MACHINE TRANSCRIPT · CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Date	Wednesday, May 15, 2024
Place	Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length	4h 20m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W719u0efyDA
- Official School Board page (PWCS): https://www.pwcs.edu/about/school_board/

> Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-11-01. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:01] - I'd like to call the meeting of the Prince William County School Board to order. Approval of the agenda. Motion is in order for the approval of meeting agenda. Ms. Zargarpur. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the meeting agenda as recommended. - Do I have a second? Any discussion?

[00:00:16] Okay, please vote.

[00:00:42] - Vote is seven yes, one not present vote. Mr. Jesse, motion passed. - Moving on to the motion to enter closed session. A motion is in order, Ms. Zargarpur. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I move that pursuant to sections 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, The Prince William County School Board entered closed session for the following reasons.

[00:01:00] One, to discuss with staff the appointment, transfer, release, assignment, and promotion of specific officers, appointees and employees pursuant to Virginia Code section 2.2-3711A, one. Two, to discuss with division counsel and staff actual or probable litigation in specific legal matters involving specific staff and students pursuant to Virginia Code section 2.2-3711A, seven and eight.

[00:01:22] Three, to discuss the award of a public contract employees exclusive representative which involves the expenditure of public funds and the terms or scope of such contract where discussion in open

session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body four to consult with staff and legal counsel regarding the legal requirements and procedures for collective bargaining by school board employees which requires legal advice and guidance as provided by virginia code section 2.2 dash 3711 a eight five to discuss and consult with division counsel regarding the legal requirements for for school board advisory committees, including school board policies related thereto,

[00:01:58] as provided by Virginia Code section 2.2-3711A eight, six, to review disciplinary matters for specific students that would involve the disclosure of information contained in the scholastic record for individual students and to receive legal advice regarding the same as provided by Virginia Code section 2.2-3711A two and eight, seven, to discuss and consult with legal counsel regarding requests for religious exemptions pertaining to specific students in Virginia Code section 2.2-3711A, two and eight, and eight 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

[00:02:38] to respond to such matters where discussion in an open meeting would jeopardize the security of such facilities pursuant to Virginia Code section 2.2-3711A, 19. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman, I second. - Mr. Williams, any discussion?

[00:02:54] Please vote.

[00:03:12] - The vote is eight yes, motion passed. - At this time, the Prince William County School Board will now enter closed session,

[00:03:17] return open session in one hour.

[00:04:20] Prince William County School Board will now return to open session from closed session. Closed session certification is on for action. Ms. Zargarpur. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that pursuant to section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, the closed session of the Prince William County School Board meeting of May 15th, 2024, be certified by adopting the following resolution.

[00:04:43] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Prince William County School Board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge, one, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements were discussed in the closed meeting to which the certification resolution applies, and two, only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening that the closed meeting were heard and discussed or considered by the school board.

[00:05:08] Do I have a second? Mr. Chairman, I second. Ms. Wall seconds. Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:05:30] - Yeah, my mouth. - The vote is seven yes, one not present vote. Williams, motion passed. - Okay, great. Moving on to closed session action items. Motions in order for appointments and releases.

[00:05:47] Ms. Zargarpur. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the appointments and releases of specific employees as presented in closed session. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Wall. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:06:13] - The vote is seven yes, one not present at vote. Williams, motion passed. - Okay, moving on to 10.02. A motion is in order of Mr. Agaraport. - Mr. Chairman, I move that for the reason set forth in the Student Management and Alternative Program Department's SMAPD letter of April 15th, 2024, Prince William County School Board approved SMAPD's recommendation to reassign student SRH24-112 to the

computer-based instruction CBI program via remote access only with educational services being determined by the student's IEP team based on charges of unlawful acts in the community.

[00:06:50] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - I second. - Ms. Wall. - I second. - Ms. Wall seconds. Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:07:07] - Vote is seven yes, one not present at vote. Williams, motion passed. - Okay, moving on to 10.03, Ms. Zargarpur. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the request for religious exemption from compulsory school attendance for case number RE23-23.

[00:07:25] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman, I second. - Wall wins, or Blake, I don't know, either one. Take either one, Ms. Simpson. Any discussion, please vote.

[00:07:40] - I see. - The vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed. - On to 10.04, Ms. Zargarpur. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the closed session consent agenda item as presented in closed session.

[00:08:00] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Mr. Blake. - I second. - Any discussion, please vote.

[00:08:19] - The vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed. - Okay, that concludes our closed session action items. Moving on to the Pledge of Allegiance. Tonight, we have our student representative, Fernanda Marante with us to lead the pledge. Ms. Marante. - Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[00:08:50] - Okay, thank you. Next, we're moving on to our Thriving Futures Focus. Thriving Futures Focus is an opportunity to highlight the exemplary work being accomplished in our schools that fulfill our vision that every student will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[00:09:09] We dedicate this time during our meetings to recognizing students, staff members, and schools that have earned an honor or award at the state or national level. We appreciate how these honorees have positively represented Prince William County Public Schools, and the school board is proud to recognize them publicly for their accomplishments.

[00:09:26] Tonight, the school board will first recognize four of our schools recently recognized by the American School Counselor Association, or ASCA. The ASCA supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, career, and social-emotional development so they achieve success in school and are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society.

[00:09:47] ASCA provides professional development, publications, other resources, research, and advocacy to school counselors around the globe. We begin our recognition this evening with Mr. Richard Jesse, the Occoquan District, will introduce our first award winners.

[00:10:02] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The prestigious RAMP Award shows exceptional efforts to prioritize the school direct and indirect services to students, program planning, and improve student outcomes in the school counseling program.

[00:10:18] These schools meet or exceed best practice standards in one or more topic areas related to school excellence for students, teachers, and staff. - The Occoquan District is very proud to recognize Lake Ridge Middle School as a recognized ASCAD model program for 2024.

[00:10:41] I will now turn this program back over to Dr. Lateef, and I appreciate the fact that he will introduce the students. - Thank you, Mr. Jesse. Tonight we have Director of Counseling, Kristen Merica, Professional School Counselor, Lauren Embry, and the 2024 PWCS Outstanding Principal of the Year, Jim Dutrow of Lake Ridge Middle School.

[00:11:08] Principal Dutrow, would you share a few words, sir? - Sure, and thank you, Dr. Lateef School Board, for having us this evening. It is my great pleasure that I stand here tonight as our counseling department is being recognized as a ramp school. When Christamerica started at Lake Ridge Middle School four years ago, that was one of my first charges to her was that this is an honor that we wanted to compete for and to earn our professional school counselors dedication hard work and commitment to excellence does not go unnoticed receiving this honor is a testament to our counselors expertise

[00:11:43] and positive impact on our students staff and community as we celebrate this achievement we would also like to thank miss ann henry and lisa james for their support throughout the application process and our school counselors that are here tonight miss america miss embri and our counselors that were not able to be here tonight i have to thank them for all of their hard work in this process once again i congratulate our counseling department on receiving this recognition and look forward to continued success for our students staff and community thank you congratulations

[00:12:18] principal detra on both your award and the school's recognition i now invite jennifer wall representative of the gainesville district thank you dr latif on behalf of the gainesville district it is my pleasure to recognize gravely elementary school as a recognized asca model program for 2024 gravely elementary school is represented tonight by principal michael kelklin and counselor megan evers principal kelklin would you like to say a few words sure thank you dr latif and school board for inviting us to receive this prestigious honor i'm joined today by megan evers one of our

[00:12:56] school counselors not able to join us tonight is sarah fullerton and kim kaiser we are extremely proud of the work that they've done throughout numerous years this is actually a re-ramp for the dedication of our our entire counseling program so i want to recognize them as a re-ramp school of excellence for this earlier today i had the opportunity to talk with some students i figured the best way to recognize our counselors for the award that they're getting tonight is to hear directly from the mouths of our kids and one of the students that i talked to today wanted to

[00:13:31] share with you miss evers and with our entire counseling program i'd like to thank you for helping me and teaching me how to love not only myself but how to treat myself and others so i wanted to recognize you for the great work that you've done along with our entire counseling program they are data driven they are in line with our continuous improvement plan the strategic plan of the entire school division and not only do they take leadership within our our school our community for our students our teachers and our community members but they also deliver leadership within Prince William County, supporting with mentorship and whatnot.

[00:14:09] So thank you for this award and thank you for recognizing our program. - Thank you, that was wonderful. Thank you, Ms. Wall. From the Coles District Vice Chair, Ms. Lisa Zargarpur, please introduce your award-winning school.

[00:14:26] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Coles District would like to recognize Saunders Middle School as a recognized ASCA model program for 2024. Saunders Middle School is represented tonight by Director of

Counseling, Dr. Shanna McComb, School counselors Alaysha Dixon, Marissa Fields, and Patrice Richardson, along with administrative intern Barb Babauta.

[00:14:49] Ms. Babauta, would you care to say a few words about this honor? - You did a good job there saying my last name, Ms. Zargarpur. - Listen, your name is like your first and last name get meshed together when people talk about you. She's amazing. I've known her for years because- - Thank you, you're very kind.

[00:15:06] Good evening, let me first wish a happy belated, happy teacher appreciation to all the educators in the room we know that the best work happens in all the classrooms in this division i hope you have received your heart's desire of mugs chocolates and starbucks coffee uh gift certificates good evening dr latif dr mcdade and board members and all the educators parents and families and guests gathered tonight my name is barbara babauta and i am representing Saunders Middle School, home of the Spartans, where every day we live our core values

[00:15:41] of accountability, compassion, community, grit, and integrity. It fills me with great pride to recognize the outstanding achievements of our counseling department who work hand-in-hand with our teachers to support our students and our entire school community. Led by Dr. McComb, our team is Ms. Dixon, Mrs. Fields, and Mrs. Richardson. They are committed to the academic success of every spartan this team holds the heart of saunders by providing services and programming in social and emotional learning so that every student may have a thriving future for themselves

[00:16:18] and for their communities we are extremely proud of our counseling team and grateful for their dedication support and commitment to our school the ramp designation tells the world what we We already know that Saunders, at Saunders, our counseling team is amazing.

[00:16:35] Thank you so much. - Thank you, Ms. Babauta, I appreciate that. Thank you, Ms. Zargarpur. From the Brentsville District, next, Ms. Erica Trudenik, please introduce our award-winning school.

[00:16:51] - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Brentsville District would like to recognize Glenkirk Elementary School as a recognized ASCA model program for 2024. Glenkirk Elementary School is represented by Principal Marissa Miranda, Assistant Principal Heather Kilgore, and school counselors, Beth Anderson and Beth Kunstal.

[00:17:12] Ms. Miranda, would you care to share a few words? - Thank you. Good evening, Dr. Lateef, Dr. McDade, and school board members. I'm thrilled to be here. My name is Marissa Miranda. I'm the proud principal at Glen Kirk Elementary. I'm thrilled to be here tonight to celebrate our amazing school counselors, Beth Kunstal and Beth Anderson, on their work and being awarded ramp status again.

[00:17:31] Our counselors are a key part to what makes Glen Kirk an amazing place to work and learn. Their ongoing support of our continuous improvement goals and their tireless work on evaluating their own data to improve their practices and the support that they offer our school community are directly related to us receiving this honor for the second time.

[00:17:49] Mrs. Kilgore and I consider the Beths, as we call them, a huge reason we have continued to see such success at Glankirk Elementary for the seven years we have been lucky enough to be part of this community. I could not be prouder of the work they have done to receive this award and for the joy, compassion, and dedication they bring to our students every day.

[00:18:07] Thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Denning and Ms. Miranda. Congratulations to Glen Kirk Elementary. I'd like to recognize also, Anne Henry, Supervisor of Elementary Counseling, Lisa James, Mental Health Specialist, and Jane Prince, the Supervisor of Secondary Counseling who support our schools in their efforts to pursue the RAMP designation.

[00:18:36] Let's give them a round of applause as well. I, you know, it'd be remiss for me to not say, you know, how much I love our counselors. And I'm gonna say that, you know, since this board, you know, six years ago, we've increased the amount of counselors we have across the division.

[00:18:56] And I think it's been so great. We need to do more, but you guys make such a vital part of our students' lives. I remember my student, my counselor's names from middle school and high school and college. And I wouldn't be where I was, where I am if it wasn't for my counselors.

[00:19:12] And I think about them every day and I appreciate everything you do for our children. So at this time, I'd like to request our honorees to come forward for a photo with the school board and receive a small token of our appreciation. We will take one photo with, here we go, I'm gonna, with Glen Kirk and Gravely, and a second photo with Saunders and Lakeridge, okay?

[00:19:31] And then Diana Gulotta will help guide us on that.

[00:20:44] - Guys, can you go ahead and stuff up?

[00:22:26] - That way or this way? - Facing them or them?

[00:22:49] - Okay, all right, oh, wow, interesting. Ms. Tredenik, I believe you have one more recognition. - The Brentsville District would like to recognize Unity Reed High School's Air Force JROTC team for their amazing three-peat as VA 265 Virginia State Drill Team Champions.

[00:23:10] At the 19th Annual Virginia State Air and Space Forces Association State Drill Championship, the Lions Drill Team secured five first-place trophies and one fourth-place trophy, EARNING OVERALL FIRST PLACE FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR.

[00:23:27] THE STATE DRILL CHAMPIONSHIP CAME ON THE HEELS OF THE TEAM'S SUCCESS AT THE U.S. AIR FORCE JROTC OPEN DRILL CHAMPIONSHIPS IN DAYTON, OHIO WHERE THEY COMPETED IN BOTH THE UNARMED AND ARMED DIVISIONS.

[00:23:42] THEIR HARD WORK PAID OFF WINNING SECOND PLACE OVERALL IN THE ARMED DIVISION AND THIRD PLACE OVERALL IN THE UNARMED DIVISION. The team's placement in Dayton, Ohio, qualified the team for a trip to Daytona Beach, Florida, where they competed against the top 24 JROTC units in the National High School Drill Team Championships.

[00:24:01] The team earned the following awards, making them placement winner and joint national champions against over 4,000 JROTC units worldwide. Fourth place, unarmed inspection. Fourth place, unarmed regulation. Fifth place, armed inspection.

[00:24:19] Led by the U.S. Air Force core values of integrity first, service before self, excellence in all we do, and the motto, one team, one fight. At this time, I invite Tech Sergeant Tina Lange and Lieutenant Colonel Daryl Robinson to introduce our outstanding champions and share a few words.

[00:24:41] so thank you for having us again um this is a phenomenal opportunity for colonel robinson and myself to share our time with these amazing cadets our team doesn't stop practicing uh it begins in

august they are there pretty much five days a week after school they give up their birthdays they give up their christmases they've given up everything just to give everything that they have to this team they've learned to rely on each other support each other

[00:25:16] it doesn't matter whether it's math or history bringing up their gpas supporting each other in earning two full-ride scholarships to universities one air force and one army which is amazing because when they went out and i had to do physical fitness tests or interviews they supported each other that's what we love about our team it is truly one team one fight and it's not just necessarily about drill it's about everything and i couldn't be more proud of

[00:25:52] them colonel robinson couldn't be more proud of them and the team wanted to do a small little performance for you if that's okay so the armed team couldn't bring in their rifles so the unarmed if you don't mind could they come up here in the front right here a small little one and then we

[00:26:09] We will end with a cheer.

[00:28:49] - Oh my gosh, okay. Thank you, Ms. Trenanek. Thank you guys. Three years in a row is certainly impressive. And I can see why. Congratulations to the Virginia 20065 Virginia State Drill Team Champions.

[00:29:06] I invite the family members of these students to please stand and be recognized so we can congratulate you as well.

[00:29:23] Before taking a few pictures, Dr. McDade would like to share a few words. Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, congratulations to our winning drill team champions. Three times, three time Virginia State.

[00:29:40] Make sure we put that three in there. We are PWCS proud of each and every one of you for your grit, for your discipline, for your resilience. You are simply amazing and inspiring to each and every one of us. I also wanna thank Sergeant Lang and Lieutenant Colonel Robinson for your commitment and dedication to our students for continuing to always support them and encourage them and help them live out their full talent and brilliance.

[00:30:05] Thank you so much for all of your hard work. I also do want to recognize, it's so apropos that we recognized our counselors this evening because May is National Mental Health Awareness Month as well as Military Appreciation Month. So it was a perfect night for the celebrations and that we have for Thriving Futures.

[00:30:25] So I want to congratulate Gravely, Glen Kirk Elementary, Lake Ridge and Saunders Middle Schools for their recognition, their amazing work. Our counselors simply are the best. They truly make a difference in the lives of our children. I know my high school counselor, I attribute my high school counselor to the reason that I'm sitting here tonight.

[00:30:45] And so our counselors meet every student by name and by need to continue to support them. And so we are so grateful and appreciative of our school counselors. So congratulations to all of our awardees tonight for being recognizing for your sheer talent and amazing hard work.

[00:31:03] Congratulations, job well done. - So I'm gonna do something a little bit different. As you, Mr. Jesse brought up this and is a good idea. And so I'd like each one of you to come to the mic, just say your name and then come to the front to get in line for pictures.

[00:31:25] So maybe we'll start over the left. Just walk up to the mic, just say your name and then come to the front so we can recognize each one of you, although it's a team sport, you guys are fantastic individuals. We appreciate it. - My name is Belen Renderos.

[00:31:42] - My name is Bibian Mejia. - My name is Marsha Elizi. - My name is Alejandra Lobos. - My name is Serenity Fraser. - My name is Phong Nguyen.

[00:31:59] - My name is Jocelyn Gonzalez. - My name is Dorcas Korabi. - My name is Audrey Delady. - My name is Mia Fadul. - My name is Samara Bonilla.

[00:32:14] - My name is Annie Rivera Palacios. - My name is Idrana Martinez-Overa. - My name is Hannah Sitka. - My name is Ingrid Perez-Aiello. - My name is Jacob Busier.

[00:32:29] - My name is Luis Lopez. - My name is Benjamin Jensen. - My name is Kenan Rodriguez. - My name is Jayden Key. - My name is Eric Diaz. - My name is Juan Zepeda. - My name is Luis Aion.

[00:32:46] - My name is Romeo Duarte. - My name is Prince Mitchell. - My name is Elijah Stewart. - Thank you. Let's give them another round of applause for our current state champions again.

[00:33:02] All right, folks.

[00:33:18] - We're gonna do three shots on three.

[00:33:49] One, two, and three. One, two, three.

[00:35:21] - Very good, excellent. That was incredible. Thank you, Dr. McDade. Where are we now? Oh yeah, this time, okay, we did that. Okay, we are now moving on to, one of the great things about our school board is that we have a student representative.

[00:35:43] We have two student representatives, an alternate. Tonight, we have Fernanda Morante on the dais with us. We have Isabella Versano over here as well, and Jacqueline Garcia, who's been our alternate for the year.

[00:35:58] And all three of them have contributed significantly to the school division, to our understanding of what the students are going through, and have represented and advocated for the students well. So tonight, we'll take this moment to read a resolution that the board would like to vote on for each of these members of our board.

[00:36:17] and I'll take that moment to read the resolution. The resolution states, whereas, so I actually make, I'm gonna make the motion to accept this resolution, whereas that our student representatives have served with great distinction and unwavering dedication to the Prince William County Public School Board, and whereas their leadership and advocacy have faithfully reflected the concerns and aspirations of their fellow students, significantly enhancing the board's responsiveness to the educational needs of the student body, And whereas they have demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and a deep commitment to promoting academic excellence and extracurricular engagement to their high schools, and whereas their collaborative efforts

[00:36:56] with school administrators have greatly contributed to a positive and inclusive educational environment benefiting the entire school community. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Prince William County Public School Board hereby expresses its sincere gratitude and commendation to our

student representatives for their outstanding service and profound impact on the Prince William County public school community.

[00:37:20] Be it further resolved that this resolution be documented in the official minutes of the Prince William County School Board and that a copy be presented to each student representative in acknowledgement of their valuable contributions and dedication. Do I have a second? Ms. Zargarpur.

[00:37:36] - Oh, go ahead. - I second. - Okay, Ms. Zargarpur seconds. Any discussion? Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. - It is an honor every year when we get to this part of the calendar year to recognize and honor our student representatives.

[00:37:52] I wanna take a second out to acknowledge Ms. Jessie, our former Occoquan District School Board representative. It was Ms. Jessie and myself who attended NSBA and BSBA events and said, why don't we have those here in Prince William? And it has really truly been, for me, a dream come true every year because with each year, the representatives that we are honored have served with us just continue to get better and better and to truly change and transform our division with student voice which for me is a dream come true having been a student and

[00:38:29] understanding what it means to be a part of a system that you don't get to really fully participate in to watch all of you year after year continue to improve our division to bring credible voice and meaningful voice from the students to all of us adults who are the policy makers is just more than i have vocabulary to express in its meaning and essence and i could never be prouder than the three young ladies who are the three women who served with us this year each of you brought your own uniqueness to the board reminded us often that sometimes we are the hindrance to your success

[00:39:07] and the most professional and spicy sometimes way as possible and showed your personalities. I am just thrilled and honored to have been able to work with each one of you, and I wish you all the best of success in the future. And I will echo what I echo every year.

