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Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Date	Wednesday, February 7, 2024
Place	Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length	3h 8m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNpVCkfI-lM
- 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 2026-11-02. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:01] The Prince William County School Board will now be called to order. And we are gonna have a motion in order for approval of the meeting agenda. Ms. Zargarpur. - Dr. Lateef, I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the meeting agenda as recommended. - Second.

[00:00:17] - Mr. Chairman. - Wall one. Wall one though, she got it to the, yeah, yeah, yeah. But they didn't put wall on the wall. They just put Jen. Like I would have put Jen Wall so that I could say Jen Wall's on the wall.

[00:00:32] All right, any discussion? - Please vote. Or no, did you, someone's supposed to read the motion? - Oh, all right, let's vote.

[00:00:48] All in favor? - Aye. - Opposed? Motion passed unanimous. Moving on to the motion to enter closed session. The motion is in order. - Mr. Chairman, I move that pursuant to Virginia code sections 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712, the Prince William County School Board enter closed session for the following reasons.

[00:01:11] One, to discuss with staff the appointment, transfer, release, assignment, and promotion of specific officers and employees pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711A. 2. To review the grievance appeal of employee T24-01 under Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711A.

[00:01:30] 1 and 8. 3. To discuss with legal counsel and take action on the placement appeal of a specific student under Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711A. 2 and 8. 4.

[00:01:45] Discuss with Division Counsel and staff actual or probable litigation and specific legal matters involving specific staff and students pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711A, 7 and 8. And 5.

[00:02:02] 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 is pursuant to Virginia code section 2.2-3711A19.

[00:02:21] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams, any discussion, please vote.

[00:02:52] - Yes, unanimous, motion passed. - Excellent, we'll move to the closed session. What are we doing? I'm sorry, I'm reading the wrong thing. We are now going into closed session

[00:03:01] and we'll return in one hour.

[00:04:05] - William County School Board will now enter open session from closed session. A motion is in order for 8.01, closed session certification, Ms. Zargarpur. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that pursuant to Virginia code section 2.2-3712.

[00:04:21] The closed session of the Prince William County School Board meeting of February 7th, 2024 be certified by adopting the following resolution. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Prince William County School Board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge.

[00:04:36] One, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies. and two, only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard and discussed or considered by the school board.

[00:04:57] - Do I have a second? - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:05:16] - Okay.

[00:05:32] - The vote is eight yes, unanimous. Motion passed. - Moving on to closed session action items, a motion in order for the approval of appointments releases. Ms. Zargarpur. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the appointments and releases of specific employees as presented in closed session.

[00:05:49] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams, any discussion? Please vote.

[00:06:04] - The vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed. - Moving on to 9.02, motions in order, Ms. Zargarpur. - Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the recommendation of the hearing officer and dismiss employee T24-01 from their employment with the Prince William County Public Schools and further that the chairman at large is authorized to sign the decision letter prepared by division council, reflecting the grounds for the school board's decision.

[00:06:31] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Mr. Blake, any discussion? Please vote.

[00:06:58] - The vote is eight yes, unanimous. Motion passed. - 9.03 Parent Appeal for action, Ms. Zargarpur. - Mr. Chairman, I move that for the reason set forth in the Student Management and Alternative

Program Department's letter of January 2, 2024, the Prince William County School Board confirm SMAPD's recommendation to exclude student SA24-037 from Prince William County Public Schools and to require the student to attend an alternative placement not located on the grounds of any traditional PWCS school as determined by the IEP team.

[00:07:32] The student shall be eligible to reapply for admission at the end of the school of the 2023-24 school year. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Wall. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:08:00] - The vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed. - Okay, next, what was it? Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Williams, can you lead us in the pledge? I pledge allegiance to the United States of America, to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, liberty, and justice for all.

[00:08:27] Thank you. Now we're moving on to Thriving Futures Focus. And as you all know, Thriving Futures Focus is an opportunity to highlight the exemplary work being accomplished in our schools and 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.

[00:08:50] 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 for recognize them publicly for their accomplishments We begin our recognition with vice chair Lisa Zargapur of the Coles District who will introduce our first award winner

[00:09:17] Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Coles District is proud to acknowledge Colgan High School's assistant principal, Karen Riddle, who has been named by the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals as the 2024 Outstanding Secondary School Assistant Principal of Virginia.

[00:09:36] Mrs. Riddle was selected by the Principal Awards Committee, a panel of school leaders, principals, and division superintendents for her dedication to education, commitment to academic excellence for all students, and outstanding leadership.

[00:10:02] Thanks to this accomplishment, Mrs. Riddle will be considered for the National Assistant Principal of the Year. Mrs. Riddle's selection recognizes her excellence in the following seven criteria categories for this prestigious award. She is willing to take risks to improve student learning.

[00:10:19] She anticipates emerging problems and acts in effective ways to resolve them. She moves actively to implement the goals and objectives of the school. She works collaboratively with teachers and other staff members to improve the educational program and student achievement.

[00:10:35] She ensures the school climate is positive and reflects high staff and student morale. She involves the community in the life of the school and uses community resources for students. and she demonstrates creativity and imagination in bringing about positive change.

[00:10:52] Mrs. Riddle is the perfect role model for the PWCS profile of a graduate, and that should come as no surprise, as Mrs. Riddle is a PWCS graduate of Osmore Park High School. She has 24 years of educational experience and has been pivotal in raising SOL math scores for her students.

[00:11:10] In collaboration with teachers and staff, Mrs. Riddle helped Colgan increase Algebra 1 scores by 17.6%, with a 32% gain among students with special needs, and a 34% gain with English learners, and a 32% gain for African American students, and a 19% gain with our Hispanic students.

[00:11:35] Mrs. Riddle embodies the quality, dedication, and talent that represents Prince William County Public Schools. Mrs. Riddle is here tonight with her principal Dr. Tim Healy. Mrs. Riddle would you care to share a few words? Good evening Dr. Lateef, members of the board and Dr. McDade. Thank you Ms. Zargarpur for your such your kind words. It is an unbelievable honor to be recognized by the VASSP for this award. The life of an assistant principal, while I believe it is one of the best jobs around, can also be one of the most challenging. I would not be the leader I am today without the

[00:12:12] love and support of my family, specifically my husband and daughter who are here with me tonight, who put up with me when I'm too tired to make any decisions at home because I've had to make a thousand decisions during the school day, who don't judge me when I fall asleep on the couch at 7:30 p.m. and who understand when I have to work late nights at work. I would also like to thank Dr. Healy who hired me as a teacher 24 years ago and has helped mentor me along my leadership journey. I view one of my roles as an assistant principal is to support the principal and their vision and that is really easy when you work with somebody like Dr. Healy. I'm also lucky to work with the best teachers and staff. I love working alongside all of them every day,

[00:12:48] supporting them, helping them grow as teachers, or just getting out of their way so they can do amazing things in their classroom. I hope that they all know how much they are appreciated and how the work they do every day matters. I believe I'm really just a representative for all the outstanding secondary assistant principals out there. It is truly a job that you cannot do on your own. I am thankful and blessed every day to work with four of the most amazing individuals also in this role.

[00:13:14] Together, we problem solve, brainstorm, bounce around ideas, laugh together, and sometimes cry. We rely on each other to make our school a special place. So thank you, Melissa McClellan, Octavia McDonald, David Parrish, and Chad Cavender. We are better together, and I am grateful for you every single day.

[00:13:33] - Outstanding. Mr. Riddle, thank you, and I can say a few words. First question, were you a student when Dr. Haley was still principal at Osborne Park?

[00:13:52] Okay, I thought you were very young, Dr. Healy. I didn't think that there would be a yes to that. Very good, excellent. And I can speak on behalf of the parents at Colgan High School 'cause I have had two kids there and I'm very grateful for, as you point out, for you and all of our assistant principals for how much time each of you spends after hours and the time it takes to be there before the school day, after the school day, making sure things are running on time and everything.

[00:14:22] It is a terrific job and it's a great job that you all do and we are as parents and families and kids and students extremely grateful for the terrific work you do to you and all our assistant principals. Another round of applause for Ms. Riddle. We are hoping to see you go on to win bigger and better things.

[00:14:41] Very good, all right. So, thank you Ms. Riddle and congratulations again. Well, one thing I should say, do you have family here that are with you? Okay, could Mrs. Riddle's family please stand to be recognized and we owe you a round of applause and thanks and thank you very much.

[00:15:10] The school board will also like to recognize tonight the 13 students selected by the Virginia Music Educators Association for the Senior Honors Choir, that's here. The purpose of the Virginia Music Educators Association or VMEA is to promote quality music education throughout the Commonwealth by

providing leadership, instructional resources and professional development opportunities for Virginia's music educators.

[00:15:37] To be selected to perform in this choir, students go through an extremely rigorous process. They compete against the top high school vocal talent in Virginia, making it the most challenging audition and choir experience available in the Commonwealth. Our six schools met or exceeded best practices standards in one or more topic areas related to school excellence for students, teachers and staff.

[00:16:02] We will continue with Ms. Zargarpur, who will recognize our award-winning choir students in the Coles District. Vice Chair Zargarpur. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. First of all, I'm just gonna take a second of privileged students. Oh my gosh, this is like, I hope you live this moment forever and ever in your mind.

[00:16:20] When you go and do Allstate, it's like one of the best things ever. Just take in every moment, enjoy. And you worked hard to get there. Nine students from the Coles District were selected to perform in the Senior Honors Choir From Hilton High School, I would like to recognize Michael Gutierrez Ramos.

[00:16:38] Hilton High School is represented tonight by Assistant Principal Tony Switzer and Choir Director Tommy Tutwiler. From Colgan High School, I would like to recognize six students. Abigail Barnes, Raelle Melvin, Hope Carey, Danielle Serrano Bremer, Adam Mack, and Hannah Yoho.

[00:16:59] Colgan High School is represented tonight by Principal Dr. Tim Healy. Carrie Staley, Choir Director, was unable to attend tonight. - From Osborne Park High School, I would like to recognize two students, Ruth Osario and Tyson Ellsworth.

[00:17:14] Osborne Park High School is represented tonight by Principal Lisa Marie Kane and Choir Director Dominic Iso. Congratulations, all of you guys in the Coles District.

[00:17:34] - Next up, excellent, Ms. Argerpore. From the Brentsville District, Ms. Erika Tredenik, please recognize our award-winning students. - Thank you. On behalf of the Brentsville District, I'm proud to recognize musicians from Gainesville High School and Patriot High School. from gainesville high school i would like to recognize mara servan principal neil beach is attending tonight to support mara choir director christina shepherd was unable to attend this evening moving on to patriot i would like to recognize bowden pearson patriot high school is

[00:18:07] represented tonight by principal dr mike bishop and choir director liz selby thank you and congratulations to the gainesville and patriot high school communities wonderful thank you mr Now Mr. Jesse of the Occoquan District will recognize our final award recipient of the night.

[00:18:32] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Occoquan District is enormously proud to recognize two Woodbridge High School students and the chances of me pronouncing your names correctly is very slim, so forgive me ahead of time. But Elena Perma and Molly Ludwick.

[00:18:56] Tonight we have Assistant Principal Michelle Sullivan and choir director, Joel Shapiro. Congratulations to both of you students on representing the absolute best of Prince William County School, and forgive me for mispronouncing your name.

[00:19:21] - Great, and thank you, Mr. Jesse, and congratulations to all 13 students and six high schools for your amazing accomplishment. I would like to ask the family members and friends of our outstanding choir students to stand and be recognized, please.

[00:19:44] We know they couldn't have gotten here without you. all your rides and help and all the terrific support you provide them, so thank you. You are really the backbone of the work the school division is doing. Mrs. Michelle Milligan, Administrative Coordinator for Fine and Performing Arts, and Ms. Anna Marie Bolino, Supervisor of Arts, will you each kindly share a few words?

[00:20:07] - Good evening, Dr. Lateef, members of the board, and Dr. McDade. We're delighted to be here with you. This is my very first board meeting. I'm day five on the job, and it's always great to celebrate our talented students and our teachers. As you said, Dr. Lateef, the audition process was pretty challenging, so let me give you numbers.

[00:20:25] There were 645 students that auditioned seniors in the Commonwealth, and of those 645 students, 132 are selected. So of our 13 students, we had about 10% of the ensemble, which I think is pretty fantastic for Prince William County.

[00:20:48] And we personally attended the concert and got to just witness, right? The best part about what we do is seeing the students in their element doing what they do best, and it was really beautiful to watch. I'd like to thank you, members of the board, Dr. Lateef, your chair, and Dr. McDade for your continued support of our arts programs, and congratulations again to the students and their families.

[00:21:16] - Thank you, Ms. Milligan and Ms. Bellino. Before taking a few pictures, Superintendent Dr. McDade would like to share a few words. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. First, congratulations to Karen Riddle on being named the 2024 Outstanding Secondary School Assistant Principal of Virginia.

[00:21:31] We are so incredibly proud of your accomplishment and the work that you're doing every single day to bring our vision to life, to ensure every student graduates on time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their communities.

[00:21:49] And the work that you do embodies the very essence of what we want for all of our students. So thank you so much. Also, congratulations to our 13 exceptional choir students on their selection to the VMEA Senior Honors Choir. Our students tonight demonstrate not only excellence in music education, but the qualities that represent a PWCS graduate.

[00:22:12] Applying critical thinking, engaging as a digital citizen, imagining innovation and vision, participating as global citizens, and demonstrating resilience. I want to extend my congratulations to the students who earned this recognition, to your friends and families who supported your pursuit, the directors who advanced the knowledge and skills for our students to launch their Thriving Futures and to our principals for continuing to support and encourage arts education in our schools, which is incredibly important.

[00:22:41] And thank you all for being here tonight. Congratulations on your well-earned honor. - I'm gonna add one last thing, you know, we've been doing this launching Thriving Futures for now a couple years.

[00:23:02] And what's remarkable is, you know, the students that we see here tonight, you also see in other places, right? You'll see them in your local community theater. You'll see them at this, whether they're in the school plays or in the orchestras or on the honors were on a roll list and doing very well.

[00:23:19] So I, again, I can't tell you how much this board appreciates the effort the families make, the students make, and all of what you do to serve just not only your school, but the community and all the

other things you do and all the other extracurricular activities.

[00:23:34] We are just so proud. So next, I'm gonna ask that at this time, we'll request our honorees to come forward for the photo. We'll start first with Mrs. Karen Riddle, our Virginia Assistant Principal of the Year, and then we'll move to our senior honorees from the choir.

[00:23:48] If we can come collect on the dais.

[00:24:58] - Engage, feels painful.

[00:26:32] - Brought up and fill in.

[00:26:54] - Best angle.

[00:26:58] - I don't want to give a speech, mom.

[00:28:15] I don't give a speech.

[00:30:01] All right, so we're going to move on now to the adoption of the public meeting consent agenda. A motion is in order. Vice Chair Zargarpur. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the public meeting consent agenda as recommended.

[00:30:19] Do you have a second? Second. Credenic. Okay. Any discussion? Please vote. Computer.

[00:30:35] Discussion? Yeah, I asked for discussion. I tried to get you faster. Okay, go. Ms. Williams. - Thank you. I just wanted to draw attention to the application for our participation in the VDOE Grow Your Own Registered Teacher Apprentices Program Grant.

[00:30:56] As we know that we're undergoing a teacher shortage and I'm just excited that we are participating in that. And I feel like it deserves some recognition because we're putting a lot of work and our staff has put in a lot of work to ensure that we have continued teachers working for our division who are of the highest quality. So thank you.

