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Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Date Wednesday, March 19, 2025
Place Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length 2h 44m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nuVXZ_a6z08
- Official School Board page (PWCS): https://www.pwcs.edu/about/school_board/

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-30. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:01] I would like to call this meeting of the Prince William County School Board to order approval agenda. The motion is in order. Ms. Zargarpur. Oh, hold on, hold on, hold on. All right. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board appro- Wait, what am I doing?

[00:00:18] Yeah, that's it, right. Okay, I approve the meeting agenda as recommended. Do I have a second? I second. Any discussion? Okay, all in favor, aye. Okay, agenda passes unanimously. Five votes. I'm moving on to motion to enter closed session. The motion is in order. Ms. Zargarpur.

[00:00:33] Mr. Chairman, I move that pursuant to Virginia Code section 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712, the Prince William County School Board enter closed session for the following reasons. One, to discuss with staff the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body pursuant to Virginia Code section 2.2-3711A. One, two, to review disciplinary matters for a specific student that would involve the disclosure of information contained in the scholastic record for the individual student and to receive legal advice regarding the same as provided by Virginia Code

[00:01:10] section 2.2-3711A, 2 and 8. Three, to discuss with division counsel and staff actual or probable litigation and specific legal matters involving staff, students, and other civil litigation involving the school division under Virginia Code section 2.2-3711A, 7 and 8. Four, to discuss the the award of a public contract

to employees exclusive representative which involves the expenditure of public funds and the terms or scope of such contract for discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body

[00:01:44] pursuant to virginia code section 2.2 dash 3711 a 29 and 5 to discuss and receive briefings by staff members related to security of school facilities the safety of persons using such facilities and actions taken to respond to such matters where discussion in an open meeting would jeopardize the security of such facilities pursuant to Virginia code section 2.2-3711 a 19.

[00:02:07] Do I have a second? Mr. Jesse seconds. All in favor you raise your hands. Any opposition? No opposition. Motion passes. At this time the Prince William County School Board will move to

[00:02:23] closed session and return in one hour. This time the Prince William County School Board is now

[00:03:24] Now returning to open session from closed session, a motion is in order for 8.01 closed session certification. Mr. Blake. 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 March 19, 2025 be certified by adopting the following resolution.

[00:03:48] 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 closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and two, only such public business matters as identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard and discussed or considered by the school board.

[00:04:16] Do I have a second? Mr. Chairman. I second. Ms. Zargarpur. I second. Any discussion? Please vote. - Vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed.

[00:04:47] - Great, thank you. Moving on to closed session action items. We have motions in order, Mr. Blake. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the appointments and releases of specific employees as presented in the closed session.

[00:05:08] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I have a second. - Any discussion, please vote.

[00:05:31] - Vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed. Moving on to the parent appeal of the SMAPD reassignment, Student SR 25-101. Mr. Blake. - I move that for reasons set forth in the Student Management and Alternative Program Department's letter on February 5th, 2025, the Prince William County School Board approved SMAP's decision to reassign Student SR 25-101 to computer-based instruction program via remote access only based on charges

[00:06:04] unlawful acts in the community. Do I have a second? Mr. Chairman. Ms. Williams. Second. Any discussion? Please vote. Vote is eight yes. Unanimous. Motion passed. Great. Next up is the Pledge of Allegiance and at this time we'll have Ms. Argerport lead us in the pledge. I pledge allegiance to the flag

[00:06:43] 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. - Wonderful.

[00:07:04] Okay, moving on, we have Thriving Futures Focus. Good evening, everyone. This is our opportunity to highlight the exemplary work being accomplished in our schools, fulfilling our vision that

every student will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[00:07:23] We dedicate this time during our meetings to recognizing students, staff members, and schools that have earned an honor or an 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.

[00:07:40] Tonight, the school board will recognize our Regeneron Science Talent Search finalist candidates, and the candidates for the 2025 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program and our National Merit Scholarship finalists.

[00:07:56] We begin our recognition with Ms. Lisa Zargapur, Coles District Representative, who will introduce our first honoree. Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Regeneron Science Talent Search, organized by Society for Science, is the nation's oldest and most prestigious science and mathematics competition for high school seniors.

[00:08:15] Students selected for this honor demonstrate exceptional research, problem-solving abilities and leadership in STEM. Rania Lateef has been named one of the top 40 finalists in the 2025 Regeneron Science Talent Search. This year's 40 finalists were chosen from nearly 2,500 applicants representing 795 high schools across the United States and internationally.

[00:08:38] As a finalist, Rania has already received \$27,000 and competed for more than \$1.8 million in awards during a week-long competition in Washington, D.C. that took place last week. She presented her research to nationally renowned scientists and competed for the top prize of \$250,000.

[00:08:57] Rania attends both Charles J. Colgan Senior High School and the Governor's School at Innovation Park as a senior. She is represented tonight by Colgan High School's principal, Dr. Tim Healy, and by AP Biology and Biology One teacher, National Honor Society sponsor and co-league mentor, Ms. Stephanie Brown.

[00:09:13] At this time, I invite Rania Lateef to share a few words about her project and what this award means to her. - Thank you so much for this incredible honor. I just wanna say I was truly excited to represent PWCS at this as a finalist as the Regeneron STS finalist in Washington, DC.

[00:09:33] My project studied the effects of disrupted sleep and circadian rhythms, specifically looking at blue light exposure on how this can affect our physical and mental health outcomes. And my research journey started with Mrs. Brown at Colgan High School and culminated with Dr. P at the Governor's School at Innovation Park.

[00:09:52] And I am truly, truly grateful and thankful for their unwavering support and guidance. and I would not be here today if it wasn't for them. I'm also greatly appreciative towards Dr. Renberg and the support system of the science fairs and opportunities this county holds that prepares students like me for opportunities like this.

[00:10:11] I would also like to say thank you to Dr. McDade for championing the Virginia Junior Academy of Science and encouraging students across PWCS to participate in events like this that give you opportunities to meet 39 amazing other young students across the county and meet with amazing

scientists, Nobel Prize winners, and I would have never been exposed to this if it wasn't for all these opportunities, so thank you.

[00:10:42] - All right, thank you, Rania. Congratulations again on your incredible achievement. - Well, I also wanna recognize Ms. Lisa Sharp, who's also here, a counselor from Colgan High School as well. Thank you very much, and where am I here?

[00:11:01] Am I missing a page of my script? Oh, right, it has. Yeah, well, so, because this is, I'll take a little privilege, my my daughter and i'm um you know very grateful i think she i think she pointed it out very well um that the school division is really committed to science um and in opportunities for our students across all stem categories and and we've spent a lot of time and energy on that and i think for parents and and students alike we are very grateful for the commitment the school division has especially at a place like colgan high school where where one might think it's a fine and in Performing Arts School, but they have never said no

[00:11:41] to the work that the students want to do there, whether it's science, debate, robotics, and those things. And I think we have that attitude across the division as well in our high schools, and I think it just leads to just great success for students everywhere. So we're very grateful.

[00:11:57] So thank you. - Who do I go to next? - Still me. - It's still, oh, that's what's confusing. - Yeah, he's seeing Cole's district all over this and he doesn't know what to do. - I believe you have an additional recognition.

[00:12:13] - I do, thank you, Dr. Lateef. It is my honor to recognize several outstanding students from Prince William County Public Schools who have been selected as candidates for the 2025 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program, one of the most prestigious academic honors for high school seniors.

[00:12:28] This national program recognizes students for their exceptional academic achievement, leadership, and service to their communities. The following students have received this distinction. Elizabeth Yeboah Cody of Charles J. Colgan High School, represented by Dr. Tim Healy and Counselor Aaron Flaherty.

[00:12:47] Ezekiel Miller, Residential Scholars Program in Career and Technical Education of C.D. Hilton High School, represented by Principal Cassandra Crawford and FACS teacher Katherine Jackson. Ali Goyar of Osborne Park High School, represented by Principal Lisa Marie Kane.

[00:13:06] Rania Lateef of Charles J. Colgan Senior High School, represented by Principal Dr. Tim Healy and School Counselor Lisa Sharp, also the Governor's School at Innovation Park, although they could not be with us tonight, we still wish to recognize Principal Dr. Jason Calhoun and the School and School Counselor Melissa Bach. Congratulations to these exceptional students on this prestigious recognition. I invite any students who would like to come and share a few words to step forward to the podium.