[00:39:24] Please come back, share with us how your education has impacted your future. Give us a look back on what it is that you've learned and how it's been beneficial to you as you move on and continue to stay in contact with us so that we can continue to show an example to your fellow students coming through the pipeline what can be accomplished and i am just exceptionally proud to that of course no bias towards males but i am always excited to see women in leadership and especially women of color and that was all three of you this year so i wish you the best of luck and thank you so much for your service and leadership

[00:40:01] I also want to thank the three of you for all that you've done. I also want to encourage you that as you go into college, take the opportunity to become active and leaders at your college.

[00:40:17] I think you have the potential, I know you have the potential, and I think it would do you well. And I look forward to hearing a lot of good things from you in the future, and perhaps even one day come back and be on the school board.

[00:40:34] it's who someone nope okay Ms. Wall it's always a pleasure to have a new member come to our board a student representative each time that we have had a changeover and every person has been unique and it's been wonderful to serve with you and Marante and I wish you all the best and thank you so much for all of your contributions and your words we've listened we've really appreciated your perspective

and I know we know that you seek to gain the perspective of others and then articulate it here and so that's been really wonderful to see you in action thank you

[00:41:12] so much and we wish you the best um okay um what i would say that i would just wrap up by saying this board will consider you a friend and colleague uh forever and if you need anything please don't hesitate to call and ask we really truly appreciate your commitment to the school and and i echo mr jesse's comments i know you'll go out and become terrific leaders and all of our members in the in the past have, and I've kind of followed many of them and they've done terrific, so I know you all will as well.

[00:41:44] Please read the vote, Ms. Simpson. - The vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed. - Okay, let's take a picture with our representatives and then, oh, and actually, let me, before I do that, before I do that, I know we have Fernanda's parents here.

[00:42:04] Can you please stand? Mr. or Mrs. Morante, thank you. None of our students can be anywhere without their parents or guardians, and we can't thank you enough for everything you've done for her and for us.

[00:42:19] Thank you.

[00:44:43] Okay, excellent. Well, as we get to the end of the year, we have so many other things and so many things to celebrate. It is really fantastic. So moving on now to the adoption of the consent agenda, Ms. Zargarpur. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the public meeting consent agenda as recommended.

[00:45:02] - Do you have a second? - Mr. Chairman? - Ms. Williams, any discussion? Please vote. - Mr. Chairman? - Yeah. - I just want to thank my appointee to the Advisory Council on Equity, Dr. Benson Cook. I appreciate his service and a willingness to be a part of the council, so thank you.

[00:45:19] - Thank you, Ms. Williams, please vote. - The vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed.

[00:45:36] - Great, next we have acknowledgements and recognitions and tonight we have a special guest, so we're voting on that first, right? Okay, yeah, okay, a motion to order Ms. Zargarpur. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the acknowledgements and recognitions as recommended.

[00:45:56] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - I second. - Okay, any discussion? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - Since I will not be here for the first June meeting, 'cause the promotion ceremony is the same night for my son, I would like to thank this board and again, Casa Blumar and former board member Adele Jackson.

[00:46:16] This is the fourth year that we, as a division, will be honoring LGBTQ+ Pride Month. It is important acknowledgement for not only our students, but also our staff members within the division. And I just appreciate the continued acknowledgement for those individuals, both staff and students.

[00:46:34] And thank you to the board for continuing to approve this now for the fourth year in a row. Thank you. - Please vote. - Vote is six yes, two abstained. Tridenic, Wall, motion passed.

[00:46:49] - Going out of order. So that was 1402. All right, so I was kind of right. All right, we're gonna go back to, So we have a special guest with us here tonight and it's not often, actually it's never happened in my six years on the school board.

[00:47:06] We are pleased to have Dr. Cardell Patillo, the Patillo, I'm sorry, and the Virginia School Boards Association president joining us to address the school board. Dr. Patillo, you are welcome to have the floor.

[00:47:29] - I wanna start by saying I'm blown away. You all have some amazing students and staff and it's a tribute to your dedication as board members and the hard work of your superintendent and her staff as well. So y'all should really be excited about what you're producing here in Prince William County.

[00:47:46] To Chair Dr. Lateef, Vice-Chair Zargarpur, excuse me, I'll go for that. I wanna thank you all for having me here. And I wanna first thank your board clerk, Ms. Simpson, and your deputy clerk for the hospitality and inviting me here on this evening as well.

[00:48:04] I'm honored to stand before you as the Virginia School Board Association president fellow board member of the Portsmouth City School Division. On behalf of the entire VSBA Board of Directors, I bring you warm greetings tonight. I want to express our deep appreciation for your dedication to the education and well-being of the children within Prince William County Public Schools and the broader Commonwealth of Virginia. Your tireless efforts do not go unnoticed and your commitment to fostering a nurturing educational environment for all students is truly commendable.

[00:48:39] today actually marks my 13th stop on my president's roadshow around the commonwealth and i couldn't be more pleased to continue this journey with you your role as advocates for the children in your community is both vital and challenging and i want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the countless hours you dedicate to shaping the future of our youth i personally understand that the responsibilities of being a school board member can at times seem tiring and thankless however please know that your efforts are making a significant impact on the lives of students

[00:49:19] that you serve. Your commitment to education is building the foundation for a brighter future for the children of Prince William County and the entire Commonwealth. So once again, thank you for your unwavering dedication. I look forward to our continuing work together to ensure a brighter future for Virginia's students. Thank you. Hold on. Dr. Petillo, it's not every day we get to have someone from Portsmouth come up and observe our meeting and join us and address the board.

[00:49:52] We want to thank you for representing us in Richmond and for taking our concerns to both the legislature and to the governor's office and helping advocate on the behalf of Prince William County students, Prince William County families and schools.

[00:50:09] If you don't mind, we're going to take one last picture because Dr. McDade demanded it. No, no, I'm just joking. We're going to do one more picture with you up here. All right, thank you.

[00:50:48] - Okay, at this time,

[00:51:36] we are moving into citizen comment time. Those citizens who've signed up in advance with the clerk may address the school board this evening when they are called to the podium. A citizen comment period for regular school board meetings is one hour and citizens may speak on agenda items or topics germane to the operations and policies of PWCS. Please use proper decorum and manners while at the podium or you'll be asked to step aside.

[00:51:55] 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. Tonight, we have 13 citizens signed up to speak. When I call your name, please come to the podium and state your name and address for the record.

[00:52:14] And I will now move to the speaker list. Anybody have one? Oh, I got it. I'll call the first five up if you wanna grab a seat in the front. Magali Hurtado, Anam Mahmood, Allison Egbert, Ali Al-Haddad, Julia Kali.

[00:52:38] Start with Magali Hurtado. - Good evening, I'm Magali Hurtado, my editor is on file, I'm an Ocoquan district resident, mom of two PWCS students and proud friend of many educators.

[00:52:53] I commend the superintendent's initiative to reduce exclusionary discipline, but I think we got it all wrong. The idea should not be to reduce exclusionary discipline. It should be to reduce the instances that result in exclusionary discipline, instead of just sweeping them under the rug to say that we reduced it.

[00:53:14] Last week, Mr. Wilk asked, or last time Mr. Wilk asked, how many disruptions are enough? Please tell us, how many times does a student get to yell, threaten, intimidate, hit, terrorize classmates, insult teachers and administrators before actual consequences are imparted?

[00:53:33] Everyone is tired of hearing that it is a process. Guess what? A process that takes an entire school year is not a process. It's just running out the clock. Ms. Williams mentioned that to her, having a firm number sounds like three strikes and you're out, valid.

[00:53:50] But how about we make the consequence for the first strike a meaningful one so we don't end up with a second one? To permit is to promote. And in my opinion, the current code of behavior, the lack of actual enforcement, the district leadership's constant undermining of teachers and school administrators is actually promoting the very behaviors you seek to avoid.

[00:54:15] But yay, the PowerPoint says the exclusionary discipline was reduced. School board members, please, your constituents expect you to have actual input on these policies to reflect your community concerns. We need you acting on what you're hearing from your community, not on the glossy presentations that you see on this room.

[00:54:38] In Prince William County, there are five categories of behaviors and responses. Tardiness is a level one or level two, which are the less severe. Possession or use of drugs and alcohol are a level one or level two, maybe a level four, it can also be a three. We need consistency.

[00:54:54] How is assault and battery or striking staff also a level one? How many times does a student need to hit someone for us to make it a level five? Thank you. - Thank you. Anam Mahmoud.

[00:55:17] - Good evening. My name is Anam Mahmoud and my address is on file. Other Prince William County students along with myself wanted to talk with the school board to resolve an issue we are passionate about. So today I will be discussing the proposal shortening the school day. As students age and grow intellectually, their classes become more challenging and some students prefer the rigor of advanced courses to prepare themselves for college.

[00:55:41] Some have extracurricular activities such as clubs or sports. A few even dive into community service or enter the workforce through a part-time job to make ends meet, not to mention their personal struggles and mental health. The case is that every student's life is different, but they all share the responsibilities to face which takes a toll on adolescent physical and mental health a simple change in

their schedules could have a huge impact on their lives this is why my peers and i have come up with two solutions to shorten the school day one proposal is to start uh school 40 minutes later although small uh although small change this new schedule will yield more time for

[00:56:21] students to prepare for school travel to school or even get more sleep if not preferred a second solution is ending school an hour earlier implementation of this schedule will allow students more time to prepare for external responsibilities such as work or taking care of siblings it will also allow students to have more time for extracurricular activities such as clubs or after school tutoring additionally students who commute will not have to sit through traffic especially during rush hour which is typically between 2 to 5 pm we all know how bad traffic can get during how bad traffic can be on Route 1 and 95.

[00:56:58] After thorough research, both our proposals comply with Virginia state laws, which require at least 990 hours of instruction. The current traditional schedule fails to consider the diverse needs and responsibilities of many students. Longer school hours have proven to not equate to increase productivity.

[00:57:17] We should be focusing on the quality of educational instruction, not just the quantity of hours. prioritizing the work-life balance of our students, we can cultivate a more supportive and efficient learning environment that empowers students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

[00:57:34] It can even help decrease the rate of chronic absenteeism in Prince William County schools. It is time for us to recognize the importance of adapting our educational practices to better serve the needs of our students. Thank you for your time. Thank you. Allison Egbert.

[00:57:49] Hello everyone. My name is Allison Egbert. My address is on file with the county. I am a human Resources Manager for a DOD contractor here in Northern Virginia. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to speak here as prior to this evening my concerns about bullying were largely ignored by my son's elementary school. I stand before you as a concerned parent of a student here in Prince William County. Two years ago I made the decision to move to Prince William from Loudoun County.

[00:58:24] I'm sure you have seen them all in the news where my student completed two years of his schooling. I decided to move to Prince William because of the value each of you place on students' education. In a recent board meeting, I heard a representative mention Prince William County is working on managed behavior through partnership with families. Unfortunately, in my circumstances, I do not believe this to be the case. Everyone has different beliefs in conceptions of what's appropriate or what is not. How do we, meaning Prince William County, decipher a

[00:59:03] racial slur as being used between friends and/or hate statement? Who is voting on whether it is friendly or hateful? The board is supposed to provide clear and concrete guidelines on what is and what is not acceptable. It makes sense that when my nine-year-old biracial son was called the n-word four times on the bus no one helped him no one protected him after four emails to the principal and a discussion with the counselor i was brushed off i cannot help but think i was brushed off due

[00:59:40] to my physical appearance not fitting your in quotes protected group qualifications as outlined within the definition of bullying in the code of behavior document my nine-year-old son provided names tangible examples specific instances of harassment and he even articulated how uncomfortable he was riding the bus yet no one from the administration helped it wasn't until my fifth email attempt when i copied a prince william county school board member on an email

[01:00:16] that a meeting was scheduled i would say that reaching out four times as a parent is classified is repeated and not ordinary wouldn't each of you agree if you can implement a code of conduct you can update the document as many times as you wish but the issues of bullying remain the bully calling my son the n-word has the privilege of riding the bus yet my son is terrified to step foot on that bus for the fear of what he will be called next this is what you as a board consider low level this is what you as a board consider discipline the victim being punished and not the perpetrator

[01:00:54] Thank you. Ali Al-Haddad. Before I get started, I'd like to have this passed out to members of the chair. While that is being passed out, good afternoon members of the school board. I am Ali Al-Haddad and I attend Potomac Senior High School for my senior year. Because I'm in my last year

[01:01:30] of primary education, I've decided to bring up a topic that has been glaring me in the eyes ever since I began high school. That issue is the morning class start times and the current schedule. Perhaps one of the most pressing issues exacerbated by Richard's school schedules is the epidemic of sleep deprivation among teenagers. Scientific research overwhelmingly supports the fact that adolescents require sufficient sleep for optimal cognitive function and overall well-being, especially considering that in adolescents the brain and body are still under development and changes are constant in them. Change is already difficult to deal with as adults. It is rampant

[01:02:06] and fast in teenagers. The early start times of many schools contradict the natural sleep patterns of teenagers, leading to a myriad of detrimental effects on academic performance and health. The relentless cycle of late-night studying compounded by extracurricular activities and part-time employment imposes an immense burden on students' mental and physical health.

[01:02:27] Chronic sleep deprivation, coupled with the stress of academic and extracurricular demands, contributes to a pervasive culture of burnout and exhaustion among students. Considering these challenges, it is crucial for educational institutions to reassess and adapt their scheduling practices to better accommodate the diverse cases of student lives implementing more flexible scheduling options such as later start times or hybrid learning the point being to negate the detrimental effects of sleep deprivation and alleviate the strain on students juggling multiple responsibilities in a study done in december of 2021 it was found that

[01:03:05] 80 of students had at least one extracurricular activity and 30 had an after-school job therefore it's very difficult for teenagers to fall asleep before 11 pm and because of school start times two-thirds of the students don't get the recommended eight hours of sleep with the struggle of achieving a healthy amount of sleep and thrust it into classes first thing in the morning students struggle with maintaining alertness and learning new things in the classroom environment my proposal is to have flex in the morning rather than have a class before it in conjunction to have a greater grace period before the actual start time of classes this This provides homeroom for students to get themselves situated for the rest of the day and receive any important announcements

[01:03:45] that may pertain to themselves. Finally, I've made each class a length of 85 minutes rather than 90. The effect may seem minimal, but in truth, most if not all classes finish what needs to be done in a single class in 85 minutes anyways. I've created a schedule that may not be able to offer students more sleep, but could offer students a better chance of being more prepared for their classes in the morning.

[01:04:04] This is why our proposal is worthy of consideration. I've come to the Board of Education to ask for any opinions or thoughts and potential detriments or obstacles that could prevent us from achieving a

more prepared and well-rested generation of youth. With all due respect, the schedule isn't helping anyone. It's only killing us.

[01:04:19] Thank you for your time. - Thank you. Julia Kali. - Hello, my name is Julia Kali. My address is 12942 Pintail Road. Hello, my name is Julia Kali, and I'm the co-president of the Woodbridge Senior High School NAMI on Campus Club.

[01:04:39] My co-president, Alexa McMillan, would be here tonight. However, she is competing with our softball team at the district tournament tonight. Go Vikings! NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and we are the first high school NAMI club in the state of Virginia. Pat Victorson from NAMI Prince William, who helped us start our NAMI club, has gone on to help Forest Park High School in creating their NAMI club this year.

[01:05:01] Our priority with NAMI on campus is to cultivate a supportive environment for student mental health, share information on school and community resources, and stop the stigma surrounding mental health. This year, we ran a wellness walk and community resource fair, and partnered with the national clothing brand, Know Solo, a company focused on raising mental health awareness and reminding people that nobody goes solo in their mental health struggles. We partnered with our school's theater department during their production of Romeo and Juliet, hosting a resource table with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. We hosted Mental Health Awareness Nights at some of our sporting events, drawing attention to the mental health struggles that many student athletes face. And we are incredibly grateful to our own Occoquan District representative,

[01:05:40] Mr. Jesse, for attending our Mental Health Awareness event at the girls' basketball game and supporting our efforts in raising mental health awareness. In addition to the girls' basketball game, we hosted mental health awareness events with our varsity baseball, JV and varsity softball, and JV and varsity girls lacrosse teams.

[01:05:57] At these events, we gave our students, athletes, and the athletes from the opposing teams goodie bags, similar to what we have for you tonight, containing mental health resources and our no solo socks with Woodbridge colors. We are so grateful to Mr. Jack, our athletic director, who has joined us in promoting mental health awareness among our student athletes by purchasing custom no solo socks in Woodbridge colors.

[01:06:19] We hosted mental health awareness tables, ran a fuzzy sock drive, and read books about managing your feelings to students at Occoquan Elementary School. Our most recent event was hosting the Ending the Silence presentation given by Nami Prince William to educate adolescents about the warning signs of mental health conditions and what steps to take if you or a loved one are experiencing a mental health concern.

[01:06:39] As I'm graduating on the 30th, I hope to utilize my experiences this year and participate in the NAMI on Campus Club at James Madison University. While I will not be here next year, our club has plans to host another wellness walk and resource fair and have more mental health awareness events for our whole community. We'd like to thank our principal, Miss Abney, and our club sponsors for their support in our first year.

[01:06:58] We'd like to thank the school board and Dr. McDade for encouraging mental health awareness and resources in the school system. And we'd like to close by giving each of you a mental health awareness

bag for mental health awareness month. They contain a bunch of fun stuff for you guys, like pamphlets, NAMI information, and a mental health language bookmark.

[01:07:17] We also provided stress balls and comp strips for you guys to support your own mental health. Thank you for your time and have a wonderful evening. - Thank you. Next five will be Marty Weaver, Bill Garber, Yannet Elias, Katalea Klaros, and Che Klaros.

[01:07:41] Marty Weaver. - Marty Weaver, Occoquan. Some of you had great questions last time. What I heard in response was wah, wah, wah. Listening to the feel-good garbage heard here, I don't know how previous generations survived and thrived.

[01:07:59] All current generations have experienced the pandemic because of mismanagement by experts in medicine and education. Now we hear from the central office with its think tank of PhDs. They propose a new code of behavior, but it is really a suggestions of behavior, as every school, every teacher, every student can be treated differently.

[01:08:20] So basically 90,000 plus students with IEPs. It's just that they don't realize that yet, or maybe they do. You don't really want to pin anything down, neither the infractions nor the consequences, because it all depends on the person, on the day, on the events, on, you know, the whatever.

[01:08:40] Why must you all keep reinventing the wheel with one failed idea after another? We had inventive spelling. Now we have teachers who can't spell. Open classroom phase, no walls, doors. A teacher told me it was fire code. Then walls and doors were added years later.

[01:08:57] Kids can't read, write, do math, but someone believes they can do critical thinking. I have been here several years. I have heard numerous teachers, bus drivers, students, parents talk about folks being physically and verbally assaulted, scratched, hit, punched, kicked, choked, spat on.

[01:09:15] But good news, millions of dollars are spent so people might not be shot or stabbed. You want to talk everything to death, or spend money. You don't need more money or more PhDs. You need more common sense. You don't need more coddling of truant students, those that just aren't into it.

[01:09:33] It is called consequences. Common sense parents would not accept this stupidity, but you with the advanced degrees have to conduct surveys, pilot programs to justify your existences. No need for some idiotic study about cell phones in classrooms.

[01:09:50] Grow a spine, or at least pretend you have one, like you think you can pretend so much else. Phone's gone in the fall. Elise turned off and left with teacher, period. No more cheating with them, no more bullying with them, no more distractions from them.

[01:10:05] And in-school suspensions? Definitely yes, but there is no need for extra staff. Take a cue from Bob Dylan's Alice's Restaurant. Put in a Group W bench in the main office, counselor's office, nurse's office, wherever else. If you have more kids than that, well then, what can I say?

[01:10:23] You are utter failures. And if someone raises a hand as an aggressor, not self-defense, they are gone. Learn now rather than later on the street. Rethink that MOU before there is a Parkland here. Each generation has stress.

[01:10:39] Depression, starvation, crippling diseases like polio, world war, cold war with duck and cover drills. You know, nuclear annihilation. So stop with the pity party for the latest generation. Bill Garber. Good evening members of the school board. My name is Bill Garber. I live at 15913 Edgewood Drive in

Dumfries. My family has students at all levels of Prince William County schools and I'm here to express my deep concern about alarming student behavior. I understand the code of

[01:11:13] behavior is under discussion and review. I applaud board representative Wilk for his calling out concerns over the code and our current approach. Just within the past month, I've personally witnessed cyberbullying involving racial slurs targeting an individual elementary school student.

[01:11:33] I have heard of student-on-student assaults occurring throughout the system and teachers being verbally and physically assaulted. It seems that it is now commonplace for students to display inappropriate, unacceptable, and downright disturbing behaviors. Additionally, cell phone use is a constant classroom distraction and it causes much conflict between teachers and students at all levels of the system. Enforcing the code of behavior is a combined responsibility involving

[01:12:08] administrators, parents, and guardians, but also our community. It appears to outside observers like myself that we have an enforcement problem. The code is either being enforced on an inconsistent basis or is not being taken seriously by students and families and has consequences that are not taken seriously by students. Abhorrent student behavior has become a systemic problem and it requires an aggressive and system-wide solution. More reports and teacher trainings are not the

[01:12:45] answer. We should explore aggressive enforcement of the code, more accountability placed on parents and guardians for problematic student behavior. Detentions, Saturday school, and other consequences are often looked at as a complete joke by students. Enforceable and appropriate consequences need to be more squarely placed on the table. There is an elephant in the room. Parents and guardians need to be held accountable for the actions of their children. We are way too quick

[01:13:22] to blame schools, teachers and administrators and give parents and guardians a pass. Additionally, consequences for the code of behavior violations need to be transparently reported to teachers, school staff, parents and guardians involved in the incidents as far as the privacy laws will allow.