[00:31:14] - Okay. - The vote is eight yes unanimous. Motion passed. - Okay, next moving on to the motion to, for acknowledges and recognitions. Miss Vice Chair Wall, Targafor, geez, oh man, sorry.

[00:31:36] - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the acknowledgements and recognitions as recommended. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams, any discussions? - Chairman. - Please vote, Ms. Williams. - Again, just like to remind the public, these are for next month, but I am very excited that we will be celebrating Women's History Month coming up.

[00:31:53] Thank you. - All in favor, aye. Any opposition? Any abstentions? One abstentions. - The vote is seven, yes. One abstained.

[00:32:08] Tridentic, motion passed. - Moving on to citizen comment time. Those citizens who've signed up in advance with the clerk may address the school board this evening when they're called to the podium. The citizen comment period for the regular school board meetings is one hour. Citizens may speak on agenda items or other topics germane to the operations and policies of PWCS.

[00:32:26] 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 to be cleared to restore public order.

[00:32:43] Tonight we have 13 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. So I'll call the first five if they'd like to come up and have a seat up front. We have Catalea Claros, Lina Guerra, Magali Hurtado, Kate Olson-Flynn, and Jed Bobier.

[00:33:07] Catalea Claros. Catalea Claros? Oh, okay.

[00:33:36] - Good evening, school board members and Dr. McDade. My name is Catalea Claros and I'm in fifth, and I'm a fifth grader at Kyle Wilson Elementary School. I've stood before you twice already, advocating for something close to my heart, a 15-minute recess break for middle schoolers.

[00:33:58] I met with our board member, Mrs. Zagapur, and formed a dedicated committee that meets weekly to plan our strategy. I've launched an online petition and tiredly gathered signatures at the Dumfries Christmas Parade.

[00:34:15] I even had the chance to discuss our cause with Mr. Jeremy McPike and Ms. Abigail Spanberger. Last time we were told to email our state delegate to rally support, I did just that, but I'm here again wondering what more can I do?

[00:34:39] Let's not forget why I'm here. Studies show that recess isn't just playtime, it's crucial to our academic success. It improves memory, attention, and concentration, it helps our brains develop properly, and allows us to decompress and absorb what we recently learned.

[00:35:00] Plus, it reduces disruptive behavior and fosters social and emotional development. To the parents who have pledged support, I urge you to join us in sending emails and speaking before this board.

[00:35:15] And to my fellow students who want their voices heard, I encourage you to stand up and speak out to, to the teachers who give their support.

[00:35:33] Please speak with your administration. The Fairfax County School Board recognized the benefits and approved a revision to their health and wellness policy in April, 2022.

[00:35:48] It's time for our board to follow that suit. Thank you for your time. Thank you. Lena Guerra. Good evening.

[00:36:04] My name is Lena Guerra, and I'm a fifth grader at Kyle Wilson Elementary School. My address is on file, and I am here today to share my beliefs of continuing recess at middle school. My brother Lucas currently attends Saunders Middle School in Prince William County, And he has shared how much he misses recess and how he wishes he could still get some fresh air and play some basketball or soccer at school.

[00:36:34] I will be going to middle school next year and I'm really sad that recess may not be an option for some. Recess may be the only time they get some fresh air or some exercise or have a chance to play a sport with friends. There are many benefits of having recess during middle school like it improves memory, attention, and concentration, helps kids' brains work and develop properly, and it helps decompress and absorb what they recently learned, reduces disruption behavior in the classroom, and improves social and emotional development.

[00:37:14] I think it's important for many reasons why middle schoolers should have a recess and hope that you see it too. Recess does not have to be long or in a big space, just free time to play and enjoy the benefits of nature and being a kid.

[00:37:30] I think that recess is a great idea because it brings back childhood memories and you can do a lot of activities and get vitamin D, which many people don't get enough of. And it's healthy for you and great for your body and your mind. Thank you. Magali Hurtado.

[00:37:50] That's hard to follow. Hello. Good evening, Dr. Mardet, Board Chair Latif. I am Magali Hurtado. I am the parent of a middle schooler and an elementary school student. Both of my kids are sold to attend Woodbridge Senior High School.

[00:38:08] We are very concerned about the overcrowding in the school. It is obvious that the eastern side of the county desperately needs a new high school. And the division keeps furthering inequities in our schools by delaying the construction of the new high school, new high school and suggesting instead additions to schools on the other end of the county it seems counterintuitive almost feels like the equivalent to prescribing eyedrops for severe migraines just because your eyes are also mildly dry I understand you are looking at population growth but I wonder if you're also considering migration rates particularly on the eastern side of the county I quite often hear kids in the community talk

[00:38:47] about the new student in their class so please look at the migration rates as well. I am not denying that there is a need to alleviate overcrowding in other schools. Maybe planning our new school with a different approach to the projections you use would reduce the chances of the school being overcrowded within a few years of being open. You have that opportunity with the 14th high school and yet you are going backwards using the same perspective that has caused one of our newest high schools to already be overcrowded. I am I'm not surprised schools in the western side of the county have high transfers rates.

[00:39:24] With all due respect, with the division allocation of resources in the CIP, your approach to specialty programs, you're turning Woodbridge into a school that you will only attend if you really have no choice, which is offered to the community and to the amazing staff at the school.

[00:39:40] You also keep using these overcrowded in the Woodbridge High School as an excuse to delay implementation of an academic specialty program supposedly to avoid overcrowding to the school by not attracting more students to a specialty program but do you realize that you're also turning kids away from our community and overcrowding other schools by not having equitable options available at woodbridge if you're building additions to schools why not build them where the most overcrowded schools are located since you are delaying the actual feasible solution why not implement the specialty program that parents have been advocating for years and make

[00:40:19] it open to woodbridge senior high school students only at least until you finally build a new school when they have when the 13 high school open if i remember correctly their specialty program was only open for the students on to that school as a temporary solution maybe consider that for woodbridge thank you thank you kate olson flynn good evening dr latif school board and dr mcdade My name is Kate Olson Flynn and I thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight about equity in

[00:40:56] the CIP and the strategic plan. Since 2017, Parents Who Care and I have fought hard for facility fairness for Woodbridge High School and the students on the eastern end of the county. We fought for turf field, concession stands, bathrooms, equal gym space for Woodbridge and Garfield, windows in all the older schools, and we still must fight for parity and specialty programs.

[00:41:18] If you believe in equity, adequacy, fairness, and inclusion, then you should reject the plan to open the 14th high school in 2029 and open it in 2026. I know this administration believes in these tenants, however the argument to delay the construction of the 14th high school because there may be a decrease in enrollment is disingenuous and does not address the issue of equity between the high schools. This population decrease does not capture immigration or the development of affordable housing and multi-use communities that are already in the pipeline to be built. Besides, one study should not be the only reason to deny thousands of students an

[00:41:56] opportunity to experience a top-notch high school facility in their lifetimes, particularly students on the east side of the county. This is not prioritizing equity in the CIP. And if this new construction is delayed, it will also postpone the implementation of the specialty program at woodbridge high school that the community has already advocate advocated for and has been promised by this administration this decision means that our kids will get no new specialty program for five more years the positive the positive climate and culture goal in your strategic plan states that all facilities need to meet objective 2.3 to be welcoming safe and sustainable

[00:42:35] woodbridge does not meet this objective how is it welcoming safe and sustainable when the facilities are 50 years old and overcrowded with numerous teachers on carts with no room to plan or meet in the building just because we don't have trailers that you can see outside like colgan does not mean that we aren't bursting at the seams at least their teachers have their own space in their own rooms and how does the school have a positive climate for learning when its specialty program is not special at all every school has ap classes this does not meet the objectives in the

[00:43:10] strategic plan. The needs of our community are the same since 2017. We still deserve an adequate space and programs as all other high schools in Prince William County. If fairness is truly a strategic goal then you really need to revisit why you plan to build additions at Colgan and Forest Park so to not disrupt school boundaries instead of renovating and improving Woodbridge so our most diverse high school so that all parents will want to attend the older schools as much as the newer ones. Our kids and families deserve a new high school and specialty program before 2029. Thank

[00:43:44] you. Thank you. Jed Bobier. So the next, yeah, Jed Bobier. My name is Jed Bobier and my address is on file with the clerk. My wife and I have been Prince William County residents for the past 15 years and we are both educators. However, we do not work for PWCS. Instead, we get up at the crack of dawn every day to make the two-hour round trip to Arlington because Prince William County Schools does not pay their educators a competitive salary.

[00:44:18] It's not even close. We're not talking about a few thousand dollars. We're talking about tens of thousands of dollars, close to $40,000 more a year combined. How does the second largest county in the state justify paying their educators such low wages? To put it in perspective, my wife with 16 years of experience would be placed at step 11 next year, and I would be placed at step 16 with 26 years of experience.

[00:44:40] Let's not overlook the fact you have a different salary scale for new employees. You're the only school district I've ever heard of in Northern Virginia, or anywhere else for that matter, that has a separate pay scale for new employees. With that said, we live within five minutes of four different schools. We would love to work in the county where we live.

[00:44:58] However, we are not willing to give up $40,000 a year to do that. I mean, who would? If you multiply that by 10 years and add inflation and pay raises, you're talking in excess of $400,000 in the next 10 years. When PWEA recently asked for a 17% raise for their T scale employees, they were spot on with their demands.

[00:45:16] Yet you countered with an insulting 6% raise. I'm here tonight as one example why you cannot retain or recruit new staff members. I'll save you a few hundred thousand dollars to pay an outside consultant to complete a salary scale study and give you the harsh reality. You are woefully behind every school district in Northern Virginia, which is why you have such a large number of vacancies year in and year out.

[00:45:37] FCPS significantly adjusted their salary scale for T-scale employees a few years ago, and you're seeing the difference. Manassas City Public Schools recently adjusted their pay scale for employees as well. Loudon, APS, ACPS, et cetera, They've all significantly adjusted their pay scales to keep up with the Joneses.

[00:45:54] Yet PWCS seems to be remaining steadfast with the belief that they are doing enough. If you want smaller class sizes, better working conditions, and significantly better pay, potential employees should go elsewhere, because it's obvious the school board does not hold those items in high regard.

[00:46:09] Your actions speak louder than words. You are not advocates for staff members. Please stop gaslighting Prince William County residents and do the right thing. If you truly care about investing in our most valuable assets, which is the students, then pay your employees competitive wages, provide better working conditions and smaller class sizes, so your staff members can provide a world-class education.

[00:46:34] - The next five, Kimberly Melman-Orozco, Haley Palinskar, Madeline Schmidt, Gianna Alina and Juris Field. Kimberly Melman-Orozco.

[00:46:54] - My name is Dr. Kimberly Melman-Orozco. My address is on file. Following the last speaker, I just wanted to start with something. Why can't Prince William County pay a competitive wage to their employees when they're willing to pay $60,000 for a hearing officer for each complaint that's filed?

[00:47:15] They're not willing to pay a penny towards private placement for children with disabilities. Sir, that's where your money's going. Over the last 12 months, Prince William County Schools has been found out of compliance over a dozen times by the Virginia Department of Education, and they're getting cases of due process filed against them.

[00:47:35] And when they don't abide by the corrective action plan, there is actually a code that means that you can have your funding restricted even further than it already is because you're out of compliance. I'm not addressing the people who are new to the board. So Mr. Danik, Mr. Jesse, Mr. Blake, I'm not addressing you.

[00:47:53] Your legacy is let to be, I mean, it's gonna be written with how you serve the next four years. I'm addressing the people who are sitting on the board right now. You knew about these violations. Ms. Williams, when I called you, you asked me how I got your number.

[00:48:09] Mr. Wilk, when I met with you at Montclair Elementary School and talked to you about this, your assistant recorded me without my knowledge. And then when you called me to apologize about it after I found out, I recorded you.

[00:48:25] Mr. Anderson, I got your email from a whistleblower teacher who told me about how you were telling the staff not to communicate in writing so that there wouldn't be documentation when it got subpoenaed. Why can't we pay our faculty a fair wage?

[00:48:42] Because they're spent fighting against providing an equitable education for children with disabilities. To see who has the best school board Prince William County does sitting behind you, wow.

[00:48:57] That's all I have to say is wow. That is a sad testament to the public school system. if you really think this county has the best school board, given the multiple violations that have occurred repeatedly and the failed correction action plans. It's remarkable to see schools awarded when you release the PII of these same administrators getting formal complaints filed against them.

[00:49:22] When injustice becomes law, resistance becomes duty. And I'm letting you know that you will continue, if you continue to violate these special education rights, going to continue to be found out of violation it's going to continue to be brought to the attention of the public and it's an embarrassment to say you're willing to pay a 60 000 rate for a three day hearing but you're not willing to pay your educators a fair wage you're not giving a penny to these children who want to be put in private placement because they're not getting a fair

[00:49:54] education i look forward to seeing you next time haley palinskar should i be introducing why don't you each introduce yourselves of course my name is gianna alina uh chairman latif members of the board and dr mcdade my address is on file and i'm here to talk to you about the importance

[00:50:29] of kindness has anyone ever heard of the third place theory it's the congregation of people in areas that are in home and work or in my case school a third place could be a religious building a playground the gym public libraries i think you kind of get the gist it's an escape from the stressors of work or school. But since the global pandemic, we've seen a decline in third places, and everything is basically online now, which leaves us with coming to work or school with home stress and going back home with work or school stress, which is such a painful cycle.

[00:51:03] But we can ease the pain with a little bit of kindness. The majority of our time is spent in the online world, which is rarely kind to us. You don't believe me? Go to any social media platform right now and look under any post section. It could be a mother holding her baby and someone would be like why he looked like that it's so easy to bring all that negativity into the real world and even easier to forget that people do remember the things we say and do to them or rather what we do not but kindness is powerful it is greater than any negative comment or act in this world it isn't earned but is given out freely when parents are kind at home children take that

[00:51:42] kindness to school and share with their friends and teachers who share it with their families that creates such a powerful chain reaction that tightens our community even further i don't know about you but i want to feel supported cared for and understood wherever i go i love hearing uh how was your weekend or and is everything okay i look forward to the day where all of us deep down in our hearts can testify the people in our places truly care about us now to pass it on to maddie just for everyone to know i have they all signed up for speaking slots so we have maddie

[00:52:21] let me just announce your name is maddie schmidt jurisfield and um did i miss one oh gianna alina you just spoke right all right go ahead sorry good morning dr latif members of the board dr mcdade i'm madeline schmidt i'm a senior at patriot high school i'm captain of the track team and officer in several

clubs i have two ideas to actually implement on how we can promote kindness within our school communities. So my first idea is to promote a vision board activity in schools for students to formulate and visualize what kindness looks like to them. This will show the students that embodying kindness is realistic and

[00:53:00] attainable expectation. Students will find images on Pinterest and turn it into a collage to basically symbolize what kindness means to them and just represent and set a realistic goal of what they should try to embody every day to promote kindness with themselves to others their family everyone around them the next idea I had was a bracelet it might seem like a simple idea but the small activity could have transformative effects so first the bracelet will be given to each student it could be a simple rubber bracelet with a cute saying or just something simple when the student catches themselves saying

[00:53:38] negative things or thinking unkind words complaints negative self-talk etc they will take the bracelet off of one wrist and switch it to another. This will become an annoying task which will help the students realize the constant and habitual negativity that surrounds them. Their speech intention or interactions and other speak speech with others. Negativity whether internalized or externalized is a habit that our generation has grown comfortable of and it's so frequent that we don't even realize when we do it which is the issue.