[00:13:33] This will be quick. I just wanted to say that it was an honor to be recognized as candidate for the presidential scholars program and an honor to represent colgan high school thank you all for the opportunity to be here tonight uh first and foremost uh oh glory god for this opportunity i also thank my magnificent facts teacher ms jackson for encouraging me to do this award as well as my principal and all my family friends that support me on this way and

[00:14:09] to represent not only prism county but virginia as well as a very important cte department for our education thank you i'd like to thank you all a lot for this opportunity as i was talking to ms Kane we have no idea how much of a pain it would be to organize something like this so thank you very much. Thank you Mr. Zargarpur and congratulations to all our award recipients. Mr. Wilk would you introduce our first National Merit

[00:14:46] Scholarship finalist? Thank you Dr. Lateef. The National Merit Scholarship program is one of the most distinguished academic competitions in the country recognizing students who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement. Each year 1.3 million students enter the competition by taking the PSAT and MSQT. Only 50,000 high schoolers receive recognition and from there 15,000 students are selected as national merit finalists. This evening we proudly recognize six PWCS students for earning this elite distinction. From the Potomac District I would like to recognize Benjamin Eikenberry of Forest

[00:15:26] Park High School represented by Principal Richard Martinez. Congratulations. Thank you so much. Thank you, Mr. Wilk. Mr. Denik. From the Brentsville District, I would like to recognize James Yountz of Patriot High School, represented by Acting Principal David Van Gelder. Congratulations, James. Thank you, Mr. Denik. Ms. Wall. Thank you, Dr. Lateef. Although they could not be here tonight,

[00:16:01] the Gainesville District would like to recognize two students, Daniel Cho and Alan Peng of Battlefield High School, as well as Principal Dolores Lucas. Congratulations to these two students and to the Gainesville community. Thank you Ms. Wall, Ms. Zargarpur. Thank you Dr. Lateef. From the Coles District again, I would like to recognize two students, Isabella Carter of the Charles J. Colgan Senior High School, represented by Principal Dr. Tim Healy, and although Alexandra cannot be with us here tonight, we still wish to recognize Alexandra Whalen of Osborne Park High School,

[00:16:37] represented by Principal Lisa Marie Kane. Congratulations to you all. Thank you Ms. Zargarpur. At this time I'd like to invite any of our National Merit finalists who'd like to share a few words on your accomplishment to please step forward at this time. I'm happy to be recognized by the Prince William School Board for my achievement. I'm proud to be representing the county as a National Merit Honor Scholarship finalist. I would like to thank my family as well as the teachers and staff at Prince William County who have helped me along

[00:17:12] the way. This is as much a recognition of them as it is for me and as I go forward to college, career in software engineering, and hopefully the United States Air Force, I will constantly be appreciating their help. Thank you. Wonderful. Anyone else? Yes, please. Hi. I want to thank the school board and everyone here for this opportunity. I'm really grateful for this recognition. I want to thank Dr. Healy and all the teachers that helped me get here and my family too for their

[00:17:49] constant support. Congratulations again to our 20th. Do we have another one? Yes. Let's go. I'm sorry. What's up guys? I'm just happy to be here. Thank you guys for inviting me. Shout out Forrest Park High School. Shout out Mr. Martinez. Wonderful guys. Thank you. Congratulations again to our 2025 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program candidates, Regeneron Science Talent Search finalists,

[00:18:26] and National Merit Scholarship finalists. Before asking our superintendent to share a few words, I would like to ask the parents and the family members of our award-winning students to please stand at this time to be recognized. I'd like to invite our superintendent Dr. LaTanya McDade to share a few words.

[00:18:55] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm really excited to recognize the exemplary achievements of our PWCS scholars. You have demonstrated excellence in academics, in research, and in leadership. And these honors really represent the hard work and dedication of not only our students, but also our educators, our families, and our school communities.

[00:19:15] I want to thank all of our educators and leaders, school leaders that are here, supporting our students and the work that you do with them each and every day to support them in realizing their dreams and their goals congratulations to our national merit finalists you represent less than one percent of seniors nationwide and i know you'll continue to inspire others as you take the next steps in your academic journey congratulations as well to our presidential scholars you represent prince william county schools with such distinction and we are incredibly proud of you and to rania i am so proud of your remarkable achievement in science um i remember our first

[00:19:53] interview when you were the editor for g bjsas and at that moment i knew just how palpable your your passion for research and for science was and is showing up today with this remarkable accomplishment i know that you all will achieve so many tremendous honors in the future beyond your time in prince william county and i look forward to seeing all that you will accomplish congratulations to each and every one of you we are pwcs proud i'd like to reiterate dr mcdays

[00:20:30] comments i mean i i can't thank the families who support you know the your your children so much for all these years in our schools we am you know i as a parent sort of have the privilege tonight of also speaking and my wife here um tharanam lateef um know what you've gone through and know what what it takes to get our kids to where they are but we can't do it without a community of teachers staff principals bus drivers custodians everyone who supports these kids to make it happen and it didn't just happen in one year it took four eight twelve years of schooling here in this county to get us there and so i can't thank you all enough another round of applause

[00:21:08] for all of our amazing teachers and staff at this time i'll invite all our honorees to come forward for a group photo diana glotta will help direct that with the school board and receive a token of of our appreciation. We'll start with the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program candidates first,

[00:21:26] then our national merit finalists. Okay, thank you for that. Moving on to the adoption of the

[00:25:48] consent agenda. We're moving on to 12.01. I move the Prince William, no, Mr. Blake. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the public meeting consent agenda as recommended. Do I have a second? Mr. Chairman? Discussion?

[00:26:09] Mr. Chairman? Yeah. I'd second and discussion. I just would like to pull 12.04 and not pull it, excuse me, postpone it to the next meeting. Table it. You move to table it. I would move to table it.

[00:26:25] Does anyone have any objection to tabling the motion? I know. If there's no objection, I can just go ahead and table it. Is that right? Well, yes. By unanimous consent. Oh, I see. So are we voting on the postponement?

[00:26:40] Yes. Okay, so all those in favor of postponing, what item number is that? 12.04 to a meeting coming up, right?

[00:26:56] April 2nd. April 2nd, you're being specific today. Okay, good. All in favor of that motion, what are we doing by hand? All right, all by hand. Vote aye to move it. Okay, any opposed? No opposition noted.

Motion passes unanimously.

[00:27:12] So now we'll vote on the full consent agenda. Okay, all please vote on the consent agenda. We can do that electronically. can we do a hand vote for this particular one that would help me thank you all in favor aye okay any opposed okay motion passes unanimously moving on next to acknowledgments recognitions motion order miss Blake I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the acknowledgments and recognitions as recommended do you have a second Mr. Chairman

[00:27:50] Ms. Williams second any discussion Mr. Chairman yeah I just under here is our resolution for the the SBA business, 2025 business honor roll. And so in this, we are recognizing the Prince William County Community Foundation, Hilton Performing Arts Center, Northern Virginia Food Rescue, Prince William Water and Chick-fil-A.

[00:28:12] And so I just wanted to bring attention to that and to thank them for all the work that they do with our school community. Thank you. - Please vote.

[00:28:31] We got it. - Okay. - The vote is seven yes, one abstained. Tridenek, motion passed. - Moving on to citizen comment time. Those citizens who've signed up in advance with the clerk may address the school board this evening when they are called to the podium.

[00:28:51] The citizen comment period for regular school board meetings is one hour and citizens may speak on the agenda items or other topics germane to the operations and policies of PWCS. Please use proper decorum and manners while at the podium or you'll be asked to step aside. We ask that the audience please be respectful of each speaker and refrain from any clapping, cheering or jeering to avoid disruptions of the meeting.

[00:29:15] If you do not, the board will recess and I'll ask the room to be cleared to restore public order. Tonight we have 11 citizens signed up to speak. When I call your name, please come up to the podium and state your name and address for the record. I will call the first five up if you'd like to make, you know, come up and sit up front.

[00:29:32] You can, if not, that's okay too. Catherine Wheeler, Anna Bongiovanni, Riley Oldenburg, Sherry Middleton, and David Dooley. Catherine Wheeler.

[00:29:49] - Good evening, my name is Catherine Wheeler. I reside in Montclair, Virginia, and my address is on file with the clerk. I am here as a parent of a non-binary graduate of Hilton High School and a transgender junior at another Prince William County school, pleading for you to continue to honor the rights of transgender children in our schools.

[00:30:10] This year, my child made the courageous decision to change his gender and name officially in the school records. Based on the horror stories we had heard of families who had done this in other school districts, we were nervous. about what this process would be.

[00:30:27] What we encountered was a system that affirmed who our child is. Our child was asked how they want to be perceived, what name and pronouns they want to use, where they felt comfortable changing and using the restroom, and even how and which staff members should be notified.

[00:30:45] Every staff interaction that we had was affirming, one that affirmed my child and their identity. It was an incredible relief to us, to our whole family, that it was an easy and positive experience.

[00:31:00] Tears were shed, my child would like to make sure that you know it was mine, but ones of gratitude for a system that treated my child with the dignity that they deserve. I tell you this story to make it clear that the policies that were put in place in a time when our government supported trans rights made a positive impact on students and families in your communities.

