year you might be listening to the sound of silence.

[00:49:51] - Next five will be Thomas Roble, Tanner Cruz, Jane Coburn, Richard Jesse, and Jackson Cherry. Thomas Roble.

[00:50:14] - Good evening, Dr. McDade, distinguished board members. - My name is Thomas Rubel. I'm an attorney and I've been practicing law in the Commonwealth of Virginia for over 33 years. Beginning January 1, it'll be 34.

[00:50:30] The reason I'm here tonight is to express some extreme frustration and concern over an event that occurred at Signal Hill Elementary School back on May 24th, a Wednesday evening.

[00:50:47] A teacher from that school went to the parking lot and found her car had been shot. I've handed up a packet of materials for you all to consider tonight. If you look at the first two exhibits, those are the pictures of that vehicle.

[00:51:05] You can see the driver's side window has four shot marks in it, and it's a close grouping. You'll also notice that the car door has nothing on it, and the rear door, excuse me, rear window has no marks on it.

[00:51:21] It's my understanding that the teacher contacted security, contacted the administrators, and the police were called. To this day, I have no idea what has happened in regards to the police investigation.

[00:51:37] One of my exhibits that I have provided to you is my letter or my email to the police department for a FOIA request. I was told that since I do not represent a party, the only way they could give it to me is through a subpoena.

[00:51:53] As an attorney, I know this. I anticipated this answer. Also, Dr. McDade, back on August 15th, I sent a letter to you, personally, raising my concerns about what happened.

[00:52:08] On August 30th, I received a letter from Mr. Wade Anderson, legal counsel. I do not know Mr. Anderson personally, I do know people that do, and he is highly respected by that person. But the letter that Mr. Anderson sent to me basically said, I've referred it over to risk management and to the assistant superintendent, and we consider this matter closed.

[00:52:32] am sorry that is not a good enough answer how would you all feel if your loved one was a teacher or had a student at that school and looked at that particular those particular exhibits that i put up there exhibits one and two you can see the amount of force that would hit that window and shattered it four different places i can only imagine what would have happened if that was human skin or an eye to this day i do not know any protocols or safety procedures that have been

[00:53:12] put in place to protect the teachers or the the students to this day the parents have not been notified of this thank you mr roble thank you tanner cruz uh hi my name is tanner cruz my address is on file uh you see a lot of the same kinds of people speaking at the school board meetings month after month a lot of them are parents come and raise complaints about policies they disagree with or suggest reforms that could help their kids many of the taxpayers are disagreeing with reforms to the budget or whatnot and pull it in their favorite political issues some are politicians themselves but for the last

[00:53:52] two years most of the speakers have been teachers bus drivers and other people who work in our schools personally begging you to treat them better and for the last two years they've been ignored my mother is one of them I have seen firsthand how disillusioned she and her colleagues have become I've seen how many times how many of them have no time for their families because every evening is spent trying to finish work that they are no longer given time during their day to finish. And since their pay is

stagnant or even lost ground to inflation, a lot of them are working minimum wage jobs every weekend so they can still afford the cost of living for their families in Prince William County.

[00:54:31] Many of your employees are barely making a minimum wage working for the school division. But you already know this, you crafted the policies and set the pay scale that causes your employees to struggle like this and at meeting after meeting they patiently explain how your decisions have harmed them, their families and their students.

[00:54:48] They beg you to include them in the decision making process to compromise with the union contract proposals and to pay them for all the work required of them. They have tried appealing to your sense of empathy, they've tried logical explaining And all of the negative impacts that your decisions have, they've extended the olive branch on more than one occasion, and yet you guys continue to ignore them.

[00:55:12] They've had silent protests, and they're kind of getting a little peed off and a little desperate with what y'all are doing. At the end of the day, I'm speaking because everything else your employees have tried has failed to move you. I'm not going to tell you how to do your job, but at the same time, I don't think y'all are doing a good job, but that's me personally.

[00:55:32] If you'd like to focus, but I will focus on how it's impacted me with one simple request. Can you all stop hurting my mom? I can tell you for time and time again, as long as I can remember being a student. My mom's coming home, she does schoolwork, and I will come out at 1, 2 o'clock in the morning, use the bathroom, get something to drink, and she's still sitting there clicking away on the computer.

[00:55:54] What you should be doing when you come home from work is getting time to wind down from the rest of the day and not have to sit there and continue to stress about, holy cow, how am I going to do the next day? What am I gonna do to finish this? You should actually be able to take time for your families and not constantly be moving, moving, moving, moving, moving.

[00:56:10] That's all I got. - Jane Coburn. - Good evening, members of the board, Superintendent McDade. My name is Jane Coburn, my address is in file.

[00:56:25] And I wanna say a personal thank you to all of the children who are out here supporting us because they have seen what it's like living with a teacher. So I appreciate that. So today I had a salad and a muffin for lunch. And it seems a little strange to start a speech about what I had for lunch, but I bet every member of the school board could tell me what they had for lunch.

[00:56:47] And I'm willing to bet that every person who works in the Kelly Building could tell me what they had for lunch too. Sadly, there's a lot of educators and other staff in the schools who didn't have a lunch break today. They didn't have a few moments to themselves, to be quiet, to make a phone call or chat with peers.

[00:57:04] Instead, they supervised students during their lunch and they went without planning because they were never relieved of duty. Imagine working nonstop all day, seven hours in a high-stress environment, responsible for the lives of others, without the chance to ever sit down and rest, to eat or even go to the bathroom.

[00:57:24] It doesn't seem right. In fact, it is in direct violation of school board policy, which says teachers shall be provided with a duty-free luncheon planning daily. So how does it happen? Policies and

regulations do exist to ensure luncheon planning every day. So why are so many educators forced to eat between lessons and supervise their students nonstop and forego paid planning time?

[00:57:44] And the answer is very simple, accountability. When a policy is passed or a regulation is written, there's no consequence to ignoring it or breaking it. In fact, regulations are written in a way that leaves plenty of wiggle room for administrators to break the policies. The regulation for duty-free lunch states, every effort shall be made to provide teachers with a duty-free lunch period, every effort.

[00:58:05] So when self-contained teachers for special education are not provided with their duty-free lunch, after day after day after day of it, and they go to their administrator, simply told every effort's been made and they just don't get their lunch break forget about asking for planning time after all if you can't get a lunch break and you rarely even get out of your out of your classroom to take a bathroom blake why would you bother trying to insist on planning time because you know you're not going to get it is it any wonder special education teachers burn out at a higher rate than other teachers and we can't fill those positions we have an empty position at my

[00:58:40] school right now it's been empty all year the division bargaining team refuses to add any clauses to the contract that is already a regulation or policy, yet the regulations and policies are not being implemented. Putting lunch and planning time in the contract makes it legally an obligation for the division. That's the minimum we should be doing for our employees. If you truly mean for every employee to have the right to a lunch and to planning, regulations and policies aren't enough. It needs to be in the contract because only when it's in the contract will it actually happen and until it's actually in the contract

[00:59:19] you're going to continue to have administrators who said it did my best thank you mr. Cooper Richard Jesse good evening my name is Richard Jesse my address is on file during the recent school board forum an allegation was made that it will take at least 10 years for our county schools to return to the pre-pandemic science scores I researched the Virginia Department of Education VDOE website and found that the 2018-2019 is a

[00:59:56] benchmark. And at that time, Prince William had a score of 81% in science. Based on the VDOE data for three years since the pandemic, our scores were 57, 63 and 66. So for a two year gain, that's about 9%. However, for the sake of arguments, let's that for the future, let's plan on 3% growth in each year.

[01:00:26] Even at this rate of improvement, it should take only the county five years to reach the previous 81% level. However, the Occoquan District Schools have shown a remarkable progress in science.

[01:00:41] The recent release adjusted scores for our 10 Occoquan Elementary Schools has two of our schools at above 90%, four of our schools above 81%, three of our schools above 70%, and one of the schools was below. Our middle school was at 79%, and our high school was at 70%.

[01:01:10] No, I am not satisfied that many of our Prince William schools are behind on pre-academic level, But the Occoquan scores demonstrate the ability to make this a county-wide short-term problem. The job of a school board member is to ensure we have a superintendent who knows how to fix the problem.

[01:01:31] I trust in Dr. McDade. In addition, I'd like to say that I saw we have a Department of Defense Education Activity Award that's going to be a grant of $1 million. It seems like it'll be two years before it goes into effect, but it will provide the development and deployment of a portable STEM station.

[01:02:00] That also should help the situation. Thank you very much. Jackson Cherry. Hello, my name is Jackson Cherry. My address is on file.

[01:02:19] I'm a 7th grade student at Benton Middle School. Since the beginning of the school year I have not been able to access the music. I usually listen to on my school device I usually I used to listen to music each morning even before school to help me get ready for my day then as a student with ADHD I When I had my teacher's permission I listened to music while completing my school work because it helps me stay focused But access to music on school devices has become more and more limited.

[01:02:54] Throughout the school year, more music and sites have been blocked. According to the 1982 Supreme Court ruling in School Board v. Pico, students have the right to receive ideas and learn as an inherent corollary right of free speech.

[01:03:15] Therefore, students should have the legal right to access information, including... music via our school laptops. Not having access to music is really important to me specifically because my mom is a teacher. Being a teacher's kid is hard. I'm at school 10 hours a day with sometimes even with three hours of nothing to do after I'm finished with my homework. I wish my mom had more time for me to come home and play music with my friends in

[01:03:47] my basement after school. I don't like seeing my mom worried and stressed out about work all the time please grant more access to music on school devices it would I would also like you to take away in my mom's extra work that keeps her at school late make make sure she has enough time during the school day to get grading and planning done or at least pay her more or so she can afford to buy me the guitar I want

[01:04:22] for Christmas snow days thank you Angela the next five will be Angela Hens Monica Seaman, Maggie Hansford, Miles McCarthy, Katie Jefferson. Angela Hens. Angela Hens. Okay Monica Seaman. Hello my name is Monica Seaman and my address is

[01:05:01] on file. I have been a loyal PWCS teacher for almost 20 years and I've also been a parent of PWCS students. Both of my children attended Prince William County schools for 13 years, a total of 17 years. I do love this county but I'm tired. I love my school, but I'm tired. I love all three of my supportive administrators, but I'm tired. I completely love all my students, but I'm tired. And I adore teaching, but I'm so tired. Why am I tired? I'm tired because on top of teaching students all day, I'm working on getting my 14 hours of flex

[01:05:40] time finished, even though I give endless hours of free labor, planning, grading, professional development and preparing for the next day. I'm tired because I have to figure out how to input those flex hours into time for school. I'm tired because I have at least 25 to 30 hours of required professional development to finish on my own time. For example, I'm still working, I'm on module four, on the five-hour universal design learning PD, but I shouldn't have to do it on my own time and I do deserve compensation for my work. I'm tired because 'cause I'm trying to figure out how to turn

[01:06:17] an in-person lesson into a virtual lesson with short notice on Code Orange Days and with the youngest of students, kindergartners, who have never been in a virtual school environment. Not to mention, teachers have their own families and/or students to take care of and do not have proper materials at home.

[01:06:35] Also, as a professional courtesy, please inform teachers and staff about county information like Code Orange Days prior to releasing it to the public. Just a professional courtesy. I'm tired because it seems that the school division does not want to listen to their employees.

[01:06:53] Instead of working with the bargaining team to come up with a contract that will relieve some stress, they're blocking and denying all requests. I'm asking you tonight to please work with the bargaining team to come up with a fair livable wage for all employees so that we do not have to stress about finances.

[01:07:10] Most teachers have to get a second job just to make ends meet every month. We could focus on teaching, we could save for retirement, or buy a house in the county if given a livable wage. Please work with our bargaining team to get us competitive benefits, so that Prince William County Schools is a county where employees are proud to work in, and a county that attracts qualified teachers to fill the nearly 400 vacant spots.

[01:07:35] Please show your employees that you see us, that you really see us, and that you plan to do the best you can for all of us and give us a fair and competitive contract before December 1st. In closing, I am here advocating for Prince William County school teachers and honestly for our entire dying profession.

[01:07:55] No one wants to major in education these days. I am one of your loyal teachers. Thank you. - Maggie Hansford. - Good evening, my name is Maggie Hansford and my address is on file with the clerk.

[01:08:13] I'm here tonight to speak to Justin, Lisa and Adele. You three know what it's like to work in the classroom. Justin, do you believe educators deserve to have a lunch, to have time to eat a lunch?

[01:08:34] Do you believe that educators here tonight deserve a quality of life where they could go home after work, see their families, plan, get ready for the next day, or should they be here at your meeting saying the same thing over and over? Now I ask the educators in the room to stand and I want you all, Lisa, I want you to look the educators in the room and let them know do you believe that they deserve a lunch have you given them a lunch what does a what does it look like when staff does not have lunch they don't

[01:09:12] have a moment to plan for the next day what does that look like how does how does someone continue to do that every day what does it look like when they're not able to take leave because there just isn't a sub or if they need to take a sick day they have to go to the doctor as an adult to come back to work one day i need you to look the educators in the faces because your bargaining

[01:09:43] team believes it in theory but not in the contract why why can't your employees have a lunch have a planning have the ability to have a sustainable job why lisa you work in fairfax i assume you do that like a lot of educators do who live in Prince William because of the pay because you're paid for other duties as assigned where we're not that we're not paid tonight we're not paid to come here you are this is your meeting we

[01:10:21] continue to come here because this is the only platform in which you all provide us the ability to speak with you we don't want to come here we want to be with our families we want to prepare for the next day this isn't our meeting this isn't our responsibility we did not run for your seat you did and what the responsibility means look your educators in the eyes and let them know are you willing to stand by your policy are you willing to stand by your policy that says these human beings these professionals deserve a lunch if you

[01:11:00] believe that then your team will put that in the contract we expect to have a a fair contract. A fair contract means wages, benefits, work environment. - Miles McCarthy.

[01:11:21] - Good evening. My name is Miles McCarthy and my address is on file. I'm a sixth grader at Lakeridge Middle School. I want to tell everybody here how hard everyone works in our schools. Most people have jobs that end whenever they leave work.

[01:11:38] However, teachers always have work to do after school and on weekends. But my teachers at Old Bridge Elementary and Lakeridge Middle are always loving and devoted. We all know custodians keep our schools clean and safe. I know it's a hard job, but they do it and always have a smile and say hi to us.

[01:11:57] The food service workers always make sure we have healthy meals and the bus drivers keep all the students to and from school every day. But I think we could do more for all these workers. I know this because my parents are teachers and they work two, sometimes three extra jobs a night, on weekends and in summers.

[01:12:21] They work really hard for their students and their family. When you make your decisions, think of all the people that really make this division school work. Thank you. - Katie Jefferson.

[01:12:39] After that will be Kimberly Melman Orozco, Elizabeth Guzman, Madison King, Shawna Cotier, and Chris Funderburg. Katie Jefferson. - Hello, my name is Katie Jefferson, and my address is on file.