[00:54:10] The purpose of this exercise is to make students conscious about the importance and reality of the words and the habits that form them. This simple implementation will have transformative effects and should be district-wide, school-wide implemented. Thank you. Good evening Dr. Lateef, members of the board, Dr. McDade. I am Haley Palinshar and I'm a senior at Patriot High School this year. I'm here with you tonight to talk about how Patriot is walking into the light with education. As we were all in a brief period of gloom, negativity, and a depressed mood resulting from the coronavirus incident a few years prior to now, we can all

[00:54:49] recognize that the transition from online to in-person was anything but ordinary. Children came into schools lacking proper social skills from the long period of isolation and it was a strange adjustment for everyone. The graduating class of 2024's first year of high school was spent at home where the true elements and foundations of high school spirit, socialization, and community remained unlearned. Our school acted immediately to combat this lack of understanding upon entering school for the first time sophomore year.

[00:55:15] As Juris, a fellow student of mine, will later say, "We have since implemented numerous changes to our school's environment through the addition of multiple mental health programs and clubs focused on reducing the stigma of seeking help in times of crisis and looking out for others who may experience the same. We are moving to influence the growth of organizations and clubs focused on reducing the stigma in seeking times of crisis and looking out for others as well."

[00:55:38] Some of these various associations and organizations at Patriot include Morgan's message, Our Minds Matter, No Place for Hate, For the Girls, and also our diverse student associations that focus on heritage and culture. Through promoting the growth of these programs, we are not only influencing the future of our school, but also the future of each graduating individual. As students, we all struggle with balancing sports, school, home life, and extracurriculars. Many of Patriot's students are in similar situations, as our student body is comprised of many diligent learners and those who are closely involved

in their respective communities. This can cause a lot of mental stress, and it is our school's goal to create an environment that is stress-free or even

[00:56:15] stress-reducing and overall a safe space for all students to feel welcomed. As students, teachers, and admin, we are contributing to our school's environment in the most positive and effective way possible through taking action to diminish the stigma surrounding mental health through employing the use of leadership, integrity, character, and pride, also known as the four pillars of Patriot High School.

[00:56:35] Patriot values its students to a high degree, as the school employs teachers, janitors, ladies, counselors, and admin who can only be described as role models, all of which I admire deeply. Our staff remains professional while also nurturing students on a personal level. The staff can be credited for Patriot's continuous growth and improvement with every passing year. As a school we hope our growth will continue to expand and everyone can leave their mark on Patriot as a pioneer. And now I'll hand it over to Juris. Good evening Dr. Lateef, members of the board, and Dr. McDade. I'm Juris Field and my address is on file with the

[00:57:14] clerk. I hope you guys are all having a wonderful day, and thank you so much for listening us and allowing us to come here and speak to you guys. I'm a junior at Patriot High School, and as the wonderful young woman before me have said, kindness is a really big part of Patriot High School, and I'm here to talk about some of the different things that Patriot High School has done to incorporate kindness into our community. To start, the teachers at Patriot throughout the school do their best to teach kindness and set good examples in their classrooms and in the hallways.

[00:57:44] This is super monumental and instrumental in providing a safe and welcoming environment for students to come to. Patriot is also lucky enough to have clubs that specialize in kindness like Our Minds Matter, No Place for Hate, Morgan's Message, and the For the Girls Club.

[00:58:01] Having these clubs available to the school gives students a place where they can look for a kind face and learn how to practice kindness everywhere. Another thing that is heavily impactful on our students are the different fundraisers and events that we have in the school. Just this year, we had this fun little thing where we had Christmas trees set up and on each little ornament there was a gift for the families in need at our high school.

[00:58:26] And the students, it became kind of a competition for the different classes to see if they could buy the most gifts for these families in need and provide to the kids in the community that don't have as much as some other students do. This helped us give back to the families in our community.

[00:58:41] We also have another thing, it's called Pete's Closet, which is kind of like a fun little thrift store. We have kids from all over the school donate their clothes and then we sell them for cheaper prices. And we also let the families in need come in and pick out the clothes for free.

[00:58:59] And it's not just clothes, it's sometimes it's like little toys and just fun different things that families may need. One of the, perhaps the biggest part of our school's culture of kindness is the Random Acts of Kindness Week. During this week we give out notes to friends, poems, we give them to families and staff, we have different crafts to do, and we dress in spirit wear as a community.

[00:59:23] This really brings the school together to recognize kindness. The leadership class, which I'm a part of, also takes a field trip to the different elementary schools around us and we get to teach them about

kindness and the elementary schooler kids love it and we love it too. It's so much fun to be able to teach kindness and inspire that in the youth, and that's all.

[00:59:42] Thank you so much. - Thank you guys very much. Next will be your principal, Michael Bishop. Bishop, Michael Bishop.

[00:59:59] - Chairman Lateef, members of the board, Dr. McDade, my name is Michael Bishop. I'm the principal of Patriot High School, and my address is on file. Next week, February 11th through 17th, is Random Acts of Kindness Week in Virginia. Tonight you heard from my students about the importance of kindness and why they believe it should be celebrated in our schools.

[01:00:17] We have celebrated Random Acts of Kindness Week Patriot for over eight years. This year with our feeder schools we will emphasize why we should treat other people with respect, dignity, and most importantly kindness. Each day has a theme recognized at all schools. Our TV production students have created a video in collaboration with PWCS TV staff about why kindness matters which will also be shared in the next few days.

[01:00:41] Next Friday students from our leadership class will visit each of the feeder schools and share lessons on the impact of kindness with students. Tonight we would ask you to endorse a division-wide effort going forward to encourage every school every teacher every employee to do something kind for another person whether they know them or not and make that a part of our normal practice celebrating kindness across PWCS for an entire week acting kind may change everything for someone that person may need to hear positive words may be struggling having a difficult time is depressed or just needs to hear

[01:01:21] something positive from another person celebrating the entire week means that each student staff member custodian parent and board member would know that there is someone who cares about them someone who wants them to have a great day and that means it in closing as it is also black history month I would share two quotes from leaders that echo the ideas behind next week first from dr. Martin Luther King jr. and it says the time is always right to do what is right the second from Morgan Freeman how do we change the world one random act

[01:01:58] of kindness at a time tonight my employee students help to create these t-shirts for each member of the board and on the back of the girls t-shirts you can see the statement is there is always time to be kind on behalf of my colleagues Andrew Buckeye Marissa Miranda Rhonda Jek Chad Ray Mark Marinoble and Lisa Warner we are asking you to now pay it forward and do something kind for someone else we would now like to present you with these t-shirts for each member of the board and calendars and posters for next week thank you all very much very appreciated

[01:02:37] there's no fun thank you very much it's not every day the board gets um gifts during citizen comment

[01:03:45] time okay thank you all right moving on next to rachel freeman and then the and last uh she'd like to come up as Heidi Feliciano so Rachel Freeman first. Hi my name is Rachel Freeman and my address is on file. I walked out without my glasses so you're with me. In the fall of 2022 my husband and I wrote to the new superintendent to have a meeting with her regarding specialty

[01:04:22] programs or lack thereof at Woodbridge High School. Instead of her a meeting was arranged on October 21st 2022 with Director Colon, Supervisor Wesselhoff, Director Weed and Director Grimm. they

listened on february 27 2023 a group of parents met with principal abney and school board representative jesse on march 30th 2023 another meeting with dr cologne not until may 16 2023 did i along with some other parents meet with dr mcdade it took seven months of emails and persistence to arrange a meeting each of these meetings focused on the effects of specialty

[01:05:00] programs on the students and community of woodbridge senior high school and the restoration of wood Woodbridge Senior High School advanced academic specialty program to improve recruitment and academic opportunities at the school. I am concerned about the continued inequity in the provision and distribution of specialty and academic programs that exist in Prince William County. In 2016, the school division, without any parent involvement, took the beloved Center for Fine and Performing Arts out of Woodbridge Senior High School and transferred it to Colgan.

[01:05:33] prince william county made this this decision without our community support and with no plan for replacement of an equivalent program additionally prince william county required woodbridge to share our successful project lead the way program with other high schools originally there was only one project lead the way program in prince william county and was located at woodbridge because of its success woodbridge trained other schools on how to implement a thriving project lead the way program for equity and access for all students Now almost all high schools have Project Lead the Way programs that enable the schools to attract

[01:06:10] and retain students from across the county. How do I know all this? I was there. I've had a child at Woodbridge Senior High School consecutively since 2013. I still have one there. So what academic program do we have now? We have AP Scholars. That's it. That's our only academic program. This is not a program. All schools have either IB and AP classes. This program is not anything different than what they are getting at other schools. I currently have twin eighth grade eighth graders at Lake Ridge Middle School nothing besides the legacy of their older siblings is drawing them to Woodbridge I don't want my kids to sit

[01:06:46] on a bus to go across the county to receive better academic classes I want them to be able to receive the same equitable educational opportunities that base school students in our own community should not believe that they must travel across Prince William County to be challenged academically in a different school that leads to better college career choices thanks Heidi

[01:07:11] Feliciano. Hello, my name is Heidi Feliciano Concepcion. My address is on file. I am here today to explain why middle schoolers should have recess. Think about this: when a student has recess, his or hers mind relaxes and they can organize their thoughts better. They are

[01:07:49] going to be more productive in their work, and it improves kids' memory, attention, and concentration helps kids brains work and develop properly kids can decompress absorb and and absorb what they have recently learned improves social skill social and emotional development that's why middle schoolers should have at least 15 minutes of free time slash recess

[01:08:28] and thank you thank you okay that concludes citizen comment time thank you all very much We'll move on to student representative time. Tonight we have our student representative, Isabella Aversano, joining us on the dais.

[01:08:43] Isabella is a senior at Gainesville High School. Take it away, Miss Isabella. - Good evening to the school board superintendent in Prince William County community. Once again, it is really nice to hear

from you guys. Okay, there's a very important holiday coming up next week that is all about cherishing the people you love and appreciate.

[01:09:03] If you're thinking about Valentine's Day, I'm disappointed in you because School Board Clerk Appreciation Week is obviously what I was talking about. Bea and Anna, you have been a highlight of this experience and I'm still not sure if I was supposed to use your last names, but I can't pronounce that.

[01:09:20] I'm sorry. You were some of the first people I met during orientation and based on the presentation I had to sit through, I can't imagine that your jobs are easy or entertaining. You do a lot of work behind the scenes and even when you're running around trying to get things done at all these events, you still let me tag along with you so I don't have to interact with anybody else.

[01:09:39] Also, I hope that you guys don't actually read my remarks before these meetings, otherwise this has been awkward. But thank you. February is also African American History Month and I'm happy to see schools across the county making an effort to recognize the contributions of all African Americans and to educate people about their culture and history.

[01:09:59] Also, Chinese New Year is this Saturday and even though we're Vietnamese, my mom is actually in Houston with her family this week to celebrate. Jackie, our alternate rep, was also telling me about OP and how Asian students there present about different cultural months each month. They have hosted fashion shows and quizzes, and this month they are planning a geography game show.

[01:10:18] I really appreciate the effort from students and teachers within our county to celebrate diversity. Another student-driven initiative I would like to recognize is from Woodbridge Student Voice Committee. These students came up with a bunch of solutions to rid school bathrooms of vaping, and Admin actually implemented a few of them.

[01:10:35] One of their ideas was to post QR codes on stall doors so that students can fill out a form and notify bathroom monitors that students are vaping. All the bathrooms at Woodbridge have been unlocked as a result. Special thanks to Adome, our senator from Woodbridge, for sharing this info about such a valiant cause.

[01:10:52] Finally, I'd like to share a few pictures with all of you, but I'm going to give you some context first. I mentioned a student leadership workshop in my remarks. Oh, you aren't supposed to put that up yet. Thank you. I mentioned a student leadership workshop in my remarks last month.

[01:11:09] The Senate gathered with students from every single high school in the county to collaborate and share ideas regarding student voice committees. The Close-Up Foundation was one of our partners for the workshop, and a day later, they extended an invitation to an event at the White House. They wanted to give students that were going to be first-time voters the opportunity to hear directly from White House officials from the President's cabinet about hot topics that affect our generation.

[01:11:31] Now, can you put it up? I don't know who I'm talking to. Thank you, whoever you are. So the White House Press Secretary gave an opening speech, and then we were introduced to the Secretary of Energy and the Deputy Secretary of the Treasury. Students from our county were able to directly ask them questions.

[01:11:48] Now could you go to the second picture? Oh, well you cut Chris out, it's okay. More importantly, I was breathing the same air as Chris Evans. You can only see the top of his hair, but it's fine. He was there

with a foundation he co-founded.

[01:12:05] It's called A Starting Point. Their mission is to demystify politics and government by providing simplified information about current events. They also try to provide information directly from politicians by interviewing them. In this case, they gave us the rare opportunity to speak to them ourselves.

[01:12:20] I'd like to encourage any students that are listening to check them out. Thank you for your time, that concludes my remarks. - Thank you, Ms. Aversano, very excited. I think you're the first school board rep to make it to the White House, so excellent, good work.

[01:12:40] Moving on to superintendent's time, Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In honor of School Board Appreciation Month, thank you to each of our school board members for your unwavering commitment and service to Prince William County Schools students, families, staff, and communities.

[01:12:57] Looking around this room, we can see the immense gratitude the PWCS students, staff, and community have for our school board. On behalf of PWCS, I thank the school board members for your tireless dedication to fulfilling our vision. Additionally, I would like to mention School Board Clerk Appreciation Week, which begins next week, February 12th through 16th.

[01:13:20] Often overlooked, our amazing clerks work wonders behind the scenes, keeping us connected, informed, and on schedule. On behalf of Prince William County Schools, thank you B. Simpson, clerk of the school board, Ana, I practiced this, okay?

[01:13:38] And I'm gonna get it right. Uta Eate, all right. Deputy clerk of the school board, and Liliana Bickham, executive administrative assistant to the school board. I also extend our gratitude to the school counselors who prepare, plan, and positively impact lives of our students every day as this is national school counseling week I encourage our students families teachers and administrators to take the time to thank our counseling teams who not only work diligently on scheduling grading and coordinating to name a few of their countless

[01:14:14] responsibilities but also the tough emotional work that goes into providing the necessary care for so many of our students and as you've heard this evening february is black history month a celebration that serves as a poignant reminder of the resilience creativity and transformative impact of african americans individually and as a community the stories achievements and contributions of african americans are woven deeply into the fabric of global history be sure to look for features from the division and our schools throughout the month of February as PWCS

[01:14:52] recognizes this annual celebration of achievements and heritage of African Americans. I will now transition to our FY25 budget presentation. Each year the superintendent of the school division is responsible for proposing an annual budget for school board consideration. Tonight we are presenting the FY 2025 proposed budget which includes the capital improvements plan. I want to thank the school board for your ongoing collaborative dialogue and feedback which has

[01:15:27] been invaluable and we appreciate the opportunity to share the proposed budget for 2025 and capture additional feedback and input for strategic investments throughout this year's budget process which includes the March budget markup work session. All budget allocations are driven by by the priorities set forth in our 2025 Launching Thriving Futures strategic plan and supports our continued improvement as a school system.