[00:31:24] I want you to have a face to contact with you know what affirming identity means. The current administration policies in our government are putting many schools in the impossible position of choosing between funding and caring for our children. I urge you to continue to choose to serve children as their full selves as your first priority. I ask you to remember my face and the faces of the brave youth that are here today that are asking you to put them first as you consider what it means to serve this population

[00:32:00] of youth whose society has been telling are insignificant and whose rights don't matter i urge you as educators call to help form our youth to continue to tell them not just tell them with words but to show them that they matter and they are perfect exactly as they are thank you um you two actually can you can sit in the front and then chairs in the front as well by the way um if you don't have to stand and wait i'm sorry if i didn't make that clear anna

[00:32:32] um bong giovanni did i get it right great hello my name is finn and i'm a junior in a prince william county high school as well as a student organizer with the pride liberation project my address is on file with the county clerk i'm speaking here tonight to urge the prince william county school board to continuous policies that affirm queer students this includes its policy of allowing transgender and non-binary students to use their preferred names and pronouns in the classroom amidst the increasingly hateful political climate of this country it is absolutely vital that local communities stand up for every one of their

[00:33:10] members sadly however many local governments and companies have already begun to roll back their inclusive policies despite not being required to putting many vulnerable students further at risk of mental health crises and even sorry and even physical danger as a non-binary student myself i can personally attest to the incredible positive impact that being able to to change my name and pronouns had on my school life and overall mental health.

[00:33:34] I know myself better than the government does, and when I was able to have my true name and pronouns respected, my mental health improved. It allowed me to be my authentic self at school in a way that before had never been possible. Additionally, a 2019 study by the Journal of Adolescent Health found that transgender students whose schools allowed them to change their names and pronouns in the classroom were less likely to experience symptoms of depression or suicidal behaviors.

[00:33:56] Please do not give in to the federal and state pressure to attack the rights of transgender or otherwise queer students in public schools. For some of us, this is a matter of life and death. Our leaders should always focus on creating policies that accommodate rather than exclude this county students. Thank you for hearing my testimony.

[00:34:14] - Riley Oldenburg. - The timer, okay, thank you. Hello, I am Riley Oldenburg and I am a junior at Colgan High School.

[00:34:29] My address is on file with the county clerk. I am a masculine presenting transgender person who has been out and socially transitioned for years. I am speaking tonight to testify against bringing anti-

transgender policies that force people to use the bathroom and play on sports teams that align with the gender they are assigned at birth into this county.

[00:34:49] One repeated concern I've heard from the side arguing to restrict my rights is the argument that they need to keep their daughters safe from biological males in restrooms and changing rooms. While I have gone through the proper paperwork and could use the men's bathroom, I still choose to use the women's changing rooms for personal safety, as many peers still view and accept me as female in these women's changing rooms i am not wearing androgynous clothing and speaking in a fairly high voice i have short hair a flat chest and shorts going down to my knees meeting my hairy legs that is all people's daughters are seeing and they're uncomfortable

[00:35:25] people's daughters and sorry they're uncomfortable when they see a boy in the girls changing room in a county where transgender people must use the bathroom of the gender they are assigned at birth thousands of students will all be in the same situation these new policies that are being proposed by the trump elon administration would not make people's daughters feel any more safe or comfortable and they definitely wouldn't for transgender students in the wrong bathroom transgender policy people are not going into whatever restroom they feel like we have to go through complex paperwork as shown by other people we have to go through complex paperwork with parent signatures in order to change changing rooms these new policies would

[00:36:04] not keep boys out of women's changing rooms they will be bringing them into them so i urge you all to work against anti-transgender policies that force everyone to use the bathroom of the gender they are assigned at birth these new policies being proposed do not help anybody they only hurt us thank you sherry middleton hi my name is sheree middleton and my address is also on file with the clerk good afternoon members of the school board thank you for the opportunity to speak today again

[00:36:39] my name is Sheree Middleton. I am the parent of Joshua Middleton-Stevenson whose status was moved from accepted to wait-listed for the Pathways of Global Citizenship Mathematics Specialty Program. I stand before you today with great concern and hope as I seek a fair resolution for my son inclusion into the specialty program. On February 28th, when the offer was extended, we accepted it promptly in good faith, a contractual acceptance, believing that this was a chance for my son to access educational opportunity he deserves. However, as we know, there were unforeseen issues with the process, which could have been avoided, which have led to

[00:37:16] confusion and disappointment for many families, including ours. Despite our timely acceptance, my son's spot in the program was rescinded. This has caused unnecessary stress and uncertainty for us parents, and mostly for my son. Since this process has begun, we have seen many inconsistencies.

[00:37:36] On application day, Gainesville High School was not even listed as a choice, along with the specialty program Engineering and Construction. I personally contacted IT and Ms. Kelly Brown to correct it and signed up my son 30 minutes later on November 1st. Joshua applied to all three specialty programs at Gainesville High School, and however I was told by some parents that they were not allowed to sign up for the same three programs at one school.

[00:38:01] Joshua is on wait list for all three programs at Gainesville High School. I ask you to consider making an exception in this case. My son accepted the offer when it was presented to us, and yet, due to administrative oversight, his spot was taken away.

[00:38:16] The students who accepted the offer in good faith, like my son, should not be penalized for procedural failure; instead, they should be granted the opportunity to continue pursuing their educational aspirations. By granting this exception, you not only allow my son to participate in a program he rightfully earned, but you also send a powerful message that PWCS is accountable, value fairness,

[00:38:37] transparency and well-being of the students. I also respectfully request that PWCS provide a clear and transparent explanation of what transpired between February 28th and March 13th to ensure families like mine are fully informed and confident in the process moving forward. Transparency is essential for building trust and will help ensure that no other student faces the same uncertainty. In conclusion, I implore you to grant my son a chance to participate in this specialty program. We accepted the offer in good faith and believe that honoring that acceptance is the right thing to do.

[00:39:12] Thank you for your time and consideration. - David Dooley. - Hello, my name is David Dooley Jr.

[00:39:29] and my address is on file. I'm a gay, white, 50 year old married man to my husband of almost 17 years, though I was only married last March. However, there is so much more to me. I'm a father who raised kids here in the county, in this school system, go Hilton, and who proudly saw both of my kids successfully graduate and become wonderful adults.

[00:39:52] I'm also an uncle, a brother, a veteran, an army sergeant, a friend, a mentor, a human being, and last but certainly not least, a proud grandfather of an almost three-year-old girl. I'm coming to you to speak and show my support tonight to the Prince William County School Board and the superintendent of schools for continuing to support sexual orientation and gender equality for both our students and staff.

[00:40:19] Did you know those policies also support our cisgender and straight allies as well? Your public support of these policies has made you a target by folks who wish to strip all rights from LGBTQI+ community members to come under lawsuit from our own government and hate thrown at you.

[00:40:41] This is what it feels like for most vulnerable, our transgender and non-binary folks who want nothing more than to be loved and left alone. I love a transgender person in my life. He has grown, survived, and thrived attacks physically by a white male, not a transgender person.

[00:41:04] He is a creative, he's a rascal, a lover of animals, and always there, even grudgingly, when I need help. So I challenge you to continue to support love, to show support for others, especially for our transgender folks and people of color.

[00:41:20] Don't just speak the words, show us your support and action, love is love. It is hypocritical for our opponents who state we must support the president's policies when those same folks call it on you to not support the previous governor's, the Virginia governor's policies.

[00:41:37] Forget the hate, the supposed protecting our daughters, our parental rights, and protect all children. Be kind to all, no exceptions. And PS, if the federal government wants to threaten to remove funding, let's find a way to not need any federal funding. Next five will be Caitlin Weston, Marty Weaver, Ellie Fox, Sean Spence, Melissa Yurk. Caitlin Weston. Good evening. My name is Caitlin Weston and

[00:42:15] my address is on file with the clerk. Two weeks ago we heard our student representatives speak eloquently about her experience at the capitol building for social emotional learning or SEL week. Thank you to the teachers who help students advocate for themselves and attend the event.

[00:42:32] and thank you to the PWC students who attended the event and spoke with Senate and House members. This sounded like a powerful and meaningful experience for both the students and our Congress members. I can't imagine a more important time to intentionally integrate SEL skills like self-awareness, self-management, and relationship skills into schools. Goal-setting, self-regulation, and being informed citizens are skill sets that we want all PWCS graduates to have.

[00:43:05] As a parent, I was thrilled to hear about our student representative's experience and perspective. Keep up the great work. Also, it is my understanding that PWCS follows the VHSL guidelines. As you are aware, on February 10th, the VHSL rescinded their long-standing inclusive policy supporting all students in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[00:43:29] Since 2014, VHSL has reviewed 48 appeals from transgender students to participate in sports consistent with their gender identity, granting 42 of them. This policy has ensured fairness and opportunity in high school athletics.