[01:13:42] As I look at this endemic issue, it really requires very serious, dedicated, and specific review. Thank you for the opportunity to address the board on this difficult but important matter.

[01:14:01] Thank you. Yannette Elias. Good evening, members of the school board. My name is Yanni Elias, and I'm a senior at Potomac Senior High School.

[01:14:18] As a part of our AP government class end of year project, Bezawi and I have been assigned to identify and propose solutions that focus on issues within our community. - My name is Bezai Tabata, a junior at Potomac Senior High School.

[01:14:34] Today, we would like to draw your attention to a crucial matter, the welfare of our students, staff, and their families. - Specifically, we want to address the issue of code orange days. There are no compelling need for code orange days when there are two hour delays that adequately serve the same purpose.

[01:14:54] - This year, we have experienced an extraordinary phenomenon. we do not need the need to use code orange days, not one. - In the beginning of the semester, we could have used one code orange day, but instead the school board decided to use a two hour delay, which did not make any sense.

[01:15:11] - As the school board committee, you should be concerned about the wellbeing of your students, staff, and the families of Prince William County. - The fact alone should make us pause and

consider the necessity of such measures in the first place. - Code orange days require live virtual learning, which during the pandemic proved to be an absolute disaster.

[01:15:30] It was incredibly challenging for both students and teachers to plan the sessions effectively. - Let us not forget the parents, many of whom who are juggling multiple tasks, including their jobs, who are also trying to take care and support their children's education. For parents who have children with special needs, the challenges are even more pronounced.

[01:15:52] - According to PWCS website, we have 18 days, about two and a half weeks of built-in hours. This implies that nothing is stopping us from declaring cold red days. Just like we did this year, so again, why do we even have cold orange days?

[01:16:08] - Virtual learning does not maximize time for instruction. Analysis of student test scores have repeatedly shown severe declines in academic achievement due to virtual learning. - Teachers and parents cannot prepare when cold orange days are cold the night before.

[01:16:23] They put so much stress in teachers and parents and increase students' absence. - According to Prince William Times, our very own Potomac District representative said he was surprised by the code orange changes and said he does not agree with the requirement for live teacher instruction, saying it is not possible for all students and poses undue burdens on teachers.

[01:16:47] - It's time to reconsider code orange days and get rid of them before the next school year. And then let's create an alternative solution that benefits all in PWCS. - By doing so, we can prioritize the wellbeing and education of our students in Prince William County and the staff while minimizing disruption to the academic calendar.

[01:17:05] Thank you so much. - Thank you so much. - Thank you, Katalea Klaros. - Good evening, school board members and Dr. McDade.

[01:17:21] My name is Katalea Klaros and my address is on file. I'm here to talk about middle school recess. Earlier this May, my committee spoke to the superintendents of middle school. They said they wanted to break up the recess period into three five minute brain breaks, but this is not what we have been advocating for.

[01:17:38] They said it would be tricky to find time for a recess period, but if you can have a three five minute break periods, that means there could be one 15 minute break period in the day. So the superintendent said that they would discuss our cause with all the middle school principals on May 8th.

[01:17:59] We are patiently awaiting for a follow up for this meeting. At a previous school board meeting, the associate superintendent of students services and post-graduate success stated that the main issues chronic absenteeism were anxiety, mental health, and lack of social connectedness.

[01:18:23] It sounds like a recess period for students is a solution because if you have a recess period where kids can socially connect, they will be more likely to want to come to school. This is a result in more thriving futures.

[01:18:39] We ask when will the committee learn the outcome of our submitted proposal? I will be a middle schooler in less than 20 days and have been on this journey for the last two school years.

[01:18:56] I would love to start sixth grade with the opportunity to catch up with friends at recess. Thank you for your time. - Thank you, Che Claros.

[01:19:15] - Good evening, Dr. McDade and school board members. My name is Che Claros and my address is on fire. I'm a third grader at Cowboys and Elementary School. I'm here to advocate again for middle school recess. The middle school recess committee has spoken here several times about the benefits of recess.

[01:19:34] Here's a reminder, recess helps kids do better on tests and improve social and emotional skills and reduces disruptive behavior. When I do not have recess, I have a lot of energy and I cannot pay attention well without it. Middle schoolers do not have recess and I think they should have time to play and be kids.

[01:19:54] Teachers also will need benefits from a 15 minute recess break. That is why our middle school community deserves a 15 minute recess pyramid. Thank you for your time.

[01:20:09] - Thank you. The next three will be Barbara Tate, Saba Barkna, Hugh John Donnelly. Barbara Tate.

[01:20:27] - Hi, my name is Barbara Tate, and my address is on file. There are more than 15 middle schools in Prince William County. This means that there are 15 different scenarios that can happen all in the same way, but get 15 different answers. That means that what happens at one school isn't happening at the school two miles away.

[01:20:47] I urge the school board to look further into changes in the Code of Behavior to give clear guidance to administrators. There is entirely too much ambiguity and too much discretion. Here are just a few examples of why this isn't working. While there is a little bit more information on bullying in the proposed Code of Behavior, What about the students that don't communicate verbally, like maybe you and I do?

[01:21:10] What about the students that can't go home to tell their parents, hey, I was bullied today at school because they can't say more than 10 words. How are they going to fill out this form that you guys would like them to fill out? What about the kids that don't have a good memory, that just simply can't remember the student's name and all of these descriptions that they are needed to input into this form?

[01:21:36] What if they don't have a good home life, nobody that they can count on to fill out this form. A few weeks ago my son was in PE class and saw another student being bullied. The child has autism and did not communicate verbally with more than a few words. My son went to the children bullying this child on his own and let them know that this child is now on my son's team for PE and that they were now going to be friends with this child and that bullying was not going to continue here. My son was commended by the school and quote there should be more kids like you which is great i'm glad my son is a kind person

[01:22:15] but where are the adults where are there any implications for these children that clearly were bullying this by the way this was a report from the teacher not my son my son actually never even mentioned this incident to me in november again this is a teacher's wording not my son's there was a stampede at the school during lunch because the cafeteria didn't open on time there were too many kids to sort out the code of behavior that were in violation so the only thing that happened is our family incurred more than $2,500 in medical expenses because my son needed

[01:22:50] emergency medical treatment two days ago there was a fight on school grounds that took place where a child hit another child so poorly that his eyeball popped out a socket and EMS came to get him from the school by the current code of behavior it looks like he's going to get a cool four-day vacation at

home probably playing xbox so why aren't we doing more what is the solution it's not working the kids are still doing this and insanity is doing the same thing and continuing

[01:23:22] to expect different results thank you sava barkner hugh john donnelly my name is uh hugh donnelly my name and address is on record i have a student here prince william county school system and next to my wife he's the most important person in my life i started to pay attention to what's going

[01:24:02] on in schools through my wife and her involvement with the school board over the past couple years. I personally have been on the conservative side, but have been very open to progressive ideas that make sense to me. But over the past several years, I've noticed that most of the emphasis in the schools have been on DEI, restorative practices, and SLL test scores for accreditation. I'm no expert in any of these areas. I'm a layman with my opinion based on limited research but i grew up in a time where americ-based systems was the pinnacle of achievement

[01:24:37] there were winners and losers and not everyone got a trophy we are all americans and we are equal regardless of race ethnicity age gender religion sexual orientation or political ideology so i really don't understand dei it doesn't make sense to me because i thought it was all covered in the constitution after reviewing the students grades last at the last meeting i don't understand prince william county's excitement in the overall sol scores that included scores from 75 to 66 percent

[01:25:13] uh to me that's a c and d score that the the school and board thinks is a great achievement it seems to be that equity trumps achievement which brings me to the last emerging technology i mean emerging ideology being implemented in our schools today restorative practice even though one of our core values of any democracy is the rule of law we are implementing an emerging science that treats discipline as an instructional prevention base to ensure equity and fairness although you can find many studies showing

[01:25:51] improvement in the levels of recidivism you can find as many studies and case studies that show no improvement as well why is that some people say it's too arbitrary takes too long to implement the onus again is on the teachers they have to document these issues over and over and respond to them later and initiate action to formulate an equitable solution in more serious cases it involves specialized support counselors psychologists social workers parents and in

[01:26:24] some cases even the victim to my understanding some of these processes are voluntary to me that is the definition of arbitrary even the experts all agree if a program isn't implemented properly it is doomed to failure it is also well accepted to five to ten percent of the students regardless of the disciplinary program don't care about accountability students need structure and and accountability in their lives.

[01:26:57] - Thank you, Mr. Donnelly. Okay, that concludes citizen comment time, and we are now moving on to 1601, the Office of Associate Superintendent for Student Services and Post-Secondary Success on the Code of Behavior, which is on for action.

[01:27:23] Do I have a motion for this? Got it, okay. So I guess we can just, isn't that part of discussion? All right, well, let's just go ahead, we'll do the presentation, Dr. McDade.

[01:27:40] So Ms. Hevener is going to present to you some red line changes that were made to the Code of Behavior based on feedback from the last meeting, and she won't go through the entire Code of Behavior

as we did last time, only the edits. Thank you, Dr. McDade, Dr. Lateef, Vice Chair Zagrapoor, members of the school board.

[01:28:01] I will just hit very briefly some of the edits that were made just based on feedback. So if you'll recall, at the last time we overviewed the Code of Behavior's purpose, and the Code Related behavior services is a framework for behavior expectations, clear expectations, and it outlines possible consequences for violations.

[01:28:18] It also creates a shared understanding of what are violations. Additionally, it fosters a supportive environment and preventative practices that are outlined, which really does not replace consequences, but they are strategies for prevention.

[01:28:35] So the updates that we reviewed previously on May 1st were edits for organization readability, enhanced information, definitions, and we incorporated updates from the General Assembly. You all should have received a red line document that's shown on the screen. You can see the yellow highlighted red text are edits and additions based on feedback.

[01:28:55] You also have a chart of changes, which the red sections reflect the additions. The old language is on the left. Those are all available online for constituents who would like to view those. So in the current proposed revisions, we have replaced, removed the chart, the summary chart that was in question, and embedded responses as outlined in the Virginia Department of Education model policies. So the leveled responses are reflective of what the state recommends.

[01:29:24] We've also added further clarification about the leveled responses to include responses for level four and level five violations. In relation to bullying, we've added information to further clarify the definition of bullying. As far as cell phones, there are no changes at this time from the May 1st proposed revisions. The Code of Behavior, we've removed the subjective language.

[01:29:46] And as far as restorative practices, we've added language to emphasize that restorative practices do not replace consequences. Threat assessment language was also added to clarify threats that may result in sanctions under the Code of Behavior. So as you'll see on the slide, the proposed 24-25 code of behavior has been updated to follow the 21 the 2021 model guidance for positive preventative code of behavior student conduct policy and alternative suspension this is the state guide from which we base our decisions on those decisions outline possible responses you as a school board do have policies that are consistent with this you also have the ability

[01:30:25] to impose more stringent guidelines so again revisiting that we do have under consideration by our governor a new definition of bullying we are waiting for the outcome of this if that is signed this will be the adopted information and as far as the ordinary teasing horseplay horseplay and um i'm sorry i'm having a chart argument or peer conflict we did add the language in the faqs you can see that on the page 56 of the proposed which gives you an outline of what ordinary may

[01:30:58] fall into thank you do we want to have a discussion first do you want okay so the moat i'll make the motion then i move that the prince william county school board approve the proposed 2425 code of behavior i have a second madam chair vice chair oh miss william seconds i'm sorry any discussion yeah i just had a question for miss huber mr jenny um do the tiers still exist within the

[01:31:36] code of behavior there's still the tiers we do reference tiers so tiers have responses also aligned with them. So we've clarified and removing the tier above, if you look on the leveled responses, tiers are

really referred to in the MTSS process, the multi-tiered systems of support, levels one, two, and three, and they do align with leveled responses. So I know that's a little bit complicated, but you can see on page, the revised page 34, where it talks about responding to student behavior. We've clarified using levels, which is the same language that aligns with the model policies from the state.

[01:32:14] Previously, in the document, we refer to tiers as related to intervention. Thank you. Mr. Wilk. Thank you, Ms. Huebner. Well, I guess I'll make my closing argument in my statement here.

[01:32:34] First, thank you to three constituents from the Potomac District who came out and spoke tonight. Full transparency, any parent who had been expressing bullying issues to me. Even recently, I've encouraged them to say, come out, express your concerns to the board.

[01:32:53] I'm happy a couple parents did come out tonight and speak before the board about some of the concerns that I've been hearing throughout the course of the entirety of this year. Giving credit where credit is due, I do appreciate the incorporation of some of my feedback into the code of behavior. Adding the statement of the threat assessment is palpable, and I think it's important that it's stated in there, again, as we've done, that the threat assessment does not necessarily negate that a consequence will be given there isn't a we've expounded on bullying more definitions

[01:33:31] key things going into more detail we've added some state code i appreciate that the when i asked for like a statement of affirmation and and i do believe looking at the document it was nice because it was juxtaposed and so anyone who can see that document on um board docs you can kind of see side by side what the first presentation did and what the second one does with red lines so we've done that um but i will be voting no tonight and here's why and my no vote is not saying i don't believe in a code of behavior my no vote is saying i don't support the current form

[01:34:10] that's being presented tonight so i'll start with the first one i think we're missing a extraordinary opportunity I firmly support and advocate for in-school suspension it is offered in the code of behavior but it's left to site-based management there is no formal address or statement that it will be a disciplinary measure outlined in every building so as one parent said who spoke earlier about over 15 middle schools what one building could have and then another building

[01:34:45] two miles down the road and what they offer are not consistent and whether i understand resources as mrs zagarpoor mentioned two weeks ago about that i understand we have some additional funds from the bocs but we don't even have to do one in every elementary necessarily i'd like to see how it would go potentially in every high school does it lead to a deterrence in disciplinary matters and i think that would be very important i also look at it i don't want to get into the standards-based grading.

[01:35:18] But if a student is in that room being forced to do their NHIs, that serves two purposes. We're gonna pass the kids. You're stuck in a room all day, isolated from your peers, and you're doing work that your teachers have provided for you.

[01:35:35] So in summary with that, I strongly support in-school suspension because we've talked about this exclusionary discipline. It eliminates that in most regards. It almost offers, in my opinion, a buffer zone between what might be a level one, more minor, which I look at those, to between a level two, which is a one to three day OSS.

[01:35:57] I think ISS could be the right form, and I do believe there should be some exclusions and some discretion left in some cases to the principal. For example, if a student thrives and says, send me home

five days, I think a parent mentioned play on my Xbox, right?

[01:36:16] Mine's out of date, I need an Xbox One. But anyways, stay on your Xbox for five days. Maybe the parent comes and says, I think my son or daughter would be better served in five days of ISS. Okay, that's something that could be worked on given kind of the list of things or options under the disciplinary action of the levels, which I think is great in that regard.

[01:36:39] So in summary with that, I think we're missing an opportunity of in-school suspension across the board. I wanna go into an area of disruption. This kind of goes with my theme of where we navigate from a level one to a level two.

[01:36:59] And I understand that we don't wanna necessarily do, as Ms. Williams said, a three strike, you're out thing. I do believe there could be recommendations on the number of times of offenses. And I wanna use something that seems very ubiquitous right now, and another parent brought it up about classroom disruption.

[01:37:19] So I went back and examined the classroom disruption, and I look at the required work for a teacher to document classroom disruption. It lists a multitude of restorative practices that must be deployed before the disruption moves to level one.

[01:37:38] So the teacher is being told to document. We don't know how many of these, 'cause it doesn't say how many of these restorative practices you must deploy as a teacher to document this discipline. and huge burden and i do recognize the importance of classroom management as a teacher um and as the job of the teacher to fulfill these responsibilities my my issue is i 100 wholeheartedly support restorative practices and and i do believe they are invaluable but

[01:38:16] the problem is by piling them up and saying the teacher here's your list and not having any firm guidance of which ones or how many to do you're diluting the impact of restorative justice and we we get this we see the narrative out in the community that it's not working well and this could be possibly it because when you see it thrown at you all the time and the listen again taken at a couple at a time i think they're great they could be very effective

[01:38:49] but and if we if we say you know that there actually is you know not an exhaustive list well then why not assign a specific number of how many you can do as a teacher for restorative practices because right now without that clear guidance there's too much discretion to site-based management and potentially who the principal or the ap is or even who the teacher is in determining how much documentation a teacher has to do just to get a kid moved from a classroom

[01:39:25] we're talking just getting to level one that's where i'm at with that it was brought up other offenses we heard allison poignantly talk about racial and other derogatory slurs this is not a change in my statement i believe they warrant an immediate level two especially at the secondary level to me secondary students are not naive about the impact of these words when they use and harass students with them students should not have to endure a year or even a multitude

[01:40:03] repeated these types of racial sexual whatever type of slurs that they're going to be we are not the parents and i'm stating that that is not my job to be the parent of these students and as uh i think mr garber said parents need to help and be held accountable what you have your kids listen to at home what you watch on the tv that's your prerogative but we as a school system can set the standard and say no

you're not going to be able to say the n-word x amount of times before you're kicked out no you can't call that student who's lgbtq the f-word this many you know a

[01:40:43] multitude of times we can set the standard in our schools the climate and culture we don't necessarily have to say level one level two i just in my opinion my opinion only that especially at the secondary level the language should go to a level two there's a whole list of examples and just to play on this whole idea level one to level two i give you a fire alarm so again elementary again i suggest one level one to three right elementary kid maybe an accident you know they're

[01:41:22] going to school, primary years, a high school kid pulls the alarm, a middle school kid pulls the alarm, the entire building is evacuated, Prince William County has to expend taxpayer resources to send fire trucks to the building, and level one is still an option? I just, I don't, I don't believe it. I'm going to give another one. Here's one, this one really hit close to home because I have a specific example. Student making threats with a weapon, although the weapon is not physically

[01:41:54] present i had a student this year at one of my buildings another student told her the knives he was going to bring to school the next day and kill her with technically that could be a level one to a level three and to no surprise to me that student was in the next day which to me i lead the assumption that it was probably a level one because that student was not out of school so again i think a lot of these as we go through that's i'm not even talking about hitting the and the teacher that says level one to three potentially.

[01:42:30] So as we go through this list, it's exhaustive. My main point here is there needs to be clear guidance on when we move from a level one to a level two. And I think they need to be also resorted. Even if some do say elementary one to this, secondary this, I think these and many others could be just that example.

[01:42:52] You know, fire alarm, fighting, bullying, what have you, as we get into that. Lastly, I'm gonna talk about bullying. So I do appreciate the division updating and augmenting the definition of bullying, putting it in the code of behavior.

[01:43:08] I think the definitions are needing, state policy is needed. And I do understand that many of these determinants of what is bullying is going to be subjective by the building leader, but ultimately leading to inconsistencies.

[01:43:25] So I did spend a lot of time reviewing this document because it does, bullying is mentioned, I think five different times in the document, kind of spread out sporadically in the document about what bullying is. And so as I went through and broke down and saw it, there's four categories of bullying, which was helpful, but I had to make my own bullets and a little chart, maybe that could be helpful too.

[01:43:52] You have bullying without injury, category C, relationship behaviors, level one to three. Bullying without injury that is repeated, That goes level two to four. Bullying with injury can result in two to four, level two to four, up to over 45 days suspension.

[01:44:10] Then there's cyber bullying that relates to the threatened safety of staff and students, level three to five. Most of them, I'm comfortable with those. I'm not comfortable with the first category. I don't think a level one should be in that area for bullying, but the other three, personally, that makes sense to me.

[01:44:27] If I was to go with the first one of category C relationship behaviors, I would put that at a two or three, but that's just my opinion. So as I wrap up, as a parent, I worry about the instances of what we define as repeated bullying.

[01:44:45] Again, we've heard from parents tonight about how many times something has happened to their child. There is no clear definition. And because there's no clear definition of what really defines repetition, and again, that might be a combination of the state being vague and a little bit of us.

[01:45:02] And like I've said to Dr. McDade, I have no problem. I've already gone once to the Virginia Board of Education and advocating for work-based learning. I'm happy to go down there and advocate to redefine what bullying is. But because the process is ambiguous, it's extremely difficult for parents to understand the procedures and the bullying process.

[01:45:26] I look at the revised code of behavior and I had difficulty finding information. And I like to think I'm educated, I have a master's. And so, but I also think of families. Who's gonna assist the families, especially those whose English is their second language in navigating through this code of behavior when bullying is a complicated topic?

[01:45:49] I mean, we have categories, we have tiers, we have levels. And finally, I'll say the code of behavior repeatedly mentions the parent submission form. I understand this. and a couple of parents have mentioned tonight that I do view this as requiring the victims to be brave, strong, to defend themselves.