[01:15:55] Before we begin the public presentation, I would like to take the opportunity to share my appreciation for our budget team. If you could just stand up and be recognized for those members of the budget team really quickly. Thank you so much.

[01:16:10] Our budget team has been working around the clock, planning and executing this year's budget process, which is a monumental task. Thank you to our new Chief Financial Officer, Shaquille Youssef, Kathleen Addison, Assistant Director of Budget, and Natasha Valencia, Supervisor of Budget, along with the entire team.

[01:16:30] Mr. Shaquille Youssef, who, by the way, is presenting his very first budget as the Chief Financial Officer. Let's give him some support, which is exciting. And Dr. Donna Eagle, our Chief Human Resources Officer, will be co-presenting this year's budget along with me.

[01:16:50] So we'll start our budget presentation grounding our work in the vision that drives Prince William County Schools, which is our collective responsibility to ensure every student will graduate on time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[01:17:10] It is this vision that drives our comprehensive strategic plan comprised of four key commitments, learning and achievement for all, positive climate and culture, family and community engagement, and organizational coherence. Every school system aligns their finances to be driven by their strategic priorities and to ensure fiscal responsibility each year, we bring forward investments that are tied to the strategic plan and the commitments that were made publicly with the input from a diverse body of stakeholders of over 4,000 individuals from schools, our communities, division office, and school board members

[01:17:49] that collaborated with us to develop the four-year strategic plan. For this condensed presentation, we will delve into each commitment and review the investment highlights. The proposed budget executive summary and this presentation will be posted for public view before the public meeting and hearing later this month.

[01:18:09] The complete proposed budget will be available online prior to the budget work session and markup in March. So I'll begin with some of the changes in demographics of Prince William County. This information is critically important as it illustrates the significant shifts that have occurred in our student population and the needs of our students, which impacts the way that we resource and fund schools.

[01:18:35] Specifically, what we're seeing is an overall increase in the percentage of students who are English learners as to date, about 25% of our student population are identified as English learners. Our percentage of students that are economically disadvantaged as determined by federal criteria has reached approximately 42%.

[01:18:55] Our students with disabilities have increased by approximately 10.7% over the last five years. Given the significant growth in the student populations I've highlighted, the cost per pupil to educate students with higher needs has also increased. This does impact how we will be able to allocate funds and how we consider resourcing our schools today and in the future in order to meet the unique needs of every learner and those needs are shifting.

[01:19:24] I would like to invite Mr. Youssef to review the regional context and demonstrate the current state of per pupil funding along with enrollment changes as well as budget highlights before we bring Dr.

Donna Eagle to review compensation highlights.

[01:19:40] Mr. Youssef. - Thank you, Dr. McDade. Chairman Lateef, members of the school board, Dr. McDade and members of the public. Before I would begin, I would also like to thank my budget team, leaders, Kathleen Addison, sitting in the back here, and a team of leaders of Natasha Valencia and Connie McDuffie.

[01:20:06] I would also like to introduce two new members of my leadership team, our new budget director, Joe Mondoro. Stand up, Joe. And our new finance director, Latoya Thomas.

[01:20:21] They and their respective teams have worked very hard and diligently in completing the proposed budget. When we look at a regional context, and the first part of the chart compares our demographics with our surrounding jurisdictions and also with the state.

[01:20:42] But more importantly, if you look on the right of the chart, it shows where we rank or compare to other jurisdictions within our other neighboring jurisdictions, specifically Loudoun and Fairfax, with whom we continue to lag behind in terms of cost per pupil enrollment.

[01:21:10] This chart specifically talks about the comparison between our enrollment, so we are going from an approved budget enrollment that we used for 2024 to what we have been projecting, and as we presented in our CIP, our K-12 enrollment has declined, however, we have projected increases in enrollment for early childhood special education, services to English learners, and economically disadvantaged students and if you look on the right you will see at

[01:21:46] the bottom of the right the differences on top of the these other categories of students in terms of our enrollment trend the chart on the left basically shows an increase through 2024 decline and a plateau through 27 and 28 which is what has been projected and on the right you will see a measure of how our different categories of special education, English language learners, and

[01:22:24] direct certification which is our economically disadvantaged rank in terms of our total actual enrollment as of September 30th. For special education we have 13.2% for English language learners we have 24.9% and our direct certification is at 33.7. It gives you a context of how we are looking at our budgets and how we fund it. So in terms of our proposed slide, the next proposed

[01:23:02] budget highlight, we have a 1.78 billion dollar budget for operating in debt. The next chart basically shows our sources and uses of funds. Our sources primarily come of revenues, come from the county, 47%, 48% comes from sales, from sales tax and state aid, 3 percent from federal aid, and 2 percent is comprised of beginning balance and other sources.

[01:23:39] What constitutes the uses of these funds? 79 percent, almost 80 percent of our use is for instruction, 11 percent of our costs go towards facilities and transportation, 9 percent for central support, and 1 percent is shown in reserves.

[01:24:03] This chart shows an overall revenue and expenditure between fiscal year 2024 adopted budget and fiscal year 2025 budget. It shows it by category, and it also shows our debt service and operating fund expenditures in summary total.

[01:24:24] As you can see, our total revenues increased by 8.4 percent, and the total amount was $137 million. Conversely, expenditures and debt service increased by 137 million, or 8.4%.

[01:24:41] The next slide illustrates what are some of the important things that led to these increases. County revenue is projected to increase by 79 million, which equates to 9.8%.

[01:24:57] This projection is based on revenue forecasts provided by the county in late December 2023. increases in real estate and personal property taxes are the main drivers of this change the state budget is based on the governor's introduced budget which was on december 20th 2023 pwcs share of state aid has increased by 56 million dollars a seven and a half percent change from the prior

[01:25:29] year and this has been primarily driven by a lower local composite index lci the lci is a formula that is used to determine PWCS's ability to pay its share of the cost of education.

[01:25:46] The LCI is based on real property values, adjusted gross income, and retail sales in Prince William County. The largest increase is in basic aid of $94 million, and this has been offset by the loss of the grocery tax supplement and a decrease in sales tax, and there is no compensation supplement in the governor's budget for FY25.

[01:26:12] There is a bonus for $4.6 million, which we already are meeting through compensation increases. During this biannual, there is a re-benchmarking, and at a very high level, re-benchmarking looks at staffing required for minimum SOQ, standards of quality, the cost of this staffing, and our share of the cost.

[01:26:34] Moving on to federal revenues, federal revenues increased by 3.6% or 8.5%, and this is primarily due to Title I, Title VIB, and awards that increase, plus the addition of the Military Achievement Grant.

[01:26:54] Other revenue decreased by one and a half million, 25%. It's a small amount of our revenues, but the decrease was fairly substantial. And this is mainly due to a reduction in E-rate revenues.

[01:27:11] E-rate revenues are a universal service to eligible schools and libraries with high poverty levels that receive discounts on internet and telecommunication. It's a five-year grant, and we were able to realize substantial reimbursements in the early years of this grant, especially during COVID.

[01:27:34] So we have $137 million, that is our change from last year's approved. And how were these applied? $71 million is towards compensation.

[01:27:52] $21 million is for new students and schools. $36 million is for our strategic investments. and there's an additional six million that we have for debt service increases. I'm now going to invite Dr. Donna Eagle our PWCS chief human resources officer to present changes in compensation. Good evening Dr. Lateef, members of the board and Dr. McDade. This evening I'll be providing an overview of our recommended

[01:28:31] improvements in our compensation and our changes to our benefits premiums. As you're aware our strategic plan launching thriving futures includes regionally competitive paying benefits as one of our priorities. Over the last two budget cycles we've been able to make significant investments in improving our compensation and are pleased that we can continue those investments to ensure we offer regionally competitive pay. As an educational system we are in the people business and with nearly 80% of our budget dedicated to personnel it's imperative that our compensation and

[01:29:06] benefits stay competitive to retain our outstanding staff and in order to recruit new talent to the Division before I get started I also would like to send out a sincere appreciation to my entire

compensation and benefits team led by Mr. Joe Michelandra and also to Lisa Fry who prepared so many models for us during the collective bargaining process our recommended improvements next slide Elisa thank you our recommended improvements to our compensation varies by our teaching staff our classified staff and our administrative staff the The FY25 budget includes compensation improvements

[01:29:44] for what we refer to as our teacher group, which is actually all grade 12 staff, so it includes staff that are licensed by both the VDOE, such as our teachers, counselors, librarians, and psychologists, et cetera, and also our staff holding health licenses, such as our nurses, OTPT, et cetera.

[01:30:04] For our teacher group, the budget includes an overall average salary increase of 6.1%, and the actual increases will vary from five to 9.1%, depending upon the lane and step placement of the individual staff member. Most teachers, except those at the very top, will receive a step movement, which is valued at 3%, and the scale will be improved by 2.2%, meaning that most teachers will realize a 5.2% increase.

[01:30:31] In addition, we're also recommending a mid-career adjustment for our grade 12 staff, who will have from 12 to 18 years of experience as of this June. The rationale for this adjustment is that we found that the compensation for our teachers in this group is not as competitive as compared to our peer school divisions.

[01:30:50] Therefore, these staff members will receive an additional step movement valued at 3%. As a result, the increase for these staff members will total between 8.1 and 9.1%, depending upon the lane and step placement of the individual staff member.

[01:31:05] Moving to our classified workforce, comprised of staff and pay grades one to 11, The budget contains an overall average increase of 6 percent with actual increases varying from 3.2 to 9.2 percent depending upon the grade and step placement of the individual staff members.

[01:31:21] The classified pay scale has been enhanced to bring parity between this pay scale and our certificated and administrative pay scales. Currently the classified scale step progression which is the difference between one percentage value difference between one step to another is 2.8 to 2.9 percent whereas a step progression for our certificated administrative scales is three percent. The budget includes a rebuild of the classified scale to make the step progression three percent and also equalizes the value between each pay grade. At a minimum each staff member including except those at the very top will receive a step movement. Finally our recommendation for administrative pay scale includes an overall

[01:32:00] average of 5.2 percent consisting of a 2.2 scale enhancement and a step movement of three percent. As I stated earlier, this is the third budget year in which we've been able to make additional investments to ensure regionally competitive pay. This chart illustrates a teacher pay progression from FY22 to what we're recommending in FY25 for what we refer to as the benchmark years.

[01:32:26] It's the five-year mark, so teachers with five years, 10 years, 15 years, and 20 years. So first to orient you the top chart provides salaries for our teachers with bachelor's degrees and the bottom chart includes salaries For teachers with master's degrees now focus on the FY 25 column, which is bumped out Let's start with the top chart the first row the bumped out FY 25 column Our recommended salary in the FY 25 budget for a teacher who will have completed five years of teaching as of this June is

[01:33:02] $5,289 on that same row you'll see the annual salary history for that staff member in the first column for that five-year teacher you will see the salary that staff member was earning during the 21-22 school year when they had two years of teaching experience which was $52,292 moving right from that cell

you'll see their salary progress as their years of experience increase currently in this school year the teacher with four years experience is earning sixty one thousand seven hundred twenty three dollars and with the

[01:33:39] budgeted salary the difference in total compensation over these three budget years the total increase from FY22 to FY25 for the five-year teacher is twelve thousand nine hundred ninety seven dollars which is a twenty four point difference between the FY22 salary and the FY25 budgeted salary. As you move down the rows, you'll see the same data for a teacher that will be completing their 10th, 15th, and 20th year teaching this June. The bottom chart contains the same data for a teacher with a master's degree. As a reminder, our teacher pay

[01:34:17] scale has five lanes. Placement in the lane is dependent upon the staff member's level of education. We have a bachelor's lane, which is illustrated on the chart, a bachelor's plus 15 lane, a master's, which is illustrated on the chart, a master's plus 30, and a doctorate.

[01:34:34] As you'll note on this chart, teachers completing their 15th year of teaching this June have realized the largest increases over the past three budget cycles. This is a result of this and prior year investments that were made to increase pay for our mid-year career teachers, which was an area of the scale where we were the least competitive.

[01:34:59] Overall, teachers in these benchmark years will realize total increases from overall, teachers in the benchmark years, which are illustrated on the chart, the ranges in the increases are from 22.6 to 34.8% on the last three budget cycles.

[01:35:15] And certainly, while the cost of living is a factor that has impacted the real value of wages, we have gained ground since FY '22 in ensuring regionally competitive pay. That said, the division needs to continue to prioritize compensation and closely monitor market competitiveness to ensure we can retain and attract an outstanding workforce.

[01:35:38] We're also pleased to share some other improvements in compensation as a result of our collaboration and collective bargaining with the Prince William Education Association. First, this budget provides funding to change from a flat rate of 14,000 to compensating a teacher 20% of their salary for taking an additional class section.

[01:35:59] So if they're taking, they normally teach a load of five, so if they pick up another class section, their base salary, 20% of their base salary will be added to their compensation. These additional earnings will be considered credible compensation under the Virginia Retirement System, and as a result, could increase the retirement earnings for teachers who take on extra sections.

[01:36:21] Next, we'll be paying our certified staff the equivalent of their hourly rate for teaching summer school and extended school year. In the past, this has been compensated at a flat rate of $46.50 an hour. As you're aware, the division procured a study of our stipends and supplements.

[01:36:38] This study informed our proposal during the collective bargaining process, which was agreed to by the PWA, to increase our supplements to market rates based on information from the study. Furthermore, we're also adding supplements at middle schools for band, chorus, orchestra and drama, and are adding a science fair coordinator supplements at our secondary schools.

[01:36:59] Finally, I'll be providing a summary of our healthcare premiums. And before I go too far, I'll remind the board that we offer our staff a very rich healthcare benefit. The benefits team routinely surveys other school divisions in our region. And in a recent survey, we found we were the only division in the region whose plans do not include deductibles.

[01:37:20] Over the years, many divisions have made plan design changes, including addition of deductibles, as a cost control measure and also to bring awareness to covered members of the actual cost of services in the hopes of influencing healthcare consumers' behavior.

[01:37:36] Currently, none of our plans can gain deductibles, but we do continue to consider plan design changes. So as illustrated on the chart, we do provide four plan options for our staff. The first three plans are self-insured, which gives us a little bit more flexibility in setting premiums.

[01:37:54] And the Kaiser plan at the bottom of the chart is a fully insured HMO plan, and therefore the premium increases are provided by Kaiser. Illustrated on this chart are the monthly premiums for our plans from '21-'22 school year to what we're proposing in the '24-'25 budget.

[01:38:15] The premium paid depends on the plan. So whether you're in the enhanced plan, the core plan, the point of service HMO plan, or the Kaiser plan, and the actual tier, employee, employee plus children, employee plus staff, spouse, or employee family.

[01:38:34] Each of the column indicates the total monthly premium for the respective plan and tier, starting with the 21-22 school year in the first column and advancing each year to the final column with our recommended premium increases for the 24-25 school year.

[01:38:50] The numbers provided are monthly increases, but in practice, this amount is divided in half and deducted evenly from the two paychecks each month. To explain further, first orient your eye to the third column from the right, which is representative of our current employee health insurance premiums.

[01:39:09] It's a column entitled 2023 to 24. For our premier plan with the highest level of benefits, which is the enhanced plan, the premium for employee only coverage currently is $128.56 per month.

[01:39:27] are $64.28 per pay period. This premium for the '23-'24 school year was increased 3% over the prior year of '22-'23 by $3.75.