[01:12:59] Hello, school board and Dr. McDade. I am going to read the speech for Princess Moss, since she was unable because she does not live in the county. I am Princess Moss, an elementary music teacher and vice president of the National Education Association.

[01:13:16] I meet frequently with educators, administrators, parents, and students across this nation, and if there's one thing I've learned, it's this. Educators, parents, and our students themselves want schools that reflect the very best of who they are and the kind of people they hope their children will become.

[01:13:35] The research is clear. Student success is enhanced when educators are respected, treated with dignity, and included in the decision-making. When educators are able to serve as collaborative partners, collective bargaining becomes an opportunity for labor and management to listen and solve problems that are tough together.

[01:13:58] These essential building blocks help to create a sturdy foundation that gets us closer to our shared goal of preparing every student to step confidently into a diverse and interdependent world. Collective bargaining is democracy in the workplace.

[01:14:15] The research is clear. When communities collaborate as partners towards reaching a solid contract, the area's financial stability improves and with it, home ownership. Most importantly, child outcomes go up, which means our students win too.

[01:14:33] Two years ago, after 40 years of work, Virginia made history when school divisions were granted the right to bargain. VEA opened that door. Last year, Prince William made history when employees authorized PWA to represent them as their bargaining agent.

[01:14:49] VEA and NEA stand with PWEA. There is more that unites us than that divides us. Together, let us seize this opportunity to write the next chapter of Virginia history, to provide Prince William's 11,000 education professionals with fair and equitable compensation to lift the lives of our students for generations to come.

[01:15:15] Thank you. - Kimberly Melman Orozco. - Good evening, my name is Dr. Kimberly Melman Orozco. My address is on file. As you all know, I am one of the three candidates who is running for chair of the Prince William County School Board.

[01:15:36] So over the last couple weeks, couple months, I've heard that many of you speak at some of the campaigning events. One of the things that I noticed was that you all seem very, very proud of yourselves.

[01:15:54] Each and every one of you have been very proud in your speeches of what you've accomplished over the last four years. Let's just walk through that for a moment. You seem very proud of what you've done for special education students Over the past six months or so, you've repeatedly been found out of compliance of federal and state law.

[01:16:14] In response to that, did you remediate? Did you assist these students? Or did you retaliate against them? Did you support your special education teachers?

[01:16:31] Or did you cut the budget by 25% for special education services? Do you currently have teachers anonymously posting online saying that they are crying with the impending IEP requirements because of the lack of staff and the lack of funding, take a good hard look at yourselves for how proud you are in your speeches.

[01:16:54] In addition to that, you've been very proud of what you've done for diversity and inclusion, yet you repeatedly have parents coming here talking about systemic discrimination. Very, very proud that you appointed the first African-American superintendent, yet multiple parents are talking about systemic discrimination, And in fact, at one of these speaking events where you were very, very proud, the commissioner of the Human Rights Commission here in Prince William County expressed that she is afraid that an impending lawsuit is going to bankrupt this county.

[01:17:30] You seem very proud of what you've done for teachers. Let's read the room. I truly do believe that Prince William County has some of the best teachers in this county, and I am not endorsed by the PWEA.

[01:17:48] If I were sitting where you are, I would not be proud. I would be embarrassed, I would be ashamed. And I can tell you right now, if I were sitting there, I would forgo my salary until the teachers were paid a fair salary.

[01:18:04] I am appalled. And they said that they don't wanna be here on a Wednesday night. Of all days, today is my 40th birthday. Do you think I want to be here? I no longer have a kid in this county because I am afraid of you and what you have done.

[01:18:21] I am here because I care about the rest of the people in the county who do not have the means to leave. - Thank you. Elizabeth Guzman, Elizabeth Guzman, Madison King.

[01:18:45] - Hi, I'm Madison King and my address is on file. I'm in ninth grade and I go to Osborne Park High School. I'm here advocating for a better work environment for teachers and bus drivers. School bus drivers play a very important role in students' lives. They are a quiet hero of the school, the first smiling adult that the children see each morning and the last before they go home.

[01:19:06] Every day I wanna go on a bus with a bus driver who is overworked and underpaid, which might I add, may not be my assigned bus driver because transportation is so understaffed that buses are crowded and these buses are often late, which affects the students' learning because it causes them to lose

instructional time, which is very valuable to the students because when these things happen, in some cases, it can cause students to fall behind.

[01:19:30] They have to start playing a game of catch up and school becomes very stressful. When I walk into school and I see an overworked underpaid teacher, It really shows how much they are undervalued. These teachers are so undervalued by their own staff.

[01:19:45] Without them, we wouldn't have access to the education all the students need, and the guidance we would need would be non-existent. Teachers need to be valued more and recognized for the hard work that they do.

[01:20:01] They give us the best education they possibly can. Since the beginning of the school year, I have lost not one, but two Spanish teachers due to them leaving to go elsewhere, which caused me to go through not one, but two new schedule changes, which really affects me 'cause I have to start all over with new classes and teachers, which once again was stressful for me.

[01:20:19] PWCS and the school board needs to do better for their staff so the students can get the best education possible. Because the way things are going, nobody's futures are thriving. They're actually lacking, thank you. - Shawna Cotier, Cotier.

[01:20:38] - Good evening, my name is Shawna Cotier and my address is on file. I have three children in the Gainesville District and I'd like to speak about the specialty programs transportation specialty programs in this county are wonderful and they provide students with an amazing opportunity outside of their assigned school and to seek in order to seek challenging and enriching environments with students who are like-minded these programs are a great success and I thank you for offering them during the last year I saw my middle school or my middle child flourish in the math and science program at Marsteller middle school he

[01:21:16] was excited to go to school and looking forward to school this year this is the first time in eight years that he has been excited to go to school so when we were asked this last year if we were going to continue into the specialty program we opted into the program for the 23/24 school year mere days before school began we found out that his bus stop in our community had been removed this left us no time to change our decision for enrollment in the math and

[01:21:51] science program nor did it allow for us to explain this to my son that it wasn't going to be a good option anymore. No explanation was even provided to us that the bus stop had been moved. I've logged in daily looking at the bus stop and just found out a couple days before school started. I began calling transportation the day school started trying to find answers after leaving countless voicemails speaking with only two people neither of which had answers.

[01:22:23] I was finally able to get help and answers two full months later when I was able to reach out to Mr. Bach, the Chief Operations Officer, and Vice Chairwoman Jennifer Wall from the Gainesville District. Both of them were able to solve my problem in a matter of days. It should not take two months and two days for two people to manage something like this. During that time, my student missed multiple days of school because no one was able to pick him up at the newly assigned bus stop. We just needed answers. The specialty programs rely on

[01:23:00] transportation. Parents make decisions about the specialty program based on transportation. I'm here to ask you to please support transportation. Give them the flexibility to be creative and innovative

with their solutions. Don't make them charge through bureaucratic red tape to get answers, to get our kids to school on time. You heard it. She's missing classes. My son's missed classes because of transportation. It's not fair to the kids. Help transportation in whatever they need. Thank you.

[01:23:35] Chris Funderburg. Hello there. My name is Chris Funderburg and my address is on file. First, I want to thank you guys. You did actually get a couple of books pulled out of the school libraries, which I appreciate, and they were pretty bad. For those who want to look it up, its fun home, a family tragicomic, milk and honey, the opposite of innocent, and what girls are made

[01:24:08] of. However, that's a small start. There's still quite a bit in the school libraries that's pretty bad. So to bring you a little bit more light to this attention, I brought a select reading from Red Hood, which is in several of the high school libraries. For anybody with children under 18, I think now's a good time to take them out or mute your TV, and I'll give you a few minutes to do

[01:24:41] that. I highly recommend it, and I really hope that all of you are as embarrassed and uncomfortable with what I'm about to read. All right. These are remarkable. His kisses, tracing a path down your neck, his hands pulling low the sweetheart neckline of your dress, his nose brushing your right nipple, and then, a moment later, his lips capturing it, his tongue circling, circling, his teeth skimming

[01:25:19] and biting, not hard, just enough to make your hands tighten into a fist and clutch the blanket, enough to make your legs begin to quiver. And then he pushes up the tule and satin of your skirt, rustling like wrapping paper coming undone. His hands reach and find the lace panties you brought, just especially for this occasion, and slowly, so slowly, he pulls them down your thighs, and you lift your hips to help them slide them free.

[01:25:42] Your feet are already bare, high heels abandoned in the front seat, so there's nothing to stop your panties from coming off all the way. Oh, how much you want this. If you guys want to get rid of this book, I'll stop reading, but that would be great. Do you shiver from anticipation for the moment when at last, at last, his mouth finds its way to the center of you?

[01:26:03] At last, at last, he's found his way there, a hand on each of your thighs, his head buried between them, and he's not teasing you, not now, not anymore. He's earnest in his desire to bring you desire, and yes, you think, as his tongue and lips press into you, as his fingers pull you apart, as you come undone beneath his hands, it is important to be earnest if this is what earnestness brings.

[01:26:26] Yes, the smell of him, the sight of him, the feel of him, all of it familiar, but not this, the hot, firm pressure of his tongue against your center, the insistence of this, his hands on your thighs, the building of wonder, of your pleasure rising. Oh, that is not familiar. That is new, brand new.

[01:26:43] You gush, that is the word, the only word. You gush as the pleasure becomes too much to survive. That was the longest two minutes of my life, thank you. - Tonight, that will conclude citizen comment time.

[01:27:00] Thank you all for coming out this evening. We are now moving on to our student representative time. We have Fernanda Marante, senior at Forest Park High School on the dais with us this evening. And Fernanda, let's do it.

[01:27:15] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. Thank you everyone for staying this time. - Good evening, Dr. McDade, school board members in Prince William County community. I am Fernando Moronte and I'm proud to

serve as one of your student representatives for this year. To start off, I'd like to congratulate once again, the nine PWCS schools who were recognized by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation as 2023's America's Healthiest Schools.

[01:27:39] Ashland, Bennett, Bucklin Mills, Kilby, Marshall, Montclair, Parkside, Piney Branch, and Victory Elementary and Middle Schools. I also want to highlight that November is National Native American Month. This is when we call attention to the culture, traditions, and achievements of the nation's original inhabitants and of their descendants.

[01:28:00] I invite all staff and student leaders from each PWCS school to celebrate our roots this special time of the year. Additionally, October has been Breast Cancer Awareness Month. I appreciate and congratulate all high schools having pink out spirit days, football games, and volleyball games and some other activities in support of breast cancer awareness.

[01:28:23] The goal of this month is to educate those concerned about this disease, including early identifications and signs associated. On another note, the PSAT was administered in all high schools for freshmen, sophomores, and juniors today.

[01:28:39] So congratulations to all of those who took it. This is a great opportunity, not just to see what the actual SAT looks like, but to also help students excel academically. As seniors, we had a synchronous day, luckily for us, but I do hope everyone was able to check out the senior board activity regarding post-secondary plans, as well as a required survey in Naviance, and preparing for the upcoming SAT offered by the county on October 26th to all registered seniors.

[01:29:15] Also, I would like to invite all students participate in the 2024-2025 school calendar survey. This is a great opportunity to have a voice and vote in important decisions that the school division makes every year. You can find the survey on the PWCS website and it will be available through October 27th. Finally, I'd like to invite all high school students to participate in the attendance slogan contest. Attendance is important and is one of the focuses of this year. The goal is to portray that in a catchphrase. More information in the submission link can be found in the

[01:29:51] global announcements section on your student campus. Also this past Monday was a second monthly meeting of the PWCS student Senate and representatives. We mainly focused in the implementation of student invoice committee in each of the 14 high schools and it might be a little bit early to say but I do believe that SVC is going off to a great start and I can't wait to see all the positive change that we will make together one of the topics that came up in one of the small discussions that we had was a rivalry between schools more specifically high schools so I want to remind students that not only do we attend our own base

[01:30:29] school but we are also all Prince William County students as such it is our responsibility to act as a countywide student body not only as students from each of our base high schools lately there has been a rivalry tension and sometimes hatred from students from school a to school B at sports games and social media as well I don't think this is part of the profile of a PWCS student and I am sure that together we can excel as a county and leaving those feelings behind as a final reminder first quarter of this school year is close to an end grading period will close on November 3rd so it is a

[01:31:07] perfect time to get all assignments and tests in so we can all finish this quarter to the best of our ability good luck to all the teachers who are here today with the end of the first quarter. Thank you,

and that concludes my remarks for tonight. - Thank you, Fernanda.

[01:31:23] Really appreciate it, Ms. Morante. Excellent comments. At this time, we will do superintendent's time. Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. Good evening. PWCS is proud to have 35 specialty programs throughout our schools, two at the elementary level, four at the middle school level, one grade one through eight program, and 28 high school level programs.

[01:31:46] Our specialty programs focus on career exploration, subject area concentration, and post-secondary preparation. PWCS provides excellent opportunities for students in elementary, middle, and high school to explore a variety of special programs in our schools.

[01:32:04] These specialty programs give students the chance to investigate careers ranging from the fine arts to building trades to advanced computer science. The application process can be found on our website located under Families, Academic Programs, and finally, Advanced Academics and Specialty Programs.

[01:32:21] Applications for our specialty programs opens on Wednesday, November 1st. Please note, the Center for Fine and Performing Arts application is due on December 14th, while all other applications are due on February 1st. For further inquiries, please email our Advanced Academics and Specialty Programs at aasp@pwcs.edu, or call 703-791-7923.

[01:32:50] The Family Engagement Series provides families with resources that will assist with their students' success. The series is led by the PWCS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Compliance Department in collaboration with other PWCS programs and community and business partners.

[01:33:07] I encourage our families and community to keep up to date with the numerous sessions we provide monthly. The next session will take place virtually on Thursday, October 26th from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. The focus will be on PWCS social emotional learning overview, which includes informing families of how they can help strengthen the home-school partnership and support students' emotional well-being and academic success.

[01:33:34] I hope that you will join us for this event. Moving on to school division observances. More than a decade ago, the Youth Leadership Forum, a group of youth with disabilities and established by the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities, requested our state to recognize October as Virginia Disability History and Awareness Month.

[01:33:56] Their creed reads, "Disability history education "and awareness will promote positive attitudes in schools, "creating a culture of mutual respect, "understanding, and equal opportunities for all." PWCS also recognizes dyslexia awareness, ADHD awareness, and learning disabilities awareness.

[01:34:17] I encourage our educators, families, friends, and students with a disability to visit I'm Determined to raise your awareness, learn about the history of disability, access resources, and find ways to engage at imdetermined.org.

[01:34:35] This week, PWCS also recognizes America's Safe Schools Week, Custodial Services Employees Appreciation Week, and National Bus Safety Week. We encourage everyone to join us in thanking these invaluable employees today, this week, and every week.

[01:34:54] We are grateful and thankful for our amazing staff and their continued commitment to the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of all of our students. Next week, PWCS acknowledges Red

Ribbon Week in honor of Drug Enforcement Administration agent Enrique Kiki Camarena, who gave his life in the battle against illegal drugs in 1985.