[01:46:10] We heard tonight about the kids who can't defend themselves. I often wonder what's going on with my son who's nonverbal in school. I don't know, he can't come home and tell me. So who's out there looking out for them?

[01:46:26] With the bullying, I believe that when we're addressing bullying, that sometimes it can place more of a burden on the victim and their family than the alleged bully. So tonight I will be voting no on the current state of where the proposed code of behavior is.

[01:46:43] Thank you. - Ms. Wall. - Dr. Lateef can see my finger hovering above the button. So I appreciate hearing from my colleague, Mr. Wilk with his thoughts.

[01:47:02] And it was about a year ago, I think, when I said I had three Bs were my concern, buses, bathrooms, and behavior. And I think we're making progress on buses. I think bathrooms has helped, at least in the middle schools that I have, where cell phones are now off and away.

[01:47:20] And behavior, you know, obviously code of behavior is what we're talking about tonight. So I have maybe three main points, and then I have a couple of questions. So my first point is, I do continue to be concerned about student behavior because it interferes with the learning process.

[01:47:36] And I want our students, so many of our students want to be in school and they want to learn. and when other students are misbehaving, it disrupts that learning process, and that therefore interferes with our primary goal, which is to help our students learn. And the Code of Behavior, I know, is designed to create an environment where we can correct unacceptable behavior, which is the purpose of discipline.

[01:48:00] So, you know, if you think about discipline in the sense of rehabilitation, deterrence, prevention, and, of course, punishment, you know, those four key principles, and the goal is, of course, to try to strike the balance. Keeping in mind that these are children, they're not perfect, they're learning.

[01:48:17] And, you know, we're looking for corrective action and rehabilitation as our goal, not necessarily to just, you know, punish them. Keeping in mind, as Mr. Wilk pointed out, you know, the culture, our culture to some extent has become more crude, more vulgar, more tolerant of disrespectful behaviors towards others, to elders, to authority.

[01:48:39] You know, this is kind of part of the stew that we live, or soup that we live in. And this can be a very difficult environment for teachers, and also very difficult for students who just want to learn. So that's my first point. My second point is I do believe that the biggest sticking point overall with the code of behavior right now is the section on responding to student behaviors.

[01:49:03] I do appreciate the language that is put in here. There's a lot of added language, and I do believe it is more robust, more informative, and more transparent. Reading it, I feel like it actually was easier to read, taking it out of a chart format and putting it in a read format, for me anyway, it was easier to process, so I'm in favor of these changes that you made, and thank you for listening to the feedback from everybody.

[01:49:30] I do appreciate the -- I just think the additional links -- I don't know if they were already in there but the hyperlinks to the Virginia code, I thought that was also really good. And I know this document is going to be an online document, correct? Correct. It will be searchable.

[01:49:46] It will be searchable. And I think that's great because if you want to go look at the code, you know, what are the provisions for expulsion, for instance, you can hyperlink to it and answer your question right then and there. So I think that's great. I think that kind of transparency and additional information is really helpful and I think that's a significant improvement to the go-to behavior and I'm a fan of that.

[01:50:07] kind of piggybacking on something Mr. Wolk was saying, I do think we have more to do with implementation and norming our practices. And I believe what I'd like to see is maybe some more, maybe this exists and I just haven't seen it, but more along the lines of sentencing guidelines, so to speak. That's different, you know, a word, a phrase from a different, from law. But I think that's what Mr. Wolk is referring to, where you kind of give your educators or your leaders There's more understanding of what would be an appropriate response for certain kinds of behaviors.

[01:50:43] Like, yeah, it's level one through three, but generally we recommend level three because this has been successful in preventing the student, teaching them the lesson that they need to learn to correct the unacceptable behavior. Does that make sense where I'm going with this? Maybe on the implementation side, creating more structures around what seems to be working.

[01:51:07] Are there certain kinds of disciplines schools are using that are working, that actually arrest the behavior, and the student goes, "Oh, I'm not going to do that anymore." So I think that would be helpful, and I know that's on the implementation side, and I know we are working towards that. I do acknowledge that staff is working towards that, and our building leaders are working towards understanding that.

[01:51:29] I think that will bring more consistency of application. It will reduce the variability that folks came and talked to us tonight about. school disciplines is kind of in this universe and another school disciplines in a very different universe of options and then you know folks talk from different schools and they find out like well my kid did that exact same thing and i got this punishment you know we just need to

norm it we need to bring it closer in um so that's my third point and then my two questions are and i don't know if they need to be answered right now but i have had folks ask me these questions and one is

[01:52:07] how long have well on our path of restorative practices are we collecting evidence that this is working or not and how do we know that which restorative practices are helping us with the rehabilitation the prevention the deterrence sides of things that's one question um the other question i have gotten from community members is do all of our schools have behavioral specialists to assist or is this an ongoing area of need as far as supports for schools and dealing with difficult behavior? Maybe that question could be answered. I don't know. Either question that you

[01:52:43] want to answer I would be happy to take either now or you know like get an answer back. I mean is this an additional resource that we need? Do we need additional behavioral specialists to assist? The behavior specialists fall under Dr. Reier. I will say that schools have access but each school does not have their own behavioral specialists at this time but we do have MTSS support that's available for all schools I also just in the in reference as a reminder the the code of behavior is a public facing document that helps students stakeholders teachers and staff understand what are violations of the code of behavior what possible consequences are and you know again

[01:53:23] to your point building out backwards an implementation guide is something that the the administrative guide would be working toward common expectations. And as far as restorative practices, it's something that, as you remember, if you'll recall, we are now, just this year, initiating additional training, systemic-wide training, and so that will be something forward that we would be looking at the results of.

[01:53:43] Okay. Great. Because I think that's always good to look at as far as, like, okay, so we have these restorative practices. Are they working? What's working better than others? not working with the desirable result being to correct unacceptable behavior and move kids forward to a place where, yes, they've been punished, but they've also learned something and become a better person who is more able to participate with peers in a learning environment.

[01:54:11] You know, keeping in mind, again, like I said, these are children. So you're saying that there are internal and more private-facing documents that are ongoing developed that will help we do have what is the code of Virginia the model guidance from Virginia does help us constructed administrators guide which is logistical here's how we enter disciplinary referrals the goal is to build that out to norm as we've talked about our implementation across the division that comes with feedback from stakeholders of all you know levels teachers administrators building staff so that is the goal to build that out for

[01:54:48] that consistency. And the leveled responses that you see, I understand that there's a range of behaviors. That is the guidance that we receive, you know, from the state. I do know that the state is looking at model policies right now and guidance for bullying. The guidance that we currently have has not been updated since 2014. And so while it is a resource, the 2021 model guidance that we use to develop the code of behavior is the most recent guidance that we have. Okay, that's good information. And then I will say one last point. I guess I have a fourth point. I'm so sorry. I I thought I had three, but I have a four.

[01:55:21] On the topic of cell phones and its link to behavior, I have a number of schools in my district that have had an off and away policy for three years, and they have noticed a distinct drop in behavioral issues because the phones are off and away.

[01:55:41] That creates more focus, more attention, the teacher's more in control by virtue of not having to compete with a really exciting phone. YouTube and TikTok and whatever is on there. Incidents of bullying, this is what I've been told so I don't actually have access to any data.

[01:55:57] The incidents of bullying is down, Title IX reports are down. A number of positive improvements have happened with very minimal input or pushback from parents because the learning environment is improving. And this is reflected, I think, in my experience, I rarely get complaints about crazy behavior And either people are just not telling me, which is possible, or things are going pretty well in the Gainesville district.

[01:56:27] And I do believe, of course, when your child is the offender, parents complain that punishment is too harsh. And when the child is, this is in general, when the child is the offendee, parents will usually complain that the punishment wasn't harsh enough, right? But aside from that, I do believe that when we clamp down on just a simple thing like a phone can make a huge difference in behavior and make it so much easier for our teachers to be front and center and be able to maintain control of the classroom.

[01:57:01] So I am looking forward. I know we talked about that in our last meeting, and I'm really excited about seeing a division-wide push toward assisting our teachers in this really important way so that they can help students learn.

[01:57:17] So that's just some feedback on that topic. Thank you. I'm going to piggyback on the cell phone thing, because I have several schools in my district that also have, what is it, off in a way? Is that what we're calling it?

[01:57:33] So, so I know that there's some districts nearby that are doing, that they're going to explore like lock boxes and things like that. To my knowledge, we don't do that in Prince William. So if you can report that there's been positive feedback and success. And I can say that initially one of my schools started it this year. I heard in the first couple weeks some concerns from parents after that, nothing. And when I checked in with admin at that school, they were saying that lunchtime was going better.

[01:58:02] Our kids were actually talking to each other instead of texting. I have another school that has had it implemented for a while now, and the kids, they knew automatically that they could not touch their phones unless it was the end of the day. They did not need any lockboxes or anything. I have a neighbor in my neighborhood.

[01:58:20] She teaches at one of the high schools, not in the Coles District, but she's one of our high school teachers. She requires her students to just put their stuff in their backpack. go in front of the room so they can see their backpack um you know just to take care of that but uh and she's reported that it works um so i you know i i think i think this is something we can actually just do i don't think it requires boxes and little or doesn't have to i guess we could look at that um the other thing i want to um just say is uh parents teachers and students

[01:58:56] all care about how learning goes in a classroom we we all want it to go out right and i think we to look at how we help each other um whether whether this code of behavior is the one or there's one you wish it could be i think really what we need to be thinking about now is if a teacher reports something to a parent parent and the teacher work together okay and mr wilk i know you were talking about the how many times that that that could be a little weird too right because what if you finally find the thing that

clicks with a kid and that's working and that thing thing doesn't work with another kid and you're working with the parent. Like, I think there is

[01:59:33] a possibility for flexibility. And if this is not the code of behavior you want, I think the communication is important. I think writing an email and documenting the facts of what's going on. Hey, my kid came home sad and said there was a kid who did blah. Can we have a conversation?

[01:59:53] Just stay with facts and keep it in an email. And, you know, I have received emails where people include me they must have gotten to a point where they're frustrated because they put me on it but i don't get a lot of emails and i don't get a lot of uh you know i get some concerns but not at the same level maybe as other places um and again i don't know if it's because they're not reporting or if it's because things are working out but regardless what i'm saying is let's work together to make sure that our kids are getting their education that we're supporting teachers we're supporting parents because if we're just going to point fingers and this is not enough and

[02:00:31] this is not enough numbers and time or whatever like everybody's different parents are different kids are different teachers are different new teachers don't have this necessarily have the same classroom management skills that very first year as maybe someone who's been around a little bit longer you go to one school where where expectations and behavior are one way and you you move to a new school and it's a little bit different there's always an adjustment period so i think we can all work a little bit better on communicating what our kids need and and then we can work through those levels together too because those level one things we don't want them to

[02:01:08] become something worse right but if we're going to just only stick to well this code only says this and says that i think we're missing a greater point here which is we're all here for the kids so if there's something we need to work on and fix and everything we also need some documentation so you know make sure we get the emails and those things but um document it with you know this happened this happened this happened what what's my next step if you don't get an answer within what is it we normally expect 24-hour turnaround on emails then then you you re-email figure figure out a way to to maybe then see what the next step is but um let let's let's work together thank you

[02:01:50] i had erica next then we'll go to laurie and mr jesse my apologies miss hoobner when i asked my question i didn't realize we were making our closing remarks so i could have just gotten mine out of the way feel free to do it right now too yes yeah um mr wilk had a lot of great points um and went back over some of what we talked about last week um i agree with with most of what mr wilk had said um while going through this and listening to you talk um i just imagine the teachers going through those tears and i can't imagine that they have the time to memorize

[02:02:26] the entire code of behavior and when an instance happens and they're trying to figure out what do i do and then they're you know running through that in the middle of also running a classroom um i just sympathize with them in that moment and and the confusion um and like mr wilk said you know there's a lot of additions there's a lot of things that happen and their bullying was mentioned so many different times to sit here and say that it's not a long document that's like that's a confusing document to go through that has a lot of language that almost contradicts itself in some ways throughout the document, which I did point out a little bit last time.

[02:03:05] I struggle in that respect. I am not like everybody else up here that has said they don't get a lot of emails. My inbox is slammed. And since I put out a survey on the code of behavior, the last time I

checked, I had over 400 responses to a survey that I created with questions regarding the code of behavior and overwhelmingly over 90 percent agreed with the lack of clear consequences with the confusion it was a resounding voice and i continue on a daily basis to get emails

[02:03:42] regarding behavior another thing that was brought up by the mom that spoke i empathize with you i have biracial children and i understand what you just said and i get it and like i said before regarding the n-word and what mr wilk said i i cannot emphasize enough that it's a problem it's a huge problem and it's okay for one person and it's not okay for another and talk about confusion talk about confusion um it's a problem it's a huge problem and i'll continue to talk

[02:04:17] about it and i'll continue to say it um uh the cell phones i know dr latif uh supports a full ban I again I believe that one of my children's schools does somebody said up up in a way off in a way it's a cute saying and in theory it's great I know that it's not fully implemented because if it was off in a way we shouldn't be able to contact them and they shouldn't be able to contact us and I know for a fact that that doesn't happen because we all get contacted all the time so it

[02:04:55] might be away it's not off and they might be putting it away and it could help solve some of the problems. But like I said before, my 16 year old is not happy with me. But I mean, ban them, get rid of them. I'm all for it. I think a lot of us parents with older kids would stop getting the text messages.

[02:05:14] Can you come get me? Let me out, get me out, I'm done. I have no more tests. Like, come on, we all get that. We all see those memes. If they can't do that, they gotta make it till two o'clock. Sorry, sorry, bud. You gotta make it till two o'clock.

[02:05:29] And we have the ability to say, no, thank you. But I mean, come on, the 35 texts that we get, like I'm hungry, can you bring me Chipotle? Come on, the parents know what I'm talking about. So I support a full ban on the cell phones and I would love to see Dr. Lateef make it happen with the help of the rest of us on this board.

[02:05:53] So tonight I've made the decision to vote against the code of behavior. The absence of clear guidelines, the confusion surrounding tiers, which are subject to interpretation by individual schools or principals result in inconsistencies countywide and also fails to provide adequate support for teachers.

[02:06:12] Additionally, each school determining its own enforcement methods contributes to a lack of transparent consequences, which is confusing for parents and does not provide clarity for students either. Ms. Huebner, I appreciate all your hard work.

[02:06:28] I know that it's a ton of work to give us this presentation, but unfortunately, I cannot agree with it and in its entirety, so thank you. Ms. Wood. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As always, I'd like to start by thanking Ms. Huebner, her staff, all of the stakeholders involved in putting this living document together. I will be voting in support of the Code of Behavior because I understand that it is a living document. It does change and it is something necessary to provide guidance for our school division. If this becomes

[02:07:04] a no vote and we have no code of behavior we will have even less response because there will be not there will not be any guidelines for discipline for any school rules or policies because it is all located in the coded behavior and as much as i do not like this antiquated expression i don't believe in throwing the baby out with the bath water and that would be essentially what would happen if the code of behavior did not pass what i will say is that in my time here the code of behavior has continued to

improve. I can agree that it is not where I would like it to be in its fullest, but I also understand that my opinion will vary greatly from anybody

[02:07:43] sitting to my left or right or the audience in front of me. What I do know is, and what I have heard, is not necessarily issues with the code of behavior. What I am consistently hearing is issues with the implementation, and I think that's where the focus needs to be. Because while it is different from school to school. Mr. Wolk, please correct me if I'm wrong. What I heard you saying was there was no in-school suspension, but I see it listed as an option here.

[02:08:10] Assistant. Okay, that's why I was asking for your correction. No, no, no, don't apologize because I asked for it. So I, and I think that that, this is a good example. You know, I didn't understand what he was saying just based upon what I read, and I think that's the problem that a lot of individuals have when we look at this document. Everybody looks at it through a different lens.

[02:08:33] it's not saying restorative justice practices do not substitute for disciplinary action anywhere but yet we hear that ever since we started down this journey we hear that disciplinary actions are enforced differently at different schools how on earth do you absolutely know that when we are not allowed to let you know what happened to the student who received discipline you only know that through word of mouth and i i guarantee you as a parent i'm completely frustrated i have lived that experience myself i have heard people tell me what they thought

[02:09:09] happened to the student involved because that's what they know is what they thought happened and i want to be perfectly clear about that that is the response we get all the time it is the same thing when students send a text message because the school is on lockdown and you will get six parents who say they heard that the school's under some sort of fire and 17 parents over here that say they have no idea this even happened and you get a plethora of responses i think we will always be faced with that because we aren't allowed to disclose what happened to the student and i think it's very important that the public understands that that is not our decision there are student

[02:09:45] privacy laws there's all sorts of things that are around that that is not a decision made by this board or any board that's come before it or any board that will come after it it is not up to us to make that a transparent for other families involved in disciplinary.

[02:10:01] Do you want to make it change? It needs to go to the lawmakers, not to this board, because the onus doesn't belong to us. That is something I consistently hear, and I think that also creates confusion. What I will agree with, and Mr. Wilk, we're going on a streak here with the agreements on the code of behavior is I do think, you know, if it's okay for a bully to fill out a form, what I'm hearing consistency is lack of guidance for teachers how to implement the forms that they have.

[02:10:28] That's not something you're going to find in the code of behavior. I appreciate that it is something that is being worked on, but it's clearly not being communicated enough to our staff and our public that it isn't in existence right now, that we are in the process of developing it and that you have the opportunity to comment and that everyone who comes into contact with that document will receive the same consistent training on how to implement it once that guidance is developed, because that is the sticking point that we hear.

[02:11:02] There's always going to be a slight variation because no one incident, no two incidents are exactly the same. What motivates one student to come to school and use disrespectful language is not

gonna be the same for another student.

[02:11:18] If a student is, depending on their age level and cognitive abilities, that should make a difference on what punishment they receive. But the other part of this that we don't have any control over as a board and in today's society, is what is the response from parents and guardians?

[02:11:35] what is acceptable and deemed okay in someone's household that then that student brings to school with them those behaviors. I said it last time, last year was the first time in 10 years and sitting on disciplinary that I've heard a parent tell me that we didn't do a good enough job disciplining their students because that's where they expected the discipline to occur because they don't discipline their student at home.

[02:11:57] So this is the times that we live in. I think it would be imperative of this administration because again, the board does policy. We do not do operations. be very clear moving forward what that guidance is for our staff because that's not a code of behavior discussion in in the document form that is an implementation discussion and it keeps coming back up again and again and that's why i'm emphasizing it outside of that personally as a school board member i appreciate the subjective language removal when it comes to dress code because i think i am on year number eight of asking to please take it out because what one

[02:12:35] person deems as too much skin exposure is completely different from another person it depends on your generation and as our student representative who loves her crop tops and pretty much that's all you can find for most young ladies nowadays in the stores that could have earned her a suspension a few years ago so i appreciate that i also think it's time that we really have a serious discussion on subjective language because again you know what is deemed okay in one person's household by what is considered a derogatory term. It depends on the context that it is used in,

[02:13:11] it depends on the culture it's coming from, and it depends on the situation in which you use it. It's not going to be acceptable for every single family every single time, period. It's just not because what is acceptable in my culture may not be acceptable in Mr. Blake's culture, sorry to pick on you for example, or Ms. Zargarpur's household, and it's also not the school divisions responsibility to make that determination of what is acceptable in someone's culture and language it is our our job to set a standard but we need to be very careful when we wade into those territories and we should be really receiving a lot of input from multiple stakeholders when we

[02:13:49] make that decision because we are now the 10th most diverse culture county in the nation and things that most people who have lived here a very long time are not accustomed to hearing you're going to hear now because there's a lot more different people here and and it's something that we should discuss and we showed norm as a practice but we should not deem one view as the acceptable view because we have a lot of people to take into consideration and that's part of what it is that we're doing and so i just want to again thank everyone for the time and energy and effort

[02:14:24] i see this as an evolution and progress i would very much like as miss wall said some information on how it is that our restorative practices are working and maybe a presentation not only to the board but to the public as well along with another more detailed description description of what restorative practices are because i don't think we can educate our public enough the difference between restorative practices and discipline and sometimes where they intersect and where they may not so i will be supporting the code of behavior but i would very very much like to see and hear

[02:15:01] more about the administrative side of the implementation of the Code of Behavior because that's what we're hearing from our public and our constituents and also if there is a note in the Code of Behavior somewhere that maybe highlight bold-faced I don't know to bring attention to that we cannot disclose what discipline is given to the student I don't I'm sure it's in there I don't know what page but it needs to be bold-faced thank you. Mr. Jesse. I first like to ask the question once i get the answer to the question then i'd like to have follow-up perhaps i should

[02:15:37] know this but i really don't when we say in school suspension particularly for high school and middle school what does that mean and how is it implemented so mr jesse in school suspension would be removal from the usual the typical instructional setting and as far as implementation it would vary depending on the location the staffing what have you from school to school but consistently i can tell you it would mean removal from the classroom instruction yeah and

[02:16:11] that's the problem i have with that because where are you going to put the kid the kid is acting up you don't and particularly in a lot of our schools there is no extra classroom there is no extra teacher where do you put this kid three or four or five kids that are acting up and you know so the in-school suspension is a problem not that i don't think it should happen but i don't think

[02:16:44] it's realistic and it also creates a problem for somebody has to supervise or should be supervising the kids in there this whole issue and i said it last week and i'll say this again to miss williams every parent and every family has different rules and regulations but when they come to this school system we are responsible for setting rules and they have to live by those rules and if they don't live by the rules they should be punished the other problem we have we're talking about

[02:17:22] you know inconsistency between the if the we have to have rules for the teachers the principals administrators and if they're not abiding by the rules they have to be held accountable also and part of the problem is is that they are not held accountable because we don't know as i used to tell employees you can't expect your manager to fix something that they don't even know exists

[02:17:54] i i have been told recently that i there is a school in my district that they don't fill out the complaint form they just send the kids to the student to the office but i guess there's a form that they're supposed to fill out they're not doing it okay if that's the rule and they're not doing it then that's that's on the principal or administration that has to be held accountable but if you don't know you can't fix it now that lady that was here earlier i understand what she

[02:18:33] was saying she talked to four times to the principal of the school got no response or inappropriate response it was brought up and we sent it up to to the executive cabinet and then somebody talked to her but again that that principle needs to be held accountable because it's clearly something that should be done so it's a complicated situation i'm going to vote for this

[02:19:06] tonight but it's not a perfect document and it's got a lot of problems but and i i hate this term living document because a lot of time the living document goes for a couple years before it ever gets fixed so we need to fix them a little faster but we need to make improvements but we have to have something and this is at least a good step and we have to make sure that our folks are consistent we have over a

[02:19:39] hundred almost a hundred schools it is a hard difficult task and I hate to say We can't even get agreement. I'm, you know, I get sick every day listening to this case with former President Trump.