[00:43:45] Overturning it is an unnecessary and very harmful decision that will negatively impact students across Virginia. The VHSL board has received numerous emails Virginia residents asking them to reverse this decision. I urge you all to reach out to the VHSL and express your disappointment in this decision. Urge them to reaffirm its commitment to inclusive policies for student athletes. Share with them that there is no need to comply in advance to an executive order that is not the law. I believe they have a board meeting in May during which they will discuss this matter further. I am confident that if they hear from all of you,

[00:44:24] that will make a big impact on their decisions thank you marty we marty weaver occoquan women's history month are we talking about real women or the alternate reality i am offended by your failure to recognize the uniqueness of women this importance of women in history when you believe anyone can be one you dishonor us by not acknowledging our unique nature we are more than a thought and when did our history go from celebrating life by our unique ability to give

[00:44:59] birth to keep the human race going to celebrating the death of our pre-born and men can't give birth you're actually eliminating the importance of women by recognizing anyone who believes they are a woman as a woman they are not and never will be when there's any kind of competition with separate categories and a trans person participates as their identity and wins then an actual woman has been cheated out of her place in history think outside of sports best actress best female singer and it doesn't matter how many trans are participating one is too many if one girl is cheated out of her rightful place in history girls won't want to even try to follow their dreams

[00:45:37] when any time they can be cheated out of accolades scholarships a path to their future successes by a person who now identifies as a woman when title nine came about over 50 years ago there was no confusion about women only now when we have some unscrupulous people with their own agendas an ability to try and alter nature with drugs and mutilation surgery of perfectly healthy bodies gender affirming care should be to fix the troubled bind children have sought to find their identities as individuals for millennia all have gone through body image discomfort as they go through puberty making them medical experiments is harmful not getting them real

[00:46:15] help in a timely fashion blocking parents from trying to help their children whom they love is harmful separating them from their parents and faith community is harmful you are harming the majority by making them accept crazy positions of other delusions a pronoun for a person is either he or she not

they and not calling little joey sally and her you're fostering an environment of grooming of vulnerable kids and distancing them from their families you are not their families this is child abuse and must stop safe and fair treatment for girls for their futures their histories so why am i this woman mom grandma standing up here now because when my son was a

[00:46:54] As a student here, you had not yet totally lost your proverbial minds. But now here we are. Moms and dads with common sense are fearful of retaliation against their kids and themselves. They are reluctant to speak, but you can't hurt my family and me. This is too important.

[00:47:10] These kids are too important. Women's history is too important. And your insistence on ignoring the president's EOs about DEI and girls is going to cost the school system a lot of money and hurt everyone. Good job. of yourselves and this is supposed to be women's history month anything goes month is june ellie fox hello my name is ellie fox i am an organizer and my address can be found with the county clerk

[00:47:49] i'm going to george mason university now but i went through my entire k-12 education in prince william county in the middle of covid i was coming to terms with my gender identity once they led us back into the school building i took the opportunity to put that exploration into practice At first, I had my teachers and peers call me Laurel, now my middle name.

[00:48:10] Eventually, I settled on Ellie. My teachers never gave me any trouble when I was trying out different names. If Prince William County schools were to heed to Trump's executive orders on "school indoctrination," trans students would be forced back into the closet.

[00:48:25] School makes up so much of our lives as youth. By not accommodating us, by refusing to recognize our gender identities, you would be creating a huge roadblock for our development as fully realized people. I maintain that the school never indoctrinated me, they just made room for me and my pre-existing identity.

[00:48:46] Some of you are concerned that schools are usurping the roles of parents. Parents are not infallible and being one does not necessarily mean controlling every aspect of a child's life. Ultimately, adolescents need room to discover who they are on their own.

[00:49:04] If a parent not only doesn't wish to respect them as a gender that they identify as, but wants to force all other authority figures in the child's life to disrespect them at all, that's a problem with the parents. The school should not empower them. Neither should schools empower the Trump administration to police the gender expression of adolescents.

[00:49:25] The talk about protecting women's sports is a Trojan horse for the government to force trans people out of the public eye entirely, and to make our lives impossible. We're seeing transgender people denied entrance into the United States under the justification that our very lives are criminal acts of fraud.

[00:49:46] This school indoctrination executive order is simply one part of a fallout assault on trans people by the government. I implore you to stand by our students. Prince William County Schools cannot cede an inch to these fascist policies.

[00:50:05] - Sean Spence. - Good evening, members of the school board. My name is Dr. Sean Spence. My address is on file with the clerk.

[00:50:23] I'm gonna discuss overcrowding at the schools. In my own teaching experience as a professor at George Mason, Maryland, and Rice Universities, as well as a senior instructor at the Army Engineering School, I've seen firsthand the impact of class sizes on student learning.

[00:50:41] Overcrowded directly hinders individual attention to a student, leading to measurable learning loss. But before I proceed, I want to express my sincere appreciation for this board's dedication to our children's education.

[00:50:57] Your commitment alongside our teachers and administrators' hard work is vital to our county. And we must continue to work together to remove the constraints our educators face, reduce class sizes, and optimize the learning environment for all the students in our county.

[00:51:14] Prince William County has the potential to lead in education. In today's economy, businesses seek skilled workforces. We need well-functioning schools to attract top-tier companies to our county.

[00:51:29] However, overcrowding hinders this. We need innovative solutions. My wife and I are both products of public schools, which led us on to Ivy League doctorates. We believe in the transformative power of a quality education.

[00:51:46] Tonight, I addressed the severe overcrowding at Covington Harper Elementary School. The 24-25 Prince William County report and dashboards show Covington-Harper at 119% capacity and looking to surge to about 140% in the near future.

[00:52:02] This is unacceptable. To further emphasize the point of overcrowding, there's a few studies I want to quote. One is the class size and student academic achievement published in the Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis Journal. This study demonstrates a significant positive correlation between smaller class sizes and improve student performance, particularly in early grades, especially in elementary school, what we're talking about here.

[00:52:27] Therefore, I have three solutions. Short-term, lease and retrofit temporary space. Look for underutilized buildings within the county for immediate relief. In the medium-term, redraw district lines and balance student populations.

[00:52:44] Third, in the long-term, prioritize smaller class sizes. Quality education depends on it. Lastly, I urge the members to also enhance the access to this particular meeting to members who may not be able to make it in person.

[00:53:00] I implore you all to act decisively. Our children deserve better. I will follow up with an email to each board member. Thank you for your time. - Melissa Yurk.

[00:53:21] - Good evening. My name is Melissa and my address is on file. Thank you for hearing me again. I'm continuing to urge you to look beyond partisan and political theater and a motion to embrace a common sense approach to comply with Title IX and rethinking policy 738-5 so we can get on to the job of education.

[00:53:43] This is not a gender issue. It is a safety issue in schools, and safety is one of the core tenets a school board is tasked with. This is not about hating on children or preventing educational access. This is strictly about following a sound law that has been protecting safe spaces in sports since at least 1982.

[00:54:04] Do not fall prey to the straw man argument or the weaponization of empathy, that ensuring safe and comfortable spaces biological girls and boys as anti-trans or anti-lgb it is said that trans kids are

one of the ones being bullied in bathrooms and i completely believe that then why on this planet would you allow them in there it defies logic bathrooms are notorious in this county for not being safe there are gender neutral options you are not complying with any of the orders or policies set by the state or vhsd for their safety you are riding the fence with your silence and inaction

[00:54:43] Are you prepared to lose funding? 80% of the county supports compliance. Your guidelines in 738-5 are vague enough that parents can be bypassed. It has been stated from this room that parents should be bypassed in these matters. This is a slippery slope that no one wants.

[00:55:01] Consider what is going on around the country. Schools are losing funding and currently as of this week an Illinois school district now faces a lawsuit because of how they handled a boy in a the girls locker room. The UN even has things to say about this. They have a global report on violence against women and girls in sports dated August of 2024. I feel like I'm talking in a

[00:55:35] vacuum. There is silence. There is no response, no acknowledgement to any of my emails, much less about the state and executive orders. As I said in past meetings, now is the time to take a stand.

[00:55:50] It is what you are elected to do. Thank you. Gloria Jordan. Good evening, esteemed school Board members, Dr. Lateef and Dr. McDade. My name is Gloria Jordan and I live in the Kohl's District. I am here in support of the proposed budget. Several years ago, when I was Vice Chair of the Equity Advisory Committee, we asked for additional money to be allocated

[00:56:26] for graduation coaches. You have increased graduation coaches and I've seen the benefit of that. More students are able to navigate plans after graduation, whether it be college, military, trade school, or directly into the workforce. Graduation coaches support advisors to help students access more scholarships or internships. We have had absolutely amazing advisors through Prince William County Schools. They always believed the best of my students and saw their potential at every stage for which I am truly grateful. Thank you. I also see an increase for teacher pay in

[00:57:02] this budget. This allows us to attract and retain more experienced teachers in in our schools to address the diverse needs of Prince William County students. Special education is another important topic to me when ensuring our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

[00:57:19] As we all know, the spectrum of special education ranges from nonverbal, those who need more support to get to grade level, as well as those who require additional challenges to keep them engaged. I am thankful that this board recognizes and prioritizes the diverse needs of all the 90,000 children this county. You have increased both your special education teachers and services to students. Many students also have physical needs from asthma, diabetes, seizures, and mental health disorders.