[01:35:19] We pledge and renew our vow to be part of the creation of a drug-free America. This year's theme, be kind to your mind, live drug-free, reminds us that our brain is constantly adapting to our environments and experiences.

[01:35:38] Every day, we choose to make significant daily contributions for ourselves, friends, families, and communities by being the best we can be because we live drug-free. Schools throughout our division will carry this message to all students through various activities and remind our children that they have the power and fortitude to maintain control of their lives and futures.

[01:36:04] Moving on to our presentation for this evening, the state of the schools is an opportunity for us to take stock and reflect on the work that we've done, the work we are doing, and our future goals. Before the presentation, I wanna highlight few key takeaways. The first is we are progressing toward our goals and we must ensure we maintain fidelity to our vision that every student will graduate and succeed and achieve. While all schools are accredited or accredited with conditions, math and science scores are on the rise and benchmark SAT scores have risen. We are still not hitting the benchmarks we need to for every student,

[01:36:41] specifically our Hispanic population, our English language learners, and our students with disabilities every student in pwcs deserves to succeed and you will see from the state of the school's 2022-23 presentation that we are moving in the right direction in most areas coming out of the pandemic however we still have struggling achievement gaps that persist related to learning loss attendance at family engagement events have have increased 100 of of graduates had post-secondary plans.

[01:37:15] Chronic absenteeism has decreased, but is still an area of focus and problem. Staff retention has increased. Student participation in advanced coursework and dual enrollment courses has also increased. And there is 100% of school and department continuous improvement plans align with the strategic plan.

[01:37:34] Although good work is being done in our schools, we also saw an increase in dropout rates specifically for our English language learners, which is our fastest growing student population. As a school system, our moral imperative must be to execute strategies necessary for all students to thrive.

[01:37:51] Therefore, we have targeted supports to our English learners to bolster academic achievement across all core areas, as well as support our students with disabilities. You will also hear about the efforts that we've put in place to address specifically the L dropout rate.

[01:38:07] Our vision is to see every student graduate on time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community. During today's presentation, we will share positive trends as well as areas of needed improvement.

[01:38:24] We will also share a few of the strategies and practices that have been prioritized to ensure we meet the needs of all students. At this time, I would like to bring forward our Director of Research and Accountability and Strategic Planning, Dr. Tim Neal.

[01:38:40] Dr. Neil, along with members of our executive cabinet will now share the state of the schools 2022-23 address. - Good evening, Dr. Lateef, school board members, and Dr. McDade. It's my pleasure this

evening to provide a brief overview of the state of the schools for 22-23 school year.

[01:39:01] So the purpose tonight is really to dive into some of our strategic plan measures that we've identified with the strategic plan vision 2025. So this report is going to give us the big takeaways and our next steps.

[01:39:19] So just as a preview of the overview of the presentation, we're going to provide a little bit of our regional context, we're going to give you a quick reminder about our strategic plan commitments, and then we'll go into some data dives on each commitment along with our key takeaways and next steps.

[01:39:39] So this slide shows the demographics and cost per pupil for the state and our surrounding localities. You can see we are still the second largest school division in Virginia, so Fairfax is larger than us, Loudoun County is slightly smaller than us, but we are very diverse when you look at how our demographics break down with other divisions.

[01:40:02] In terms of cost per pupil spending, you can see that most school divisions have a higher cost per pupil than we do, so we are second from the bottom. This slide is intended to provide a little bit of a context for how our metrics have changed pre-pandemic to current.

[01:40:24] So if you look at 2018-19, you can see that we are administering close to 50,000 tests in math and/or reading across the division. In 2021, that number was almost cut in half. This presentation is going to focus on 2021, 2022, and 2023.

[01:40:44] But it's really important that we look at the trends that we compare 21-22 and 22-23 because the pandemic year that 2021 was such an anomaly in terms of the number of students tested.

[01:41:01] So our strategic plan is organized into four different commitments, learning and achievement for all, positive climate and culture, family and community engagement, and organizational coherence. Most of our conversation tonight is going to focus on commitment one, learning achievement for All, but we will hit on every one of these areas.

[01:41:21] So in terms of Learning and Achievement for All, we're looking at providing equitable opportunities for our students to achieve at high levels, preparing students for post-secondary education in the workforce, and ensuring that staff members have the support to challenge all students.

[01:41:37] So our key takeaways from Learning and Achievement for All, first, all schools in PwCAS are accredited or accredited with conditions. The overall pass rates for literacy remained consistent with the prior year, but we did see a slight decrease in the performance of our Hispanic students.

[01:41:56] Math and science both showed increases in pass rates for all student groups. In looking at early literacy, the percentage of students that met the PALS benchmark at the end of second grade increased. Our on-time graduation rate was on par with 21-22, but we did note that there were substantial decreases in this for our Hispanic and our English learners.

[01:42:20] And finally, the percent of students that met the benchmark for math and reading on the SATs did increase, but we do have significant participation gaps for our Hispanic students, our English learners, and our students with disabilities.

[01:42:36] So in Virginia, there are three different accreditation ratings that you can receive: accredited, accredited with conditions, or accreditation denied. These ratings are based on multiple criteria or

indicators that you can see at the left of this slide. Some of these apply to elementary schools, some of them apply only to high schools.

[01:42:55] It is important to note that for the current year's accreditation rating, a metric called College Career and Civic Readiness Index was applied at the high school level. This is essentially a measure of the degree to which our high schools have students either participating in advanced coursework or engaging in some sort of civic or work-based learning.

[01:43:16] When we looked at the breakdown of our schools, we can see that 93 percent of our schools are accredited with seven percent of them accredited with conditions. When it comes to student achievement, we've set a target of having 85 percent of our students in grades three through eight pass the reading SOL. This slide shows the the rates over the last three years and when you compare 21-22 with 22-23 you can see the rates were largely unchanged across all student groups.

[01:43:56] This slide has that same information for our students with disabilities, our English learners and our economically disadvantaged students. With mathematics in grades 3-8 we also have a target of having an 85% pass rate.

[01:44:14] Here you can see there is an upward trend across all race and ethnicities for mathematics pass rates and the same holds true when we look at our student subgroups. A particular area of celebration and this is a new set of slides for us for this presentation is science.

[01:44:35] We also have a target of having 85% of our students pass the science SOL in grades three through eight and here again you can see a substantive increase across all race and ethnicities and across all of our student groups when it comes to passing the science.

[01:44:53] In addition to overall pass rates, we are also looking at the pass-advanced rates in grades 3 through 11. Mirroring our overall pass rates for literacy, you can see that our advanced pass rates in reading remain largely consistent with the prior year.

[01:45:11] And this pattern holds true across all race and ethnicities and student subgroups. With mathematics, the pass-advanced rates showed an upward trend from last year across all race and ethnicities with variation amongst our student subgroups.

[01:45:37] And finally, when we look at our pass advance rates in science, again, mirroring our overall pass rates, you do see an upward movement across all groups, which holds true in our student subgroups as well.

[01:45:56] In addition to looking at student achievement through our SOLs, we are also looking at other measures. We do have a target of having 80% of our elementary students reading on grade level by grade three. So this slide shows the HMH reading pass rates, percent of students who are reading on grade level at the end of second grade for 21-22 and 22-23, and again, you can see there was very little movement on this assessment.

[01:46:26] It is important to note that HMH is measuring reading comprehension, and so when we look at the next measure of early literacy, which is our PALS benchmarks, you can see at the end of second grade, we had an upward trend of the percent of students meeting the PALS benchmarks. Where HMH measures reading comprehension, the PALS assessment looks at phonemic awareness

[01:46:52] and phonics. So this pattern for PALS persists across all student groups. For high schools, we have a target of having 95% of our students meet the on-time graduation rate. Remember Our on-time graduation is defined as graduating within four years of the time that you enter high school, with some accommodations made for students with disabilities and our English learners.

[01:47:27] When you look at the on-time graduation rate here, you can see that we are largely on par with where we were last year, although we did see a decrease in the OGRs for our English learners.

[01:47:49] Another target in the strategic plan is to have 60% of our graduates meet the SAT college readiness benchmarks for reading and math, which are indicators that they are prepared for success in college courses. This table shows the percent of our graduates that took the SAT, and it's broken down by student subgroup.

[01:48:09] So here you can see we have about 40% of our graduating class take the SATs, but when When you look at this by race and ethnicity, you see we do have some significant disparities in participation rates. When we look at the benchmarks, the target is to have a score of 480 in English reading and writing and a score of 530 in math.

[01:48:35] So of those students who took the SAT, 53% of them met the benchmark in mathematics. That is a slight increase from the prior year, so there is some improvement, which you do see across many of our groups although there is some variation and this does hold true we look at our student subgroups as well with literacy on the SAT benchmark we perform much better 85% of the students have met of who took the

[01:49:06] SAT in the graduating class met that 85% met 85% of that benchmark you can see this is an increase over the prior year and it does hold true that increase when we look at our student subgroups as well. The target, though, is to have our students meet both the reading and the math. So this graph shows the percent of students who met both of those targets, and you can see that about 53 percent of the graduates who took

[01:49:40] the SAT met both reading and math readiness benchmarks. This is an increase over the prior year, and you do see that pattern across most of our student groups and our student subgroups.

[01:50:01] Even with the theme of post-secondary preparation, we have a target of 100% of our students having a post-secondary plan for either entering college, the workforce, the military, or transition services. In '21-'22, we were at 98% across the board.

[01:50:19] Last year, every graduate had a post-secondary plan they created in collaboration with their school counselors. And this pattern holds true across all groups.

[01:50:37] that participation in advanced coursework is also preparation for post-secondary education. We have a goal of increasing the percentage of students completing advanced or dual enrollment courses by 10%.

[01:50:52] You can see here that we did have an increase in participation in advanced courses across all races and ethnicities and across our student subgroups as well.

[01:51:08] In addition to participating in the advanced coursework, we have a target of having 60% of our graduates earn at least one qualifying score on an AP, IB, or Cambridge exam, earning a dual enrollment credit, earning an industry credential, or earning a seal of biliteracy.

[01:51:28] And here you can see we had some upward movement in the percent of students that were earning one of those credentials or qualifying scores. We also see that same general movement when we look at our student subgroups.

[01:51:48] A particular area of celebration for us are the totals of verified offers that our students have received. In 2022, we had a little over $91 million in verified offers for scholarships.

[01:52:04] This means that students received an offer and shared documentation with their schools to confirm that those offers had indeed been made. We saw a 31% increase in school year '23 with a little over 119 million offers made.

[01:52:24] So in looking at our commitment to learning and achievement for all, student academic performance on math and science tests did improve, while our literacy scores remained largely unchanged. We still see performance gaps persisting for our Hispanic students, our English learners and our students with disabilities, and our on-time graduation rates remained on par with the prior year, but we still have gaps for Hispanic students and English learners.

[01:52:53] So to address some of the next steps on actions we're going to take, I'm going to turn the podium over to Dr. Sullivan. Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to share just a few of the strategies that we are using to improve outcomes for students.

[01:53:11] And in particular, our students who need additional support in meeting their potential. Dr. Brown and her team have worked alongside our high school principals to expand equal opportunity schools to all 13 high schools.

[01:53:27] This is really important work. This is targeted strategies to ensure that students that are underrepresented in challenging coursework have access to programs and opportunities and that they experience success in reaching those high standards.

[01:53:44] We know that when students receive high quality instruction in an engaging environment with high expectations, that the students who benefit most are those who struggle. They have disproportionate gains in having access to that high quality instruction.

[01:54:00] This is particularly important for our English language learners who often miss some of those opportunities to engage in that coursework. The equal opportunity school system ensures that no student is missed. In the coming slides, you will see the dropout rates by ethnicity and by student group, which highlights the need for more intentional work in supporting students for on-time graduation, with a particular emphasis on our English language learners.

[01:54:30] This fall, we kicked off the on-time graduation task force, which brings together our level associates, student services and post-secondary success, teaching and learning, instructional Technology and RASP, our research team.

[01:54:46] One of the key initiatives was the development of the Early Warning System. This data dashboard allows every school leader, counselor, and relevant staff member along with central office staff to track each and every student with deficiencies towards graduation.

[01:55:05] But furthermore, it requires the entry of an intervention plan and the monitoring of that implementation plan for every student. this is really exceptional work. Students will not fall through the cracks in this system.

[01:55:21] This team is taking an exhaustive approach to understanding our population that do drop out and the use of that information to address root causes. For our English language learners, we are additionally working through the processes to amplify the support that our global welcome centers provide families and schools.

[01:55:41] We are working to ensure that they continue to monitor students throughout their enrollment and assist those at the school site in connecting with families. We're also excited to implement the expectations of the Virginia Literacy Act as a plan cause for instruction rooted in the science of reading.

[01:56:03] We are currently engaged in a training plan based on high quality phonics instruction that leads to phonemic awareness and strengthens fluency. Those foundations are the basis for students comprehending text at high levels.

[01:56:19] This focused level of instruction also aids in the identification of students that may demonstrate dyslexia and other reading-related disabilities. Strengthening tier one instruction in reading supports success for all students.

[01:56:37] These strategies are also crucial to the early success of our young English language learners. Dr. Ryer recently shared the improvement to our multi-tiered system of student supports for those who require more than tier one instruction.

[01:56:53] Schools now have MTSS coaches that can monitor and track interventions for students through tier two and tier three support. And additional behavior personnel have been added to eliminate behavior issues as an impediment to learning.

[01:57:09] Numeracy is also a cornerstone in our work. One strategy that provides direct support to students is tutoring through the Algebra Readiness Initiative. This state program funds tutoring support for students in grades six through nine who may not be on track to meet the algebra standards.

[01:57:29] And although recently shared, I wanted to also highlight the work of our special education team in providing inclusive environments for our students while providing them specially designed instruction aligned to their specific academic needs.

[01:57:45] One of the ways we are ensuring that schools are aligned to this critical work is through instructional rounds. Principals and central office staff work closely together to target their comprehensive improvement plans and identify problems of practice through instructional rounds and follow-up discussions.

[01:58:04] These are occurring at every single one of our schools. This collaborative process better connect central office resources to school leaders. Each of these strategies are designed to significantly impact student groups who are underperforming their peers while simultaneously improving the success of all students and as a compliment to all of the work through the comprehensive improvement plans.

[01:58:30] Thank you for the opportunity to share. - So we'll now move on to commitment two, positive and climate and culture.

[01:58:47] This commitment focuses on providing a learning environment that fosters inclusivity, connectedness, and encourages social and emotional wellness for all. We're working to have students and staff feel supported with a strong sense of belonging and have welcoming, safe, and sustainable facilities.

[01:59:07] So some of our key takeaways from this commitment, chronic absenteeism did decrease over the prior year, but it remains higher than pre-pandemic levels. Our dropout rates increased, but they increased more significantly for our English learners and our Hispanic students.

[01:59:25] Exclusionary discipline, which includes both in-school and out-of-school suspension, those rates remain largely static compared to the prior year. Our staff retention rates increased slightly, but remain above our strategic plan target. And students feeling safe in schools decreased slightly overall, but we saw a significant drop at the middle school level.