Obviously, the laws are not consistent. The application of the laws are not consistent. But we have to do the best we can to make them consistent. And that's part of the

[02:20:11] problem, our interpretation. What is offensive to you might not be offensive to me. But we have to say in this school system here is what's appropriate and if you don't apply by that that's inappropriate and we're gonna deal with it and if you don't like it go to the public private school or so forth you know sitting on a disciplinary committee I see sometimes kids that basically have all failing grades it doesn't surprise me that they're getting the problem because they

[02:20:50] heck they're not obviously studying in school and they don't want to be there and that's a problem so you know we just have to handle that and we have to deal with the reality there with 90,000 kids to be honest we don't have a heck of a lot of problems but those problems that we do have impact and if it's your kid that's being bullied or whatever then that's a problem and you have to deal

[02:21:25] with that and you have to respect it doesn't matter if that's the only person out of 90 000 that person deserves to have proper treatment and proper enforcement thank you mr blake thank you mr chairman so i just want to say this uh this code's strength lies in its holistic approach and it not only sets out expected behaviors but it also emphasizes the importance of shared understanding amongst students staff and community by delineating positive behaviors and providing

[02:22:01] strategic guidance on how to achieve them the code plays a critical role in guiding our students towards academic and personal success moreover the inclusion of the preventative and restorative practices is a testament to our commitment to proactive rather than purely reactive measures through the implementation of the positive positive behavior interventions and supports and the restorative practices with the multi-tiered system supports our approach is geared towards

[02:22:34] preventing issues before they escalate and the proactive and responsive nature of the restorative practice further enhances our educational environment by focusing and building community repairing harm and preventing future conflicts these practices underscore our dedication to maintaining a harmony school climate i would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to dr mcdade mishu and their dedicated staff for the tireless effort in crafting such a comprehensive code of

[02:23:09] behavior i know it wasn't easy um their work has been instrumental in aligning our district's policies with the best practices outlined in the vo or the virginia department of education's model guidance for positive and preventive code of student conduct and policy so i feel this code of behavior is a strong testament to our district's unwavering commitment to creating a nurturing educational environment that respects and promotes the well-being and success of every student and And for that, I will be supporting this code of behavior.

[02:23:46] Thank you. Mr. Wall, only because you weren't here last week. Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I just wanted to conclude by saying I do appreciate the edits made to the document. I do believe it improves transparency.

[02:24:02] It gives as you as Ms. Huebner stated, it is a public facing document designed for families and students and teachers to understand, you know, what we expect. I do believe that we've made a lot of improvements in giving more clear information, and we've improved the readability.

[02:24:21] And my assessment of our challenges with student behavior is that it's not so much the Code of Behavior document itself, but the implementation, which is a separate issue, and I know it's one we're

working on. And so for these reasons, my vote will be reflective, not so much that I think we don't have additional work to do, but I recognize that we are making progress toward a very important goal, which is teaching children how to behave so that learning can occur in our classrooms. Thank

[02:25:01] you. Dr. Lateef, I just had one more question. Sure, Mr. If this was a no vote, would the code of behavior cease to exist and we would have nothing governing any guidelines? Can you answer that question for me, Ms. Huebner? I think that's the question for general counsel.

[02:25:22] My understanding is the current code will continue to exist, and we work on all we're approving is the changes to the code of behavior today. Right, because you've approved the current code in effect, and there's no automatic sunset of that code, then that code would continue because that was the board's vote.

[02:25:45] In other words, every time you approve the code annually, you are superseding the prior existing code and replacing it. We're just voting to approve the changes. Correct. the last one would continue to exist even if it was voted. - Correct, you're in effect voting to supplant the current existing code with a new code.

[02:26:05] - Thank you. - Yeah, so I'll just, since I'll be last here and relatively brief, that is correct. I think that's important to know that we're voting on changes, we do this every year.

[02:26:20] Many of the changes are in compliance with laws that are changed in the General Assembly each year that require us to change our code of behavior to come into compliance with state laws and any new federal laws that may be implicated. I wanna thank Dr. McDade, the work Ms. Huebner's done, this is my seventh or eighth code of behavior votes, maybe seventh, and you know, I'll just point out that, you know, I'm as guilty as sort of anybody in romanticizing the past.

[02:26:51] I'm generation X, or whatever that means, and you know, I was bullied as a kid for my name, I was bullied as a kid for my religion, I was bullied as a kid for what I brought to lunch, to eat, that was different than everyone else's.

[02:27:09] There was no one in those days to report that to. We didn't have counselors in elementary school. It was something you just didn't really report to anybody, and you never told your parents 'cause you were ashamed to be bullied.

[02:27:26] And so it was a different time. And so maybe in those days, if you ran the stats on schools and bullying, it would look like bullying is a lot less. We are living in a time now where I think we've encouraged people to report things.

[02:27:42] We have Title IX, Title VI, Title I. A number of different laws have come into effect because of the way Generation X may have grown up and thought that maybe things should be better or different or improved.

[02:27:59] We have social media now that takes something that wouldn't have ever been reported and now everyone can see it. That's good and bad. And so we have this romanticized version of the past that it was always great.

[02:28:14] It was better when we were younger and things aren't as good. When I grew up, when I graduated high school in 1990, there were four students with a perfect score in the SAT in all of America, four. Nowadays, you have four in every high school in some of the good high schools.

[02:28:32] It's not that the test became easier, 'cause trust me, I have four children and they're all studying for it. It's as rigorous as it was, if not more, in many ways. But we have many more support systems. Thanks, Tracy. If you wanna finish, you wanna finish up for me?

[02:28:51] We have many more support systems, like the school division pays for students to take the SAT, which we didn't have when I was growing up. We have probably, and I think this is accurate, higher average SAT scores of students in the county now than probably 30 or 40 years ago.

[02:29:09] And that's not because the test became easier, it's because we have done what sort of, if you were wealthy in the '80s, you could afford Kaplan courses or Princeton Review courses and you could prep for it. And it was something new at that time. Now it's relatively, you can go online and Khan Academy can provide you what we were getting back then for hundreds of dollars.

[02:29:32] You can get it for free. And so things were always more romantic. You know, you think it was better back then, but in many ways we have enormous progress. And I look at this work that your office has done and in response to challenges that teachers face in the classroom and that we face as folks who are in charge of governance and oversight and what our teachers face on a daily basis and what our parents feel and what kids feel, this is constantly something that has to improve.

[02:30:04] We're doing it. And I think Ms. Williams, Ms. Wall both point out and as did Mr. Wilk and Trudenik, that enforcement is critical and consistency, and Dr. McDade, when she came here, one of the first 100-day things she noted was a lack of consistent practices across the division, whether it be in just behavior, whether it be in governance and oversight of school functionings, whether it's transportation in one building versus another, you know, we have to get better at that, and that's why the fourth part of our strategic plan, is it fourth, Dr. McDade?

[02:30:37] organizational coherence for is organizational coherence. And so this goes a long way to helping us get there and I appreciate all your work. So I will support the changes in the code of behavior as well. And so I look forward to making that vote here. Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[02:30:53] I do want to, before the board does take the vote, couple of things. One, I do agree with, there was a lot of things said tonight and there's a lot of things that I agree with. I do want to make sure for clarification Ms. Hebner worked with a diverse body of individuals to kind of craft this, and they didn't craft it based on their own desire or wish for what would go in there.

[02:31:21] What they tried to do was to make sure that it stayed tightly aligned to the model guidance from VDOE. So anything that you see in the Code of Behavior isn't like a PWCS-specific rule or recommend recommendation, everything you'll see in the Code of Behavior is aligned to the model guidance that we got from BDOE because straying too far away from that can get us into some legal trouble as well.

[02:31:51] So what I will say is based on what I heard though, it is a dynamic document. It's a policy that the board owns. So even based on, like we asked for red lines. got some we got some feedback from you know what we got from parents from teachers etc and you'll see that the changes that were made did reflect some of the red lines that we did get those red lines that maybe were too far away from the model guidance is what we didn't you know put up to put into the document but there were some practical things that were mentioned with specific

[02:32:27] examples of like, yes, something could be a level one through a three, but the document could say what the recommendation is as opposed to just leaving it open. Things like that I think are things that

can be considered as long as whatever is recommended, you know, is still in alignment with what the VDOE considers acceptable. So I would offer that, you know, this be a dynamic document where even after some of the specific examples we got tonight if there are things that we can go back and review and look at and say we can add these things and bring it back to the board

[02:33:05] we're happy to do that um and so that it's not just a a one and done uh you know if we can make improvements excellent dr mcdade and i would just reiterate my you know i we've talked about the cell phones i've talked about it both privately publicly um and among board members and i and i do think that i do appreciate the pilot you're going to do it's all middle schools next year what are we doing or it's all middle schools have done we've already done the pilot what's the deal on that it all middle schools and there are additional elementary and high schools that have been identified yeah and i i just think if one of the things we look at on the dynamic aspects of the

[02:33:44] document dr mcdata is just consideration on on how we can get there a little faster on that that issue and again you know the board owns policies so if it is the board's will to have a policy on cell phone sooner we can absolutely do that the goal for the pilot really wasn't just about let's pilot and see what's going to happen um it was about trying to engage families as well and not just spring something on them so it doesn't necessarily have to be that the pilot goes the whole year before we craft policy um but it would give an opportunity to get some communication out

[02:34:16] to families that something that this is coming fantastic okay um please vote no actually someone Oh, did you, did we do that? Okay, outstanding, good work.

[02:34:36] Did we do that? - Yeah. - Oh, excellent. - The vote is six yes, two no, Tredenik, Wilk, motion passed.

[02:34:54] - Fantastic, thank you. Thank you, everyone. Moving on to our student representative who's sat through this and then we've ended her. Is this your final meeting, Fernanda Mirante? Forest Park High School is with us this evening and I will turn the meeting to you.

[02:35:12] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. - Good evening, members of the board. Dr. McDade, my parents are there, hi, and Prince William County community. It's hard to believe that this is my last board meeting. I do have fun listening to everything. I'll give my comments later.

[02:35:28] But I do want to start these last remarks by thanking the board for allowing me to represent the over 90,000 student voices in the county this year. It has been an honor to serve as one of the student representatives, and I really do hope that I have left positive impact in our community. These remarks might be a little bit longer than usual but this is the last time you'll hear me I promise at least in DC in this seat. So I'll give my last couple pieces of input from a couple of student related topics about the code of behavior as well and then just a year wrapped about my experience as a student rep and then thanking some really

[02:36:05] important people from my support system. To start off I'd like to recognize Forest Park High School and Patriot High School's FCCLA chapters for their outstanding participation at the Virginia FCCLA Leadership Conference. FCCLA stands for Family Community Career Leaders of America. We went down to Virginia Beach in April to participate in the Leadership Conference at the state level. Patriot High School had a big team of leaders and were awarded with lots of recognition because of their various

projects entered and a lot of participants qualified for the National Leadership Conference that will be held in

[02:36:42] Seattle, Washington this summer. And Forest Park was also in competition and entered projects in five different categories. We ended up getting first, second, third, fourth, and fifth places in all of the entries we had. And two of our teams qualified for nationals and one team, which I'm a part of, got first place in event management category with Multiculture Night that we hosted at Forest Park earlier in March.

[02:37:09] and we will be traveling to Seattle this summer, which is really exciting. So Joshua Thirmalai, a senior at Forest Park High School and our sponsor, Ms. Gonzalez, we will all be traveling and competing nationally. And so congratulations to both schools for their awards as well as Colgan High School for their amazing participation.

[02:37:27] It's the first year Colgan has an FCCLA chapter and they're already competing at the state level, which is really impressing. I know they're not here anymore, but Julia, I think it was her name from Woodbridge High School about the NAMI on campus at Woodbridge.

[02:37:46] They did support Forest Park starting their own chapter. So it's really a great work that they do on campus and it truly shows the advocacy that students have for mental health. And Unity Reed's JROTC Air Force drill team, their performance was amazing.

[02:38:08] I've never seen anything like that. So congratulations to them as well. And thank you to Independence High School for kicking us off to grad season. Seniors at Independence graduated this past week. So congratulations to all graduates. And congratulations also to all the seniors around the county as we embark in our post high school journey.

[02:38:28] In the last couple of weeks, schools like Forest Park and Colgan have celebrated decision day. So congratulations to all my fellow seniors. So whether you have decided to go into the police fire academy um the army workforce you're on an like an internship two-year college four-year college if you're staying in virginia if you're going out of state um i wish you the best and if you're still deciding where to attend school college admissions didn't go as expected you're still waiting on financial aid packages or your fafsa or wait list or you just don't know what to do next that's okay um don't worry there's still time um i actually have to go home put my deposit

[02:39:06] down tonight but it's okay to be scared i am too and feeling anxious yeah and it's okay to evaluate all of your options maybe a little longer than some of your peers so don't feel rushed or behind everyone has their own timeline and just know that Prince William County Schools believes in you and it's excited to see where you go additionally i want to share the work that the student senate and the school-based student voice committees have been doing recently a couple of weeks ago a draft of the student bill of rights was sent out to each high school student voice committee

[02:39:42] for review and suggestions and all schools should have sent their recommendations regarding modifications or suggestions improvements or additions to the bill of rights for future review we have a meeting on monday so we will go over all the suggestions then and i wanted to bring this to the attend to the board's attention because of something that came up during the meeting we had discussing this draft. We were brainstorming and working on the Bill of Rights and one of the senators from the county brought

up that all students should have access to menstrual products somewhere other than the nurse or clinic. I thought a little bit about what they said

[02:40:19] and I decided to ask the room if anyone's school made use of the product dispensers that we have in the bathrooms. We don't use them at my school so I was curious if any other school used them but Everyone said they're just there, but they're always empty. So no schools offer menstrual products inside the bathrooms.

[02:40:38] They do offer them in the nurse or the clinic, but that's inconvenient and kind of defeats the point of having a dispenser inside the bathroom. So I wanted to bring this to the board's attention. I'm not sure if it's like site-based or something different, but kind of considering bringing back menstrual products inside the bathrooms so we can facilitate students the access to them.

[02:41:01] and i hope this can be considered for the next school year um so about the code of behavior um from a student perspective um i'm honored to like be in the discussion and understand what the code of behavior is and all of that stuff um but there's really no point on doing the modifications if us as students we don't understand what the code of behavior means at the beginning of the year we see we can we are supposed we're supposed to read the code of behavior we're supposed to say we read it i have to take a quiz that says like that you read

[02:41:38] this or not i just click yes and i i'm done and um there's a video about the code of behavior which is like maybe 20 years old and like the language they use um their dress code examples um their definition of bullying it's really not in touch with reality or what we see now um so i think that I think like one way that we can lower the incidents or like the fights and all the disrespectful behavior in schools is just telling the students

[02:42:17] that what's right and what's wrong. They might not even know it, I might understand it, Isabella might understand it, but not everyone does. And understanding the code of behavior should not be a privilege. So what I think all the stakeholders can do is partner with the student senate or elementary school, middle school, student representatives to just ask them, like, have them read the code of behavior, ask them what they understand, what they don't understand.

[02:42:44] I think an updated video would be really cool, and if you even want to make it more engaging with the students, you can contact all the drama departments at all levels. You can say whoever does the best video wins, like, and you'll have, like, money for your department for your next play or something like that.

[02:43:01] So I think that students understanding the code of behavior is really, really going to help lower those incidents. I don't know what happens if I take out my phone in class and I'm still sitting on this chair because I'm supposed to read the code of behavior at the beginning of the year, but maybe I just read it and I didn't understand it.

[02:43:21] I don't know what I, like if I walk out of school, nothing happens, but I don't know what should happen either, you know? So I think students understanding the code of behavior is really important and something that can be improved this next year.

[02:43:40] We also wanted to talk about more the student senate work that we did this year. We established student voice committees in each high school. In our senate meetings, we talked about

substance abuse prevention, school safety, student leadership workshops, school-based concerns, the Bill of Rights, to name a few of them.

[02:44:00] And I truly think the team of senators we have is outstanding, and I hope their legacy continues in each of their high schools. And as I wrap up the work of the Student Senate, I also want to wrap up my experiences as a student rep this year. Back in May of last year, at around this time of May, I entered a Zoom meeting.

[02:44:20] It was an interview with about 17 adults as part of the application process to be one of the student reps. It was intimidating, it was very scary, but it was definitely necessary to prepare me for what was to come and what being in this position means um and at my first board meeting i was really nervous i love to talk if you didn't if you didn't catch that already um i consider myself a pretty good speaker but that night i was really scared and i was really nervous i remember i talked about the sats coming back to school wishing seniors good luck during college application season um and throughout the year i've touched on different topics like bullying

[02:44:56] student opportunities safety in schools inclement weather policies and my personal favorite middle middle school recess. I love to work with Catalea, Jay, and the whole middle school recess committee, and I'm truly impressed of all the meetings and all the people that they've talked to, and I really hope that coming back to a board meeting next school year, kind of seeing Catalea finally getting that middle school recess.

[02:45:26] I was also honored to represent Prince William County Schools in the Virginia School Board Association Annual Conference, and I met and exchanged ideas with other student reps from around Virginia. And I attended diverse events in the county, like the inauguration of the Innovation Elementary School and the induction ceremony of the new board members.

[02:45:45] And I will be emceeing the retiree ceremony next Tuesday. And I really can't put into words how amazing this experience has been and how honored I am to have served almost 100,000 students in our county. So thank you for putting your trust in me, and I really hope that your voices have had a space here and that I have inspired you to advocate for what you believe in.

[02:46:08] I'll get to the more emotional part now. Throughout this year, there have been multiple people that formed my support system, which helped me succeed as a student rep. I want to extend my gratitude to Dr. McDade, who has been an amazing supporter ever since I met her and a great seed buddy too.

[02:46:24] Thank you as well to the whole board for always listening to my ideas and encouraging me, as well as Bea and Ana, who have been there for me, always checking on me, showing me around the KLC, even though I got lost a couple of times, not gonna lie, I was in some random office, but I made it out.

[02:46:40] Thank you also to the communications team for getting my good angles. And also for showcasing student activities through their videos. I'm actually the number one fan of the YouTube and of the Instagram channel. So when they post something, I think I'm the first to see it.

[02:46:58] So I love seeing my school there and other schools know the students doing what they love um so i really think that the the work that they do is it's it's really amazing thank you also to bella for being my fellow student rep this year we've worked together and we have been there for each other this year and i am lucky to have her support um you're an amazing leader and i'm truly honored to share this seat with

you and we have sat together at events where we knew nobody else and we can relate to how fast our term has come to an end and we even got to go to the white house together and meet chris evans

[02:47:36] so i'm sure i will see you thriving in the future and i wish you the best thank you to jackie as well for stepping up when the opportunity came and always having a fresh perspective on different social and economic improvements that the county can't do and also want to send a thank you to miss viola and mr gervin miss vail has been my mentor throughout this term and without her i really we could have not taken this position as I did.

[02:48:03] She replies to my emails in a span of seconds. I'm not joking, it's actually seconds. And she has given me fashion advice of what to wear to the meetings, suggestions of my remarks so I don't make grammatical errors. And she's truly created a specific plan for the Student Senate and the Student Leadership Workshops.

[02:48:21] And she has introduced me to other officials in the county and has always, always, always showed her support towards me and Bella and Jackie. so thank you so much, Ms. Viola. And finally, I'd like to thank my parents who are here today. I might get emotional, so just, you know.

[02:48:37] My parents, my brother, and I immigrated to Virginia from Peru three years ago, and their support has truly made me who I am today. We came here with uncertainties, not knowing how anything worked, not speaking the language in their case. And as we adapted to our new life in the United States, I taught them what clubs were, what AP classes and DE classes meant, Why were they important?