[01:39:43] For this upcoming school year, '24-'25, we're recommending another 3% increase in the premium. So for this tier and plan, the premium would increase $3.86 from its current amount of $128.56 per month to $132.42 per month.

[01:40:04] Next, we'll look at the Kaiser plan at the bottom of the chart, which is our plan with the lowest premiums and the highest level of healthcare management. Currently, in the 23-24 school year, if you're looking in that column, the premium for employee-only coverage is $29.46 per month, or $14.73 per pay period.

[01:40:29] As you'll note, the Kaiser premium has increased by 3%, or 86 cents per month over that of the 22-23 school year. And for this next school year, the premium will increase by 3% again, resulting in an 88 cent increase per month, or 44 cents per paycheck.

[01:40:52] As you review this chart, you'll see that the FY25 premiums are all a 3% increase on the premium. Not to be confused with a 3% increase based on a staff member's salary. The dollar amount

increases per month range from a low of 88 cents additional per month for the employee only Kaiser plan to the most would be a $24.95 per month for the family tier of the richest plan, the enhanced plan.

[01:41:26] Annually, that's a total increase of $10.56 on the low end to $299.40 on the high end. And that's the annual increased cost. To offer some perspective, the average teacher raised in the budget is $4,945.

[01:41:49] So this slide illustrates the cumulative employee increases for our health insurance plans since 2019 For each plan, the cumulative increase is provided by tier level and the tiers are the colored bars.

[01:42:07] As stated earlier, three of our plans are self-insured and the Kaiser plan is fully insured. The cumulative dollar amount increases in total from since 2019 to the recommended FY25 premiums are shown above each bar by month and pay period for each tier in plan.

[01:42:32] In addition, the cumulative percentage increase is listed under each plan type. For instance, if you look at the enhanced plan, which is the bars on the far left, the enhanced plan premiums have increased by a total of $10.06 per month for the employee-only tier since 2019.

[01:42:57] And for the family tier, the total increase premium on the enhanced plan per month since 2019 is $64.98. The Kaiser plan was initially introduced at extremely low rates as they entered the market when they built their new facility. Since its introduction rate increases have exceeded that of our other plans so you will see more significant cumulative increases with this plan although the plan in terms of the actual monthly

[01:43:29] premiums is still the least expensive plan for our staff so what is what is illustrated shows that we have increased premiums on our self-insured plans by 8% in total since 2019 however our health insurance costs have increased by more than 8% since 2019 to ensure competitive benefits the division has subsidize the premiums to keep premium increases low the causer family foundation which is an

[01:44:05] independent source for health policy research recognized by all benefit professionals shows that nationally and this is a different period so i wanted to compare apples to apples so it's not the period represented on the slide but from 2018 to 2023 according to the causer family foundation employee premiums increased by 22 percent in that same five-year time period from 2018 to 2023

[01:44:36] pwcs increased premiums on our three self-insured plans there by only five percent it will be important for us to continue to monitor our health insurance expenditures going forward and continue to study the plan design for possible changes that might help curb escalating costs while still ensuring comprehensive benefits that meet the needs of our workforce and offer and also are competitive. I'm pleased to also report that there'll be no increases in our dental premiums for next year. Before turning the presentation back over to Shaquille I'd like to take a moment

[01:45:13] and just thank the board for your continued investments in our workforce. While our resources are limited I appreciate the support and prioritizing the areas of most need to ensure regionally competitive pay and benefits for our outstanding staff thank you thank you dr. Eagle the next slide talks about new schools and students and early in the print in my presentation I discussed the growth in enrollment for our early

[01:45:51] childhood special ed students services to EL and students with disabilities on this chart we have this budget commits 21 million dollars net of any enrollment decrease in general education towards

these items we have approximately 500 students 33 sites and 66 programs for our early childhood special education

[01:46:26] programs special education level 1 increased by 14 1456 students level 2 autism increased by 256 students and our EL increased by 1470 so they are significant investments we are making in these particular items and programs.

[01:46:48] Dr. McDade will now discuss the strategic investments in the FY 2025 proposed budgets. Thank you so much Mr. Youssef. As you have seen the vast majority of the proposed budget is dedicated to wages and benefits. There is 36.6 million designated to fund strategic investments aligned with our four key commitments in the strategic plan meeting the basic needs in fulfilling the priorities through the duration of the four-year plan. I will now review the budget highlights for each of the four commitments, beginning with learning and

[01:47:24] achievement for all, which is our largest investment because that is where our main academic areas reside. This represents only the highlights of some of the biggest ticket items in the budget for learning and achievement for all. The first one is the four point million for teacher assistance for level two special education classrooms. When we launched the four-year strategic plan, we made a commitment to 300 total FTE. Year over year, we have progressively fulfilled this commitment, which was a phased process to get to the 300 over the three years. This is the last

[01:47:59] round of the FTE to fulfill the initial commitment. Keep in mind that as new programming comes online, we will make sure that our special education classrooms will receive the necessary resources to support the growing need. This was the first large number we committed to with this process.

[01:48:16] After this year, we will have fulfilled our pledge to fund 300 TAs for our Level 2 programming. Our next highlight is teaching software. This is an investment that we need to support the continuation of software for educational programming such as Nearpod for classroom lesson design, MathType to support the creation of math lessons, and our translation software to support the needs of our English learners.

[01:48:42] The governor has put out an aggressive plan to support the science of reading, which requires that schools have a certain number of reading specialists based on the total student population. In order for us to meet the state requirement, we are proposing the addition of fifteen and a half reading specialists so that all schools meet the state required threshold.

[01:49:01] We are also proposing ten elementary school administrative interns. These administrative interns will serve elementary schools that have the highest percentage of level two special education program students and have tremendous administrative responsibilities for case management.

[01:49:16] This additional resource will free up administrators to continue to support the instructional core programming and advanced academic achievement. The other benefit is that these are teaching positions that allow teachers who are aspiring leaders to pursue an opportunity for upward mobility within the school system.

[01:49:32] This is an opportunity to both retain teacher leaders and build strong succession planning within our school system. We are also proposing an increase of seven FTE diagnosticians to support the identification and reevaluation process for students who may have special needs.

[01:49:50] Our next investment highlight is kindergarten TAs. We have made a commitment to ensure that all kindergarten classrooms would have a teaching assistant so we're proposing to add 23 additional FTEs to fulfill that obligation that we made to our kindergarten teachers.

[01:50:07] Next is positive climate and culture which is our second highest funded commitment. The first highlight is our investment in international faculty. This is the cost for our contract with Participate at 3.2 million. This is where much of our diversity comes from. Our strategic plan highlights a goal to increase our international faculty by 350 teachers.

[01:50:27] This year we have a total of 258 Participate teachers. What is really great is that in Prince William County, our student population is representative of 159 countries and our Participate teachers represent those countries in our classrooms so that our students are seeing teachers from their very countries of origin.

[01:50:46] We have gotten very favorable feedback on our participate teachers who have added tremendous value to our school system. The Evolve system that we implemented this school year is on an annual lease and the second year of the lease is $2.5 million. We will continue to provide a $1,000 stipend to eligible special education teachers that do case management.

[01:51:08] To do that, we must account for $1.3 million in the budget. Those individuals who staff and support morning entry with Evolve also receive a stipend for the additional duty, which is just over $1 million. We are also proposing five additional social workers to support the increased needs of students with disabilities, those experiencing economic hardships, and to maintain our social worker-to-student ratio.

[01:51:33] The last two items are security officers and the five community safety officers. These are positions that are already staffed with employees working in security, and these investments were added to the 2024 budget off cycle so we do have to account for them now in this fiscal year's budget in the area of family and community engagement the operational budget has a low investment in this commitment area this is only because you will see a significant investment in the capital improvement plan budget to support family and community engagement additionally through previous year investments we have fulfilled our commitments identified in

[01:52:11] the strategic plan in the area of family and community engagement one of the most significant investments is our two-way translation system to remove barriers to communication we have accomplished this goal through the implementation of school status which was funded as a strategic investment in fy 23 and is now incorporated into our operating budget year over year we also funded parent liaisons for every school and that will be sustained in the budget therefore new funding streams for this investment is not needed in the FY25 budget.

[01:52:41] In FY25, we are proposing two positions for the Global Welcome Center in Manassas, apparent liaison and social worker, to support our newcomers. The big investment will be realized in the capital improvement plan for the renovation of the Global Welcome Center in Manassas, which supports families and community, which supports our third commitment, family and community engagement.

[01:53:05] And finally, in organizational coherence, we are highlighting a total of $6.4 million in investments. The first one is a request from our high schools to provide additional support to our directors of student activities. Our DSAs have tremendous responsibility to support athletics and student

extracurricular activities, so we are proposing additional funding for the high school budgets to supplement positions.

[01:53:28] The supplemental funds totals the equivalent FTE. Each school will receive an additional 0.4 budgetary allowance for this additional support for student athletics and activities. This is also the last cycle of megahertz radio replacements included in this year's budget and will complete our replacement process, which was a multi-year phased approach to funding this need.

[01:53:53] This year we will offer a bus driver sign-on bonus so that we can remain competitive coming into the hiring season this spring. We did a great job last year with bus driver recruitment, but vacancies do remain and we believe that this incentive will allow us to better compete with surrounding jurisdictions.

[01:54:11] The data analyst positions are to support our student information system as well as data analytics for student services and post-secondary success. The proposed budget also includes three FTE for bus service attendance to account for additional needs we have realized this year in supporting transportation.

[01:54:30] These are the big highlights across four key commitments in the 2025 strategic plan, and of course the detailed budget book will be made available. Mr. Youssef will close us out with a summary of changes for FY25, highlights from the capital improvement plan, debt sales, and the budget timeline.

[01:54:47] Thank you, Dr. McDade. The next chart summarizes the changes in revenue and the expenditures that we have just narrated and presented. In terms of the revenues, $79 million was from county, was a change in county revenues, $55 million in state revenue, federal revenue was at $3.6 million.

[01:55:19] There was a reduction of approximately $1.5 million in the other category, and our beginning balance did not change. The total of the revenue changes was $137 million plus $233,910.

[01:55:36] The next categories were the expenditures, where our debt service is increasing by $6.2 million, compensation that you've heard Dr. Eagle present is $71 million, strategic investments is $36.6 million, new students in school is approximately $21 million, school repairs in renewals is 5.8 and there is grants of 3.8 and there is a reduction in our baseline mainly

[01:56:12] one-time funding that is no longer needed of 7 million to bring the expenditures to 137 million which equals a revenue change at the school board work session on january 10th 2024 our chief operating officer, Mr. Wernbach, and his team presented the proposed CIP. This chart summarizes the five-year plan from 2025 to 2029. The total CIP for that period is $973 million,

[01:56:50] with bond sales or bond funding over $857 million. The next slide basically shows the change in our proposed projected debt sales from fiscal year 2024 to fiscal year 2025. The 2025 debt sales are much smoother than the prior fiscal year, and the total is again 857 million,

[01:57:20] which ties back to the previous chart of our bond funded CIP. The budget timeline, we have presented the proposed budget at CIP today, February 7th.

[01:57:38] February 12th, there will be a public meeting on budget and CIP. At KLC, there will also be a public hearing on the 21st of February. Going into March, March 13th, we'll have the budget work session and markup, with the 20th being the school board's approval of the budget and CIP.

[01:58:02] In April, the school budget is presented to the BOCS, and on April 23rd, the BOCS is scheduled to approve the budget.

[01:58:18] - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. - That concludes our budget presentation for fiscal year 25, Mr. Chairman. And at this time, we will take any questions that our board members might have.

[01:58:34] - Okay, anybody have any questions for the superintendent? Mr. Wilk. - No question, I just have a suggestion 'cause Dr. Eagle's presentation was very thorough and helpful. If it's possible, I know we've done a lot of this before, but to make little snippet videos of explaining this to the public for better context because that was so helpful Considering the dialogue that's out there in the hyper bowl that's being said about certain things about the budget and the cost of our health care and how much that's eating into it.

[01:59:04] I think that would be very beneficial for context to the community. Thank you for that feedback Mr. We absolutely can work with our communications team to put out a series of videos and informational you know maybe even we did before I think Donna did a webinar once before on it so we could even do something like that.

[01:59:26] but I think that's a great feedback and we will definitely move forward with that suggestion. - Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just kinda wanna piggyback also what Mr. Wilk was saying.

[01:59:41] I think it's absolutely phenomenal that we've only had that small percentage of change in our healthcare increases over the course of time being self-funded as someone who has always had a traditional 40 hour a week-ish job outside of being a school board member.

[02:00:00] this was past cycles, the first time I took the school division's insurance because my own employer's insurance was too expensive. So I appreciate that sensitivity that we have for our employees. Again, going back to our funding, we do not generate our own revenue.

[02:00:18] So considering how large we are as a division, how much we invest in instruction and the enormous increases over the past several years that we have been able to provide for our staff. And I think we can all agree it's not enough, but it is absolutely remarkable that we have been able to do that consistently and keep our healthcare costs at where they're at because it impacts our employees' ability to use healthcare if you pay too much for it.

[02:00:48] So I know that those are tough negotiations. I just wanted to really take the time to thank Donna Eagle and her department. I know I drive you guys crazy consistently about health care and health care costs and when are we negotiating and how come the county and all of those things.

[02:01:05] And I know that there's a lot of work put involved that's involved in that. I appreciate the breakdown because I think that is very helpful. I do like the idea of the videos, maybe like an Instagram link. Maybe we should make reels for it. But I just, I think it's very helpful to understand because almost a decade ago, when I was working for an employer, our costs went up and our increase in salary did not, and it was tough adjusting to that.

[02:01:32] You couldn't quite, math is not my strongest suit, so it was quite complicated, but I do appreciate the amount of time and effort. I also think it's, I'm thankful for the slide that shows the increase in student cost. Even though we may not have a tremendous increase in student enrollment, the students that we have enrolled and are expected to enroll are significantly more expensive, and I think that's something that's often missed.

[02:01:57] A lot of times out in the public you hear, oh, well, we have so many billions of dollars in our budget. What are we doing with this money? It's all administrative top-heavy, not understanding that the county in the last five years has gone, I think, what, 41, 42% free and reduced lunch rate countywide, if not close to it.

[02:02:15] Our L students, our special education students have also gone up. They're significantly higher increase for our student, for our budget as a student. So I don't think we can highlight that enough, especially during budget season. and I am sending all the positive vibes out in the universe that we have an approved state budget on time this year so that you, sir, will have an easier, less, if there's possible in finance, less stressful time in your position.

[02:02:41] But thank you for all of your hard work for this presentation. I look forward to getting our nice lovely binder so that we can break it down. And thank you for all of your hard work. - Okay, I have a question.

[02:02:57] Shaquille, or Dr. McDade, how certain are we on the commitment from, So the revenue forecast for the county and the state, the revenues you presented us there are fairly conservative. We shouldn't go down from there, right?

[02:03:12] If anything, maybe up or what? I see. So I meant to mention this in my notes that this is dependent. The county revenue, as you are well aware, is dependent on how they set their tax rates.

[02:03:30] These are based on the current tax rates. And as we get more information from them, as we finalize the budget, we'll definitely keep Dr. McDade in the loop and Dr. McDade will keep the school board also informed of changes.

[02:03:47] As for the state revenue, this depends on where the governor's budget and when it is approved. I understand that it's still been discussed by the General Assembly, so it depends on which way the General Assembly goes and where the budget lands with the state.