[01:59:50] So when we look at chronic absenteeism, you can see the blue bar represents the 2021, which was our hybrid year where some students were in-person, many of our students were virtual. We had a very low chronic absenteeism rate.

[02:00:06] Coming out of the pandemic, we saw that chronic absenteeism rate skyrocket to over 23%. We did see a decrease overall last year, dropping down to 21.7%.

[02:00:21] So while we did see the decrease, that rate is high across all groups. In terms of our dropout rate, We did see our dropout rate increase to 6.9%.

[02:00:38] We did see this rate, it was variable amongst races and ethnicities and student groups, but you can see that our Hispanic population had a higher rate of dropouts as did our English learners.

[02:01:01] When we look at the percent of students that are receiving exclusionary discipline, so this is both in-school and out-of-school suspension. Those rates remain largely unchanged from the prior year across all of our student groups, but you can notice we do have disparities amongst our race and ethnicities and amongst our student subgroups.

[02:01:30] In terms of staff retention, we had a rate of 91.8% staff retention last year. That is a slight increase over the prior year and it is above our target of 90%.

[02:01:46] The strategic plan goal is to have 90% of our students reporting feeling safe at school. We have broken this into two different components: overall feelings of safety and feeling free from bullying. This slide shows the breakdown at elementary, middle, and high school levels of feelings of safety.

[02:02:06] You can see at our elementary and our high school levels, they remained largely unchanged from the prior year, but there was a substantial drop at the middle school level in the percentage just students that were feeling safe. When we look at this through the lens of bullying, that same pattern emerges.

[02:02:25] You can see at the high school and the elementary school level, the rate of students that felt free from bullying remained largely unchanged from the prior year. But again, at the middle school level, we saw a decrease.

[02:02:44] So our key takeaways for positive climate and culture, chronic absenteeism remains a critical focus for the entire school division and we have an intense focus on dropout rates especially for our Hispanic students and our English learners because they showed substantial increases over the prior year to address next steps in positive climate and culture I'm going to turn the podium over to Ms. Huebner thank you so as you can see we are strategically monitoring data around student attendance dropouts and this is being used to inform our efforts not just to look at it but act upon it so a lot of our work is captured

[02:03:24] in our central office in our school level continues improvement plans I'd like to give you a few specific examples we've recently launched a very enhanced attendance campaign to increase the student and family awareness and the engagement around attendance as a matter of fact our our students are a part of this as of today we have about 250 entries for our naming contest for the attendance awareness campaign and our kids were talking to them we're hearing their voices, we're understanding what the root cause behind them not coming to school is. We hope to use that information to change some of our practices and to encourage them to come to school. We have a lot of team

[02:04:01] collaboration going on. We have an on-time graduation task force that is between our central offices and our school teams to provide the support that we need to keep our kids in school. We want our kids to stay enrolled so there is a focus on engagement. I know that school and central offices are making a concerted effort to increase the student participation, not just in athletics, but also after-school activities and to promote student engagement in school. We also want our students who have left us to come back so we are reaching out and offering opportunities to learn about non-traditional education and alternatives for re-enrollment events. I had the word today that we had at least seven students that will be returning through the GED process. We have

[02:04:40] increased support for our school-based administrators to identify and implement disciplinary supports and interventions and I think that's an important piece to talk about the interventions. Behavior in buildings tells the story so we're using the data to get to the root cause and most importantly to implement those interventions this includes additional training for responding to behaviors and training unrelated to acts of bullying discrimination harassment this information includes information this includes information on title six of the Civil Rights Act that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race color and national origin and other protected categories ensuring our school teams are accessing using data we've

[02:05:17] supported and providing them each school has been provided data that has a protocol and a tool for them to take a look at it and that is related to the student satisfaction survey and we've equipped those staff members with ideas on how to address those concerns under commitment 2.2 you'll see that we are implementing the you belong here which is enhancements to a comprehensive diversity inclusion and equity initiative and a pilot of upbeat as part employer retention and satisfaction efforts additionally we're working with our social-emotional learning coaches in each school to expand the student and

[02:05:54] adult wellness initiatives we continue to support our administrative leaders with launching the leadership capacity launching thriving careers and Prince Wim County Schools leads and we continue to implement teach Prince Wim County which is a robust strategic initiative to build a deeper certified applicant pool that reflects a rich diversity in our county through an umbrella program that's designated to increase the number of highly qualified teachers. We continue with grow our own programs and to expand our partnerships with over 50 colleges. We want our facilities to be welcoming and safe and sustainable. At this time you'll see that we've implemented our weapons screening

[02:06:30] systems and most secondary school and we will be completed with that initiative by October 20th. Additionally we have another 106 positions that were approved to directly support school safety and that includes enhancements to technology such as closed caption cameras and megahertz radio improvements at this time I'll turn the podium back over to dr. Neal so we have two commitments remaining family and community engagement organizational coherence I'm going to combine the two of these for the remainder of the

[02:07:08] presentation so with family community engagement we want to engage families as authentic partners in the education process to support academic progress of the students we want to work collaboratively with community agencies and business partners to support our strategic initiatives and we want to ensure honest transparent two-way communication with all of our stakeholders in an effort to build trusting relationships.

[02:07:34] When it comes to organizational coherence, we are working to create systemic structures for strong cycles of continuous improvement and we want to remove barriers to communication to facilitate collaboration across offices, schools and families, not only in the spirit of customer service, but in order to make improvements to better serve our students.

[02:07:54] So the critical points with these two commitments, one, attendance at our family engagement events showed a general upward trend. Feelings of family engagement and positive trust were similar to the prior year. A majority of our PWCS leaders have participated in one or more professional learning sessions focused on continuous improvement, and all schools and central offices have continuous improvement plans in place.

[02:08:23] So our target is to have 85% of parents report that they have opportunities to engage with their child's school about their learning. This graph shows attendance from February to May of 2023 in our family engagement series.

[02:08:38] Although the attendance was variable depending on the topic of session and so forth, what you can see, the trend line, which is that dotted line, shows an upward trend in the number of participants that we had. 96% of the participants who attended reported that they were better able to meet the needs of their students after attending that session.

[02:09:00] What's exciting about these family engagement sessions as well is that simultaneous translations were provided in Farsi, sign language, Spanish, Urdu, Arabic, Korean, Pashto, and Vietnamese as appropriate.

[02:09:16] When we look at family engagement and trust, which is a metric on our division-wide climate and culture survey that is comprised of multiple items, we see that feelings of family engagement and trust are largely similar to the prior year.

[02:09:34] When it comes to our strategic plans, you can see that 100% of our schools and 100% of our central office departments have continuous improvement plans that are aligned with the strategic plan. This is the second year in a row that we have achieved this.

[02:09:50] All of the leaders have been trained in the continuous improvement process, and we have a robust systematic progress monitoring plan in place when we look at the training provided we had 86 percent of these trainings had assistant principals or 86 percent of our assistant principals were present these trainings 100 percent of our principals and 100 percent of our central office departments had representation in sy 22 23.

[02:10:18] so for next steps with family and community engagement i am going to turn the podium over to dr brown good evening um thank you for having me here to highlight some of our high impact evidence-based family engagement strategies that we're using to support our students access and opportunity to pursue excellence in education. We have five strategies here beginning with highlighting our family engagement series that was referenced earlier. We're looking to begin these series

[02:10:54] earlier before the school year so that we can give our students and families information to empower them as they prepare for the school year. We'll continue to offer the increased sessions later at toward the end of the year last year we moved from two offerings a month up to four one each week and so we'll continue that and move to expand our modalities that we're hosting and facilitating these from not just virtual to in-person in our community hubs as we move through the school year next we'll continue to utilize parent liaisons for

[02:11:30] direct outreach to families we're happy to report that all of our schools have parent liaisons except for one elementary which we're looking forward to bringing that parent liaison very shortly in the coming weeks with regard to direct outreach we mean beyond the use of technology meeting our families where they are with direct calls and conversations in their native language so that we can extend familiarity to them and make them comfortable with conversing and bridging the gap between schools and homes next we'll continue to host and support parent advocacy events across all schools and departments

[02:12:07] again empowering our families to support their students in their academic experience next we move to increasing information on support sessions for families particularly our specialty programs across all levels and again making sure that we empower our families so that they can support access and opportunity for their students and then lastly building on some of the work that comes out of Miss Huebner's shop with her support core expanding this whole notion of home visits so complementing what they do and bringing that that piece

[02:12:43] if you will to our school parent liaisons and potentially our family and community engagement specialists so with that I'll turn this back over to Dr. So our next steps with organizational coherence.

[02:13:05] We are going to continue to refine and offer additional professional learning on the continuous improvement concepts and implementation, not only to extend the learning from those who have already had this training, but to bring those who have not had the training up to speed with everyone else.

[02:13:22] We're going to continue our progress monitoring and feedback for all of our continuous improvement plans and have implemented a process where all the departments are able to gain more insight into how we can support other departments as well as schools and their plans. This has come in part through our implementation of Plan for Learning, which is our new electronic platform which is allowing and facilitating this communication between departments.

[02:13:47] And lastly, we're going to continue the development of data visualizations both for internal use and for external use to increase data literacy and transparency with this information. So in summary, in grades three through eight, student performance in math and science improved, but literacy remained comparable to the prior year.

[02:14:13] Our chronic absenteeism rate decreased overall, but still remains higher than pre-pandemic levels. Access and performance gaps persist for English learners, students with disabilities, and Hispanic students in multiple areas. Our on-time graduation rates were comparable to the prior year, but dropout rates for English learner students increased.

[02:14:34] Lastly, PWCS offices and schools are engaged in a coordinated and intensive effort to address attendance, access, and achievement gaps. This concludes the state of the school's overview. I'll be now open to entertaining questions.

[02:14:51] Dr. Neal, thank you very much, Dr. McDade. I first want to commend you on the transparent summary of the challenges we face. are certainly improved since prior reentering the pandemic and we're seeing some progress being made across the board.

[02:15:15] Challenges with dropout rate continue. I wanna focus though, I really do appreciate and I think it's important for the board and the public and everyone to really take a look at the commitment you guys have made on SATs and advanced academics.

[02:15:32] And the reason I bring that up is in this day and age where folks will comment on the lack of rigor or commitment to rigor. I think it's important that one of our, two of our main goals is improving SATs and advanced coursework.

[02:15:52] And if you ask any professional for college admissions, college admission deans, VP of enrollment offices, counselors, they'll tell you that, you know, to my knowledge, and you can correct me if I'm wrong, the SOLs have no predictive value for college performance.

[02:16:08] Is that correct? - Not that I'm aware of. - That's right. And so my knowledge is the SOLs are testing the basic knowledge that the school division is supposed to deliver to students. You pass it, then it's just an example of you receiving the most basic knowledge and some level of competence in what we're trying to get out of here.

[02:16:26] But the SAT scores and GPA in a rigorous curriculum are the best predictors of how students will do in college. And so a commitment to improving our SAT scores and improving our access and opportunities for students in advanced curriculum, starting even at the middle school really is critical.

[02:16:53] And I appreciate Dr. McDade's ambitious goals on this. And I think, you know, in this day and age, and I think it's really important for everyone to know this day and age where we talk about, you know, test optional for college admissions. You know, I serve on the Board of Visitors at the University of Virginia, and in discussions with the admissions deans, they will tell you, take the test.

[02:17:15] Take the SAT, take the ACT. Now, you can submit the score if you want. If you feel good about it, go for it. But it's a really good predictor of how you're gonna be able to handle college. And it tells us, as a school division, how we're preparing our kids. And those tests are far more rigorous than, say, the SOL and some of the coursework we're having.

[02:17:34] So I think, you know, I commend the work being done. I commend the work, Dr. McDade, on expanding SATs and offering it to all students, making it accessible. You know, our SAT scores, some will say the SAT scores, the Prince William County schools are lower than X district, but we have far more students taking them.

[02:17:55] And that's really something important because we've expanded that. So we have students taking them who maybe in other districts wouldn't be encouraged to take them. And so I think it's really important as we look at where we are, where we've been, and where we're going, the ambitious goal set out to put forward a rigorous ambition.

[02:18:15] And then let's take a look at the scholarship dollar slide, if you wanna pull that up, if someone can pull that up. Do we know what number that is, Jen? The goal is to get it to 230 million. We're at about a hundred-- - 260. - 260, thank you, Dr. McTain. 260, corrected by the superintendent.

[02:18:32] Slide 42, 260, where are we at now, Dr. McTain? - 119. - 119. So that is an incredibly ambitious goal. And, you know, all of this work, I believe will lead to it.

[02:18:48] You know, I, and I think Vice Chair Wall have just put four kids into college over the last two, three years since, you know, since in and during the, and after the pandemic, you know, admissions is critical. The work that we do to prepare our students to look good, to the work that we, you know, make sure that they are learning and achieving and making sure that they are prepared because I was criticized the other day you know by you know folks who say you know my kid didn't feel ready for the first semester in college right that's we have to reduce that level of anxiety that our students are facing when they get to that first

[02:19:23] semester in college we need to make sure we increase our students graduation rates at college and community college the graduation rate at community college here at nova community college is only 28%. 28% of students who sign up get their associate's degree. That's pretty much a standard nationwide.

[02:19:39] We gotta do better than that. And we gotta send our students in there more prepared to graduate there. And these are the goals. These are the efforts I think that will help us get there. So I can't thank you enough. I mean, this is, you know, you have to be, you know, realistic when we came out of the pandemic, we put forward a re-entry.

[02:20:01] What'd we call the program, Dr. McDade? - Our unfinished learning plan. - Unfinished learning plan, and our re-entry plan, and then the strategic plan, and all of these are having payoffs. The return on investment, I believe, will be there. We are making progress, and I commend all of you and Dr. Sullivan for coming forward, Ms. Huebner, Ms. Brown, Dr. Brown, Dr. Reier, for all the hard work you're doing, and all the groups, the subgroups, all of that is so critical.

[02:20:32] and I thank the principals and the teachers for taking a look at our goals and really helping us with this, 'cause this is the real work. So while there's a discussion out there about lack of rigor or lack, this is the hard work that the school board in collaboration with the superintendent are putting together ambitious goals.

[02:20:52] Some of these goals we may achieve, we may not achieve them, but we've set them high. And I think it's really important for everyone to understand that the board takes this all very seriously as does Dr. McDade. So anyways, I wanna thank you with that and then I'll open it up for questions if any board members have any questions or concerns or thoughts.

[02:21:08] Ms. Zargarpur. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I wanna just find out a little bit more about the seal of biliteracy, if I could, and maybe how that could work in conjunction with some of our English language learners 'cause I just looked it up on VDOE.

[02:21:24] I have a Word document sitting here that there's a bunch of tests. It's not about being an AP Spanish 72 or whatever it is, right? It's not just about the academic pursuits that our current students are, you know, our English-speaking students are learning, but it's also, there's other tests.