[00:57:49] I appreciate that you have made a commitment to having a nurse in every single school which allows teachers to be able to concentrate on meeting the needs of their students and not have to do things outside of their scope. Schools across the state and this country would greatly benefit from from having a nurse in every school.

[00:58:10] Finally, I want to commend you all on your efforts to continually improve special education for students. From early identification in elementary school, signet, reassessing along the way into the gifted program, as well as adding additional seminars and the gov school.

[00:58:28] My children have thrived in Prince William County schools from elementary school through high school and beyond. And I just wanna say thank you. Thank you for your commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as you meet the needs of every student, whether it is in language acquisition, math and reading skills, or navigating their future school, our school district goes above and beyond.

[00:58:49] You all will not boast about your commitment for equity, but it's important for Prince William County parents to know that every student from every background, culture, ability, socioeconomic status, religion, or creed is valued and given individualized education to help them thrive and be productive citizens in our community and around the globe.

[00:59:07] you so much okay thank you that concludes citizen comment time and we are up next with the office of the chief financial officer 15.01 for the fiscal year 2026 budget capital improvement plan um and it is on this evening for approval i'll turn the meeting over dr mcdade thank you mr chairman over the last several months we've worked together with the budget team schools and departments to develop the fiscal year 2026 budget and capital improvement program I would like to thank our

[00:59:44] entire budget team including Joe Mondoro and our who's our budget director Kathleen Addison assistant director of budget and Natasha Valencia supervisor of budget and the entire budget team who really lead the budget process and under their lead under their leadership we've seen such success with our budget process and I want to thank our chief financial officer Mr. Shakil Youssef who leads the entire budget and finance office. Thank you for your diligence, commitment, and execution of our proposed budget. It's a budget that we're incredibly proud of.

[01:00:19] I would also like to thank our school board members for your critical feedback and input, engagement, and support throughout this process. Your proactive involvement and thorough review of the proposed budget supports our continued alignment to our strategic plan which we've continued to accomplish this year. On February 5th our team submitted the fiscal year 2026 proposed budget and CIP to the School Board. The School Board then held a public meeting on the proposed budget on February 10th, followed by a public hearing on February 19th. A work session and final markup was

[01:00:54] held on March 12th. At that work session the following investments were included within the proposed budget and this is just a short list of some of the budget highlights we included at the at the markup two additional science specialists fully funding costs for academic competition travel and participation one position to support and expand extracurricular activities additional support for elementary school math to include two math specialists and five instructional coaches to support schools with high math needs additional funding for summer school virtual courses such as health and physical

[01:01:32] education 2 and econ personal finance, additional funding to cover the tuition fees for summer high school accelerated courses, three additional security operations center staff for after hours events, an additional eight administrative interns for schools that have high instances of level 2 programs in special education, vape sensors in all high schools prior to the start of the 25-26 school year, one additional social worker dedicated to supporting McKinney Vento, adequate funding for referee pay for teams advancing past the district

[01:02:08] level competitions, department budgetary funds for science, six additional community security officers for elementary schools, additional investments for supplementing elementary school gifted programming, and 13 additional math coaches to support and maintain accreditation for math in elementary schools. Additionally, the CIP work session at the proposed budget presentation, we informed

the board that approximately 24 million in proffer funds held by Prince William County which are eligible for use in school construction throughout the county will be allocated to the CIP. After consulting with county staff, we are requesting these funds as part of the CIP approval

[01:02:47] process. This approach differs from past practice where proffer requests were made individually as projects progressed. The enhanced approach better supports capital planning and transparency and as of our last inquiry the total amount available for school use was a little over 28 million the capital improvement plan is a incredible undertaking it is something that we work on all year it's a multi-year plan and I do want to show appreciation for mr. Vernon Bach who is

[01:03:24] our Chief Operating Officer who is responsible for the CIP in collaboration with Mr. Shaquille Youssef. Our Chief Financial Officer Mr. Youssef and our Operating Officer Mr. Bock are both available this evening to address any additional questions on the proposed budget and CIP. Okay questions comments from the board. Mr. Wilk. Thank you Mr. Chairman. First of all thank you

[01:03:59] to the entire team. Hold on. I should probably make a motion. Oh, yes. Yes. Okay. Right. Sorry. My apologies. I need a motion. Mr. Vice Chair Blake. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Prince William County School Board 1 approved fiscal year 2026 through 30 CIP and the fiscal year 2026 school budget for all funds in the total amount of \$2,401,954,649 and further

[01:04:38] to approve the revenue sharing agreement between the Prince William Board of County Supervisors and the Prince William County School Board that provides 57.23% of the county's general revenues be transferred to the school division for the operations of the fiscal year 2026 and further three direct the superintendent to forward the requested school budget by fund totals to the prince william county board of county supervisors and further four requests the prince william

[01:05:12] county board of county supervisors to approve and appropriate the fiscal year 2026 school budget by lump sum appropriation in the amount of \$2,401,954,649 by fund totals as in previous years.

[01:05:34] And five, request of Prince William County Board of County Supervisors to accept, budget, and appropriate \$24,968,000 in profit funds to support the Prince William County Schools' capacity-increasing projects.

[01:05:53] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Wade. - I second. - Okay, great discussion, Mr. Weld. Are you sure? I'm just kidding. Tonight, first of all, again, as I was saying, thank you all, the entire finance facilities, budget team, administrative, the cabinet, and all the others and all the various departments and the work that was done into this.

[01:06:15] Thank you. You know, I know getting this ready over the years is a Herculean task, and so I'm very much appreciative of that, and so, But I do wanna state a couple things about tonight, as we get prepared to adopt this budget, I do wanna highlight some of the key investments that align with the Thriving Future strategic plan and support student success, safety, and opportunity, not only through the school system, but most especially within my Potomac district.

[01:06:41] A thriving future starts with safe, accessible schools. That's why I support, and I'm thankful, that the sidewalk pathways at Potomac Senior High School, the expanded vape centers, and more community safety officers to create safe learning environments have been added.

[01:06:57] The addition of dean of students at secondary schools will also strengthen discipline and student wellbeing. This budget invests in student achievement with new graduation coaches and behavior specialists that guide students. As a steadfast supporter of the fine arts, I'm pleased to see funding for renovated Potomac Senior High School's auditorium reinforcing our commitment to creativity and academic excellence.

[01:07:22] Our student athletes deserve high quality facilities. The addition of practice turfs at our high schools, including Forest Park, expands opportunities for teamwork and growth. Finally, we must invest in our educators and our staff. With a 6.9% average salary increase, we are committed to attracting and retaining our top talent.

[01:07:43] This budget reflects our shared vision for strong schools, and I look forward to its positive impact on our students, staff, and families. Thank you. - Ms. Trudenik.

[01:07:58] - That was very professional, Mr. Wilk. I am not going to do it as professionally, but this budget process, as I said, at our last meeting that I doubt any of you watch because it's a work session, but anyhow, we worked through this budget.

[01:08:14] And one of my favorite parts is that Dr. McDade really does speak to each one of us and understand the unique needs of our district and gives us the opportunity to put forth different budget initiatives and make suggestions to her, as well as to the team of everyone that does this, it takes a lot of people to make it happen this is my second budget season so i felt a little bit more prepared this time but i did put forth a lot of different requests after meeting with principals and parents and teachers in my district to hear about the different needs from different

[01:08:50] people in the community so some of the things that i'm really excited about are the vape sensors in every high school for the fall i think that's going to make a huge difference for safety for our students and for their uh educational day um another thing that i am excited about is the are the additional cso's at the elementary school level um and and beyond um i'm excited about that as those those students are um part of our our discussions and different people have come and talked at our reading or spoken sorry at our meetings about wanting more safety for our

[01:09:26] our elementary school students so I appreciate moving in that direction the additional math support funds for science those are all things that we pushed for and I'm really excited that we were all able to talk about those things and bring them forward the referee pay for people that make it past districts I know that's a big deal for our schools the elementary school gifted programs getting some more funding based on per pupil allotment too is great so So I also asked for additional assistant principals at the elementary school level, and that's something that we were talking about and looking into for later, for in the future.

[01:10:05] So there are some things that we did not get on our request list, which is fine because it's hard to meet all of those needs, but I appreciate Dr. McDade working with each one of us and talking to me, especially through my long list of wants and needs, and I'm excited that we were able to bring this forward, and I can't wait to pass this budget on.