[02:49:00] Why I had to stay after school all the time? Why I came home so late? What coming up was, what the FAFSA was, we sat together, like, what are taxes? Like, what is this asking me? But together, we really have learned and grown and have made the most out of all the opportunities that were presented to us.

[02:49:17] And they have always been there for me. And without them, I could not have made my high school career as satisfying as it has been, or even serving the student community today. I'm extremely proud of them. And in only three years they have grown so much as well. And they're both attending the Continental University of Florida and Fulbright scholarships.

[02:49:38] My mom is working towards her bachelor's degree in business administration. And my dad is pursuing a master's degree in educational innovations. So I'm really proud of them. And I couldn't be there without them. Thank you for your time and putting your trust in me.

[02:49:54] And with that, I conclude my remarks and my term. Thank you so much.

[02:50:18] - Outstanding, Fernanda. Thank you so much. Whoever's covering her angles, I want to cover my angles. Okay, that's the take-home message for the evening, okay? Number two, thank you so much, Fernanda, for your support of the board this year.

[02:50:37] We really appreciate it, and I think you brought some really good ideas. I saw Dr. McDade writing. She's probably sending a memo already on getting a new video out for the code of behavior, and maybe we can have Isabella and you and Jacqueline be in that video this year for us. Maybe we can have you guys introduce it. Right. So thank you very much. All right. So wonderful, guys. That was that was a great, great way to end your term with us. And we truly appreciate it.

[02:51:04] Moving on to Dr. McDade's superintendent time. Dr. Latonya McDade. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. I really want to just start out by thanking our student representatives to the school board, Isabella Fernanda and Jacqueline it has been a true joy to sit next to you for every single meeting you all have a different approach you each had a different style but nonetheless each and every one of you were just so impactful and I can't imagine us having these meetings without a student sitting here on the dais and providing their perspective because student voice really

[02:51:42] is critically important and Dr. Lateef is right I did make the note about the video so there so there will be an update but that but that's just an example of many different recommendations and feedback that we've gotten not just from our board reps but from our student senate as well and from our student voice committees and and our students as leaders in this system and using their voice in advocacy for improvements in the betterment of their schools and communities really makes pwcs stronger and really makes a difference and then on a personal

[02:52:15] note i've gotten to know each of you and i have learned so much about your aspirations and your goals your motivations what drives you you have invited me to things that you were leading or organizing and i had an opportunity to see you outside of the board meeting and just sitting in the seat but seeing you in action and seeing you be able to thrive and i'm just so incredibly proud of each of you and all that I know that what you've already accomplished and all that I know that you will accomplish in the future and the impact that you're going to make not just for

[02:52:52] yourselves but also for your community and for the betterment of our world. You are brilliant, you are talented, you are highly capable. Don't let anyone tell you anything different and anybody that does, you can show them better than you can tell them. So keep up the great work. We are proud.

[02:53:11] pwcs is always your home and if you ever need me personally i will respond to the call so congratulations i love you all three of you and keep up the great work and i hope that you all will stay in touch all right so moving on i want to also recognize sky auger from osborne park high school for being named a 2024 national merit scholarship winner from the semi-finalist group over 16 000 and over 15 000 students met the high academic standards and other requirements

[02:53:51] to advance to the finalist level of the competition by the conclusion of the 2024 program more than 6 870 finalists will have earned the merit scholar title and received a total of nearly 26 million in college scholarships. So congratulations to Sky on this monumental achievement. Prince William County Public Schools is observing Mental Health Awareness Month this May. Prioritizing mental health in schools is essential for the well-being and success of our students. We are hosting a variety of different events across the division to educate our communities and create a supportive environment where we can have honest conversations about mental health challenges

[02:54:30] without fear of judgment mental health affects us all so it is important to take care of ourselves each other and help others to know exactly where to start if you need help mark your calendars in celebration of national physical fitness and sports month i am excited to invite all of our families to the inaugural pwcs sports fair this will be our first sports fair one of the things that I charge our Department of Athletics and Student Activities on is making sure that students are fully aware of not just the traditional sports but even some of the non-traditional sports

[02:55:07] that they can be a part of and to do that through a fair. And so we're having our first sports fair on Saturday, June 1st, 2024 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Kelly Leadership Building. This event will

showcase the athletic opportunities available to middle and high school students within our school division coaches and athletes will be on hand to discuss the various sports programs and answer any questions that our students and families may have so i encourage our families to come out as students plan for summer i want to encourage our families to take advantage of the many learning opportunities that are available to students i'm sharing them tonight because we

[02:55:44] we've sent out communication but we want to make sure that we're continuing consistent communication around the summer programs to make sure everyone understands what's available to them because there's a variety of programs to fit the needs of um so many different students so we're offering both summer school our academic which is our academic recovery program and discovery which is our enrichment program and that's for students in kindergarten through grade 12.

[02:56:12] Registration for our summer programs in is it is in high demand and selection is limited to one enrichment program per student. Registration concludes May 24th for elementary, middle, and the discovery programs, and May 31st for high school. So please visit our website, www.pwcs.edu, select Academics and Programs, then Summer Programs. As a reminder, our summer school-age child care provider is AlphaBest Education, which provides two summer programs: Specialty Enrichment

[02:56:48] and excursion students can balance the relaxation of summer with the excitement of discovery and i would encourage families to take advantage of these programs that are offered by alpha best pwcs is actively recruiting current vacancies for teachers school counselors and librarians filling our current vacancies with highly qualified candidates requires the support of the entire community so help by spreading the word about available opportunities or registering for either of our upcoming in-person job fairs held May 18th or we have a virtual job fair on Wednesday June 12th. Registration can be found on our human resources web page so please refer your friends family and recent graduates to

[02:57:28] consider applying for a role in PWCS. Over the past two years we have experienced many challenges with student transportation. We've listened to feedback and we've continuously made improvements and updates to our processes and practices within student transportation. We work diligently to improve our service.

[02:57:48] Our goal is to increase our on-time arrivals and continuously improve our service to students, families, and staff. And although we did see improvements this year, there are still great opportunities for us to continue to get better. As a division, we contracted a third-party transportation consultant expert to conduct an independent study to review and evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of our bus routes because we knew that with all the revisions and updates that we made we needed some additional support to get to the root causes of some of the problems that we were having with transportation and so our third-party consultant did just that

[02:58:28] and tonight we will share the results from that independent study and we will be engaging the community in the coming weeks about several improvements that we're planning to make to strengthen our customer service for the upcoming school year. I am inviting at this time to join us our chief operating officer Vernon Bach and his team and I'll have him introduce his team to present on the updates on transportation and I'll just before they get started just basically state that now that we know some of the things that we could and should be doing better it is

[02:59:03] going to be important for us to act swiftly and make these revisions. Change is always hard. But when we see that change is needed, it is going to be important for us to move forward with that process.

And we'll do just that. So they'll be bringing forward to you some recommendations, but also ways in which we're going to engage our families and communities before we start rolling out or executing any changes. So, Mr. Bakken, could you please introduce your full team?

[02:59:31] - Yes, thank you, Dr. McDade. And we have with us tonight, we've got Robin Marshall. Robin is our director of transportation and we have with us tonight also Heather Hansen, our supervisor of transportation operations. So good evening, Chairman Lateef, board members, and Dr. McDade.

[02:59:48] I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you tonight. We are excited to be with you tonight to share with you some improvements we have on the horizon to really significantly improve our students' on-time arrival to school and to improve communication with our families.

[03:00:05] Before we begin our presentation, I just want to address some important issues regarding our transportation service delivery model. We acknowledge that there's been some significant challenges in delivering students to school on time and recruiting drivers, as well as maintaining effective communication with families.

[03:00:24] These shortcomings have not met our standards, and we recognize this is unacceptable. We've completed a top-to-bottom audit and analysis of our transportation operation through a partnership with the consultant firm Formative. We're here tonight to share with you the results of that audit and the improvements that will enable us to deliver the students on time and realize our transportation vision, which is really ensuring that our students get to school safely and on time with reliable and prompt transportation service, and also empowering seamless student transportation experiences through timely parent communication for every journey. To

[03:01:03] realize that vision we've been collaborating with Formative technologies beginning this September to really optimize and modernize our district's transportation system. By leveraging Formative's expertise we aim to implement effective strategies to improve punctuality and rebuild trust with our families. Formative is a student transportation technology management and consulting company with a highly analytical approach to systems improvement and you can see the team's depth here and the school divisions large school divisions that they have supported across the country with making similar improvements and also working to support

[03:01:42] departments of education and their work to support transportation so we have engaged in a three-phase review with formative the first phase and and ultimately really about this three phase it was really to set a pathway within the district for us to achieve operational and fiscal sustainability and to produce recommendations for how to improve and how to optimize our transportation operations to ensure and and to enhance on-time service performance the first phase with formative was completed back in january and the objective of the stability sprint here was really to quickly

[03:02:22] assess our system gather data pretty quickly and to identify some pretty quick wins for us as a transportation department really the goal there was to begin to immediately stabilize and so through that engagement really formative engaged us and around three questions and through their work and their data analysis what opportunities can we realize to stabilize transportation pretty quickly what are the near term solutions and also what are the longer term solutions for next year and even into the future we were really excited about this effort because it wasn't just a an

[03:03:02] effort from afar formative came into the district and they completed focus groups and you can see the focus groups that were engaged with here from students to parents parent liaisons in schools and all the way up to senior leadership these focus groups really were focused on teasing out our operations gaining insight from the different layers within transportation and folks from across the district and also a huge part of their first engagement effort here was validation of our data validating it and then analyzing it and so i'm excited because for the first time in several

[03:03:40] years we now have accurate data to inform our improvement initiatives and previously our efforts were primarily based on intuition rather than empirical evidence and this shift towards data driven decision making marks a significant step forward in our approach to continuous improvement and so just want to share with you some of the numbers we're transporting just under 73 000 students daily in the district that's 79.4 of our population and to give you some perspective The average across the nation for a district for districts nationwide is transporting about 49.4% of the student body.

[03:04:20] And in Virginia, it's about 75%. So giving you a little perspective, we're above both of those metrics or averages both nationally and at the state level. Metric number two is really, we believe, why we're in the current situation we're in. 57,000 students in our district walk less than two-tenths of a mile or less to their bus stop.

[03:04:42] It's far less than we have experienced in other districts. It's far less than our neighbors. And it's virtually providing door-to-door service for the vast majority of our students. And with the critical bus driver shortage that we've experienced, we've been able to keep up.

[03:05:01] And that's been a key reason for our poor on-time performance. We're averaging about half of our buses, our seats on buses, which is another problem. We're relying heavily on privatized transportation.

[03:05:19] And we have pretty, in some cases, really very low-density trips. Many of our trips, you'll see in some data that we present in a few slides, over 1,000 trips a day with less than nine students on them, which is very inefficient.

[03:05:37] You can see here our on-time performance in the morning is abysmal at 37, you know, in the morning 37% of our buses are late to school, which is unacceptable to all of us. And, you know, I did mention already the data accuracy. We now have clean, accurate data to base and inform our decisions moving forward.

[03:05:56] The second phase was the comprehensive efficiency analysis that Formative conducted. really focusing on immediate solutions for both short-term and long-term problems. Again, you can see posing some of the same questions here. What are some things that we can do quickly to help us stabilize?

[03:06:14] What are some alternative system configurations that we could consider for transportation? And then what are our long-term solutions to really realize long-term stability? Robin? Absolutely. Thanks, Vern. So some things that we can do immediately to help stabilize the system, First and foremost, I'll talk about stop consolidation.

[03:06:35] So Vern mentioned that over 50,000 of our students currently walk less than a tenth of a mile to school. Raising that median up a little bit, allowing kids to walk maybe four or five houses further from point one to point two five will allow us to get in and out of neighborhoods a lot quicker.

[03:06:57] Currently right now, and we'll show you an example that a little bit later one neighborhood may have up to 10 or more stops so we have buses stopping literally every other house every three houses just to pick our students up having less stops within specific neighborhoods will allow buses to get in and out of neighborhoods quicker and it'll also shorten the number of it'll shorten the number of stops on each route and allow us to pick up more students to get to school quicker. The opt-out policy is something

[03:07:34] that we want to put in place to allow families who do not use transportation to opt out so we can have a more accurate number to plan for for day one of school. So currently right now any student that is eligible for transportation within Prince William County we have to route for. So day one we're routing for a lot more students than we actually have to transport doing so stretches our resources then especially in the beginning of the school year and then we have to draw back and move buses around a lot in the beginning and it's it's a

[03:08:11] hectic time between September and the beginning of October currently 71 percent of our plane riders actually do ride and that just causes a heartache for the system planning for more students than what we actually have to ride and what Vern mentioned earlier with half of our buses being full this is a part of that reason another thing is a vehicle mix currently right now with our low density routes we have over a thousand trips that have nine or less students on the bus or in our privatized vehicles adding vans i'm sorry adding

[03:08:48] district-owned vans to our mix next year will allow us to route low density routes more efficiently and potentially eliminate 63 of those low-density routes that we have on buses. It'll be not only cheaper to operate on vans, but another benefit is the vans can be a CDL pipeline for us.

[03:09:11] So not only would we add vans to the mix, but we'll use those vans to recruit drivers with regular driver's license who have aspirations to be bus drivers. We'll train those drivers in-house and create a pipeline to have more drivers than where we have positions.

[03:09:30] That is the actual goal. As we stand right now within transportation, we have more trainees ready to become bus drivers than we have positions. So that's a good problem to have and something that two years ago we thought would have been unheard of with the driver shortage.

[03:09:47] On top of that, working with Formative, they found that by us expanding our training, improving our internal processes, and covering our routes better, we can get better GPS tracking, data accuracy, customer service, as well as communications to our schools and families.

[03:10:05] We were talking about doing a full technology overhaul before the beginning of the school year, but this is something that we're actually gonna wait to do after the beginning of the school year stabilizer. So Vern and I, as well as Heather, noticed that we were trying to do a lot at once.

[03:10:22] So besides trying to do everything at once before the school year starts, the goal is to have a prioritized step-by-step process to implement all of these changes that we wanna see within transportation. So this is the example of a neighborhood that we currently route for.

[03:10:40] This neighborhood has 10 stops in it. 10 of them are designated for elementary students, nine are designated for middle school students, and eight are designated for high school students. As you see, each stop is about six to seven houses apart.

[03:10:55] Some are only two to three houses apart. Working with Formative, they created a example of this neighborhood with the elementary stops. We reduced it from 10 stops all the way down to six.

[03:11:11] As you'll see with the elementary students, the stops that were eliminated, you'll see that the students may have to walk anywhere from four to six houses further than what they have to walk currently for their stops. If you look at our middle school example, we get slightly more aggressive 'cause as the students get older, they're able to walk a little bit further on their own.

[03:11:32] We went from nine stops down to two. And for this particular neighborhood, we went from eight high school stops down to one. So this does not require the students to necessarily leave their neighborhood to get to their bus stop, but they have to walk slightly further within their neighborhood to get to get to that stop.

[03:11:50] - And I just wanna add here, it's important to note in the models that you just saw that the target distance for elementary would not exceed 0.25 miles, the target distance for middle school would be 0.5, and the target distance would be 0.75 for high school.

[03:12:06] Obviously many students, because that would be the max, many students are walking much less than that, but those were the kind of the parameters that we worked with to establish these, the reductions in stops that you see here. - Absolutely. So a part of phase two, we thought it was important to point out that out of our 62 elementary schools, 48 of them have defined walk boundaries.

[03:12:31] And this is important because these students currently walk to school now. So if you look at the student body from these schools, 30% of them are within the mile walk distance. And out of that 30%, over 4,500 of them currently walk over a half a mile to get to school.

[03:12:50] So we felt it was important to show this example because we're not asking families and students to do things that we're not already expecting our elementary students to do. Three of our schools, Kerrydale, Muglin, and Westgate, currently have 90% of their students as walkers, and about 12 schools have more than 50% of their student enrollment walking to school.

[03:13:14] This chart right here will show you what the median distance is now, compared to what the median distance can be for next year. So if you look at the pre-K through five, they currently walk less than a tenth of a mile to their bus stop.

[03:13:30] And next year we're proposing about 0.15. For our six to eight, the distance gets a little bit further as students get older. It goes from a tenth of a mile currently to 0.32. High school is 0.11 to 0.53.

[03:13:47] If you look at the specific needs, these are our students with disabilities as well as our McKinney-Vento students, their stop distances will not change from this year to next. But our inboundary schools, these stops will increase for elementary about 0.09 to 0.15.

[03:14:10] For middle school, that's 0.1 to 0.31. High school is 1.35 to 0.4, I'm sorry, yeah. Yeah, to 0.49. Our specialty programs via district policy, the stop can be up to five miles from the home.

[03:14:35] We are moving the elementary at the max from 1.18 to 2.77, middle school 1.09 to three miles, and 1.35 to 3.48 for high school.

[03:14:53] Just to give you a quick highlight of our headlines of efficiency, What we covered is by repurposing 39 routed vehicles, we can have up to 225 fewer daily routes, which will allow more students on our current buses, which are currently averaging a little more than half full.

[03:15:12] We can reduce up to 22% of our stops. Now, just to keep in mind too, we're not just removing stops without actually doing a thorough review. Heather and her team will be going out to the stops that we're proposing to remove, looking at the walk distances, looking at whether there's sidewalks present or not, and just assessing the safety to see if the stops that are being proposed should actually be removed.

[03:15:38] The average duration of our runs will be about 53 minutes. And with a mixed utilization of vehicles, we can get up to 63 fewer trips that have nine students or less, And each vehicle will complete about 5.66 trips per day.

[03:15:56] And what that means is the goal is for each vehicle to do about three schools in the morning and three schools in the p.m. getting up to close to six schools per day. And for all of our students, the median stop distances go from 0.1 to 0.24 for our inboundary schools.

[03:16:13] It goes from 1.28 to 3.35 for our specialty programs. and these specialized needs, routes will not change. Mr. Before Robin moves on, I think it's important to note, you know, the repurposed vehicles, there's another important data point there.

[03:16:30] We average about 40 bus drivers out on any given day. When you have an employee group as large as 700, there are daily absences. And the nice thing about the repurposing of those routes and those vehicles is now we have built-in coverage, subcoverage, and so we can repurpose those into built-in subcoverage and accommodate those routes when we have subs or when we need subs. And so the next, the final phase here, which is what we're working through, is building those bus stops and routes with these efficiencies. You know,

[03:17:07] you heard Robin say we do have an internal team that will be reviewing all those routes, making sure that the routes are safe. They're safe routes to school. Obviously, we don't have kids crossing four lanes of traffic, so we'll be closely scrutinizing those. We are purchasing and implementing passenger vans, and we'll be bringing those into the fleet with those van drivers that Robin mentioned as the pipeline for bus drivers with CDLs. Working to communicate with families to expect adjustments to bus stops, and I'll talk a little bit about that more in a moment. Obviously, we believe all of these will improve customer satisfaction with

[03:17:45] faster response times to parents and increase satisfaction we're working on building that opt out platform for parents to indicate their preference for transportation and their needs for next year and then obviously with all of these enhancements and improvements the here comes the bus app will be very functional next year and we've been working very closely with the vendor to ensure that's the case so just a couple a couple things for engagement coming up and communication obviously we're here presenting this publicly tonight we robin and i will be hosting three virtual town hall meetings next week tuesday wednesday and thursday from 7 to 8 15. robin and

[03:18:25] i will be sending out a communication uh we anticipate sending it out in the morning tomorrow notifying all of our families of these these changes and the potential positive impacts on transportation and improving arrival times and in there we will be including the links to the the virtual town hall meetings.

[03:18:43] Obviously, I mentioned the transportation preference, so that'll be something we envision. We've been working with IT there. So when students log into ParentVUE to access their grades, they'll have a pop-up screen that comes up and asking parents to express their desire for transportation.

[03:19:01] And we're just asking families, if you know you're not using transportation next year, to opt out. If you think you're gonna need transportation at some point next year, just indicate, don't, don't do anything. You don't need to opt out and Robin and the team will make sure they route for you. Um, and then the last, the last piece here is, um, we'll have student bus stops ready this fall, uh, no later than August 12th. Um, so that rounds out our presentation and we're here to, and happy to answer any questions you might have. Thank you so much, um, Mr. Bach and I really appreciate it. And, and Robin, um, is new and he's been drinking from the fire hydrant,

[03:19:38] but loving it from what I can see and already making some significant improvements across the board with transportation. Heather, thank you so much for all of your hard work. You all are an incredible team behind the scenes. I know transportation takes the bulk of the beatings at the beginning of the year because in any school system, transportation is tough at the beginning of the school year, but you all have been so committed to taking feedback, continuously making improvements and I really do appreciate everything that you've all of the thought that you've put into how we are going to roll out this phased

[03:20:16] approach for much needed improvements in transportation which I do believe will be positively received by our families there will be growing pains in the process but what outcomes will be from this I think will be definitely worth going through this so at this time I'm going to turn it over to the boards for any questions that you might have dr latif mr denic i just wanted to thank you guys you know i've talked to you a lot about this process and constituents in my district have expressed

[03:20:50] their concerns with uh the buses and i appreciate your transparency and you owning what what's not going well uh right now and what you want to fix uh and again i think that i might be a little too obsessed with transportation now i love it i love the bus drivers i love your community um and the vibe that you guys are creating over there is excellent so continue that um i appreciate your hard work um i think i can't wait to hear less fuss from that here comes the bus app i'm really excited about that i think the parents are going to be thrilled this year for those changes um and you know i was supportive when you guys told us about this the first time i think having those

[03:21:30] those babies walk a little bit further is good for everybody. You know, zip the coats up, you know, put the tennis shoes on, walk to school, you'll be just fine. And I had no idea that the distance for specialty programs had to be that short of a driving distance, which I understand my kids are involved in the specialty programs, so I get, you know, wanting them to be close, and not everybody's is walkable, those kind of things, so I understand.