[02:21:41] There's Arabic, Chinese, French, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, goes on and on and on. There's pages of it. So I'm wondering a couple things. How are we identifying students who could be taking some of these tests? What are we offering? Because apparently there's a ton, and we can just dip into that.

[02:21:58] How do we have any students who are taking advantage of it? And I know the seal itself, if our division, because I believe it sounds like it's left up to the division to decide these things. If we go, okay, this kid passed this test or adequately showed this measure that they are proficient in another language, then the seal is available to us by us applying for it on their behalf.

[02:22:26] So I'm just curious if we're delving into that much. - Yeah, thank you, we are. This is an area we're spending a lot of time working on last year we had 213 students that benefited from those exam opportunities and that represented an increase of a hundred and twenty four percent from the year before some of the strategies that we're adding this year we're adding a third credit by examination site which is going to help an access to be able to take the assessment and we have two different assessment platforms one credit by exam and one is another third party opportunity for different languages we have added languages to that this year

[02:23:05] as well because the Prince William County community is growing in its community of multilingual participants and so we've worked closely with schools and identifying those students that are demonstrating mastery and should be referred first for support and for testing so we are taking a very aggressive approach we most definitely think bilingualism is an asset that our students that are coming to us with these abilities are a huge value added to our community so we're helping target those students to receive those

[02:23:39] credentials thank you so I will just advocate real quick on behalf Hindi that's that's one or do we do we do that or I can't say exactly okay but I - If someone could get back to me, I would love to know. - I'm in the 90%, I will absolutely follow up.

[02:23:57] - And Arabic? - For sure. All of our top languages are represented. - Okay, thank you. - We're just continuing to add languages as our population has changed. - Hindi was specifically asked, so. - I will absolutely follow up. Thanks for the questions.

[02:24:15] - Mr. Wilk? - Yeah, thank you, I have a couple questions. I'll put a timer on so this does not go too long for all of us, okay. Slide number five. So we know the states like Virginia and champion inclusive practices for special needs students of cause I very much endorse.

[02:24:32] Yet the shift of the students on the brink of VAP qualification for standard assessments SOL raises concerns, particularly with the recent changes in VAP participation criteria for those with significant cognitive disabilities. I fear those students on the bubble may struggle with their SOLs.

[02:24:50] With that chart, are we able to disaggregate data for students with IEPs taking the standard SOLs versus those students completing the VAP? - Yes, we can pull that data for you. - Excellent. - And aggregate between students with IEPs that took the SOL and those that participated in VAP.

[02:25:07] - Perfect, thank you. Slide 36. So I brought this up earlier about kind of concerns with post-secondary planning timeline, because my fear is if we initiate the process too late, students may struggle to adjust their plans, meet SAT deadlines, apply for scholarship, engage with post-secondary admission counselors.

[02:25:27] I think starting early is crucial and having well-established timeline is very important to empower our students to make the right choices. Could, Ms. Huebner, could you provide any quick insights on the recommended start and overall best practices for effective post-secondary planning?

[02:25:46] - Absolutely, we believe it starts at elementary school where you explore career paths through the Virginia Wizard. We have implemented Naviance in the middle school and conduct many activities to start that awareness around college and post-secondary planning. Additionally, there are tasks that are assigned in there that not only give kids experience but help them see the future and understand how they use the software when they become a high school student when you're getting into the more discreet tasks of that path of applying for colleges.

[02:26:16] So as you remember, we have college and career counselors now in every high school and we We have a very outlined playbook of step-by-step actions month-by-month to ensure that our students are getting information. It includes frequently visiting all of those experiences that lead to post-secondary success.

[02:26:33] We recently had our college fairs at both Freedom and Battlefield, which were well-attended, and I was personally there and saw students that were as young as sophomores in high school. So we're taking many different approaches to that, a very comprehensive timeline. Thank you for that succinct, I appreciate the summary. Okay, it's probably you, slide 42.

[02:26:50] A few months back, I encountered a gentleman in one of the churches I visit, and he expressed some frustration over the scarcity of applicants for his scholarship. Learning this, I quickly, promptly told two graduating seniors who had worked with me to apply for the scholarship.

[02:27:07] The result two weekends ago was that collectively they earned $11,000 applying for the Gospel Worship Experience Scholarship Program. Now, I mention this because I want to know, Are we using some centralized repository for all students to use when it comes to searching for scholarships?

[02:27:27] Or are we allowing the buildings to kind of manage that site-based? Because my fear is some students may not know certain ones are available if it's entered in one school versus the other. So I'm just curious how scholarships are collected and then shared to our seniors.

[02:27:43] - So as we collect information-- - By the way, that's Mr. Wilkes' best question ever. - I know, and I'm still under five minutes. So as we receive information about scholarships, it does come from a lot of different avenues. Sometimes it will come from the school where a school's been contacted by an individual.

[02:28:00] That is all funneled and channeled and entered into Naviance, where all of our students are able to access that. You'll see on some of the slides that we've been visiting, bulletin boards, different activities that we do to engage the kids around looking at those scholarships.

[02:28:16] As a matter of fact, in a couple of weeks, will be having, will recognize National Scholarship Month and engage in specific targeted activities, campaigning contests to get kids engaged to take a look at what the options are. So we do organize those in Naviance so that they're available to everyone.

[02:28:32] - Okay, so real quick, I'll follow up on that one. So like this person's scholarship or other ones that I'm aware of, is there like a submission form for them to fill out then that goes through a counselor before it's approved to submit it? 'Cause I find like a lot of times there's money available, but they just don't know who to go to to channel and funnel that money in and say, hey, here's a scholarship that our kids, you know, your kids can apply for.

[02:28:57] - Sure, they can look on the website and reach out to me. I'd be happy to funnel that in the right direction. We also receive scholarships through Spark. But really, any college and career counselor will have the information and the knowledge of how to get that to our college and career representatives who will enter it into Naviance.

[02:29:13] - Okay, excellent, okay, a couple more. One more, and I'm at under five, okay. - You keep having good ones like that. There's no time limit. - No, no, I'm trying to set an example here. Slide 53, regarding the improved retention rates among our teachers and staff, I think this is great.

[02:29:30] I'm curious if we have any anecdotal reasons behind the positive trend up. And when looking at delving deeper into the factors of climate culture, I'd like to explore the number of applicants who are teachers from neighboring divisions who are applying for positions within our system.

[02:29:48] So a general comparison over the past couple of years, I think would provide valuable insights. So three years ago, if 2000 Fairfax teachers, last year 3000, this year 4000, I think that would be very helpful. Obviously, I'm not asking you to do it right now, but I think that is something that could be beneficial.

[02:30:07] - Thanks, Mr. Wilk. In terms of anecdotal data that may exist regarding the increased retention rate, we currently you know spend more of our time doing exit interviews but this year which is the opposite side so we have plenty of data regarding exit interviews and why our employees have exited however this year we did do a launch of stay interviews and it's really in a pilot stage at this point we have posted all the resources on the launch pad as an administrator toolkit as part of our retention efforts.

[02:30:44] We did provide some PD to the principal's advisory committee as well as the toolkit with the resources necessary in order for building leaders to conduct stay interviews. We have not collected that data from a system perspective, however, I'm sure it exists at schools who have conducted stay interviews.

[02:31:05] In addition, as Ms. Hebner discussed, this year we are launching Upbeat, which is an administration of a survey with research-based questions regarding teacher retention. They really, the questions are really meant to measure the level of staff satisfaction and engagement, and once the data is received back from those interviews, building administrators will work with a coach that will help them design action plans in order to improve culture and climate and retention and engagement of their teachers.

[02:31:39] So we have about 30 schools in that pilot that will be launching the upbeat initiative this fall. And in terms of neighboring school divisions, we don't track that data, but I did talk with Mr. Macalandra who is our Director of Benefits and Retirement Services because when we hire new employees, if they are previously worked at another district, we have to transfer their VRS, okay, if they're in a Virginia school division, and so we're gonna explore whether we can pull that out of, it's called the VRS Navigator out of that system, whether that data is just, you know, once a, whether we have access it after we've made the switch from the employees,

[02:32:19] say from, you know, Loudon to Prince William, so we are gonna explore that. - Excellent, okay, under 10 minutes, thank you. - You sure, Mr. Wilk? - Feel free, brother. They're all excellent, fantastic work.

[02:32:38] We have Ms. Williams next. - Oh my, it's hard to follow that. I just wanna say overall thank you very much for this presentation. I will agree with the sentiments expressed earlier by my fellow board

members. I think this very much counters the rhetoric that we're hearing in the open public space.

[02:32:57] It's nice to have some sort of data to look at to see exactly where we are. I am interested to know, and I know this data isn't available now, but after maybe this year and going to next year, at the end of the school year, the feedback that we're receiving from the students in regards to reasonings for why they're dropping out, because I know that's information that we are currently collecting, as well as some of the challenges that our English language learners are facing.

[02:33:26] I know some of those groups overlap. I know that that's our main target right now, and we're in the process of trying to do everything that we can to support those students. So I think that finding out that information would for the board be helpful. I'd also just like to note and just state that I think this board put a lot of emphasis, thanks to Dr. Lateef, on focusing on math and science.

[02:33:49] And I think that we very clearly see these results in what was presented this evening. I think last year all we heard was math and science. And it just goes to show that when we all share the same lens and focus that we do meet our goals or at least there is notable improvement in that area.

[02:34:08] And I think that's worth taking a pause to congratulate all the hardworking staff from the Kelly Building all the way down to the teachers and our parents and families. I also would like to take a moment to congratulate the division, Dr. McDade, and all of your staff for the tremendous increase in parent engagement.

[02:34:26] The opportunities at all levels is truly amazing. as a parent myself right now of an elementary schooler I don't I don't have any other children right now in any other grades which is odd but I can sincerely tell the difference in just two years not only the amount of text message that messages that go out but at parent camps parent engagement nights title one family nights everything from food banks surveys and not just the the program at the programming that's available but the fact that it's

[02:35:04] available in multiple languages is so impactful you can I can visibly see when I walk in schools as a board member but also in my own student school the increase and and the number of parents who do not speak English who are able to actively participate in their students learning because we make that information accessible easily digestible and comprehensible for them that's so impactful as someone who grew up here in Prince William and started and I guess you could say my path to being here as a PTA president and remembering

[02:35:41] what it was like to extend the opportunity to our pet program parents who were in the building the same time as our PTO met and seeing the increase because we made a second language available to them and knowing now that that is something that we do division-wide and not just foreign languages but also sign language for our hearing impaired I mean it's just I really want to thank you and your staff for all of the hard work that they put in I've seen from just simply a few translators to sometimes the devices that did not used to work to devices that work and then on top of it we've done such a good job of hiring staff that if we have a device that doesn't

[02:36:19] work there is somebody there to speak the language I just can't tell you how impactful and meaningful that is to me as a board member but also as a parent I would like to have a little bit more information about the types of training and how we're using the lens of equity when it comes to our student disciplinary rates it's something as a board member that I have focused on my entire time I know

it's had a roller coaster sort of scale and over the years but I see that we're sort of back up on the top end and I want to be sure that That's something that we are addressing in an impactful way.

[02:36:58] I know that we are, we have more minorities now in our school division than ever, but I think that there's still some attention that needs to be focused on student disciplinary actions when it comes to our minority population.

[02:37:15] And that has always been an area of focus for me. So, Dr. Medina, I think you're gonna say something. - Just about that piece. So we've started that process, even, you'll recall, at the meeting where we presented, where Denise presented the code of behavior, we talked about looking at the fidelity of implementation of the code and norming practices across the school division.

[02:37:38] And so we started with some training at the legal conference, and that's continuing. As a matter of fact, there was just a training at the October, this week at the level meeting with all administrators, so we are continuing that throughout the year and taking a look.

[02:37:53] We've been doing audits, kind of pulling infractions and seeing how discipline is being executed across and making comparisons to see where we see some opportunities to refine practices and shore up training and looking to make sure that across the board there's better implementation of the code.

[02:38:11] So to your point about training, that is in progress. Thank you. I appreciate it. Denise, did I miss anything? DEFINITELY SEE IT WITH THE LACK OF PARENT INPUT I HAVE ABOUT NO TRESPASS BEING HANDED OUT ESPECIALLY AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL SO I KNOW THAT THERE IS SIGNIFICANT WORK BEING DONE AND THAT OUR STAFF IS IMPROVING IN THOSE AREAS BUT IT WOULDN'T BE ME IF I DIDN'T SAY SOMETHING AND I DON'T WANT TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT YOU KNOW WE'RE THERE YET IN TERMS OF IMPLEMENTATION BUT CERTAINLY THIS YEAR IT IS A BIG FOCUS ON THAT IN COMPARISON TO PRIOR YEARS AND RECOGNIZING THAT YOU KNOW WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE THAT ACROSS THE BOARD

[02:38:50] we're not seeing an infraction at one school being disciplined one way and then another school the same infraction being handled very starkly differently so we are taking a hard look at that this year thank you I appreciate that and I know coming out of the pandemic that's especially hard with all the other things that are going on because as a community we are healing and I appreciate the work that's being done with that regard and I think that's it thank you - Thank you very much.

[02:39:22] - Ms. Williams. - I'm sorry, I just one more question. I'm sorry, Ms. Jessie. If we could get an update too, I know that it's been discussed previously and we talk about preparing students to be in dual enrollment AP level classes and Ms. Huebner just said that a lot of that work begins in elementary and I know that there was a focus on algebra in this tonight's presentation, but if we could get an update or I would say more of a reminder of what other strategies we're implementing at lower-level grades so that our students are prepared, because I know, as Ms. Huebner just said, that the work does begin in elementary school.

[02:39:58] What other practices we're putting in place to ensure that students are prepared, and then what work is being done sort of on the counseling angle so that we're reaching the students and their parents to ensure that they value these courses as opportunities that are meant for them and that they are capable of enrolling in.

[02:40:17] Don't need that right now, but I think that paints a little bit fuller picture, and there's only so much that we can cover in one night, so thank you, I appreciate it. - Jessie. - Good evening, Mr. Wallerford, you didn't think you wanna get out of here without me asking some questions, right?

[02:40:39] I want to talk, because you are the expert. I've heard so much lamenting about the budget and how we're not providing teachers with the money that they need, And I, the slide, I think it's slide three or four on the demographics.

[02:41:01] Could you show me that one, Dr. Neal, to put that up?

[02:41:23] Okay. Would you explain to me and for the public to understand how we come up with this? I notice that we're still at one from the bottom, $15,755 for a teacher-approval ratio and for a per-approval cost, I'm sorry.

[02:41:47] Could you explain to me why we're still at the bottom and how do we come up, how do we, how does the budget from the Board of Supervisors and our budget, how do we come up with this figure, what are the parameters?

[02:42:04] So, first of all, Mrs. Jessie, thank you for the opportunity to speak at my last meeting. And it's a good question, right? It's a great question, right? It's a fantastic question. And in fact, all of your questions, Mrs. Jessie, have been fantastic over the years.