[01:10:25] Miss Williams. Thank you, Chairman Lateef. I am especially excited that our budget happens to fall during Equity and Education Month because I believe that our budget aligns with our strategic plan

and equity is one of our core values. This budget absolutely captures the voice of not only each member up here on this board, but our staff from the Kelly Building down to the staff in our

[01:10:59] actual school buildings where students reside and are educated it captures our communities input and and does so in a way that's meaningful and that everyone has the opportunity to see their voice reflected in some part of the budget and as we know budgets are not perfect and there's always things that we can work on and improve but as someone who has sat here for a very long time now this budget and really since dr. McDade has been here it has we have seen the increase of capturing this voice in a meaningful way that gives value to our academic community and it makes me proud to be able to support this budget

[01:11:39] because a budget really is our financial dollars and what they mean to our community and to our school excuse me to our school community and it's very exciting to see each year the increase of that voice captured I'm also proud to support this budget because as a board member it is one of our major responsibilities is to approve a budget that works for the betterment of our community and the world that we live in now as mr. Wilkes said it captures things from his district and I thought when I heard that not only does it capture things from his district each one of our districts are reflective but we don't live in a world anymore where it is just what happens in my district

[01:12:19] in my district alone it's because of the improvements and I'm just gonna say because Mr. Wilk said it earlier because of the sidewalk that's in his it makes an improvement for everyone that goes to Potomac High School for every event and it's nice that we are able to to make these improvements and to have these things highlighted in our budget because all of our students share resources across the division and this budget absolutely speaks to that whether it's sidewalks or increasing in student funding for competitions having students not have to worry about if they're gonna fundraise or if their school community has enough money to go participate in cooks around the world or

[01:12:55] an academic or a stem research competition it speaks to our what we've heard from our community our staff about student discipline by having a dean of students these are all things that help everyone across the board and I'm really proud to be able to support that in addition to that it's just our our continuous commitment to our strategic plan in every way shape or form um exercise in our in our dollars that we are going to be that say are a priority for our school community so i'm really proud to be able to support this budget i'm thankful to dr mcdade all of her staff i'm thankful

[01:13:34] to verne's department for the cip and i'm also very very thankful to our financial department because of all the time and energy that they take to explain especially to persons like me i usually have some random off question um even though i've been doing this a long time because it shows that not only are you serious about what you're doing but you in turn have the opportunity to educate us so that we are able to make well-informed decisions as well and to our public so thank you miss jargaport i will make this quick because it would be repeating

[01:14:09] much of what has already been said um but for the public um the work that goes on behind the scenes uh that that we as a board even only get a small snapshot of it has to do with the superintendent who came in and wanted to make sure dollars were going to students and wanted to make sure that schools were heard in their for what their needs are and that we could plan for those things so i believe this budget reflects it it continues to reflect uh the meeting the needs of our students

[01:14:44] and our staff I am jealous of the raises to come and but but very happy that we're in a position to be able to do it so um that is that is all I'm going to say right now because um thank you for all the work that everyone has done thank you Ms. Wall thank you Dr. Lateef um I uh don't have any questions for staff and partially that's because I've I asked a lot of questions through the process so i appreciate you're taking time to answer my questions um we're here tonight voting on

[01:15:20] a very substantial budget for fiscal year 2026 and i believe this budget is strong and significant i have advocated for a number of items that are in this budget and i appreciate the consideration of my concerns thoughts and my suggestions and i would be remiss if i didn't acknowledge like like Mr. Wilk, the efforts of our hardworking budget team who have been working all year to bring this proposed budget to us for our consideration.

[01:15:51] So thank you very much. The key feature of this budget is the proposed raises for certified, classified, and administrative staff. And from my awareness of other districts and their budgeting challenges, and from some who are proposing modest raises and celebrating that, this is a significant commitment to our district's competitive advantage in the hiring market.

[01:16:13] And please correct me if I'm wrong, but from what I can ascertain, this may be the biggest proposed increase in salaries in Virginia. I'm not sure if that's true, but it looks like it. So until corrected, that's what it is. I also wish to note that I am very disappointed that the teachers union has failed to put this agreement to their members for a ratification vote before we are voting here tonight.

[01:16:37] This is especially serious because this budget is historic in its generous compensation increases over the next two years and directly impacts every employee. I wonder for those who pay union dues faithfully each month if you should be demanding more from your union.

[01:16:54] Several years ago, I voiced my concerns loud and clear that teachers would be ill-represented by tying themselves to the union in such a definitive way as to enter into collective bargaining. I sincerely worried that our ability to do right by our employees would be hampered through union missteps and neglect of important issues.

[01:17:14] From what I have seen, including the failure to bring this wage agreement to a vote of its members, an agreement secured through the very collective bargaining process that the union so vehemently fought to earn, my concerns have not been allayed. Nonetheless, I anticipate that the board is going to move forward with this proposed budget because of our commitment to our employees through our five-year strategic plan launching Thriving Futures, wherein we are striving to carefully align strategic investments to ultimately drive student achievement

[01:17:49] and give our taxpayers a valuable return on their investment in our schools. So the budget here does align significantly with the strategic goals laid out in our strategic plan, and it is because of this that I intend to give my support to this budget.

[01:18:07] Mr. Jesse. Yeah, I just want to say that I'm really excited about the budget, AND I'M REALLY APPRECIATIVE THAT WE HAVE DONE ALL WE COULD AND I WOULD JUST ALSO LIKE TO SAY THAT I UNDERSTAND MRS WALL'S CONCERNS BUT I'VE BEEN ATTENDING BOARD MEETINGS FOR 12 YEARS NOW AND THIS THIS DIVISION AND THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS DONE A WONDERFUL JOB THAT WAS NOT ALWAYS THE CASE

[01:18:39] SO YEAH I DO BELIEVE IN YOU AND I DO BELIEVE THAT THEY'RE NEEDED BUT SOMETIMES THEY'RE NOT really needed but it's good to have them there until they are thank you mr blake thank you mr chairman uh so tonight i'm proud to support uh this this fiscal year budget uh 2026 budget and capital improvement plan and i think this budget is more than just numbers on the page it's a direct investment in the future of our students and a reflection of our shared commitment to

[01:19:16] providing the highest quality education for all children at all levels every dollar in this budget is intentional designed to uplift and empower and empower every student in our division i'm particularly excited about the addition of the dean of students at this role will bring a much needed consistency and oversight to our disciplinary practices helping to reinforce the code of behavior with fidelity and ensure that all students are supported in a fair and structured environment several other key investments in this budget that align closely with priorities in my district

[01:19:54] and a broader strategic plan include the adjusting the EL ratios to meet state requirements which will provide targeted support to our English learners, adding EL teacher assistance and leads as well as EL instructional specialists to strengthen the instructional framework for our growing EL population, hiring eight graduation coaches to ensure more of our students reach the finish line and earn their diplomas, increasing mental health support by adding five school of psychologists and more counselors, reinforcing our commitment to student well-being, expanding

[01:20:31] classroom support with additional kindergarten teaching assistance, recognizing the importance of early intervention and foundational learning. And I'm also excited about the investment in the PWCS VCU Apprentice Residency Program and the I-Teach Alternative Pathway to Teacher Licensure Program, which will help us recruit and retain a diverse and highly qualified teacher workforce this budget again is not just about me is not just about meeting the immediate needs of our schools it's about building a sustainable and

[01:21:11] equitable foundation for the future it reflects our collective responsibility to ensure that every child regardless regardless of background or circumstance has the opportunity to succeed I want to thank Superintendent Dr. McDade and Mr. Youssef and Mr. Bach and her entire team for their thoughtful work in crafting a budget that reflects the needs and values of our community.

[01:21:39] I'm proud to support this budget knowing it will make a meaningful difference in the lives of our students and families. And let me be clear, every dollar in this budget is invested for all children at all levels this budget helps all students it's not about one group or one school it's about supporting every single student across this division every investment is directly tied to strengthening our schools and empowering our students to succeed thank you very well said mr

[01:22:14] blake it's often said that our budget is a direct reflection of our values i'm very proud of this This is, I believe, my seventh or eighth budget I'm overseeing as chairman, and I am very proud of this budget.