[03:21:57] But consolidating the stops is going to make a huge difference in lateness, which I think is a big problem for a lot of parents. And the smaller vans, you know, I, of course, have talked to you about how vital those could be for the sports programs, smaller sports programs for getting kids to regionals, getting kids to states when there's only one or two that qualify.

[03:22:17] I think the future of that is is so bright. So I thank you guys each for all your hard work. And I can't wait to see what happens next year. And hopefully I get invited to go ride another bus. Thank you. Any time. I think, Mr. Jesse, we'll just come.

[03:22:37] - Just a couple of questions. Number one, I'm assuming the new vans are already in our budget plan? - We, they are, yes, sir. - Okay, and the other, the only, first of all, I think this is a very good plan, and I agree with everything that was just said, there's only one concern I have.

[03:23:04] That concern is we talk about the walkers, We really talk about the walkers and the drop-offs and the drop-offs are creating some major problems at our schools. And what I'm concerned about is that this is going to increase.

[03:23:22] Some of the kids are going to be lazy, don't want to walk three houses up and we're going to have more cars and stuff. And it's becoming a major problem. Thank you. Mr. Jesse, I appreciate you sharing that. thing that we're really proud of is we have a traffic safety committee that we've implemented in the division and they've engaged with 43 schools over the past year and a half to make improvements to their their parent drop off and their procedures making it you know safety is the top priority but making it efficient as possible as well so the team's ready and on standby to help

[03:23:59] us this fall and they'll continue to help us make improvements and you know we're going to monitor this very closely through the implementation uh the first month and even into the next year so it'll be something we're keeping a close eye on so i appreciate your feedback williams um thank you mr chairman and uh welcome again uh to our new transportation director um mr marshall i appreciate the um look at a new lens with our transportation department it's transportation has

[03:24:38] needed some improvements and modifications over the years will this new plan um i understand how it's benefiting us as a student it's reducing the time what are the benefits for the drivers because what we consistently hear is the drivers don't have enough time to eat lunch utilize the restroom all of the things that are important to their quality of life while being employed how does does this impact them so mainly with reducing the stops the routes the plan is for the routes to get shorter in regards to time and and it'll allow drivers to get in and out of neighborhoods quicker so when they drop

[03:25:18] off at school those routes can end quicker than what they do now so prime example besides stopping at like 20 schools I'm sorry 20 stops they may stop at about 15. Okay. And we're still continuing to accommodate drivers with stops at schools using restrooms and things of that nature. Absolutely. That's always been a constant concern that we hear from our transportation employees. That concern's been addressed and yes, they have free access to go into the schools, use the restrooms, take breaks, those

[03:25:52] sort of things. Okay. Thank you for that because it comes up. And then I did hear that you are going to personally be going out to look at the specific stops that are going to be eliminated and I appreciate that because I saw on your presentation things like Kerrydale and some of the schools where it's walkable but those are also enclosed neighborhoods and so that does make a difference in the amount of students that are able to walk I can my student can walk from his home but if you go right across the street it's on an open road and the bus does stop every two to three houses because there's no sidewalk there's nowhere for the kids to go. So I appreciate you personally going out there. My concern is the specialty stops.

[03:26:32] I just want to make sure that while we're increasing the distance that we are still able to accommodate our students to the best of our abilities. I know that there's no guarantee that you get a specialty bust when being in a specialty program. Parents are aware of that. But there are some families that are still dependent upon that. So I want to make sure that we're not removing a student's ability to participate in a specialty program because now the stop is extended further I don't know I've never seen any data on that just something I think is worth a look especially in some of our denser neighborhoods where that mileage

[03:27:08] may not seem very far but the family resources may not be there and I hate to see a student not be able to participate and then my last question is outside of the town halls how are we prepping our school families for this adjustment that's coming will we be utilizing platforms like school status and things of that nature because the town hall meetings are next week and if you have a student like i do like i'm not thinking about sign up for a town hall i'm thinking about how i'm going to get them through sols and getting ready for promotion ceremonies which would start very soon so how are we pushing this message out to our families great great uh

[03:27:47] all great points and the one thing i want to touch on before i touch on the the communication piece is you know i'm really proud of this team because we are very responsive when we have those you you know, needs that, like you expressed, I think our team is very responsive, handles those on case-by-case basis. And the other thing with the addition of the vans, we're going to become much more flexible, more agile to be able to adjust to some of those needs and those demands.

[03:28:11] So we stand ready, you know, to work with families should they have a unique circumstance or we have situations like you mentioned. So we're ready to do that. The other thing I'll mention, through the communication, we recognize it as a busy time of year for a lot of families.

[03:28:27] We wanted to get in front of this to notify families. We are working with communications. We'll have a website. The virtual webinars will be recorded. They will be available on the website. We have a letter that's going out from Robin and myself to all families across the district with the changes tomorrow with links to those websites. And then I envision, and we've talked about this with planning with our comms department they'll be regular reminders too over the summer and as we get closer to next year just reminding families of the changes. Thank you I appreciate that and while it's not a transportation sort of ask but it's sort of an inter divisional ask if we do

[03:29:04] have students drop that we be proactive as a division asking why because one of the things that I've noticed is that someone will drop or not participate regardless of what it is because there's a lack of understanding and then it if we don't know what that is we're missing an opportunity so while it may not be transportation i would just hope that someone else takes up that um question for so that we know what the issue is thank you yes ma'am general thank you dr latif so thank you very much for this presentation i've had many conversations about transportation over the years um in full transparency one of my interests in this topic is directly connected to

[03:29:43] start times i have long detested high school starting at 720 and i don't even have a high school anymore so I know you know those of us who finally finally say you know goodbye to that early start time you know we still we may not be actively you know parenting kids in Prince William County but we remember how it was anyway so I appreciate the stability sprint that's awesome that this is a great effort I appreciate the great effort to gather stakeholder input I'm just gonna give you a little bit of feedback and then I have some questions I really appreciate that we have gone in and gathered some accurate data, some

[03:30:20] empirical data. I have long observed mostly empty buses driving all over Prince William County, all over my neighborhood, and thought this is not efficient. Like we can do, there are things we can do. We can consolidate stops, we can make, we can get vans, we can, you know, figure out that there's a kid that's never going to take the bus. Like why is this kid allocated a spot on this bus? You know, all of

these things. So I'm really, I'm really excited about it. I think this is great and I think it will improve our customer service I think it will I think more parents will trust the bus system and put their kids on the bus

[03:30:56] hopefully that will alleviate the long kissin rides that we have if I'm hoping that will be the case if the routes are shorter you know out where I'm in Gainesville district some neighborhoods are pretty clustered and close to schools but some are really way out there you know and you don't ride the bus if your bus rides an hour long like you just don't you don't get on the bus at 6:05, drive all around Western Prince William, and finally get to your school at, you know, 6:50. Like, you just don't do that. So I'm really looking forward to seeing those routes getting

[03:31:29] shorter. I do imagine this is going to require significant communication with parents. I do believe that there will be parents who may not be happy about losing a door-to-door service, and they may not be happy when their stop is eliminated or when they have to drive their high school student further to catch a bus you know to for a specialty program um but i the question was already asked and answered about anticipating our ride times to be shorter and i'm really hoping i'm looking forward to hearing more about that um i do have a couple of questions um where do you

[03:32:07] anticipate uh parent um discontent i guess or push back and what steps are we taking to anticipate where they might be unhappy and and and how are we planning to get that info information out to kind of preempt some of that uncertainty or discontent that might happen just because you know we don't like humans don't really like change um and if you've always had your stop you know you always go to that corner i anticipate we're going to have some issues i think you hit the nail on the head that's where we are anticipating issues you know we we've got we've had some stopped long-standing

[03:32:44] stops and you know when a stop gets eliminated um you know there there's going to be some complaints we anticipate that we know that but the one thing i want to stress is you know we can't keep doing the same things and expecting different results so we really do have to you know adjust some of these route distances to realize that on time arrival for students so we we know it's going to be a change for some families um you know we know it's going to be a little bit uncomfortable the first weeks of school when families are, you know, realizing some of those changes and, you know, seeing some of those changes.

[03:33:20] But it's to a greater good. And it's really the focus here is to get kids to school on time and also increase the functionality of the communication with families. So that -- you hit the nail on the head. That's where we expect to hear some complaints early on. Yeah. And then I'm assuming our communications will try to anticipate that and address it.

[03:33:38] Yes, ma'am. Yep. And also in our communications, are we going to be or I recommend or I suppose I can phrase this as a question or a comment. I recommend that we we highlight to the families the benefits that we expect to gain from these changes.

[03:33:56] Yes, ma'am. I think that will help. I if we have 63 fewer trips and 39 routed vehicles that will be repurposed, is this how will this affect our start time?

[03:34:13] for our high school, middle, and elementary, and also our two-tiered elementary start times. I anticipate we will probably, we won't know until we start implementing it what that's going to look like.

[03:34:30] I know in my district, everybody likes the earlier elementary start time. They don't like the 920 start time. You know, I mean, some like it, some like it, you know. But anyway, is that something we're kind

of hoping to eliminate? No, we are not adjusting start times with this plan.

[03:34:49] Our start times will be consistent. I think what you can expect, though, and to Robin's point earlier, bus time on buses and, you know, transport times will be reduced. So instead of maybe having a 6.05 pickup, you might have a 6.15 pickup.

[03:35:05] And so I think some of those early pickup times are going to be pushed back a little bit later because we're not the bus runs aren't going to be as long and not as lengthy time on the bus for students but that's not part of the plan of changing school start times for next year okay so because I do recognize that this has been a much better year than last year and with pairing of elementary schools together so that you know we are we gained efficiencies we did and so I do You recognize that it's much better this year because of those things that we did?

[03:35:42] So you're saying that that will probably continue? That will continue. I mean, it's something that we'll continually monitor. And the one thing we're going to monitor, obviously, the data is going to be closely monitored as we implement this. And what we anticipate is a forward-facing dashboard and also an internal dashboard where we're monitoring the data real time.

[03:36:02] So that will be implemented this fall. And more to come on that. But that's the plan to have that dashboard, a forward-facing dashboard for the community and also one for us internally. Excellent. And the reason I am hopeful on my question is when elementary school starts at 920, those kids get home at 5.

[03:36:24] You know, it's a really long day for little kids. And when you have a long bus ride to get to high school, you know, you're tired and you're not able to pay attention. So I'm hoping, eventually, I would like to see that we move high school a little more closer to 745, you know, or something like that.

[03:36:43] And maybe we don't have a 920 start time. We have like a 910 start time or a 905 or, you know, something like that. Kind of bring in the wings a little bit just because I think it is better for children. Okay, so I have two more questions.

[03:37:00] Never mind. I just asked that question. Will we have on the website that you will be directing parents to, will there be frequently asked questions and will there be like a number to call if they have like a really unique or specific situation that they want to make us aware of when we're planning?

[03:37:20] I appreciate the question because if I failed to mention the FAQs on the website, so yes, we are actually working actively to make sure those are completed and that parents can go right to the website with all those FAQs. And then, of course, we'll have a number publicized on the website and we stand ready to answer any questions that parents have. Excellent. Thank you so much. Well, I just want to say I'm really glad we are doing this. I think it's been a long standing problem. You know, the division has grown and we kind of had the same system and added on to it as over the years. But I think this is great. I think it's the right time for

[03:37:56] an overhaul. And I really appreciate it. Thank you very much. Just really quick, I have some questions about some of the Coles District. So if I could just get a meeting with somebody about that. Specifically, I want to find out about the Yates-Ford area. Signal Hill Elementary School has a very wide attendance area. So they've had some interesting problems. And 28 always has really bad traffic. So I just want to find out some things from you. That's it. Thank you for everything, all the work you've done so far.

[03:38:26] I look forward to hearing a little bit more when you get your meetings done. - We're happy to answer any questions you have. - Mr. Blake and then Mr. - Yeah, thank you, Mr. Brock and your team.

[03:38:45] I just, I'm really excited about that opt out option because I know a lot of people in my community, like they'd like to drive their kids to school. So I think that's gonna streamline things. like you said and I also just like thinking outside the box and switching up the vehicle fleet I also think is a great idea so um and I agree with Miss Wall that maybe we should uh highlight the benefits of of like especially the walk increasing the walking distance and then the benefits of of all the rest of the things like but overall I'm I'm very happy with this because

[03:39:24] this has been a big issue like the buses I know uh the bus in my community in my neighborhood it takes I mean the school is like five minutes away but it takes the kids 40 minutes to get home off of that bus so you know I appreciate this and I know that a lot of parents will too so thank you thank you Mr. Blake Mr. Jesse this is a quick question and maybe started uh I'm concerned about

[03:39:56] the vans because with our current color scheme the vans are white has a small with today's environment where we have people kidnapping kids and doing other stuff what color is our vans going to be? So most of the vans will be white but they will be clearly marked as students on board or student vehicles. They'll have bright reflective decals on them so they

[03:40:30] can't be mistaken for a regular passenger van that's that's driven by a family and it'll have of course prince williams logos on it all over so it'll be very well marked thank you excellent wonderful very good i think with these efficiencies improve so much we could have later start times maybe in high school i don't know maybe maybe we're paving the way for that at some point she's not happy no that's okay we're moving on um thank you so much outstanding dr mcdade do you you have anything to wrap up here with the superintendent time?

[03:41:10] - No, that concludes superintendent time. - Okay, outstanding. Moving on to, we don't have any board matters. We're moving on to revision. We don't have one. It's scratched off my list.

[03:41:25] Yeah, sorry guys, we don't have one today. Revision of policy 653, materials selection, adoption, and deletion of policy 65303, challenged instructional materials, first reading.

[03:41:42] - Good evening, Chairman Lateef, Vice Chair Zargarpur, Dr. McDade, members of the board. I am not Dr. Sullivan. I am Ashley Cramp, the Director of Student Learning, and Dr. Sullivan is out of the division today, so I am presenting the recommendations on her behalf.

[03:41:59] We have two recommendations with regards to policy 653, currently titled Materials Selection and Adoption. Namely, we want to add instructional in front of materials to clarify that those are the types of materials we're talking about in this policy.

[03:42:16] And we added clarity to update legal references, position titles, and some formatting. Policy 653 was also modified to include all of the content currently in policy 653-03, challenged instructional materials.

[03:42:34] That policy does require us to have regulations around challenges to materials. This change will result then in one cohesive policy includes both of those elements so we will have one parent policy 653 with the regulations 653-1 and 653-2 regulation 653-1 is the evaluation and selection of instructional materials this regulation had minor changes in formatting clarifying languages clarifying language and

[03:43:07] updating references those changes have been posted and regulation 653-8 was changed in numbering to 653-2 and is now titled the reconsideration of instructional materials the changes to this regulation are in response to both parent and community and school feedback and they are designed to provide a clear roadmap to requesting reconsideration of any of our materials and more consistency in how multiple petitions around materials are addressed and those changes have also been posted thank you very much and so this is the first reading for board members

[03:43:46] please take a look at all this material and for citizens please send any questions or comments through by email and we'll be voting on these policies at the next board meeting is that correct okay great and then i assume council's looked at all this yes okay dr latif we've looked at it and i just did want to point out that the um uh regulations are posted on board docs okay excellent thank you thank you thank you so moving on next to revision policy 759 concussion management First reading, Mr. Wooden-Wolf.

[03:44:20] - Yes, good evening, Chairman Lateef, members of the board, and Dr. McDade. Tonight, we're here to present for first reading, revisions to policy 759 on concussion management. I have here Dr. Martin Grimm, Director of Student Activities Management, and Ms. Ashley Osborne, coordinator of sports medicine, to provide you with just some brief information regarding this policy, and answer any questions you may have.

[03:44:49] - All right, thank you, Mr. Wolf. So the policy 759 basically is mostly a cleanup. We have updated language like return to sport versus return to play, those types of things, updated the legal reference.

[03:45:08] We've also identified a larger group or broader group of healthcare professionals that can diagnose and treat concussions outside of the athletic trainer, which was named specifically in the policy. And then I think the next slide, please.

[03:45:24] Also, we have eliminated the level associates to report to the school board on an annual basis. The concussion policy review team does meet yearly, multiple times. Ms. Osborne leads those meetings.

[03:45:41] And if there are any changes that would come out of that committee report, we would go through the process that we're going through right now. So if we have a committee, if we have a meeting, and there is no changes made into the policy, that just basically takes away redundancy, and also cleans up some language, like initially the policy used brand names, so Xerox instead of copy machine, is probably the best analysis there, or analogy there.

[03:46:11] So that's it in a nutshell. - Yeah, let me just ask a quick question, and then we'll go to Mr. Dunnick. How do you define, and I don't see it in here, maybe it's in the other policy, appropriate healthcare provider?

[03:46:28] - So the appropriate healthcare provider is in the regulation as well. I would actually, Ms. Osborne, go ahead and answer that question real quick. - Hello, the healthcare professionals are listed from multiple governing bodies.

[03:46:45] It would still along the lines of an athletic trainer, a doctor, a neuropathy, any of the lists. It does exclude ER doctors 'cause they don't have the follow-up care. So those doctors would typically refer. And then chiropractors 'cause that's not part of their practice.

[03:47:02] Physical therapists have been added to the list of people who can diagnose and treat concussion. - Can you send us that? That's not on here, right? That's somewhere else. - In the regulation, it says it, but happily, of course. - Yeah, yeah, can you just send a copy of that to the board? I just wanna see where that is and how, is that definition based on VDOE or someone else is recommending that's who.

[03:47:25] - Yeah, it's actually in Virginia code. It's actually in Virginia code. - Okay, great. So if you just said that'd be great. Ms. Trudenik. - I honestly have not had a full chance to go through every little bit of this, but the one thing that stuck out to me as a mom of athletes.

[03:47:42] So I just have a question about it. And you don't have to answer it today if you can give me some guidance on this, but changing from return to play to return to sport. I guess my concern with that is if they have a concussion and they're out for six weeks or whatever, three weeks, however long it is, if you say that appropriate return to sport, like that to me says they can't even sit on the bench, they can't travel.

[03:48:05] Like that's where the return to play versus return to sport, I get a little concerned there as a parent. - Sure, then that's updated terminology with the National Athletic Training Association and CDC. However, I can tell Ms. Osborne has an answer for that question, so go ahead. - Sorry, I get very excited about this type of thing.

[03:48:22] So annually, there are multiple governing bodies brilliant minds who get all together inside of these very fancy places and they talk about it. So typically what happens is they like to switch the language. Return to school goes return to learn or return to sport goes to return to play. Truly the only difference and really it's a very strong difference is that now we're able to take these student athletes and allow them to participate in non-contact or non-direct in line of play where they can't get hit again.

[03:48:52] But we allow them to be out there and they can run and they can cheer and they can participate in all the drills and the shooting and so the changes that are coming are really positive i like it because it has to do with mental health removing an athlete from play immediately causes a lot of issues so all the sciences and all the big heads is what i like to call them have figured that out that removing a student who is in love from what they love is creating some problems and so now they're able to continue safely we're not putting them back out there when things are being thrown in the air. However, they're off to the side doing goal-specific, sport-specific things so they don't lose a step. If, for instance, their team is

[03:49:31] doing full-contact things, they're able to do non-contact but go through the same footsteps so they're able to maintain their skills. So it's actually very exciting. Thank you. I really appreciate that. As a mom of a child who's injured this year in football, his athletic trainer was facilitating that same thing due to mental health too, making sure that he was still able to be on on the sidelines and things, but protected.

[03:49:52] So thank you for clarifying that 'cause that's great. - Very important. - I appreciate it. - The science is really changing and it really is going more from being kind of away and isolated to getting you in and social as much as possible, so that's what this policy. - So a question on this then, for the physician who's clearing the concussion, what do they write on the form that clears them to play in the game, full contact?

[03:50:19] - So that actually is, it's still our athletic trainers that do the final clearance for it. So they'll write a note that maybe says can return to physical activity. And then what the athletic trainers do is they will actually progress the student through.

[03:50:37] So you're not going from a dead stop to full participation and they have to go through the drill process. And then they're slowly put back into play by the athletic trainer. How does the athletic trainer know if the physician says, you know, no, they can't go back?

[03:50:57] Does the athletic trainer make an independent decision on their own to say, no, the kid can go back? No, sir. No, sir. It's a collaboration. We try and work very closely with our physicians. If, for instance, the doctor says no, they have a very, I guess, blurred vision of how the student athlete is typically performing, and then there can be a discussion.