[02:04:10] Those are the two big-ticket items on our revenue side, but I look forward to getting more information, and as soon as we get more information from our county, we'll share it. And then, so on the county side, when you said it's based on the current tax rate, current tax rate, what you expect will be next fiscal year?

[02:04:31] Correct. Correct, right. Whatever little increases in their five-year plan or whatever they projected to us? That's correct. Right, okay. Dr. McTain, anything else to add? Nothing else additional. Okay. And then anyone else have any questions? So for the board, for everyone to know, Dr.

[02:04:50] Shaquille Youssef explained the timeline on Monday is the public hearing on the budget that we must do annually. That'll be this Monday at B. Is that at six o'clock? Hello, B. Hello, hello. Six o'clock is the hearing on Monday. Six o'clock Monday, Monday, February 12th. That will be the public hearing public meeting public meeting public meeting on the budget for anyone who'd like to come and speak to anything to do with the budget and that meeting will be only speakers could sign up about the budget that's that's specifically citizen common time about the budget okay board

[02:05:30] members know that they have the ability to take a look through all the budget you know speak to whoever you need to speak to regarding you know concerns and constituents and then work with the superintendent's office on any concerns you may have in the budget at this point we will move on to the

next item if there's no objection did anyone have anything else to add yeah the next i do have yeah she does the next item is going to be the course catalog yes okay dr mcdade all right the most exciting part of the meeting now is coming up here we go before we jump into the course

[02:06:05] catalog i do want to thank all of the board members for your input and the thoughtfulness that you provided the team around you know presenting the budget making sure that the public understands what we're what we're presenting to them and all of the many suggestions and throughout our discussions over the last month or more so i just want to thank each of you for all of all of your input i am excited to share that we launched our first interactive publicly accessible high school course catalog on our PWCS website which has been revised to provide

[02:06:43] a roadmap for students and families. This interactive site provides our students and parents with greater visibility and access to vital information to track and plan for post-secondary success through multiple pathways whether they choose to enroll, enlist, or seek gainful employment after graduation. Language within the catalog is connected to the strategic plan along with translation options for the nine most frequent household languages in PWCS, all supporting our vision to help students create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[02:07:16] Our team has been hard at work to make continuous improvements in PWCS offerings as well as creating transparency for our families to better support our students. And so I want to thank Denise Huebner, our Associate Superintendent of Student Services and Postsecondary Success, along with Dr. Martin and Rebecca Schlater who are joining her today, the team that helped get this off the ground and launch this really exciting opportunity for our parents and students in Prince William County.

[02:07:47] So they're going to come before you today and present our improved electronic high school course catalog. - All right, woo! Yes, ma'am. - Good evening, Dr. Lateef. - Let's go. - Vice chair, members of the board, Dr. McDade.

[02:08:03] I'm just standing here because I'm so pleased to be able to put that smile on our superintendent's face. and our deputy superintendent's face as well. - What about my face? - And all of you as well, all of you as well. This truly has been a labor of love, a heavy lift, and a great example of organizational coherence and collaboration.

[02:08:21] So with Dr. McDade's vision of creating a thriving future for our graduates and for all students, with the leadership of Dr. Flannard and the encouragement, 'cause I said, I don't know, this is a really heavy lift, I'm not sure we can do it. And Dr. Flannard said, you can do it, Denise. You can do it, Sarah, right?

[02:08:36] And so with this amazing opportunity, teams rose up we looked what we normally do when we have a crisis we said Mr. Guilfoyle what are we gonna do we need a platform and so our friends in IT found a great platform partnered and the collaboration has been this amazing product which we're gonna have a very interactive lesson as a model of how people actually learn and so the brave Dr. Martin is gonna come up and kick us off or maybe it's maybe it's the brave Mrs. Schlater so I'll turn that over to whichever one is coming first. Good evening Chairman Lateef, Vice Chairman Saagapur, members of the board, and Dr. McDade. I am Sarah Martin, the director of

[02:09:13] career and technical education. Before I start, happy CTE month. That's right. This this month we are excited to celebrate the work that our CTE teachers do to provide students with equitable access to

multiple pathways for post-secondary success, whether they choose to enroll, enlist, and seek great or seek gainful employment after graduation. In Prince William County Schools, we recognize our CTE teachers as an integral role in making the qualities of the profile of a graduate, come to life for students in an inspiring and meaningful way. My sincere appreciation to all of our CTE teachers for their commitment to our

[02:09:49] students and to thank you for your support of our CTE programs. I appreciate the time tonight to share with you the new high school course catalog. This six week project, and yes I said six weeks, was a collaborative effort between several offices and departments from our IT to teaching and learning, college and career support services and communications. The vision for this catalog was to make it a more student-focused, user-friendly, and to use us as a living instructional resource. The language is consistent with our

[02:10:25] strategic plan and commitment to our student success beyond high school graduation. You might be wondering how a course catalog can be used as an instructional resource. Well, as you know, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, all seventh-grade students must take the course Career Investigations. This course serves as a foundation for students to develop their academic and career plan.

[02:10:48] In this course students engage in assessments which help identify their interests and aptitudes. The language used in the assessments align with the language used in the course catalog. For instance you'll see things called career clusters, career pathways. Additionally the new course catalog is being incorporated into our lessons and activities for our seventh grade students to look ahead at the course offerings within their top three career clusters and begin completing their academic and career plan.

[02:11:17] Tonight I'll walk you through the live category illustrating the features and benefits of this resource and Ms. Rebecca Slater, the Director of College Career and Student Support, will share with you how this resource is being used in academic advising. So let's get started.

[02:11:34] If you would please take out your phone and you can connect live to the course catalog. For those of you at home, I'll be taking you on a live journey through the web application.

[02:11:53] Our board has that QR code, great. So if you're using your mobile device, what I'd like to share with you first is that there are three lines on the top right-hand side, that's called the hamburger. You're going to click that, and you will see a drop-down menu with the word Start Here, Graduation Requirements, Courses, Career Pathways, Specialty Programs, and a little button that says English.

[02:12:16] So the first thing that we want to share with you here is that you can choose your language. If you choose any one of those nine most often used languages in Prince William County, it is using Google Translate, and it translates that document instantaneously so that this supports our families as they are learning more about the course offerings and the benefits of being a Prince William County School student.

[02:12:49] One of the best features of this course catalog that I find is that we have right up front our graduation requirements. So if you were to click that button, if you were to click that button, or maybe not, your graduation requirements are up front so they are available for families so that they know the diploma types and which offerings that your student can be in, and to know what's expected.

[02:13:27] The next thing that I find is very, very exciting is, and I'm trying to switch over, well, it is, I'm supposed to, there we go, thank you, we had a little glitch.

[02:13:45] So if you look at your graduation requirements, you'll notice that these provide information on the standard and advanced diplomas and again general information for all of our students. What I find to be the most exciting part of this course catalog is that families and students can dive deeper into their courses.

[02:14:02] So if you were to choose that course button, that navigation button, let's say that you're an incoming ninth grader. You're going to look at the top bar. You're going to choose grade nine and then you're going to hit the search button. When I do that, I see all the courses that are available to me as a ninth grader.

[02:14:21] You'll see that there are pages and pages of courses. So that might be a little overwhelming, right? So let's say that I'm in ninth grade but I go to, I'm going to choose a school, Battlefield High School. As a ninth grader, what courses are available for me at Battlefield?

[02:14:36] Again you hit your search and you can see all the courses. Again, maybe a little overwhelming. Let's go to the subject area. You guys following me or am I going too fast? No, it's fine. You're good. So let's choose Career and Technical Education. Why don't we? Why not? I love that as well. So at Battlefield High School is grade nine in the Career and Technical Education. I'm hitting search and here are all the CTE courses available to me as a ninth grader.

[02:15:04] Sure. Isn't that exciting? Yes. Yes. So let's reset, and let me show you something different. So let's choose that you're a grade 11. Yep. Let's choose that I'm at Freedom High School. And I want to look at any of your advanced placement courses that are available to me as a grade 11.

[02:15:25] I choose a designation drop-down venue. I choose advanced placement. I hit search. and then I see all those courses available to me as a junior in high school that are advanced placement. Pretty awesome, right?

[02:15:40] - Yes, yes. - Something new that's for us this year that I'm very, very happy about, of course, is something called Career Pathways. What are Career Pathways? Let's click that button and find out. So Career Pathways are suggested course sequences available at base schools.

[02:15:59] Students express interest during the course selection process and work with their school counselors to enroll in elective courses. Career pathways are grouped by career clusters. Career cluster is a group of careers that share similar features or common themes, and CTE courses in Prince William County offer students access to 16 career clusters.

[02:16:22] And further delineated, those career clusters go break down into something called a career pathway. A career pathway is a coordinated sequence of high school courses that lead to a post-secondary career pathway. Students select to program a study or career pathway based on academic and career interests.

[02:16:40] Prince William County Schools CTE career pathways also include opportunities to earn relevant industry certifications or credentials which may provide students with an increased employment opportunities and/or college credit. So when you look at that page, if you scroll down to the bottom, you will see all the career pathways offered at the Bay schools.

[02:17:00] So just for an illustration, I'm gonna choose Arts, AV, Technology, Communications. You will see a definition of the career cluster of an Arts, AV, Technology, and Communications. You'll see that the

programs, what schools they are offered, and you'll see the pathways offered within the career cluster.

[02:17:22] So you see Journalism, Broadcasting, Pathway, Visual Arts, Pathway, and the courses that make that up. Let's move on to specialty programs. So specialty programs are courses and sequences available by transfer or transport to approved high school sites students submit a specialty program application between November 1 and February 1 so we just hit that deadline of the year prior to enrollment if you look at the specialty programs page you will see that the programs are delineated by

[02:17:57] transfer and transport again if you look at the transfer programs you will see that those career and technical education specialty programs start off with the career cluster and then it builds in. So let's look at ag food natural resources as those students just came back from a phenomenal field trip. Those that is a agribusiness systems pathway which is offered at Brentsville High School. You'll see that it's a transfer so it shows you that tells you what school and it tells you the sequencing of the courses that are there. Another

[02:18:36] one that is a favorite of mine under transfer would be the pathways to global citizenship because this one was a really hard one to build so I love that that is I'm gonna showcase you this it gives you an example or the definition of what that pathways the global citizenship program the benefits that it provides to students it shows you the different academic pathways and the themes so you can scroll all the way down and see all these wonderful courses offered in that heading back to specialty programs and let's look at a transport again those transport programs are usually your junior and senior year

[02:19:12] those are mostly career and technical education with the exception of the governor's school if we look at human services or cosmetology program again it gives you the background information of cosmetology it tells you again it's a transport what schools it's offered in and what two courses make up that pathway so as you can see this course catalog allows students and families to have all of the information they need to make informed decisions right at their fingertips I'm now going to turn this presentation over to the important work from our school counselors our director of college and career and student

[02:19:49] support Becca Slater and she'll walk you through some of the other instructional tools of this course catalog thank you good evening thank you Dr. Martin good evening chairman Lateef vice chairman Zargarpur members of the board and Dr.

[02:20:06] McDade thank you all for having us this evening my name is Becca Slater for the new board members and I'm excited to be with you to talk about the Prince William County Schools course catalog. I would be remiss as a school counselor if I did not recognize the fact that this is National School Counseling Week. The theme this year is school counseling standards based and student focus. School counselors in PWCS come to work every day prepared to deliver a variety of services to students based on need. You may find our school counselors working with individuals, groups, teaching classroom lessons. You may see them sitting beside our families solving complex social and emotional issues.

[02:20:46] And you may also find our school counselors taking students on trips to college campuses around the state. Thank you to all who serve as school counselors in Prince William County. And thank you to the members of the board and to Dr. McDade for your continued support of our profession. It's been an honor to work alongside Dr. Martin and her team to re-envision the PWCS course catalog.

[02:21:06] We really hope that this tool will become an invaluable resource for all PWCS families. So I'm going to take you back to the button that says "Start Here," and "Start Here" really is symbolic.

[02:21:22] It represents all the things that start for students when they are going through Prince William County Schools and as they transition between grade levels and between levels of schooling. So you see here we have our tools for our journey.

[02:21:39] When we start any journey in life, we all need tools for success, right? there you will find a variety of resources at your fingertips for tools that will help you navigate your high school experience school counselors will use these tools to support the academic advising process so i'm just going to show you a couple of the tools first i ask you to click on set yourself up for success so for all the school board members and to any of the parents and students that are listening here i'm going to say something maybe

[02:22:16] a little bit controversial i believe that every high school student needs to take seven classes every year all four years of high school and they need to take math every year science every year social studies every year and English every year just because there is a minimum doesn't mean that's where we live in Prince William County schools so I just want to encourage everyone look at our pacing for success and take the courses every year there's a time the education is not free and you want to take all the courses that you can while you're in Prince William County schools so this pacing for success really will set our students up for

[02:22:52] whatever door that they would like to walk through after they leave high school whether it be four-year college two-year college if you stick with us in this pacing guide you will be ready for those opportunities next I want to take you to a different section of our toolbox here so if you could click realize your vision through action. So here we have some very specific steps by

[02:23:26] grade level that students can follow to meet their goals for life after high school. Our school counselors use this tool again in academic advising to get students thinking about the steps that they need to take at each grade level. So you'll see here we have investigate, create, and action. Very succinct steps that students and our families need to take to be able to realize your thriving future some examples of investigating or researching things like graduation requirements which you can do here in the course catalog researching college

[02:24:02] costs you can create your resume and yes all of our high school students do create a resume during high school it's part of our English 10 curriculum and it's something that we also have in Naviance you can collect artifacts about your extracurricular experiences. And action, take action to challenge yourself during every year of high school so that you can reach your highest potential. So again, going back to our homepage, I want to highlight also that we have some steps for you to refine your vision according

[02:24:37] to your pathway. So when you're doing your academic and career plan in seventh grade and when parents and guardians are working with students, you are thinking about that pathway and this pathway may change over time our course catalog now has the information needed to navigate each of the pathways that a student may choose in Prince William County so I hope that the time that we have spent this evening has given you a good picture of this wonderful tool for our parents guardians and for our students we appreciate your support I appreciate working with dr. Martin on this project and I think it's a really great resource that is only going to get better in the

[02:25:17] to come so thank you dr. McDade for having us this evening and that wraps up our presentation thank you so much for that amazing presentation and for building out this much-needed resource in our school system and at this time if the board members have any questions see what you can do in six weeks dr. McDade I got a whole list of other things that are on my my request I do also want to thank Carol really who was the visionary behind a lot of this when Carol first

[02:25:52] came on board she came to me and said like we really I wanted to evaluate our courses and in my first year it was just so many things going on I couldn't get it done but as soon as she walked in the door she's like I got it and she went above and beyond my expectation for leading to what you're seeing here today and of course catalog so Carol I couldn't do this work without you I I really appreciate all that you're doing for Prince William County.

[02:26:20] - Well, Dr. Flanard, I'm thankful as well. I think this is amazing, this is great. And in the spirit of the board's many requests for communication, I would love to see maybe a video made with our students taking us through this for the students, maybe to roll out the program and maybe having Isabella and the other school board members, I'm volunteering you for more work.

[02:26:44] Yeah, yeah, but I think this is fabulous. This is exciting. I think this puts a lot of things that were very difficult to navigate in the past all in one place. It, you know, if you're a seventh grader and you wanna look at different schools and opportunities, you can click it there.