[01:22:31] This budget reflects everything, as Ms. Wall points out, that's aligned in our strategic plan. The strategic plan, which comes from a surveying, an organized process of working with our community, our partners, our students, our teachers, our faculty, our staff, all of that work went into creating the strategic plan the budgets that we have voted on the last four years have all aligned with that strategic plan that effort which reflects our values and what we all want to see

[01:23:05] get better what we want to see continue here in our school division i am very proud of that i believe the budgets we have voted on including this one make us one of the best school districts in all of america one of the most competitive school districts in all of america one of the best districts where we treat our staff and teachers extraordinarily well I think it is among the best in America I have no doubt that these investments will improve student achievement at all levels across all schools across all groups and it was a well thought out budget

[01:23:43] we spent a lot of time on it I'm particularly thankful to the superintendent her staff tonight after we vote on this it no longer is the superintendent's proposed budget it becomes a prince william county school board's budget and the one that we will present to the board of county supervisors i'm particularly proud of the continued record raises for teachers and staff that this school division and this board has been committed to doing over the last eight years a record that has helped us catch up to our neighbors the competition in northern virginia

[01:24:19] to make us a place where we can better recruit and retain our top talent which we have done we continue to do i i was hoping this evening we could celebrate that this budget and what i think everyone should know is that the school division and the school board went into good faith negotiations with the Prince William Education Association we came up with a very exciting collective bargaining agreement that we both agreed to last two months ago now that agreement has yet to be ratified but I want the public and all of our teachers and all of our staff to know that this school board is

[01:24:55] fully funding every commitment in the agreement even though it hasn't been ratified we are particularly proud of the work we went in and how much work we we did to come to a complete three-year collective bargaining agreement this agreement really addresses a lot of the needs that our teachers had a lot of needs they wish to have and a lot of the work that we needed to do to correct long-term long-time problems with the way we were addressing human resources and i think i am very excited by that night i am very proud of this board for the

[01:25:32] work they've done and how we're going to move forward with again another two years of record raises for teachers which i believe will become the highest raises in the nation in the same time period of any district in the country and that shows our commitment because we also believe having great teachers is the first step in having great academic performance and all the research shows that and we want to recruit and retain the best in the business in which is our core business here of teaching and learning so I will fully support this

[01:26:09] budget proudly support this budget and I'm excited to do so so at this time if there are no further comments we'll take a vote on the budget please vote Justin do you have to read your thing does he have to do his thing disclosure

[01:26:26] you can just read it just say it we all know what it is sorry dr. make the dr.

[01:27:30] Dean and Dr. Lateef. I read this one every year for the last 10 years. Pursuant to the Virginia State and Local Conflict of Interest Act, I'm required to declare the following regarding adoption of the budget. My wife is employed as a teacher in Prince William County Public Schools and I therefore have a personal interest in the transaction. I'm a member of a group of three or more persons affected by the transaction and I'm able to participate in the adoption of the budget fairly objectively and in the public interest.

[01:28:00] Thank you. - Please.

[01:28:39] - Vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed. - Thank you. That will be a unanimous vote once again for the fiscal year 2026 school budget for the amount of \$2,401,954,649. Thank you very much.

[01:28:57] We will now move on to, where are we at? Superintendent's time, Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I'm so excited today. We hosted the SAVE Youth Leadership Training Summit. You'll see some of the decorations still left behind here in the boardroom.

[01:29:18] The SAVE stands for Students Against Violence Everywhere. And we had a wonderful event today. And I would like to thank Mr. Jake Edwards and the entire crisis management team for hosting this year's summit, as well as Sandy Hook Promise for their incredible partnership as we leverage the voice of our student leaders to build stronger and safer schools and communities for all students.

[01:29:45] We had 80 students here today representing 18 secondary schools, that's across middle and high schools division-wide. We had 30 staff members along with national staff from Sandy Hook Promise who led students through Save Promise Club activities for the day to make meaningful steps to prevent violence and cultivate connections.

[01:30:06] It was an impactful day of student leadership and learning. I'm also pleased to share that the Prince William Manassas Regional Science and Engineering Fair will take place this Saturday, March 22nd, right here at the Kelly Leadership Center. This event is a celebration of innovation and scientific inquiry, highlighting the incredible talents of our students.

[01:30:28] And they are certainly scholars and researchers. Virtual judging began on March 6 and concluded March 13. The public is invited to view the top student projects in each category from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. before judging begins. Later in the day, the middle division award ceremony will take place at 4:00 p.m., followed by the senior division award ceremony at 5:15 p.m.

[01:30:52] I'm so excited that this year, we have a record-breaking number of participants, with 313 middle and high school students presenting 224 projects, more than 200 category judges. Yes, that is something we've worked hard to increase.

[01:31:12] And we expect to have more student researchers and scientists participate in the years to come. We have more than 200 category judges, including students from our National Science Honor Society, which we're evaluating, who will be evaluating projects in the middle division alongside 30 external organizations lending their expertise.

[01:31:33] I also want to note that we had 62 student members of the National Science Honor Society who volunteered to judge projects in the middle division as part of our Grow Our Own initiative. The senior division first and second place winners will advance to the Virginia State Science and Engineering Fair, while five grand prize winners will compete at the International Science and Engineering Fair.

[01:31:58] I would like to extend my sincere gratitude our sponsors i66 express lidos and spark for their generous support in making this event possible for more details please visit the pwcs website and search science fair additionally i would like to advertise some upcoming career opportunities here at prince william county schools for students families and staff alike first pwcs will conduct a summer job fair on monday march 24th from 5 30 6:30 p.m. at the Kelly Leadership Center for summer student aid positions. The

[01:32:35] student aid positions are typically three week long part-time morning hours worked between June 23rd and July 11th. Additionally, there are two work days before the beginning of the program: June 18th and 20th. So we want to encourage our students to take advantage of this. Secondly, we're hosting a career information night job fair on Tuesday, March 25th from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Kelly Leadership Center for individuals looking to explore diverse employment options right here in PWCS. For those interested in teaching, we are hosting

[01:33:13] two 30-minute sessions on pathways to teacher licensure and that's going to be at 6:00 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. Finally, we are hosting an employment and summer job fair on Wednesday March 26 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Osborne Park High School for high school students looking for summer employment and graduating seniors who plan to enter the workforce military or post-secondary training programs these three events and more can be found on our website under upcoming events I am honored at this time to introduce our associate superintendent for special

[01:33:52] education dr ashley ryer dr ryer will provide a presentation spotlighting the enhancements made to pwcs post-secondary transition programming for students with disabilities as they align with our strategic plan so i'd like to thank dr ryer and i know miss johnson is accompanying you as well thank you for this presentation good evening dr latif vice chair blake members of the board and Dr. McDade. We are pleased to be here this evening to provide an update from the Office of Special

[01:34:26] Education that specifically focused on enhancements made to our post-secondary transition programming for all of our students with disabilities. Here with me this evening is Supervisor Ann Johnson, and she'll be joining me in this presentation. Before we begin, I'd like to highlight a few individuals that are in attendance tonight. All three directors from the Office of Special education dr darwin barker dr amy holub and dr wendy martin johnson i'd like to thank them and their teams for their leadership and their focused work around many areas of continuous improvement that reside in our office i'd also like to acknowledge our chair of the special

[01:35:06] education advisory committee miss christie bowie young she's here with us this evening the topic of post-secondary transition is one that has been of great interest to our SEAC and so we'd like to thank them for their volunteer service and continuous support the 22-23 school year began with a reorganization of the office of special education we'd like to thank dr mcdade for this vision and the support of the board to provide dedicated leadership to this

[01:35:38] critical area in our school division some may recall that in october of 2023 we provided a comprehensive update of the work that was included among all three departments tonight we'll focus on just a few key priority areas and updates and then move on to our spotlight.

[01:35:57] The Department of Specialized Instruction, led by Dr. Amy Holub, oversees the total instructional programming for students with disabilities. This begins with our youngest learners, children ages two to five, who receive early childhood special education services. This is an area that has grown in response to increased identification of these children. This year we opened this school year with 66 additional half-day preschool programs that all opened fully staffed. I'd also like to note that over half of our ECSE programs provide opportunities for students to be

[01:36:36] educated alongside peer models. This is in the spirit of kindergarten readiness and is above and beyond other inclusion opportunities that exist through our partnership with Head Start and VPI. This department leads the work of our specialized programs for students who require dedicated support from

special education staff throughout their school year this team also works with school teams to ensure that there are the appropriate instructional materials with special education teachers to address students academic and behavioral needs

[01:37:11] in the area of reading this includes not only students accessing high quality core instruction which has been strongly emphasized this school year through implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act but also the instruction that students with specific reading disabilities require beyond core instruction. This is aligned to their specific needs and is determined by their IEP teams. The specialized instruction team is also working with schools to identify every opportunity possible for students to be served in general education settings to the greatest extent possible. Inclusion is a value

[01:37:50] that we hold high. This year, this department hosted the first ever new special educator induction program called Bright Beginnings and a series of professional learning for special education teaching assistants. This department has also expanded assistive technology supports and hosts a number of outreach events through expansion of the Parent Resource Center.

[01:38:13] The Department of Special Education Programs and Development, led by Dr. Wendy Martin-Johnson, leads the work of related services which includes speech occupational and physical therapy as well as eligibility and child fine this team oversees compliance with special education regulations which includes procedural supports to schools around high quality special education documented documentation and paperwork as well as dispute resolution our goal in this area is to resolve

[01:38:48] disagreements with families early and at the lowest level possible. Tonight's spotlight will cover enhancements in post-secondary transition and finally this department partners with transportation and coordinates our extended school year programming. The Department of Tiered Interventions and Supports led by Dr. Darwin Barker coordinates PWCS's multi-tiered system of supports which is an implementation of intervention across all areas and and supports all students in schools, including those with disabilities.