[03:51:15] A lot of times, if a kid is diagnosed or if a child is diagnosed with a concussion, what What will happen is that they'll be brought through a certain return to sport progression where they're able to do conditioning, do drill specific, and then when it's time for them to return for their checkups through the physician, that they have to report all of these things.

[03:51:35] And sometimes there's notes and packets sent, and then they're able to say, okay, well, you've gone through this and you're looking -- your symptoms are gone or whatever they are. You've become asymptomatic, and they can be signed off. if a child goes to a physician and is diagnosed by a doctor, they have to return to the doctor to be cleared. The athletic trainer does not have that ability. But the athletic trainer can diagnose and treat and return a concussion. So, that's why we'd like to have that.

[03:52:01] So, just to point out, there's enormous pressure on physicians, you know, when these parents come in to say, I want my kid cleared, okay? My, you know, I know neurologists in the county i know you know they some come to me because they have eye issues after a concussion and there's enormous pressure on us to clear the kid um and so if you're telling me well we can do kind of a half clearance where it's like okay yeah he can sit on the bench or run and train but no contact i don't know if the physician community knows there's that difference between

[03:52:38] those two things now that you're all going to do that so the now the parents are going to come in and say, well, can he do this? Can you clear him for half this? Or can you clear him for that? Like, it seems like this policy is much more difficult to manage. So it really, I think, think about it like the way I think about it is the physician, we're not going to override the physician saying that the athlete cannot play because that clearly we're not we're not going to do that.

[03:53:05] But what we what we are able to do after the position says, well, we'll clear the play and we'll have situations where we'll get a doctor's note, the student is clear to play. We'll double check with the physician. And they said, yeah, they came in with a broken finger, not the concussion. So because the note, the note will come. So what will happen is once once once the physician clears, there's still and all of these are CDC. We're very, very fortunate in George Mason and have the Virginia concussion initiative.

[03:53:35] Dr. Thank you, Dr. Caswell on our committee that that works with this. So it's so what we're doing we're actually implementing what's done nationally and at the collegiate and the high school level. We're actually ahead of, I would say, 95% of the country on this.

[03:53:53] You know, I mean, the only reason I bring this up, and I think we have to have clear sort of guidance, I mean, because, you know, physicians liabilities on the line, right? If he clears them to do this half thing you guys are doing, like he's going to go run and all this stuff, and then something happens to him, right? I don't know. I mean, I guess current practices, maybe they're already doing that maybe they're saying okay you can go ahead and do training but no contact so maybe they're already doing that i guess so

they're they're actually clearing they're saying they are actually clearing for the concussion yeah we are actually the ones slowing it down

[03:54:30] we're the ones saying yeah okay you've been out for three weeks we're going to get you your conditioning back okay then we're going to see you after full contact we're going to we're going We're going to reassess you to make sure that you're not getting any residuals.

[03:54:46] So for the physician, they're saying, yes, neurologically, what we're seeing, we can move forward. And then we're actually the ones slowing it down. And we do get a little pushback from that from some parents, because they're like, well, the doctor said they can go. And our response is the doctor, from a neurological standpoint, is saying they can go, but they're not seeing it from the on the field play type situation.

[03:55:08] Mr. Fascinating. Okay. I want to clarify a couple of things. One, the change that's on the screen is not reflected in the red line that's on the agenda item. In the policy, the last sentence should be stricken through. I'm not sure why it's not on here. But essentially, that was my suggestion that the results of the review that occurs annually is really their presentation to you, not, as it says now the results of this review should be reported to the school board via the

[03:55:45] associate superintendent for high schools but it doesn't it's not there is really no mechanism for that come to you from an associate superintendent instead what it what actually happens is they bring in any changes on an annual basis for regulation change the other thing I wanted to point out was you had asked what an appropriate health care provider is and that is identified in the regulation 759 - 1 which is a posted on board docs and that would be a licensed health care provider is a physician physician assistant osteopath or certified athletic trainer licensed by the virginia board of medicine a neuropsychologist licensed by the

[03:56:21] board of psychology or a nurse practitioner licensed by the virginia state board of nursing in compliance with the code correct so our regulations in compliance of virginia state code on all that i certainly hope so since my office reviewed it okay okay yes it is all right yes it is okay all right miss wall i had one question um in what will be new section d um I think it's the stricken D and then stricken in the new D is the identifying training and certification requirements for athletic trainers and then lower at not so much the CDC language,

[03:57:00] but the providing for training of physical education, teacher and other sponsor leaders of activities where students at risk of head injury. What are we doing with that? Are we what can you explain to me? Are we not? Yes. People anymore? No, it's actually the opposite. think what happened probably when the policy first came out it was directed at that at this point we're training all teachers and all coaches so instead of specific saying physical education teachers it's really all teachers we've we've revamped the the working with the NOVA we've completely revamped it and so it's all teachers get it and so it's just it's again it's a redundancy thing

[03:57:39] we're we're we're training teachers so we don't need to say we're gonna train physical education teachers if that makes sense yes that makes sense thank you miss wall i'll point out that there's a training education section in the regulation as well that identifies all the training protocols wait can you just send an email just telling us all the regulations pertaining to this policy so we can review that's great okay outstanding thank you thank you all right um so again so board members please take review this this will

also be up for a vote next time is that correct yes sir it's our first reading okay outstanding all right thank you

[03:58:12] gentlemen thank you ladies we appreciate it um thank you dr mcdade we move on to board matters um tonight we'll start with um mr blake you get to go first buddy i won't correct any wording in here you can if you want it's messing or you can correct me if you want to thank you mr chair good evening it's always an honor to be here representing the neapsco district and tonight i wish to speak about some significant achievements and ongoing initiatives within our schools. Recently our district celebrated remarkable events that I want

[03:58:51] to highlight. The first Lego League Day at Osborne Park I got to go to was a showcase of ingenuity and problem-solving skills for our students. This event not only demonstrated their technical abilities but also their creativity and teamwork. I also attempted or I also attended Hampton Middle School hosted a mental health fair with with an international day combined. These events underline our commitment to embracing cultural diversity and enhancing mental wellness across our schools. As we observe Mental

[03:59:27] Health Awareness Month this May, it is crucial to emphasize the importance of mental health in our educational environment and the community at large. With my background in psychology, I am keenly aware of the critical role that mental health plays in the success and overall well-being of our students and staff. My professional journey in psychology and my work within the community have deepened my commitment to mental wellness.

[03:59:54] I'm dedicated to ensuring that our schools are equipped with the necessary resources to effectively effectively support the mental health of all of our students. One of the most significant challenges we face is the stigma associated with mental health. It is vital to differentiate between mental health and mental illness. While mental health encompasses are more are emotional physiological and social well-being mental illness refers to health conditions that involve changes in emotions thinking or behavior these illnesses can cause

[04:00:30] distress and hinder functioning in social work or family activities to destigmatize mental health issues we we must create an environment where mental health is as openly discussed and treated with the same urgency and care as physical health this involves educating our students staff and community to dispel myths and encourage those in need to seek help without fear of judgment in closing i want to express my deep appreciation for the opportunity to serve my community together let's continue to build a supportive environment where every member of our school

[04:01:10] district can thrive both educationally and personally thank you miss william thank you mr chairman um i'm almost certain i'm going to run over time because this will be my last school board meeting of this year um i will be attending my son's promotion ceremony which is scheduled during a school board meeting um so i would just as um a parent but us as a board member we used to have a practice of not doing that i clearly it's just an issue this year but the reason why why I bring that up is because the majority of our elementary and middle

[04:01:45] school promotion ceremonies are all scheduled on the same night some of them also at the same time as high school graduations which and my time as a board member has never happened before I bring this to the attention of the public because the public doesn't know why we're not there they don't know that like we can't be in three places at one time and a lot of us especially this being election year

have formed a really significant bond with our communities and I think it's important that I take a moment to honor the fact that all of us cannot be at all of these events I really really hope that our division can

[04:02:21] spread those out not only just as my own personal plea but if I had a child in elementary and middle and high school I may have to skip one of my child's events this year to go to another one that should never happen and every year that I've been on the board I can't stand back to school night and I cannot stand graduation season. And this year is the worst. And I know that it is not like the superintendent or anybody at the Kelly Building making these scheduling choices. I also want to formally recognize that it is the event centers that put a lot of pressure on our school division because they don't make money for us booking graduations. But we spend a significant amount of money,

[04:03:01] like 30, close to 30 grand per graduation. And don't quote me on the number, but it's really expensive and this year we're also having graduations Tuesday Wednesday and Thursdays so if you are in a family that does not have the ability to take off work you won't be going if you're coming from out of town you are going to in significantly incur expenses in order to attend a graduation which used to occur Friday Saturday and Sunday and since we are 40 percent free and reduced lunch I feel the need to speak up for my community I know the impact it would have on my family if I had to go to graduation on a Wednesday I know exactly what it felt like to have a

[04:03:38] graduation on a Monday in my family years ago so I know that this is not a solely our schools scheduling this it has to do with where we have them but again this is a significant burden on our families and I hope that is a division we can really at least explain why to our families or do better next year and taking into account of course we don't have any control over Eagle Bank but that's my shameless plug to build a sports and entertainment center to keep the money in-house and to have graduations right here in the county and significantly reduce the financial burden to our families and then i'm just going to wrap up and say i went to a lot of similar events

[04:04:15] congratulations to denise carroll first lego league first time we had over 119 teams there we may need to think about breaking up into two events governor school research symposium wonderful as always and i just want to say congratulations to all those who are being promoted from elementary school middle school high school juvenile detention center graduations independence non-traditional graduation pace west all of those it's an important time in all of our families for all of our families i want to say congratulations to all those who will be participating in signing day as well as cte and so thank you and to our new board members for

[04:04:55] bringing out the year successfully i appreciate the opportunity to work with each and every one of you and i want to say thank you to the staff for all of your hard work i know that this is a very hard time of year and especially to our teachers our counselors and our principals and all of the parent volunteers for our schools so thank you very much and i hope everyone is enrolled in some type of summer programming because it's academic remediation and for fun learning so thank you miss wall thank you so uh fernanda is not here but i think a coda behavior video contest or like

[04:05:31] a TikTok contest could be very fun. That's true. It might be bad. I also think I need to work with communication team on my good angles also, like Dr. Lateef said. Looking backward, some of the great events that I've been able to attend. On the 18th of April, I was able to go to the Multicultural Night at Tyler. It was awesome. 19th of April, I went to the Military Families Parade, also at Tyler. 24th was the Spark

Business Partnership Awards, and we love our community partners and I'm really excited to see this grow. May 9th was the internal audit committee

[04:06:06] meeting. We had a great meeting. We have a great internal audit plan and we are bringing value to the organization. May 10th was Mountain View's Young Heroes Breakfast. It was an awesome event, so well planned. Families loved it. Also on the 10th, I attended Battlefield High School Spring Concert. The theme was Broadway, and that was Mr. Bernie's final concert and he is a beloved teacher in the in the community and I know he's moving on to other professional opportunities so I just want to say thank you for all his many years of service to Battlefield community 14th was our joint audit committee meeting with the BOCS my first one and the I

[04:06:43] also attended Battlefield Department Awards and the CASET Awards and wow we have some amazing children students young adults and and tonight before I came here I went to the senior awards and scholarships at Battlefield High school, and they have to date brought in $13 million in scholarship, and scholarships are still coming in. So that's really great. I want to highlight that May is Internal Audit Awareness Month in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and I join Governor Youngkin in calling this observance to the attention of all of our citizens, and particularly to our school division.

[04:07:18] Auditor is often very behind the scenes, as appropriate. But our auditor performs a vital function of strengthening our organization and protecting stakeholders by helping identify and manage Prince William County Public Schools risks and ensures that our policies, procedures, and controls are working and in place, working appropriately and in place.

[04:07:42] So I want to take this opportunity to express appreciation for our Chief Internal Auditor and our soon-to-be-hired Audit Manager. In my remaining time, as this school year draws to an end, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to each of you for your commitment to your children and their academic and personal success.

[04:08:01] I'm so grateful for the opportunity to join with you in celebrating the milestones your students have achieved and the lessons learned and the memories created in the coming rest of this month. I'm incredibly proud of our students and for how hard they work. I'm incredibly proud of our teachers for their creativity and adaptability.

[04:08:19] Thank you for entrusting me to represent you in the Gainesville District and as I advocate for your children's education. It's been an honor and a privilege to serve as your school board member this year, wishing you all a safe and relaxing and enjoyable summer. - Mr. Jesse.

[04:08:34] - Thank you. Since the last board meeting, I attended the Rockledge Elementary School, had a Harrison night. It was a outside event, very well attended. I went to Woodbridge High School, had a spring dance concert.

[04:08:50] And again, that was a very good program. And then this afternoon, just before coming here, I went over to Jenkins Elementary School and they had a Leadership and Me presentation that focused on finances.

[04:09:09] And they had 60 students, third, fourth, and fifth grade students that participated in the program and they gave out awards. Each student that opened a saving account with Apple Credit Union gets that $50 started.

[04:09:29] bonus to start their saving program so and then the sorority not a sorority but the muhammad black women organization also gave out awards dollars for people starting the program so that was very good program so that's what I did look forward to starting the graduation I agree with that a lot of these are very confusing and

[04:10:03] compressed and conflict with each other so I will attend as many as I can thank you very much Ms. Trudeni thank you I think scheduling our county and events is a nightmare for some people to do and I'm sitting here tonight I missed my son's chorus concert I have three kids they're going to be in three different places at different events we can't we can't cater to us and we as elected officials chose to be here you can also choose to miss to go to your kids events although

[04:10:40] sorry honey i'm not coming to your chorus concert tonight i'm going to sit here and take some votes so sorry i missed your chorus concert but it's going to happen and we can't schedule around our personal schedules as school board members parents in our districts continue to miss events for their kids because they can't be in three places at once it's just a fact of the matter um as the With a proud daughter of a dedicated police officer now retired, I wanted to take a moment to highlight today the significance of Peace Officers Memorial Day.

[04:11:07] Each year, Police Week is a time to pay tribute to the men and women who serve and protect our communities. It's an opportunity for us to recognize their sacrifices, honor their commitment to public safety, and express our gratitude for their selfless and unwavering dedication to service. Peace Officers Memorial Day, observed on May 15th, holds a special place in my heart as as we remember and honor those courageous officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

[04:11:32] It's a solemn day of remembrance and reflection, reminding us of the risks law enforcement officers face every day to keep us safe. I would like to pay tribute to our fallen officers in Prince William County, Pete White, Mike Pennington, Chris Young, and Ashley Gwenden. We have named a police station after Mr. White and a school after Mr. Young and Mr. Pennington.

[04:11:51] And I hope one day we will honor Ms. Gwenden by naming a school after her. I'd like to take a moment and thank my favorite cop, My dad, thank you for being a steadfast, strong example of a life of public service and sacrifice, for putting the safety of Prince William County and its citizens before yourself. I love you, dad, and I'm thankful to have been part of the Prince William County Police family.

[04:12:09] I will forever back the blue." I also wanted to address a couple other statements that were made about parents and the hearsay and the things that are happening. Parents, I appreciate you continuing to speak up and advocate for your children. I appreciate you telling the stories.

[04:12:26] I appreciate you writing emails and talking about what you're seeing and what you're experiencing and what your kids are experiencing. I am listening, I hear you, and I will continue to try to advocate and make positive changes for you and your family in Prince William County. Thank you, and I'm also very excited to attend graduations in the next few weeks as these are my first.

[04:12:45] I'm so proud of our seniors and their amazing accomplishments. Enjoy the last and be excited for so many upcoming firsts. Congratulations, class of 2024. - Mr. Wilk. - Good evening.

[04:13:01] Oh, Jill, thank you for being here. Seems the full house tonight. Just, I posted my updates now on my board thing, but I'll just mention a couple of the ones most recently. Particularly, you know, A Street Bruins is a great program promoting inclusion with the special ed and general education population.

[04:13:25] And they had their annual prom on Saturday. and it was a good time. I asked Ashley if the DJ could play '80s music, and we had four songs in a row, and I actually danced this year. I said, "I didn't care." Whatever, at this point.

[04:13:42] A couple of multicultural nights wrapped up there. Family Science Night at Mary Williams. Last night, Forest Park High School, I think just in general, boys or girls, the boys won district lacrosse championships.

[04:13:57] I was there last night, and my son, let him hand out the trophy so anyways um what a joyous evening thank you all so much um verne i was in i had to run out something came up with something that said on the diet so i had to cough um and um i just want to appreciate what you said i i love the fact you know i understand you know people say oh we're becoming too corporate stuff like that well the reality is we service our community we put out our product as a student um ready to uh you know be a profile of a graduate succeed in this world whatever road they want to go on so the entire time i'm thinking kind of like

[04:14:36] oh your whole thing was like supply chain management about like how we're getting the kids to school and how we're doing this and stuff it was really cool um that was very professional and very nice so thank you for that and uh i'll yield an extra minute to lori i'm just kidding she gone but i'm done have a good evening miss thank you dr latif um i went to the robotics um lego league thing on uh may the fourth and i uh came home and didn't realize that the kids had clothes pinned me so for those of you who go to the robotics things you know what that means so i got four clothes pins i believe one was from cole's elementary that was kind of cool

[04:15:16] felt like one of the one of the people like i've been been accepted now um i also had an opportunity to go to the Virginia Association of, oh I'm sorry, Virginia School Board Association regional meeting that we had. We got to hear from Dr. Lisa Koontz, who's the Virginia Superintendent for Instruction, so she talked a little bit about the reading program that's coming, that's becoming law in the state, and some things surrounding that. She talked a little bit about attendance. I also attended the Governor's School Research Symposium, and the students that I got

[04:15:53] to learn from were absolutely amazing juniors and seniors and they did projects that were you know i asked them why did they pick their projects and they had different reasons but it was just it was so um neat to see how engaged they were and the level of research and knowledge that they gained from this um i also want to mention that uh osborne park high school principal lisa marie kane is the the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals 2024 Outstanding High School Principal of Virginia.

[04:16:27] On our website, there is a line here that says, "Kane is passionate about minimizing barriers "to instruction through collaborative learning teams, "teacher efficacy, and her conviction "that no child is at risk, but rather all are at promise."

[04:16:42] So what I know about her, I know that's true. Congratulations to her. She was also Prince William Principal of the Year last year. And speaking of principals, those of us in the teacher circle may have seen -- I certainly get sent this, you know, people send me this and say, "How do you like this guy?"

[04:16:59] There's a principal who does these -- I don't know if they're TikToks or what, but I think his name is Principal Bird, and he talks about how to support teachers. And when we were having this

discussion about the code of behavior, it's evident that we need to make sure that our teachers are able to do their job in the classroom.

[04:17:18] It's not going to happen without support. So when a teacher has a concern, they raise a concern, we really need to listen. And this is why I said earlier that parents, when you have concerns, make sure you document very, very, very succinctly what you're worried about so we can all work together.

[04:17:33] But we don't want to pile on teachers either. We need to make sure that they're supported. So for those of you who know about this principal, and you've seen some of his videos, I love his advice. So I'm going to just reiterate it, support your teachers. Thank you all. Have a good night.

[04:17:48] I look forward to the graduations that are coming. Okay, thank you. Busy meeting tonight, a lot of stuff to talk about. I want to thank both Denise Huebner's office, her outfit, Verne Box. I think the theme of both presentations today were that you did engage parents, and you did engage the community, and I think that was critical in the work that you did to sort of come to a final product that I think is really something we're happy to move forward with.

[04:18:18] I appreciate Dr. McDade that it is important to let everyone know that a lot of these changes are directed by the communications we get and the comments we get from families and folks over the years. And so I think that's really important.

[04:18:33] The driver, part of it is yes, transportation is an issue, but it becomes more of an issue if we get complaints. And a lot of the work we're doing is to try to make things better. And so it is really important that everyone understand that a lot of the work we do is driven by our community, our stakeholders, our parents, our students, our families, and I don't think anything should be lost on that.

[04:18:54] You know, we had a long meeting, we had a lot of discussions, but the largest driver in the work we do here is families, parents, and students, whether it's trying to improve our academic success, which we heard about at the last board meeting, or whether it's, you know, commitment to, you know, transportation is a massive system we have to move, or whether it's working on the code of behavior, which is obviously impactful every day of the year.

[04:19:19] Those are things that we just take seriously, the comments everyone brings to the table, whether it's at citizen comment time, whether it's by email, whether it's through the school, whether it's through concerns brought up at different advisory committees, all of these things I truly appreciate.

[04:19:38] And I think it's something that I wanna thank everyone in our schools this year, we're wrapping up the school year, our teachers, our counselors, our principals, our assistant principals, our staff, our custodians, everyone who makes the school work and then everyone in this building behind the scenes who makes everything happen.

[04:19:55] It was a terrific year. I think we'll finish strong in the fourth quarter. Our absenteeism has improved. I think that's continuing to improve. Our grades are continuing to improve. We're seeing improvements across the board and I look for big things and I congratulate all of our seniors because I think they will have graduated by the time we make our next meeting.

[04:20:17] So congratulations to every senior who will graduate this year and best wishes on going out there and doing whatever you do to make yourself have a thriving future and for yourself and your community.

[04:20:34] Thank you very much. This time the board meeting is adjourned.



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com