[02:27:02] You can see all the different options you might have and what the curriculum may look like and what the requirements would look like if you went there. So, I mean, this is actually, as I look at this, an enormous tool for the middle schoolers, right, as they're planning things. and for parents who many times come to us and say, you know, I'm not really sure what to do.

[02:27:23] And you know, by the time they get to eighth grade, they'll say, I didn't realize I was supposed to be looking at these kinds of things sooner. This is all there. And so I think it's really important that we push this out to the community to make sure they know this is available. It's an incredible tool. You know, I've already been playing around with it.

[02:27:40] My wife and the family's been playing around with it. It's fantastic. So I cannot thank you enough. This is really good stuff and I'm very excited and very grateful. So thank you for that. I know other board members have something to say. Ms. Wall had her hand up.

[02:27:57] - Yeah, I think I just wanna commend everybody who worked on this, the idea behind it, the technology to do it, the platform, all of this, because I think it's a really great resource and I can see a lot of families and students taking advantage of this.

[02:28:14] I know I have had kids go through PWCS and I don't honestly ever remember seeing a course catalog. And so until I was a board member. - It's true. - And so it just was sort of a process that happened with my child and like a counselor and I was sort of like on the side and didn't really know what was going on.

[02:28:35] So I think this is really great because this allows for strategic thinking and planning and facilitates the conversations to happen with the students and the parents, like what are you interested in? Let's figure out where the best place for you is. And then I think we'll be able to avoid situations where we get a 12th grader who suddenly becomes aware that there's a welding program and they always wanted to be a welder, you know, or something like that.

[02:29:01] Like I know those things have happened in the past just because it was just a little harder. And I love how the technology makes this so easy. This looks fun to go through here. I think I'm gonna spend a good hour clicking through everything to see what everything looks like. But I just commend the effort or the strides towards transparency and knowledge because that enables good decision making.

[02:29:26] And hopefully we will have students who see these exciting things and think, why would I just take three classes as a senior? I'm gonna explore and take a full load of all these interesting things before I get to college because I'll tell you if they get to college and they can't figure it out and they change their majors two or three or four times, it becomes very expensive and also frustrating and also discouraging.

[02:29:49] So I think we're really helping launch our kids with this kind of transparency and accessibility to what we offer, which we offer so many great things in Prince William County, so thank you. - Okay, we'll go, I'm gonna start down here.

[02:30:04] I'll go to Ms. Williams, and then I'll go to Mr. Jessie, 'cause she was second. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I echo my fellow board member's statements by saying this is commendable. as a former PWCS student who had the actual book I could flip through that looked like a weekly read, well, yeah, I don't know if anybody knows what weekly readers are, but yeah, phone book.

[02:30:23] No, it wasn't, no, it wasn't. It was like super thin back then. And then as a parent of a student who graduated in 2019, Ken Bassett and I battled out over the course catalog that you couldn't find, but was online, but was the worst document that I've ever seen in my life and very confusing to follow.

[02:30:43] As a parent of an elementary schooler, soon to be middle schooler, I'm very excited about this. I would like to see this pushed out operationally in a manner that is accessible to all of our families, meaning be it by text, we should be talking about this at back to school night, not waiting till middle school, but in elementary school, especially for our families who are not from this county, not from this country, who don't understand the importance of planning, starting in elementary school, not middle school, because if you don't teach them, they don't know.

[02:31:18] I can't tell you how many back-to-school nights I'll go, "Hey, do you know we have specialty programs?" Not a clue. Last election cycle, just talking to voters. Not a clue that we have it. And I know, 'cause I've said for years, we do almost everything except go to people's doors, knock on them, and read it to them.

[02:31:34] But we are large, we are diverse, and we are rapidly changing. And as wonderful as this is, it will do our families no good. if we aren't pushing that message out in a digestible manner to all of our families, no matter where their background is, no matter what their home language is, because traditionally this has been gatekeeped information and parents miss it, or they wait and they get it when their kid's getting to enroll in high school and it's too late for a lot of the prerequisite courses, it's too late for opportunities for their kids to do it, or then they stress their students out and they double book them in summer school and all of the other things.

[02:32:13] So I absolutely am not taking away from any of the progress that's been made because I've seen it over the years and it's commendable, but I would be very remiss if I wasn't myself and said, we really need to harp this on our families who are just moving to Prince William County, who don't know anything about this.

[02:32:31] I can say there's people I've graduated with that still live here that still don't know. So I know that this is an issue, but it would be nice if we could incorporate this into some of the already forward progress information sessions that we're providing to our families because we're doing such a good job in that evolution.

[02:32:49] I cannot be prouder of it, but it's just extremely important to me that all of our families have access to this and understand the, not just access, but understand the importance of it and how it works. Ms. Huebner, you look like you have a comment. - So we certainly, that is our intention to push it out.

[02:33:06] And I did want to highlight that we have had and we'll continue to have information sessions. We had a family engagement session with translated opportunities for parents. In addition, that is recorded and that will be available. We've also worked with our parent liaisons to train them on this resource so they have familiarity with it in your goal.

[02:33:23] We see that vision with you and we will continue to work hard to do better with that. - Thank you. Back to school nights when like everybody's attentive, if we could push it out then, like at the beginning of the year, before we get to the scheduling, before we get to any of that kind of stuff. I don't, it's not my job.

[02:33:40] I'm not trying to do your job for you 'cause I recognize we have a superintendent who is uber competent, but that's generally when parents are paying attention. When we do our family engagement series nights, when we do our other things, it's a hit or miss. And I just think it's just, that's my opinion only, but I think that would be an excellent time to try to incorporate, have you seen this?

[02:34:01] This is the importance of. And it also would take a burden off of some of our counselors who then get inundated because their children pick things and parents don't know all that other good jazz. So thank you, I appreciate it. - Mr. Jesse and then Ms. Zargar. - I'd like to compliment you guys on this.

[02:34:18] It's amazing. Something that, the type of thing I like to work on and do and come up with ideas of doing things like this. I can't wait to talk to my daughter at home about this because she is very critical of everything.

[02:34:36] And, you know, I want to say this is amazing. She probably will tell me no, but, But, you know, the one thing I will say is that getting people to use computers is not easy.

[02:34:55] You know, you can have books and read, and they're all in the same cell. And then you want to look up something. And you go through, you know, you pull out a book, and you pull this book, and it takes you from. Or you can do a search on the computer for the same books, and in a matter of minutes have all that information.

[02:35:18] But getting people to be at ease looking at this stuff is a really hard part that we have to get to. Because the information is there, the technology is there, but getting people to believe it and understand it and use it is important.

[02:35:36] So I hope this, I think this is that. And we're going to work on Dr. Lateef Amann-Corner. So, Mr. Jesse, one feature that we did not point out, in case you are a paper lover, because there are those paper lovers out there, this catalog does print into a PDF version that parents, or if you're a paper person, that is an option that is available to parents.

[02:35:59] Yeah, it is an option, and again, they will take 30 minutes to get to where you can get to in five minutes, you know, and that's understandable, but again, we want to encourage them and get them comfortable using this stuff.

[02:36:16] - Thank you. - Ms. Zargarpur and then Ms. Trin. - I'll just make this very quick. Thank you for this. When I was going through schools here, I think our course catalog was maybe a piece of card stock or something and you checked off one English, one math, one, yeah, that's about what it was.

[02:36:35] I loved your sentiment about the, make sure the kids are taking the full courses. Yes, yes, yes. I mean, it's one of the few times in your life you're gonna get to try something And it's not going to cost you a college tuition, and you never know what door might open.

[02:36:52] The other thing I did notice on here, I saw something that said guarantee or warranty. That's a fascinating link, by the way. Guarantee? It was a guarantee or warranty? Diploma warranty. Yeah, diploma warranty. Sorry, yeah. Diploma warranty.

[02:37:07] I thought that was fascinating. So that was awesome. So, yeah, we've had a diploma warranty in Prince William County School. I've been around long enough, sadly. This started about 22 years ago with Dr. Kelly, who wanted to make sure that employers in the locality knew that, you know, we stand by what we do in Prince William County schools.

[02:37:30] And that's where that diploma warranty comes from. So thank you for noticing that. Ms. Tredenik. Thank you for this. As a parent of a senior right now, this is super helpful to have it digitally like this and to be able to click on it.

[02:37:48] I do understand what Mr. Jesse is saying. Possibly, you know, that it's printed and there's a copy in the front office at a school until if someone were to request it. I also would just like to say as a parent of multiple kids, please do not add anything else to back to school night.

[02:38:03] I echo and I feel like a lot of parents would say, no, thank you. We're trying to get to 14 classes, having anything else, even that video, just having that up online so we can watch it there. But anyways, that's just my two cents. Thank you very much for this time that it took to do that.

[02:38:22] - Okay, listen, I mean, I will say that I consider this in my six years on the school board, one of the greatest achievements that I've gotten to observe the staff do. I mean, I think member Williams said it best when, you know, what did she say?

[02:38:44] There was a gate, what did you say? It was gate kept and there was a course catalog and we had one copy in our house, like a real copy, but it was something that they said, you know, wouldn't print every year 'cause you couldn't give one to every kid, a lot of paper. And so they had it somewhere online and it was online, but it was always challenging to find.

[02:39:03] So I think this is incredible. This is interactive, it's engaging, it leads to the answers. It is an incredible tool. And by the way, you know, Happy National Counselors, what are we doing, week, month? Week, Happy National Counselors, week, year.

[02:39:21] You know, it is, I love them. This is a terrific tool for them as well. This will help take some of the burden of the work off of their plate. So, you know, as I look at this, you know, we say the ideal counselor to student ratio, which, you know, I always struggle with how they come up with the numbers, 250 to one, the state says on the SOQs.

[02:39:43] I think we're right there almost at the high school. Are we almost there, Denise? 275, did we get to 250? We're at 300, so we're at 300. So something like this will help make, you know, kind of virtually get us to 51.

[02:39:59] I mean, it really helps, you know, take the burden off of the work for them a little bit. And they have a lot of tremendous work. And, you know, as we continue to, you know, see, you know, changes in the world, the counseling work gets heavier and heavier, right? It's just not, you know, when a student walks in and says, what do I do when they're not hiring people who've learned how to code now at a high college because coding is done by AI, what the heck do I do now, right?

[02:40:25] And so even for counselors, it's hard to keep up with what's happening in the world. So I just see this as a great tool for our students and our staff. And I just think this is maybe the most important thing we have done in an incredible, you know, it's just incredibly important.

[02:40:41] So Dr. McDade, thank you so much. This is, I mean, I recommend that, you know, this should be on the front button of the website. Like this should be like up in the corner here, you're a student, you know, there should be a button that goes right to this. You know, like a big giant button, you know?

[02:40:58] But, and I can talk about this all night, but I can't thank you enough. This is tremendous. And I also think, you know, if you're coming from another county or you're thinking about moving to Prince William, you know, you look at this page and you say, this is a destination district for us, right?

[02:41:16] This is where I want my children to get educated. it's transparent, it's open, it sort of indicates that there's a level of accountability. And I just think that is what we're trying to achieve here.

[02:41:32] And it's really, it really is exciting. And I just, I mean, look at this, you have the thing you'll hear on, did I just see the military pathway, right? Career, I mean, it's all there, so it's really neat. So anyways, I can go on and on, but I can't thank you, the entire team, everybody named, didn't name, Dr. McDade, very good.

[02:41:51] This is exciting. - All right, thank you so much. - And our student, Isabella Aversano, I want to hear from you. We want to hear from you. The public wants to hear from you. - I know. Speaking of entertaining jobs and positions, I just wanted to thank you guys for doing this.

[02:42:08] I've been faced with some pretty gnarly course catalogs and I kind of just, at that point, so thank you. That's all. - Dr. McDade. - Thank you so much. And Carol wants you to know middle school is on the way. - Yes, yes, middle school is on the way.

[02:42:24] - We also have some other exciting resources that I cannot wait to release that are coming pretty soon towards the end of February. That'll be another opportunity for us to engage with our families and our students as they prepare for post-secondary success.

[02:42:41] So this is just one of many new initiatives to push post-secondary because we know that our job goes beyond handing that diploma on the stage of graduation. The true measure of success for our school system is our students' ability to acquire rewarding careers, experience economic mobility, and live a fulfilling life.

[02:43:01] And that is what we're trying to accomplish in Prince William County. - Well, Dr. McDade, you teased us now for the next board meeting, maybe the first meeting in March, but that's a teaser. If I'm in

the press, I'm gonna wanna be here in the front row writing about the exciting things happening in Prince William County public schools.

[02:43:23] - Thank you so much. I think now we are moving on to, are we done? Dr. McDade, you have completed superintendent's time. Outstanding, we're up to board matters. We will start with Mr. Tracy Blake of the great Neabsco district.

[02:43:39] - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, everyone. Today marks the 100th day of the school year. Just a little recognition. And as we usher into February, we celebrate the beginning of Black History Month, a vital period that reinforces the notion black history is indeed an integral part of American history. This month serves as a resolute reminder of the indispensable contributions and sacrifices made by black Americans in shaping the narrative of our nation. I'd also like to extend a heartfelt congratulations to our superintendent Dr. McDade for being

[02:44:16] named the Region 4 Superintendent of the Year. This honor is a testament to Dr. McDade's exceptional leadership and commitment to education which has significantly impacted our community. I was able to attend the PTO Bingo Night at Penn Elementary School, which was a vibrant display of community spirit with 300 to 400 families and students participating. Such an event underscores our community's unity and commitment to our

[02:44:52] children's education. This weekend I was able to attend the first annual George Hampton Day at George Hampton Middle School, which was a remarkable celebration of life for Dr. Hampton's legacy and contributions to education. The performances by the George Hampton Middle School dance team, cheerleaders, Literacy Magazine Club, and guitarist students were a true testament to the excellence and creativity we encourage in our students.

[02:45:22] Additionally, I would like to acknowledge Ms. Diane Ralston's deep respect for Dr. Hampton and his legacy in education. Her joy in participating in renaming the school in his honor reflects a strong connection with our educational heritage.

[02:45:37] This afternoon I visited Neabsco Elementary School where the school counselors Ms. Larimore and Ms. Fultz were recognized with the Virginia Department of Education Region 4 Difference Maker of the Year Award for their Star Supporting Stars Mentorship Program.

[02:45:59] This program has not only empowered students to become leaders, but has also played a crucial role in increasing attendance rates. It highlights the significant impact of mentorship on student engagement and academic achievement.

[02:46:14] Following their visit to Neap School Elementary, I had the pleasure of stopping by the school-wide spelling bee at Minnieville Elementary School. The event was a profound demonstration of academic enthusiasm and talent. The children's ability in spelling was so remarkable that the competition went well past the dismissal bill, but luckily their parents were there, so they just stayed and they kept competing.

[02:46:41] I left though, so. Such events are crucial in fostering a love for language and learning among our students. In conclusion, these events and recognitions highlights our district's commitment to excellence, diversity, and community engagement.

[02:46:59] It is an honor to be part of such a proactive and nurturing educational community. Thank you and have a good night. - Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Vice Chairwoman. I would also like to celebrate the

100th day of school.

[02:47:14] I miss, we used to have citizen comments who came in and celebrate, but I used to be able to go to the schools and see everyone all dressed up in their 100th day of school outfits. So it's an exciting time. I'd like to wish everyone who will be celebrating the upcoming Chinese New Year on the 10th.