[02:42:23] But on this one, it is a good question. The cost per pupil is really a function of how much revenue we get. And as everybody on this board is aware, we get revenue basically from three places, from three sources. One is the county, the one you mentioned.

[02:42:40] The other is the state government. And then we get a smaller amount from the federal government. So your question is, how do we get that cost per pupil up? How do we spend more money? Well, it's simply a function of where do we get more money and what control do we actually have over that?

[02:42:58] And as a school division in Virginia, we really don't have a lot of control. We have two things that we can do. We can lobby our state government to make all kinds of changes. And some of those, like the support cap this year, was actually modified to provide us with some additional revenue as a result of the special session that just happened a month or two ago the other source big source of funding is the county and to the extent the county can generate

[02:43:31] revenue we currently have a share where we receive a little bit over 57 of that total revenue so those are the two you know those are the real two impactful ways that we can generate additional revenue or others can for us, and creates the ability for us to spend more per pupil.

[02:43:53] One other thing I'd note, and you mentioned this already, and so did Dr. Neal at the beginning of this presentation, that is we are out of the Northern Virginia localities, as measured by a variety of sources, but the Washington Area Board of Education is one.

[02:44:10] We are second to last out of about 10 localities, 9 or 10 localities in our spending. And that's even after having increases of 5%, 7%, 5% and 7% over the past four years, and putting more money in on top of that in the form of about $20 million last year and about $6 million this year.

[02:44:37] So we've spent a fair amount of money improving pay, not just for teachers, but for all staff in the school division. So there's been a real effort to increase that cost per spending, not just in salaries, but

in other places as well.

[02:44:54] I was looking at one of the comparisons of the increases for the other counties, and it seems that we increased, but all the other counties increased. Is it because, I'm looking at Arlington.

[02:45:11] arlington's revenue source is it different that's why they have a lot more money to spend on their student well the reasons other localities spend more per pupil than us is varied arlington county is one of the richer counties in the state and so their locality actually actually has to contribute more to their total school division on a per pupil basis than for example prince william does We actually get more money from the state than does Falls Church and Arlington and Fairfax and Loudoun County, those wealthier counties.

[02:45:48] So last year, in the budget last year, the Board of Supervisors gave us a great deal more money, right? That's correct. Do you recall how much money we received, the difference? I can't tell you off the top of my head what the increase in county revenue was, But I can tell you the total increase in revenue over the past two years has been $180 million going into 23, and going into 24, the increase in revenue was about $120 million.

[02:46:20] And so $301 million increased revenue over the past two fiscal years. So it's been an outstanding, from a revenue standpoint, it's been an outstanding two years where our prior years, the biggest revenue increase year over year, would have experienced is in the range of you know 50 51 52 million dollars so what dr latif you know mentioned earlier this evening it's true this this last two years really has been from a revenue standpoint very good for us thank you thank you very much thank you appreciate it for your last

[02:46:58] question thank you for all you've done for this county and thanks for putting up with our crazy questions i love your questions mrs jess thank you thank you i just want to add a couple other things tonight I have gone through here's my list of about 20 questions I asked during the two by two so I'm not going to ask them tonight but I do want to share something with you tonight I've been in this county for a very long time and everything has changed and I am tired of hearing all the lack of growth

[02:47:34] that we're having as a school division you think the sky is falling but I was year when I was title one supervisor and they gave me the money and the only thing they asked me to do was not to misspend the money they did not ask about student learning and it has changed and I wanted to just to tonight to spend my time complimenting Dr. McDade and her staff you know I had last time I had this little phrase I said this dog won't hunt and it's not about

[02:48:11] attacking other people but highlighting the actual real things that's happening and one of the things I do a lot of research I've been a national researcher and I know that basically they say that strategic plans don't work except this strategic plan seems to work because your staff Dr. McDade you guys have actualized it it's reflected in how you present the data to us is research-based for example daytime tutoring during the day is aligned with

[02:48:44] the research not after-school tutoring we are in fact on this this report the way we report one school and one school division here spends twenty thousand dollars almost on their performance but we outperform them now I look at several sources of data one of which is the way we report I'd look at that I look at the VDEOE data but my favorite source of data is not Nietzsche is not great school it is school digger because school digger shows you the data and I

[02:49:21] want to share tonight with what we're doing as a school division according to school digger which looks at standard scores we're outperforming Stafford we're outperforming Spotsylvania we're outperforming Montgomery County we're outperforming Fairfax will rank 40 out of 211 schools so we're in the top 19 percent and Alexander is in the hundred is a hundred out of 211 so I want to know want you to know that I appreciate everything you've done and when I came here I asked the four questions which are research-based questions are children learning now that they've been taught are they learning how do you know

[02:49:59] what you're gonna do about those who didn't learn you've got this in all your data and what about those who already know so those slides where you showed the the difference in students at the higher performing levels was really important and you have actually embraced the fact that we're not perfect but you have isolated and indicated where we need to improve so I'm very pleased so with that is Laurie where is Laurie Laurie supposed to be my Laurie Laurie

[02:50:30] Williams asked her to come okay Lori asked Lori to come in she's failing her job so you guys know that I run around and give these gratitude cups to everyone not to everyone I'm very selective I give them to teachers and so tonight I'd like to give the first gratitude cup to this staff so I'm asking all of dr. McDade staff blue one dr. McDade staff please stand and I started

[02:51:08] given this week I gave a rotational cup and the rotational cup means you get a cup and you pass it on. So for the staff you have a blue and white cup that I'd like for it to be rotated. Now who's going to rotate this cup Dr. McDade? Who do you think should start? Should start with the cup?

[02:51:30] Yeah. Do I have to pick? Oh John and then John will have to pass it along on his date of retirement. So let's start with John Wallingford. John Wallingford, you're going to pass the cup? My gosh, isn't that wonderful?

[02:51:48] Yeah, thank you very much for all that you've done. Please pass it along.

[02:52:03] Thank you. Now I have a second cup for Dr. McDade, and I actually bought this cup, and I love the cup so much that I want to keep it, but I didn't. So I think it's a beautiful cup, and to you, for all that you've done in this system, and for all that you are going to do,

[02:52:23] i'd like it's a beautiful cup i think please come over and in closing i just want to say that this school division is doing well and under dr mckday's leadership and the staff and i know she's working you to death i don't know if you can drink from this cup because you don't have time she doesn't either but i appreciate everything that you've done for the kids in this county i've been here

[02:53:03] a long time and i know that we never got this kind of comprehensive data and especially quarterly data and with that I know I've gone over my five minutes but I think it was worth it thank you thank you Miss Jessie thank you so much I think Miss Wall is next thank you yes amazing I love talking about this topic I am glad that

[02:53:35] we have this on our agenda I value data because of what it can tell us for how we can help students achieve so I'm really thankful for the opportunity to talk about this tonight I understand that for some this is a stressful topic not everybody loves to see you know where we're falling short most of us love to see where we're exceeding our expectations but I do feel that it is the most important work that we're doing and at the end of the day it's what

[02:54:11] matters most it is the core of why we are here and why every single person has a job here in Prince William County Schools is to help children succeed so it is my belief that all children can and will learn and that they deserve they all deserve quality teachers and because of that I'm encouraged by in particular slide 44 and slide 57 the ones that say you know next steps now that we see the data and where we are you know what what are the next what are the next steps and and I'm encouraged by the real concrete, it looks like we're going to 44, educational strategies that we have here.

[02:54:51] In particular, I wanted to highlight the on-time graduation task force. I think that's really great. I think the expansion of equal opportunity schools to all 13 high schools is really great. Specifically, I have a question on that. I believe it was seven or eight schools. I don't remember exactly how many schools were in our pilot of this.

[02:55:09] Do we, do we? - Are you referring to EOS? - EOS. - So with this new year, all 13, isn't that correct, Dr. Brown? - Yes. - So everyone, the first year-- - This year, everybody. - The first year was-- - 11. - Yep, and so now we're in the full-- - Two more.

[02:55:26] - So with the EOS opportunity, equal opportunity schools, I love that initiative because it's, the point is to expand the number of kids who are willing to take rigorous classes, correct? and willing to get into some advanced classes and push themselves and increase the rigor in their schedule.

[02:55:46] And I wanted to ask, have we seen good results from that? And we can be general, 'cause I know I'm asking. - Are you saying, so we won't really have result, this will be the first year-- - Of all of our high schools. - So that we can actually get some results. Now what we are seeing is that we have increased the number of students.

[02:56:06] So remember last year we had that target number of students to enroll, and so we have now seen students enroll in advanced coursework and the end of the year will provide a better picture of how they're faring with both grades as well as earning the early college credential so the end of the year will be a better telling sign of whether or not because we don't want them to just enroll we want them to actually be successful and earn the early college credential as well so we'll have more of that data because last year was really an onboarding year and so what we should have more data available at the end of the year with the first

[02:56:42] kind of sign of results is there anything you want to add dr. Brown nope I think you've got it okay excellent because you know I especially like to see those kinds of efforts because I think when we challenge kids and we give them really rigorous curriculum but we also support them then I think they can succeed I had a question about scholarships kind of building after off of what mr. Wilk was saying I know when I've had so I've had three kids go through the process of trying to you know graduate and apply for scholarships

[02:57:10] and sometimes it is really hard to find good scholarships that your kids qualify for and a lot of times that information is in Naviance and other places where the parents are trying to work with the kids and the kids are maybe resistant. They don't want to do it. They have heavy classes or whatever and they don't really care. They don't want to look or you kind of have this tug of war sometimes between parents and kids where parents want kids to apply and find the scholarships but parents don't have access to Naviance.

[02:57:40] at least I don't think I did, but it is a particular challenge. I wonder if there is a way we can help parents help kids with that process because applying for college can be overwhelming and applying for scholarships can also be overwhelming for kids.

[02:58:01] So I know we can't do everything. We are amazing. We do a lot of amazing things, but that is a particular challenge that I've experienced and I've seen other families struggle with it as well. trying to work with those high school seniors and get that information into their hands and get them motivated to do it I don't know what my question exactly is I'm so sorry well I think I can speak to that what strategies do you have to centralize or allow us access I mean if we're gonna go for 260 yeah we're gonna all have to pitch in right it can't be something that we're all looking here

[02:58:38] and therefore so I guess miss wall might be asking what are we doing for Sure. It is an overwhelming time as the parent of two adult children. I don't have any more. I remember that as being a very stressful time. So what we have done is help kids access that process earlier. Even this summer, we were having workshops and information sessions to help kids get a head start on the things that would be needed for the application process. With a common app at our college fair this past week, we had sessions to help parents. Kids could come with their parents so I believe it's truly a mindset so we've made the information more accessible we're creating that mindset that it is possible we are

[02:59:16] featuring you've probably seen them we have the scholarship spotlights that come through in our scoop we publicize those in the school buildings lots of posters but really helping kids believe that the scholarship is actually attainable by celebrating those kids who have achieved those scholarships and reflecting back and sharing on that so there are a lot of different things that we can do in making the process more manageable and allowing more time then for students to seek those scholarships as the next step.

[02:59:41] Okay, that sounds great and I hope we can make it easier for parents and kids to find those scholarships. I had a question about, I mean obviously the data is showing that our Hispanic students and our English language learners are areas where we can really focus and target some interventions, not interventions, but supports.

[03:00:01] And so looking at that data, are we attempting to puzzle out the particular reasons for the challenges that our Hispanic students and our English language students in particular are having because it is a very noticeable area and I feel like there's probably some qualitative data there too.

[03:00:29] We have the quantitative data, the numbers and everything else, but the qualitative data, are we finding that what are some of the root causes and maybe some of I know we some of the things that we have in here are designed probably to attack the problem yeah dr. Neal and I have actually recently had extensive conversations on this topic and one of the first things we're doing is splitting out our Hispanic data so that we are seeing the performance data of our Hispanic students who are English language learners and those aren't because those issues can be conflated often and I ran some data just this

[03:01:08] morning and it told an interesting picture and one of the SOLs our student achievement data for our Hispanic students who are non L was 75% and our L was 25% so already the issue was separated and allowed us to look deeper so we're doing that work as we speak I literally just learned how to do it this morning and so working with Dr. Neal on those analysis he and I have already talked about revisiting all this data from that lens because we also don't want to expend energy when we're not accurate on the problem right so it's super important for us to deeply understand the problem first as we're

[03:01:46] looking at our EL data for dropouts that's that's a really great example of this work we have 328 kids who last year in the class of 2023 who were EL dropouts. And so I've told the team I want to know what they had for breakfast every day. I want to know every single thing there is to know about these students. One of the first indicators that came up is the vast majority of those dropouts were August dropouts, meaning non-enrolled, which was a different narrative than what we were thinking in terms of at the end of the

[03:02:19] school year. And so working closely on where the numbers tell us, it does tell a story I love qualitative data too and interviews and questions and and meetings with students but there's more the quantitative data can tell us also we're looking at the four-year pattern rate of students and when they when they drop out so oftentimes those dropouts actually precede the senior year their their ninth grade dropouts 10th grade they're just revealed in the data in their senior year so now we're able to look at those live along the way so we've already

[03:02:58] worked with our high schools on students that withdrew prior to this year that may not have been on their radar and that's where that re-engagement process comes in we've looked at the english language level of our students and as you can imagine the level one english acquisition students are a pretty high population but we're also super stagnant in our level three students so we're not seeing the growth in that space that we want to see we are seeing increased exclusionary discipline in our English language students we've highlighted that data for our schools and our level associates and having

[03:03:34] those discussions on how these things correlate Denise Huebner's discussion on sense of belonging importance and access and feeling community is really important so helping our schools navigate what I think is a pretty awesome new normal for Prince William County schools and and helping them look at creating that sense of belonging a little bit differently those story tells so we are digging deeply into literally the month of withdrawal the time span the number of credits for example out of last year's dropouts during the school We are not just seniors.

[03:04:13] Their average span in the system was four to six months. So that's another story too. And so we are leaving no stone unturned to really understand the picture, understand where the vast majority of our students are not succeeding, and how we can provide way more support to those schools that have a higher number of those students.

[03:04:35] And so we've added graduation coaches in just those three schools. added additional resources and my hopes with the Global Welcome Center will provide more interview opportunities because they're really having meaningful one-on-one and have an opportunity to work with families most often in their native language. That is all very encouraging and I appreciate all of the efforts of you and your staff and everybody who's looking at this challenge because at the end of the day I really do you know believe that every child can learn we just need to figure out how we can keep them in the system of in the school and

[03:05:15] give them the supports that they need so that they can be successful um i have no further questions thank you miss jackson all right um thank you i appreciate the time taking to put the data together um i appreciate the transparency and the increase in difficult conversations some of these gaps are historical and change comes from these discussions and all the work that staff is put in i also appreciate the research-based initiatives have been put in place and then tracking to make sure

[03:05:47] it's implemented with fidelity the two by twos um were helpful um because some of my questions were included in the presentation so i appreciate adding the explanation for pals and um hmh

so and some of my questions were already kind of asked by other board members this it's been a great evening of questions so i'm just going to piggyback on the different questions And so my part will be quick.