[02:47:33] Happy New Year, and I'm excited for celebrating our Digital Learning Day, which is on the 15th of February. Also want to appreciate our lovely clerks, and Deputy Clerk, and Clerk of the School Board, as well as Lillian, who thank God for you guys, really.

[02:47:51] Herding cats is the expression I use, but I think it just needs to be leveled up, 'cause there's so much more now. and without you, I don't know how well this board would function behind the scenes, and I just really want to extend all of my heartfelt appreciation for everything that you do for all of us.

[02:48:07] Thank you. That was a good call, yes, yes, I love it, I love it. So, moving on, I would challenge all of those parents in Prince William County who are unhappy with the current state of school attendance to reach out to your legislators.

[02:48:24] Prince William County is being compliant with state law and state regulation. I know that it is challenging sometimes for parents to understand the difference between excuse and unexcused absences, but it does not matter to our state legislators if you are not here. That counts against us, which in turn counts against our accreditation.

[02:48:42] So schools may be in jeopardy of losing accreditation no matter their academic standings or how well the students are performing because students are not in school. And I think that this is hard to digest and sometimes hard to comprehend, especially after having our entire society and culture shift to keeping our students home when they are not feeling well.

[02:49:01] I encourage you to reach out to your school and to learn more about it if you're having questions. Please do not feel personally attacked by truancy letters. I know that a lot of them are going out, but we also have to be compliant as a school division. And so I would encourage you to reach out to your elected officials for more information.

[02:49:21] I'm going to go over, but I don't care at this moment because I love Black History Month. It's really, Black History Month is our history in this country. There are so many things to learn about. I'd like to recommend one book that I love every year to share, which is "A Thousand and One Things Everyone Should Know About African American History."

[02:49:41] Because if you aren't aware, there's pretty much anything you come into contact in your day-to-day life that makes life easier was probably invented by a black person. Whether it's a spark plug, air-conditioned furnace in your house, heat, refrigerator, door stops, ironing board, firefighter helmet, traffic light, you name it.

[02:49:59] All of these things were amazing inventions contributed to a fabric of our society by African Americans. And speaking of that, I would like to celebrate, which has already been done, our own history maker in African American History Month, Dr. LaTanya McDade, for winning Regional Superintendent of the Year, again, because it's worth mentioning.

[02:50:19] I'd also like everyone to take a moment and learn about our own amazing African-American history, not only in Prince William County, but within our school division. And I'd like to give credit to Miss

Lily Jessie for always being the leader on honoring black history within our school division.

[02:50:37] Prince William County has a very long and amazing history when it comes to African-Americans and other minorities, but especially African-Americans, with the courageous four, just to name one. And lastly, I'm gonna wrap it up really quickly, but I would like to congratulate our school division for contributing funds through Spark, I believe it was Education Foundation, for the expansion of the EIP program as an EIP alumni.

[02:51:03] I know how much that program means to those students and families. I was the first in my family to graduate college. If I had not been in EIP, I more than likely would not be sitting in this seat today. I would have not been a college graduate at all, and I would not have the career I have if it was not for EIP.

[02:51:21] So I am eternally grateful for that program, for George Mason and for Prince William County Schools continuation and expanding the opportunity for other students. So thank you very much. And Ms. Denise Humner, next time you go, please invite me. - Ms. Wall.

[02:51:38] - Thank you. I wanna say congratulations to Dr. McDade for Region Four Superintendent of the Year. That is a huge accomplishment and a great honor to our school division. I wanna thank school counselors for School Counselor Week. You are amazing. You do a really heavy lift.

[02:51:53] You are so valuable for our students. So thank you. I appreciate the budget discussion tonight. I think it's gonna be very interesting to hear from members of the community. So please reach out to me in the Gainesville District and let me know what your thoughts are.

[02:52:09] I wanna give some congratulations. Battlefield Girls Gymnastics Team are Cedar Run District Champs and now Region Champs. So I went to the meet last night. it was awesome, everybody did a great job. And Battlefield was chosen to go on to the state tournament, so that's really exciting.

[02:52:28] Also, Battlefield boys are the Cedar Run district champs for wrestling, and they are also going on. And good luck to Battlefield and Gainesville basketball teams for the semifinals.

[02:52:45] In fact, there's probably a win already, but I haven't heard what it is. They were playing tonight. I will be holding office hours on February 20th at the Haymarket Gainesville Library. From 5:30 to 7:30, please email me to reserve a time.

[02:53:00] I've been to a lot of events over the last three weeks. Unity Braxton last night for the boy who harnessed the wind reading activity that involved all content areas. It was really innovative and they had a great turnout from the community. I already mentioned region 6B gymnastics, The Chesapeake District Championships for First Tech Challenge were at Battlefield.

[02:53:22] That was an awesome event. Love to see the enthusiasm. Also went to All District Band. Wanted to say congratulations to Taekwondo champ David Gill from Reagan Middle School. He is going to be competing in Hong Kong.

[02:53:38] And congratulations to Battlefield student Sarah Everhard for her first US Figure Skating Championship win. We have such distinguished kids. It's amazing. This is a big month for music. I was excited that I was able to attend Select and Honors Orchestra for All County on January 28th and some other events like VEX Robotics at Marcellar and Lake Ridge.

[02:54:00] Wow, I just can go on and on of all the things, but I think I'm gonna switch for the sake of time. I am excited about the progress we're making toward empowering students and parents. And I want to share with you the motto from Sudley Elementary School, which is don't just follow your dreams, chase them.

[02:54:22] And I think that is a good thing for us all to remember. Don't just follow your dreams, chase them. And I see a lot of evidence that we here in Prince William County are chasing our dreams. And I think students are ultimately going to be the beneficiaries. And with that, good night. Mr. Jesse.

[02:54:41] - It's been very interesting being on the board and I used to tell people I don't understand why the spouses of elected officials not with them all the time well after 11 years with Lily I understood it very well because it's a lot and it's a lot of work for example Saturday I attended the Hampton School celebration and I've said in in citizen time many times that

[02:55:15] it's important that I think every school should talk about why the school is name whatever its name after and the Amagas are doing a great job at Hampton keeping the thing that was like a half-day program it wasn't just a one thing and then this Saturday the Amagas are also having a talent show over at Woodbridge High School so that's important but I left Hampton early to go

[02:55:45] to a funeral and that funeral was for the wife of Admiral Gravely and he was the first admiral in the Navy black Admiral in the Navy and that school I'm I don't I didn't know him I didn't really know his wife but I just wanted to be there because I thought it was man I think she was 102 when she passed away but the important thing I want to say is that they have been involved in that school it wasn't just the school was named that they wanted to make sure

[02:56:23] that school knew why they were named after him and I want to encourage people to you know keep your school name alive if you know it's important also I want to encourage people I know we have the hearing Monday the public hearing for the Budget and so forth and I'll be honest with you. We'll be lucky if we have ten people and I want to encourage people to come out

[02:57:00] Particularly those people in Woodbridge whether you think we should delay the high school or you think we shouldn't delay it But come out and express your opinion be part of the thing Don't just complain about the budget but help us understand what the citizen in the county needs So I encourage you to come out and attend and I just want to say thank you It's been an honor to to be on this board so far and I hope after four years I I still hope that you you think that we did a good job

[02:57:37] And we were not always gonna agree with you and we're not always gonna do it the way you want But I think we do it in a pretty doggone good way. Thank you. Mr. Erica Trudanik of the

[02:57:52] Wonderful Brentsville district. I just want to express my gratitude again for the opportunity to serve as your school board member. January has been a long month and I've immersed myself in this new role gaining deeper insights into our schools and division. I attended an event alongside Jen Wall and Justin Wilk about the dangers of fentanyl in our county. I want to commend the efforts of Potomac Valley Church and Will Archer, the pastor. Also the speakers, Attorney General Jason Meares and First Lady of Virginia, Suzanne Youngkin, who hosted the ARCAN training event on January 23rd shedding light on the critical issue of fentanyl awareness. It was extremely insightful to learn about the dangers of

[02:58:31] fentanyl and the ways we can raise awareness with kids and the public. To the concerned parents who reached out about attendance letters, please know that your feedback has been heard. I

brought your concerns to the attention of the superintendent and emphasizing the importance of delivering messages with sensitivity and accuracy. I know the administration is reviewing these concerns and will make appropriate changes to ensure clear and accurate communications. Visiting schools in the Brentsville district has been a privilege. Meeting with principals, staff, and our exceptional teachers has only reinforced my appreciation for the dedication and talent within our education community. From inspiring STEM projects to captivating chorus performances, our students continue to impress me with their enthusiasm and

[02:59:10] learning for growth. I was super impressed with the Patriot High School students that reminded us about Random Acts of Kindness Week tonight. Haley, Madeline, Gianna, you rock. Thanks for the great swag that you gave us. I look forward to continuing to work together to support our schools and families and students. I'm excited to attend some playoff games, musicals, drama performances and work with the PTO and Advisory Council. Please feel free to reach out to me with any concerns or invites if you want to have me come to something at your school and thank you for the budget presentation, the charts

[02:59:45] and things that made it very uh attainable for us as regular people to understand um i i appreciate that and i like that um i i also just want to say out loud to the public i do think that it is incredibly disrespectful when we as board members choose to go over our time when we ask you to stick to three minutes i think we as board members should also be respectful and stick to to three minutes, thank you.

[03:00:16] - Mr. Wilk, thank you. Following that, I didn't prepare something, so I have some thoughts I'd like to share tonight in a calm tone and manner. I do wanna first recognize and thank, of course, recognize African-American History Month.

[03:00:32] I wanna thank all of our school counselors, wanna recognize CTE month, our clerk's office, hopefully we can add another position in there for you. So I'm very appreciative of that. I also wanna thank the budget presentation today. I did send suggestions and feedback on the budget, not just for my schools this year, but also looking at everyone's schools.

[03:00:52] I know, shocking. So equitably, I'm looking hopefully for ways of helping our schools that are under capacity with our specialty programs promote their programs better. I'm looking equitably if we are truly in support of promoting the theater arts in this division on making sure our older buildings also have storage so they can have state-of-the-art sets like Colgan High School.

[03:01:16] So a couple thoughts now. This is my annual start of concerns with discipline. So anecdotally, I believe there's been a spike in discipline, especially in the areas of bullying. Truthfully, I did think that updating and editing the code of behavior last June was gonna have some drastic improved change with the disciplinary actions that resulted in the bullying.

[03:01:39] Transparently, I'm still concerned. I do wholeheartedly believe that come this May and June, I think the board should look at better defining What is repeated and what is perpetual bullying? I think it's a serious concern and I've received an influx of emails from parents in my community that this is an ongoing thing.

[03:01:59] And I question sometimes, I'm speaking for myself, not the board. I question sometimes the disciplinary actions that are administered. I don't think we need to get in a position where parents of the victims are the ones looking for alternative placement for their students.

[03:02:16] That shouldn't be what we're doing. Lastly, I do have a concern and something I think, and again, this may be on the roadmap. You know, with our afterschool events, especially the largely attended ones like our basketball, football games, various things like that, if we're looking at a roadmap of hopefully scanning student IDs as they come into these events, what I'm finding and my concern is when acts of skullduggery occur and the perpetrators are the ones who are doing horrible things, whether it's in the parking lot, in the event, or fights,

[03:02:53] they're often students not part of either the visiting school or the home school. Often they could be expelled. The security at that building does not have a way of knowing what students are expelled visiting their building.

[03:03:09] If we have an ID card that could flash and indicate that to them by the look and appearance, I think that would be very helpful moving forward. Thank you so much. - Ms. Zargar. I'm gonna take a minute to thank our school counselors who play a crucial role in the educational system by providing support to our students in various aspects of their lives.

[03:03:32] One, they support academics, counselors assist students in setting academic goals, developing study skills and overcoming academic challenges. Two, personal and social development. Counselors provide guidance and support to help students navigate personal and social challenges and these issues can include peer relationships, family relationships, bullying, self esteem, health concerns. Three, career counseling. Counselors can help students explore career options, set career goals, and develop plans for post-secondary education or vocational training, and they can provide resources for career

[03:04:08] exploration and assist with resume writing, job searching, and all those kinds of things. Four, crisis intervention. Counselors are often trained to provide support during times of crisis or emergency situations. They may assist students and families in coping with traumatic events. They also in offer individual counseling one-on-one section sessions to address specific student concerns I skipped five four and five got together there six they offer group counseling they may facilitate group counseling sessions to address common issues among students seven they are advocates and they

[03:04:44] advocate for the needs of our students within the school system eight they collaborate with teachers administrators parents community organizations to create a supportive and inclusive school environment and with the theme tonight that centered on kindness and I believe someone else had mentioned taking a burden off of our counselors. I'd like us to hopefully consider a way to engage community partnerships to support our students and our families. There are some school divisions in Virginia that offer telehealth sessions for students. It could cut down on absenteeism because

[03:05:23] students wouldn't have to be out of school for appointments so I'm hoping we can consider doing something like that and that would take a burden off of our counselors who can do that but they can't do it all and we need to help support them as well of course getting more funding so that we can hire more counselors would be awesome as well we're doing great things here in Prince William County we have career counselors we have college and career counselors in all of our high schools so we are making improvements but given the fact that there have been so many things centered on mental health.

[03:05:57] We cannot make one person's job multiple jobs. So that's my two cents on that. I did get to go and visit lots of different events and I look forward to hearing, seeing, and experiencing more. I will leave you all with a quote this week by Leslie Odom Jr. who played Alexander, or who played Aaron Burr in "Alexander Hamilton."

[03:06:17] He says, "You must be an artist and a citizen of the world. You must speak to this stuff that's happening. You must do what you can to shine a light on it and help people through it. - Thank you, Ms. Zargarpur. First, I wanna thank the students from Patriot High School who came during citizen common time and they gave us a shirt and it says, there is always time to be kind.

[03:06:44] And that includes in the boardroom, at the dais, in meetings, wherever we're at. So that's great. Second is Black History Month, so I thought I'd start off with a not often quoted quote from Martin Luther King Jr.

[03:07:03] It seems to me that education has a two-fold function to perform in the life of man and in society. The one is utility and the other is culture. Education must enable a man to become more efficient, to achieve with increasing facility the legitimate goals of his life.

[03:07:21] Sounds like our launching Thriving Futures. And then I'm gonna wrap up, actually I'm gonna keep it short tonight, on National Counselors Week. Personally, I love the counselors my children have had. We have Ms. Hanville over at Colgan High School, and Ms. Sharp, and Ms. Bach over at the Governor's School.

[03:07:41] Absolutely wonderful counselors, really engaged with our students and really changed their lives. I remember my counselors from when I was in high school, Mr. Sullivan, my counselor in college, "Ginerva Mann, rest in peace, I love that lady."

[03:07:57] And my counselors from medical school and residency and my mentors and all of those. They really make a difference in our lives. I'll leave you with one quote, and I can't find the source of the quote, and so I don't wanna make it look like I'm so smart, but it follows on, many of you heard that I talk about GPA and GPS, and I really care about the student's GPA, but I care more about their GPS.

[03:08:17] Where do they wanna go, how would they like to get there, and what would they like to see on the way? That is a charge of public education. Well, to do that charge well, you need guidance counselors. So guidance counselors are the compass that helps students navigate the path to their dreams and aspirations.

[03:08:34] In the hands of a caring guidance counselor, uncertainty transforms into clarity and obstacles become stepping stones. Thank you to all our wonderful counselors. I wish you all a wonderful week and a wonderful year. Thank you, and this meeting is now adjourned.