[03:06:17] To reiterate Ms. Zagopoi's question about the CEO of biliteracy, I have one question and then one thing I'd like to advocate for. So one is, I can't recall, I know I asked this during the strategic plan, but is ASL included as a CEO of biliteracy?

[03:06:36] Yes. Okay. And then the other thing I just would like to advocate for is introducing the CEO of biliteracy, which you might already be doing. In middle school, when people start taking high school level language classes and that possibly considering including the seal by literacy on their diploma standards that people hand out in IEP meetings for transition plans, you know, when you reach in middle school, students participate and start planning for transitions.

[03:07:06] I think including the seal by literacy, if possible, on the transition, the diploma options would be a great way of advertising. Love it. Thank you. So, then I also, my next question was on VAP and SOL scores, so I just want to reiterate my support for breaking down that data for future discussions.

[03:07:32] And then I had a question about, you know, how we were addressing the ELL dropout rates, and you already kind of addressed it with breaking down the Hispanic subgroup into different

[03:07:49] Like ELL versus non-ELL, and you kind of already hit on this as regards to level one, level two, level three, but I just want to just, I'm not in support of adding more tests or adding more work for staff, but I would like to see at some point, like, I just want to advocate for more discussion about WIDA scores being included, because it is a measure of comprehension, and we're looking at PALS and HMAs.

[03:08:22] they're taking WIDA so it would be nice to include it that's it and I again appreciate everything so I guess I is it possible to consider WIDA sports yes ma'am we can we can take a look at that thank you thank you Ms. Jackson hope you feel better uh Fernanda Marante thank you um I have a question about how we're addressing the big percentages like the difference between um Hispanic and EL

[03:09:02] students and the rest of the student body especially with dropout rates are we reaching out or talking to their families and I know especially for EL students a lot of them if not most might be immigrant students and I can speak about that myself my first year in an American education system was sophomore year and everything was very different and it was very helpful to have staff explained to me and my family how to go about like taking classes and graduation

[03:09:38] requirements and all that stuff so is there a process that we follow with that or is it kind of just like if it happens it happens and if if it doesn't then it just gets lost thank you Fernanda for asking that question for sharing your own journey it's essential and so I'm gonna give you two answers one yes we do have a process for that. Again we work really closely with our translation team and the Global Welcome Center in particular. However I will certainly say it's insufficient and so it's definitely an area that we need to target better

[03:10:18] because most definitely all families wants a great education for their children and they want to be involved in their children's education and if we aren't taking the steps to talk about what that's like, how it's different, and and how we encourage that level of involvement and our parents of course won't know because many of the environments that people come from have very different expectations and different standards.

[03:10:43] So it is important for us to be very explicit, very focused and very intentional about that work. We have work to do. So we are definitely analyzing every aspect of that experience for our students and that's one of the ways that we are currently insufficient but we will target.

[03:11:01] I really appreciate you bringing that up. - Is there anything that you think us as students that are already familiar with the system can do to help English language learners and overall all the dropout specific minorities that have the highest dropout rates?

[03:11:26] - In particular our English language learners and yes, thank you for asking that question. We just had a wonderful presentation for our principals with an esteemed professor, is really an expert in that field. She presented a lot of research and data that talked about the importance of those peer-to-peer interactions and interviews from countless of students that talked about what helped to bring about that sense of belonging.

[03:11:51] So our students play a really big role in that and can really help a student feel a part of the school community and give their peers something to look forward to come to school and so many many students would probably say they're most excited to go to school to see their friends and do lunch and those things and that's where you guys have a leg up way over the adults and so i would love to talk to you more and talk about ways we can mobilize our student communities particularly in those schools that have large numbers well even if it's one child

[03:12:28] right how we can create a greater sense of belonging so yes we want your help on that we may be able to this may be a good idea to start with the Student Senate and work with them and then we do have some schools that do have some great peer-to-peer programs one particular that comes to mind is at Osborne Park so we could we can replicate some of that but I think starting with the Student Senate so maybe Dr. Sullivan that's where you can and maybe present to the student senate and get some ideas.

[03:13:01] - Perfect, yes, thank you. Thank you, Fernanda. - Fernanda, thank you. Your perspective is critical as you have a window to this world that many of us don't and didn't and need to know more about. Ms. Wall has one last question and then I'll wrap up.

[03:13:18] - My last question was kind of going back to the cost per pupil chart or table, which I think was on page four. know we have had a lot of outstanding increased revenues and we've increased our cost per pupil and so has everybody else because other other divisions have also had the same windfall of revenue so to speak but I do remember from past years through you know when I was in law school and took an education law class we spent a lot of time discussing the relationship between cost per pupil and

[03:13:56] student achievement and I know sometimes it's sometimes there's a correlation or causation but sometimes there's just a correlation sometimes there are other causes and for instance in Prince William County even though we are relatively at the bottom with our rich neighbors we we if we compare ourselves to our poor neighbors we were higher but we managed to achieve nonetheless like Miss Jessie was saying according to school digger we were doing quite well with the dollars that we have per pupil which I think is a is a point that needs to be made you know student achievement as measured objectively by test scores

[03:14:34] graduation rates college readiness college persistence and so forth may or may not really correlate directly with cost per pupil the cost per pupil in my mind is a function of tax revenues that come from the state and local governments tax rates right and some federal dollars and some other other things

and then divided by isn't it basically how much money you take in divided by the number of students that you have essentially and so you know if we're gonna look at cost per pupil and equate it with student success I don't think necessarily I guess my point is I don't necessarily think that there's a

[03:15:11] direct causal relationship because we are a case in point we are relatively poor compared to our rich neighbors and yet we we achieve at quite high levels nonetheless and anyway um do you have anything to add to insight on to that point of discussion or I can just let it be a comment as well if anybody wants do you have any thoughts on cost per pupil correlation to student success I mean certainly we know that with more dollars we could have a lot more resources in our schools especially schools that may have lower enrollment

[03:15:51] and so you know they are unable to sometimes offer some of the programming that you know and I'm not I'm not just talking about the core programming you know math and science and reading and social science just overall we know that students who participate in you know fine and performing arts and extracurricular activities and robotics and all of the the experiences that make up a really robust educational experience you know all of those things come into place so certainly I am for you know more funding for our schools

[03:16:27] and for our students because it just would allow schools to do more than just the basic needs that are met in the classroom or basic staffing models for you know core classes and sometimes not having the ability to secure more tutors not having the ability to secure specialists that support those kinds of things are important and we do see that when you do have more investments students do you know fare better than if you if you have less so there's no argument there and I think that there's there's a full body of literature that supports that notion so certainly it's something that we're always looking to

[03:17:07] improve upon it's hard like mr. Wallingford talked about in terms of as a school division we don't we don't control revenue but certainly I'm always an advocate for us having more and yes and I think dr. Brown can speak a little bit to this too because that's one of the reasons that we have the equitable equitable budgeting task force and that's something that she and mr.

[03:17:30] Wallingford are exploring right now which is resource equity and it there's and she can talk to the research I don't know if you want to share anything dr. Brown here but I know you shared a wealth of research with the budgeting task force around the fact that resource equity does matter and it does have a positive there is a causal relationship between you know improve student achievement and the amount of investments that we're making in our schools that goes beyond the classroom to even include infrastructure right to include our facilities so I don't know if it's hard to put you on the spot but I know you've done a lot of research around this and I know that this was something that when

[03:18:07] we launched the budget task force you shared a wealth of research and data with the budget task force around the need for stronger resource equity right and so I won't say much because you've captured it very well but I will add that there is strong empirical evidence to support the strategic investments and increased dollars over time do have a direct impact on student achievement for the very reasons that Dr. McDade said across 10 evidence-based dimensions or areas within resource equity,

[03:18:40] which is a key domain of our DEI framework. - Okay, thank you very much. Well listen, the presentation was great. I think, you know, there weren't that many questions on special ed this week because we spent quite a bit of time at the last meeting on special ed.

[03:19:00] So thank you, Dr. Ryer. I think it's really important for the public to know we have taken our most important topics very seriously as we have launched the school year. Mr. Wilk, I was at the college fair as well. I know Dr. or Ms. Huebner said she saw, maybe a sophomore there, I saw middle schoolers there.

[03:19:18] I went to both of them. So that team who did the college fair N.H. Shaver, your counselors, all of your college and career counselors, excellent job. It was outstanding and it was just so well run. And I don't think this board would wanna give you any indication that we don't support counseling and we're interested in continuing to support it at the highest levels we can if that's what's necessary.

[03:19:43] So I want you to know that. I am concerned about the bullying at middle schools. I mean, when I get emails on bullying, it really is at that middle school level. That's where I'm seeing and hearing a lot of it. And I'm not a big fan of middle schools.

[03:19:59] You know, let me be clear. Like I think middle schools in America where we, we somehow decide that we're gonna just blame everything on kids and their hormones and stuff. And we sort of, I don't know, we throw them into this place. And I just feel like they leave fifth grade and everyone's happy and they go to middle school and something just happens.

[03:20:17] And I really believe we can do more at middle school, whether it's with counseling, whether it's with scheduling, whether it's with curriculum, whether it's with homework. I mean, I really do think, and I say this just asking that we make a commitment to making sure that we're doing the best we can in middle schools for our kids.

[03:20:37] And I just, that's where I get my highest number of emails on bullying, is at the middle school level. I don't think you have an answer. I don't know if you have an answer, but. - I don't, other than yes, middle school, it's that developmental piece where kids are changing and sometimes it's not self-regulating, but I just want to reassure you that we have already had extensive training this year on bullying and we've crafted a new regulation.

[03:21:02] We are in compliance with what the state says about reporting and really encouraging peers to think about their actions through our counseling lessons and just day-to-day kindness and interactions. We have to treat one another with respect and kindness regardless of the situation. And so your voice is heard and we will work on that.

[03:21:19] - Yeah, okay, great, thank you. and I don't wanna, you know, spend a lot of time on that. And then back to scholarship dollars. I mean, I do, I have seen just a tremendous improvement over the last few years on emails coming from counselors with levels of resources. And I just, I hope that I'm not the only one seeing them at our schools.

[03:21:37] So, you know, I think if we have best, if we have examples of best practices, it's gotta be shared. And I would even encourage you to mandate the best practice. meaning if we're seeing certain counselors, certain schools sending out better quality information packets about scholarship dollars, resources, links, this, that, on a regular basis, I mean, I think we have to model, our schools all have to model that, right?

[03:22:06] We can't just do that on site-based management. I mean, I really think, you know, if we can have a central repository and a commitment, you know, 'cause I'm the tiger dad, tiger mom, I don't know what happened to Wall, I think we have access to my kids' Naviance. I mean, we're looking at it all the time. But it, you know, and so I do think that is critical.

[03:22:25] And so whatever you need there support-wise, I think this board would throw it your way. You know, I think it's really important. - Thank you. And Dr. Lateef, just so you're aware, you will see standardized practices across the division. This is the first year that we have implemented our K-12 playbook for counselors, including our college and career counselors.

[03:22:43] And so we are sharing best practices, highlighting at monthly meetings, practices that are reaping good results and you you see them on the slides here the pictures those are examples of what we're doing so we are we are working on that yeah no I really appreciate it because I've seen some amazing stuff come and in already with with results and I think you know mr. Wilk brings up a good example I mean I think all of us as parents have had that experience where we see the scholarship somebody wins we go to the award ceremony and there's all these scholarships people are winning we're like we didn't even know we could apply for that one right like we qualify for that we didn't even know that one existed and they're naming all these ones and and you know you look across the

[03:23:23] room of parents and they're like I didn't know I didn't know right and so I just think we can do a better job and we want you to hit that to 290 324 50 million what was it oh I see 260 way off 260 target right so so whatever we can do. I just think it's so important. And parents do appreciate it. I mean, look, parents appreciate it. And, you know, looking at all the different scholarships available, you don't have to be number one to win these, right? Like, there's so many different ones. We're like, oh, are you interested in IT? Are you interested in art? Are you interested in, you know, like, there's so many

[03:24:03] different ones. And it is overwhelming, as you point out, Ms. Huebner. I mean, it really is. But we can do so much. I mean, I told you the other day a great example of a link that we got from our school about the Virginia Department of Health created a task force advisory council for students from across the commonwealth.

[03:24:22] Many students applied from our county and I think a number of students got it, right? It was like, I would not have seen it otherwise if our school, and so I can't tell you how much this stuff really means. And the work you're doing is so important. I mean, I just, I mean, I don't know how to say it any more than that, but it is so important.

[03:24:41] and it does make a difference in the lives of our children. And I can't thank you guys enough. So anyways, I've talked too much and we're gonna move on to the next agenda item. Thank you, Ms. Huebner, thank you guys. Great work team, I really appreciate it. Dr. McDade, that I think includes superintendent's time?

[03:24:57] - Yes, it does. - That was a long one. Okay, we are moving to, what do we have next? Do we have something next or are we done? Okay, is there any committee updates? Ms. Wall, update on safe schools. - Yes, so I have an update on Safe Schools Advisory Council.

[03:25:14] There was a meeting held in April, on April 24th, so I'll ask Ms. Zargarpur to talk just a little bit about that one, and then I'll cover just briefly what Safe Schools did in our meeting on Monday night.

[03:25:31] - Thank you, Ms. Wall. So Safe Schools meets once a month throughout the year, and there is a moment in the beginning if the citizens wanna come and make comments, they can. They can bring citizen comment time there, too. At this particular meeting, there were no citizens making any comments, but the big presentation that evening was about the threat assessment process by Dr. Robinson.

[03:25:52] And I just wanted to make sure that the public understands if you look at our website and you just search for threat assessment, there's a whole page under student management and alternative programs. So you can get information there about threat assessments, different pieces of information, links that'll take you to get you other information.

[03:26:09] So that was kind of part of the presentation. We received recommendations for different, you know, issues and topics under safety in our schools. So there were recommendations for the superintendent for the yearly report. And we talked a little bit about membership.

[03:26:26] And Vern Bach is our facilitator. So we're looking forward to seeing him this year again. So, Ms. Wall, would you like to talk about this week's meeting? Yes, thank you. So the Safe Schools Advisory Council met on Monday, October 16th.

[03:26:42] And the purpose of the Safe Schools Advisory, I'll just read this because I think it's helpful to know, the council supports student staff and school safety through discussions on policy questions and collaboration with various stakeholders. And it strengthens the relationship between PWCS, government agencies and the community on safety matters with established guidelines, including auditing and safety related reports.

[03:27:06] And so Mr. Bach is our new facilitator this year. So welcome to him in our meeting. it was his first meeting, Ms. Huebner was our facilitator last year and thank you to her for her extra time and attention to the council. The meeting held on Monday, we held officer elections, we approved our minutes.

[03:27:25] We also were treated to a beginning of the year safety and security update by Mr. Ron Crow, which was very comprehensive and very impressive. And a lot of the information can be found in a security, similar to a security update that we received last spring, believe here in a school board meeting because i will say one thing that we have really done in the last two years as a school division and also on this committee is to elevate the importance of physical safety and there is a laundry list of really impressive things that we have done to

[03:28:02] increase safety at our schools and within our schools not just outside of our schools but within our schools as well and so that was a really good presentation and a good meeting introduction because there are a number of new members on the council this year and so that was I think that was part of it is to get everybody kind of see what we have done up to speed with what we have done and what we still what we still need to do I'm also there was a discussion about as a as a an extension of its school board established council so FOIA requirements that apply to the school board also apply to that council so we

[03:28:40] also receive some education on that and that was provided by our assistant division counsel Eric Carlson Landy so thank you to him for coming in and talking to the board about the importance of being a government body and and our obligations under freedom of information laws so with that we adjourned and it was it was it was a great meeting and a good start to the - Thank you, Ms. Wall.

[03:29:08] Moving on to board matters tonight, we'll start with Ms. Zargarpur. - Oh gosh, thank you, Dr. Lateef. So it's been busy, busy weeks with finishing up back to school nights. I got to go to several concerts.

[03:29:23] I went to see O.P.'s choral concert and their strings concert. I'm very sorry I missed the band concert. Had a vet appointment for my kitty cat. Got to do the coin toss at the Hilton football game. I'm looking forward to Friday going to Osborne Park. is my 35th class reunion so I will be there hopefully recognizing people I'm sure we look exactly the same I feel like I need to correct the record though from

this evening as a music teacher in a neighboring district there are some things that I do wish to see in this school division but I do not receive stipends for my job I'm about to embark on our all-county chorus rehearsals I

[03:30:02] don't get money for that I don't get paid for the day that the actual festival is I don't get paid for the extra meetings and it would be nice to be honest it would be very nice to receive stipend so I do support those things I do also think that we need to know what positions people have as teachers and supporting staff and extra things that they're required to do so I'm not against that at all but I want to make sure people understand I don't we know I'm not in a position that does receive stipends however our middle school music teachers do in in Fairfax County now there's a difference between that job there and the job here in Prince William our middle schools are

[03:30:41] sixth seventh and eighth grade unlike Fairfax County and in six seventh and eighth grade here we require our kids to take a music class in both sixth and seventh grade that's not the same in Fairfax County Fairfax middle school teachers who are who are music teachers have to recruit for their jobs so not all those positions are full-time it can be very difficult they might be working between two or even three different schools.

[03:31:03] So it's a little bit different position and I just want people to just understand it's a different county and I do support stipends for our staff. If you're doing extra things for our kids, for sure, we wanna make sure that you're compensated for it. Wanna make sure you get home to your own families, wanna make sure that you have time to do your planning and spend time having a work-life balance, of course.

[03:31:23] I'm looking forward to the game on Friday at OP. Next week, I hope to be meeting with a few more parents who have requested some meetings and some students. In fact, there was a student who came here, Catalea from, I believe it was, forgot the elementary, which elementary school, Kyle Wilson.

[03:31:41] She is interested in having recess in middle school. So she wanted to have a further discussion. I can't wait to meet with her to hear a little bit more about that. I hope everyone has a great week. Thank you.

[03:31:56] - Ms. William. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I like this little change up of order. First, we'd like to start by congratulating Kilby again for receiving a 2023 Healthiest Schools designation and for seven categories, believe they led the pack.

[03:32:13] I'm always very proud of all of my Title I schools. They just do amazing things. And that was also reflected tonight in our State of the Schools report. Just very proud to be their representative. This past weekend, I was able to attend the Title I Family Camp, which is one of my favorite activities every year.

[03:32:32] It was absolutely packed. There were sessions for adults, parents, everything from social-emotional learning, advocating and supporting your student, specialty and gifted programs, after-school activities and sports, and my personal favorite this year was the Apple adaptive technology session.

[03:32:51] I learned so much, and I'm pretty technologically fluent, but I believe there's always something to learn, and it really was amazing and an impactful session. also enjoyed getting a sneak peek into the kids camp they had a magician who would perform shows they also got the opportunity to play with robotics and do some coding and the robots for the little round spheres it was just amazing and I appreciate the community collaboration from all of the different community groups and resources that

were available for adults that line the hallways I want to spend a spent send a special shout out to all of the staff

[03:33:29] that made that day possible I know that there's a tremendous amount of work that goes into that half-day program it's just chocked full of information resources and fun and also to the junior ROTC cadets that came to help out throughout the day for the programming next up earlier this week I had the opportunity to visit TOTOS market the location off River Ridge Boulevard I just want to thank mr. Carlos Castro who's the owner of TOTOS for partnering with the school division to expand transition programs for our special education students.

[03:34:04] The work that is being done between the school division and our community partners to ensure that our special needs students have the opportunity to go out in the world prepared with some workforce skills already in place. And I know the sense of relief as a parent that that must bring is just an amazing opportunity and I look forward to seeing this program continue to expand.

[03:34:27] I lastly wanna, well, the 32 seconds I have left, I just wanna welcome the new cohort of student learners to the Human Rights Commission. They are students from all over Prince William County, and I especially wanna give a shout out to Dr. McDade for being the keynote speaker this year. Look forward to attending Freedom High School's homecoming this weekend.

[03:34:45] As a graduate of Whitbrook Senior High School, I was at Miss Jessie's school, which is also mine, for their homecoming, but more importantly, to celebrate the life of Coach Davis and participate in the memorial service. There's an absolutely amazing plaque and a tree that will forever live on at Woodbridge Senior High School.

[03:35:03] He was so impactful to so many lives of the students who were there, mine especially, and so it was just a really nice opportunity to be there. And I just wrap up by saying I'm sorry for all the events that I missed while I was ill, but I look forward to attending more in the future. Thank you. - Ms. Jeff.

[03:35:20] - Good evening, I hope I'm close enough to the mic. I think I have a slide, could you put it up please? - Ha, this is going to be the new Occoquan Elementary School.

[03:35:36] It is gorgeous. And it is a net zero school. And we had a presentation on Tuesday evening, I think it was. And we got a snapshot on Tuesday. I think we're planning to show at the school board on the first week in November, am I right?

[03:35:57] Yeah, okay. So I'm asking Mr. Verne, Mr. Bach please be the presenter. I love your presentations because you really know elementary schools and you know the aspect of the school is that it is a, you notice, you can't say that at the beginning, but the tribes.

[03:36:18] I wanna talk a little bit about Occoquan Elementary. It's a series, my series is called This dog won't hunt, and Occoquan Elementary, in US News and World Report, is ranked, number is 93% of the schools scored at or above proficiency level in math, and its overall score is 93 out of 100, and it is a Title I school.

[03:36:48] So I gave a cup to that school, I think as a second slide. This is, wow, I look awfully dark. it's not a great photo but this is Catlin Farrell and we started I started this rotational cup because the schools on their own decide to rotate the cup around so this is a rotational cup I gave two cups to schools have two

schools that are 90 90 90 math reading and science and they were 90 90 in reading and math and so I gave this cup to her and I want to read their school digger

[03:37:26] scores. Occoquan Elementary ranks better than 68.4% of elementary schools in the state of Virginia and is 26 out of 64 elementary schools in Prince William County. I just want you guys to know that it's not just my schools. I would dare you guys to go to SchoolDigger and look up your schools and you're going to find that many of our schools are scoring much higher than we're given credit for.

[03:37:56] for so with that i want to say thank you i also wanted to say for the woodbridge high school homecoming it wasn't a good homecoming game because your team i think the last i left when i left was 69 62 nothing i don't think we got any scores i want to thank the staff for recognizing me and the families parents who care for the stadium and for the track that we were able to to get there and for the gym.

[03:38:26] Thank you very much. - Mr. Wilson, I'm debating about something nice to say, don't say it at all for correcting records tonight. So I'm gonna move on from that. Couple highlights from the last couple weeks.

[03:38:44] On October 5th, I did my last two back to school nights, Washington Reed and Ashland. So I did all 15 schools, one traditional and one pre-K program. It worked out this year. The schedule was much better and I was able to actually hit them the way it was divided, so it was great.

[03:39:04] On the 10th, I was able to attend a parent presentation of Rachel's challenge. It's a program we've been doing for a while. It's all about the story and what occurred at the horrific acts of the Columbine massacre back in 1999.

[03:39:22] And the story of Rachel is a story of passing on kindness. She was the first victim of the event. And it's a great program being implemented in many of our middle schools. It's been around for a while. When I was a teacher, we were doing it at Gainesville. The 12th, I attended the Covington Harper PTO meeting.

[03:39:40] I also went later that night and spoke to a group of Cub Scouts for one of their badges. On the 13th, I attended the Forest Park football game. And then last night, I was able to go to the Triangle Book Fair and Family Night.

[03:39:56] From there, I went to spoke to another group of Boy Scouts in Montclair Elementary and then ended the night at the Forest Park Horus Concert. So with my time remaining, I yielded to Lily. I'm just kidding.

[03:40:11] - Miss Wall. - You can yield it to me if you want. I often need it. I'm gonna do something a little different. I'm not gonna talk about places I've been, but just some things that have been on my mind. Red Ribbon Week is coming up on October 23rd through the 31st.

[03:40:29] That week began in the 1980s to highlight the dangers of use and abuse of prescription and illegal drugs. I don't think that there's a family out there that hasn't been impacted by illegal drugs or alcohol abuse in some way. I know my own family has been impacted.

[03:40:47] Everybody I know has at some point somebody they know that has been impacted by this. Please, families, talk with your children. Don't just assume that they're just not going to do anything or be exposed to anything wrong or harmful, they will. And help them understand why they should avoid the use and abuse of drugs and get help if needed.

[03:41:09] The month of October is Dyslexia Awareness Month also, and I'm encouraged by the efforts to improve not only the identification of dyslexia, but also efforts to improve educational supports for children who are experiencing dyslexia. I want to recognize the efforts of parents, teachers, reading specialists and other professionals who assist children with dyslexia and related learning disabilities.

[03:41:34] Thank you for what you do. You are so very important to each of the children who are struggling with these learning disabilities. October is also Bullying Prevention Month, bullying, harassment, discrimination, whatever form it may take, be it verbal, physical, online harassment or bullying, it's a serious problem. We who are connected with children in schools, we need to make continued effort to address bullying and harassment of all kinds so that all of our students can learn in a safe, positive and supportive environment. It

[03:42:11] begins with each one of us, I believe, parents and educators and community members to lead by example in this really important realm and on that note the tactics that have been used to pressure and shame the board on the progress of collective bargaining have been relentless however in my observation the tactics are not having their desired effect rather it is serving to alienate parents staff and community members who otherwise are in support of collective bargaining. And for those who were not initially in support, those pressure

[03:42:49] tactics are evidence for why the effort was resisted and validate the warnings that were given. The teachers union, through great effort last year, won their seat at the bargaining table. Having won that seat, I wish to point out where that table is. As has been the case all along, the union negotiates with the school division, not with the board. And that negotiation happens at the negotiation table, not in the boardroom. I will close by saying thank you to everyone who is working so hard to help children learn. I acknowledge your

[03:43:26] efforts, I appreciate your dedication, your time, your commitment to helping educate the children of Prince William County. We value you and you belong here. So thanks everyone and have a great night. Okay, thank you. Just to remind everyone, so it was a great week, two amazing college fairs, one at Freedom, one at Battlefield, extremely well attended.

[03:43:51] I mean, you couldn't get in the parking lots, the gyms were crowded, the halls were crowded, it was exciting, parents were there, students were there, middle school students, high school students, our counselors were there. Congratulations to Nate Shaver, Denise Huebner, the entire team on a fantastic effort in a really successful launch to our college season.

[03:44:12] Second, I have to say this, I went to see Rent at Colgan And Colgan is now a member of the Cappies program, which recognizes great theatrical performance at schools. Students from each school participating in the entire DC, Maryland, Virginia area, participate and they write reviews of each other's plays and they go around.

[03:44:33] And so because Colgan did a fall play, it was one of the first plays of the year. And last year, four of our schools participated in the Cappies and Woodbridge took home an award at the Cappies, it's very prestigious. And so it's not just our Fine and Performing Arts School, all of our schools have tremendous theater programs, great theater teachers, great voice coaches, great orchestras and bands, and oh my gosh, they're showing it.

[03:44:56] But I have to read you some of the lines from the reviews. So I wanna congratulate, I went and saw Rent, it was fabulous. I wanna congratulate Mr. Warkentine, the director, he's also a teacher for the CFPA Musical Theater, Ms. Staley, who's the musical director, she's also a CFPA voice teacher.

[03:45:15] The reviews were written by Naomi Bautista and Kat Pascal, both at Fairfax High School, who came to watch it. Let me just read you some quick lines. Colgan High School's production of "Rent: School Edition" invited the audience to a "Viva La Vie: Boheme" with a larger-than-life cast and no qualms approach to this Tony Award-winning show.

[03:45:34] Colgan's production was filled with passion, joyous energy while handling each sensitive topic with care. Starzak's ability, he's the lead actor in the show, one of our, I think a senior or junior, ability to make big acting choices without fear endeared him to the audience with his use of body language to build relationships with those around him and his captivating hilarious energy in la via boheme from the moment she climbed on the table and you i wish they were playing it again this weekend but uh danielle serrano bremer who played maureen which if you've seen rent maureen is a central figure in the show here's the review of that from the moment she climbed on the table for for her performance of Over the Moon,

[03:46:13] Danielle Serrano-Bremmer commanded attention with a larger-than-life stage presence and a vocal versatility that had the audience cheering. With her comedic timing and pure charisma, Serrano-Bremmer filled the stage with her uproariously funny energy, playing up the dynamic energy between her and Joanne, who was Julia Sapak.

[03:46:33] Her consistent powerhouse vocals proved that this diva needs her stage. They talked about the sound mix allowed each of the ensemble's members' voices to shine in all their harmonious glory. Costumes, designed by Julia Sapek, Elena Turgeon, Casey Williams, channeled the '90s grunge while adding to each individual's character development.

[03:46:54] Scene transitions were crisp and well done, and a testament to the excitement of stage management of Autumn Parrish, assisted by Kenzie Forbes, Kate Olson, Riley Rushen. Delivering on a truly brave undertaking, Colgan High School's rent was filled to the brim with Bohemian spirit that highlighted that the best way to measure life is in love.

[03:47:15] Great show. Congratulations to Tim Healy. The entire, the cast, the students were spectacular. And I tell you that all of our high schools put on these amazing productions. I can't be more proud of the work that our students are doing in every aspect that the school division offers.

[03:47:34] And it truly is a pleasure and a privilege to get to see them. and I believe that Colgan should be in the running for a Cappy, and if they don't win, I will not be happy. Okay, I'll just leave it at that. Excellent, you know, playoffs are starting for all of our fall sports.

[03:47:52] Watch them, follow them, you know, support our students. College applications are due soon for early decisions in November 1, and I'm hearing great results at Benton Middle School on their results with students not being allowed to use cell phones throughout the day, so I would encourage our school division to continue to look at that.

[03:48:12] Thank you all very much, meeting is adjourned.



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