[01:39:25] This department is responsible for proactive and preventative behavior supports. These do not replace consequences, but are focused on positive supports and restorative practices that when implemented would reduce the likelihood of a student violating the code of behavior.

[01:39:43] This department also coordinates training around de-escalation, restraint, and seclusion. We are proud to report that 100% of PWCS schools have at least one administrator trained in Handle With Care, in addition to other staff who have been identified throughout the IEP process, and this puts us in complete compliance with state requirements.

[01:40:07] This slide provides some information about our students with disabilities in PWCS. You will see that there's been an increase across the past three years, and as of December 1 of this past school year, 14.6% of students in PWCS receive special education services.

[01:40:27] We serve the greatest number of students who qualify as students with specific learning disabilities, autism, and other health impairment. We've seen the greatest growth within numbers of students with autism, increasing by over 500 in the past two years, as well as our students with developmental delays, which coincides with our increase in preschool programming.

[01:40:53] The division has made significant strategic investments throughout the past several budget cycles. Many of those were referenced in the earlier presentation tonight. I'd like to highlight just a few

and thank Dr. McDade and Dr. Flanard for their support, as long with the support of this board for these investments.

[01:41:14] Highlights include additional resources to support school programming, staff, and the expansion of central office leadership. Over the past three years, 350 teaching assistants have been added to specialized programs this means that in our schools the majority of specialized programs are staffed with two teaching assistants in addition to the classroom teacher 15 additional behavior specialists have been added to support schools and students with the greatest behavioral challenges in addition in partnership with our

[01:41:49] colleagues in budget the model for allocating special education teacher positions to schools to serve students in our level one or resource programming was adjusted so that schools know clearly how many special education teachers to staff based on the PWCS ratios of one to 12 in elementary, one to 15 in middle school, and one to 17 in high school, across disability categories and with a formula that now rounds up.

[01:42:19] Instructional staff in schools have benefited from supplements provided to sponsors of Unified Sports, a program focused on inclusion that is in place in our middle and high schools. Our IEP case managers also receive a stipend that acknowledges the additional workload when responsible for special education paperwork.

[01:42:40] I'd like to specifically note the SEAC's advocacy for both of these investments. The leadership in the Office of Special Education has continued to expand in response to needs to provide dedicated leadership in the areas of Child Find, early childhood special education and related services.

[01:43:01] Our procedural support team continues to grow to continue to assess needs and support high quality IEP development in schools. And finally, two additional investments highlighted on this slide support the expansion work for post-secondary transition programming.

[01:43:18] Staff added to open new work-based learning sites and the supervisor for post-secondary transition who directly works on building out this programming for our students. What better way to begin our spotlight than with our very own PWCS Vision 2025.

[01:43:40] Every student will graduate on time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community. The enhancements in post-secondary transition are at the essence of this, with many focused efforts on preparing all of our students to transition competitively into the workforce.

[01:44:02] The post-secondary transition expansions cross several commitment areas of our current strategic plan, most notably that PWCS will prepare all students for post-secondary education in the workforce and will work collaboratively with community agencies and business partners to support strategic initiatives.

[01:44:27] As we approach the home stretch of our current strategic plan, we are proud to report the two goals related to this area of focus have been accomplished. By 2025, all high schools will follow a cohesive division-wide framework to implement the employee program.

[01:44:43] This program exists in all of our high schools and we have students participating in multiple levels of coursework. In addition, PWCS will partner with businesses to develop three additional full-day

work-based learning programs.

[01:44:58] You may be familiar that historically, PWCS has had a project cert site at the UVA Health Center in Haymarket. And since then, we've added three additional programs. Last school year, PWCS opened a homegrown program at TOTOS Marketplace, and this school year, additional work-based learning sites were added at Capitol Ridge Gracious Living and Westminster at Lake Ridge.

[01:45:25] The Westminster at Lake Ridge program is a second project search site, which Ms. Johnson will share more about in just a few moments, but we would like to celebrate that PWCS is the only school division in the Commonwealth that has been granted a second site, as well as the only school division that was allowed and able to open a site this school year.

[01:45:46] I'd now like to turn it over to Ms. Johnson to provide some more details about this exciting work. - Good evening, and thank you, Dr. Reier. I am thrilled to be here with you this evening to share information on secondary transition and high quality work-based learning programs.

[01:46:07] Secondary transition planning starts for students with disabilities at the age of 14 during their annual individualized education program meeting. This planning involves creating personalized support to help students prepare for life after high school, including higher education, employment, and independent living.

[01:46:25] When planning for secondary transition, the IEP team will create what's called a transition plan, very similar to the academic and career plan, which includes post-secondary goals, transition services, course of study, and annual goals.

[01:46:40] Student-focused planning is key, which means making a plan based on the student's strengths, interests, and preferences, while using assessment data to develop the plan in supporting the student's involvement in their individualized education program and the transition process.

[01:46:56] The main goals of secondary transition planning are increased independence and self-advocacy, better access to post-secondary education and job opportunities, and improved quality of life for after high school. Collaboration among all professionals and services is crucial for a smooth transition from high school to post-secondary life.

[01:47:17] Prince William County Public Schools continues to build upon strong relationships with our business partners, as well as the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services and the Prince William County Community Services Board, as well as training programs and colleges.

[01:47:34] For students with a goal of entering the workforce directly after high school graduation, work-based learning opportunities with specialized programming and direct instruction in workplace readiness is provided through transition programming and in partnership with the Career and Technical Education Department.

[01:47:54] This year, we are excited to continue our collaboration with the Career and Technical Education Department, focusing on the Employment Opportunities for Youth, or Employee Program. Aligned with Virginia's work-based learning standards, employee equips students with the top skills needed to enter the workforce.

[01:48:13] Since 2023, the employee program has grown significantly, offering high quality work-based learning opportunities for students with disabilities in all of our high schools. Students gain hands-on

experience, explore various careers, and develop essential skills like communication, networking, and time management.

[01:48:33] The employee program includes a continuum of classes to help students meet their post-secondary employment goals. Employee one focuses on job shadowing, allowing students to observe professionals and engage in career-related learning.

[01:48:49] Employee two emphasizes school-based enterprises where students run a business and prepare for internships. Employee three offers internships with 151 local business partners, providing hands-on experience. Employee four features paid work experience with students completing a minimum of 396 hours of competitive employment while also earning high school credit.

[01:49:16] These courses provide incredible opportunities for our students to develop workplace readiness skills. As they progress, we prepare students age 18 to 22 for full day work-based learning environments like Project Search and Explore, or to enter the workforce directly into competitive integrated employment.

[01:49:38] As we continue to enhance work-based learning opportunities for students with disabilities, we strive to maintain current partnerships in the community and grow our network to allow for new partnerships based on the specific needs, interests, and preferences of our students.

[01:49:54] This list of business partnerships illustrates a small sample of the community support we receive across the county, which affords our students the critical opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings enhancing their skills and employability.

[01:50:11] We are deeply grateful to our 151 local business partners for their unwavering support, which helps our students explore different careers, refine their post-secondary paths, develop professional networks, and gain insights into the chosen industries, making them better prepared for their futures.

[01:50:32] Explore and Project Search are high-quality work-based learning programs that immerse our interns into the world of employment through full-day internships at business host sites for students between the ages of 18 and 22.

[01:50:48] Interns spend the entire program year, which does follow the school calendar, attending the internship at the business host site. We have proudly partnered with each business host site to ensure a training room is available for students to receive direct instruction each day prior to participating in the hands-on internship opportunities. The Project SEARCH program model was developed at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in 1996 and has been duplicated more than 500 times nationwide and in 10 countries. Through this program, young adults

[01:51:25] develop the tools necessary for employment and the skills needed for self-determination, management, and self-advocacy. Project SEARCH is a partnership between the school division, the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, DARS, and Did Lake, an adult employment agency, as well as our business host sites.

[01:51:47] Through this partnership, our Project SEARCH sites benefit from having a job skills trainer on-site provided by DARS and Did Lake, available on-site for the interns in the program. Even after completing the one-year program, DARS and Did Lake remain committed to supporting our interns with work readiness and employment needs.

[01:52:09] We are forever grateful for their invaluable partnership and the difference it makes in the lives of our interns. Our two project search sites include UVA Health Prince William Medical Center on the western side of the county. We also have Westminster at Lake Ridge on the eastern end of the county.

[01:52:28] Similar to project search, Prince William County Public Schools also is expanding our homegrown Explorer program. Our two current Explore sites include Totos Neighborhood Market on the eastern side of the county, as well as Capitol Ridge Gracious Retirement Living on the western end of the county.

[01:52:48] In both of these programs, interns receive direct instruction in employability and functional skills for about an hour each day and about four hours working in identified internship rotations.

[01:53:03] The goals for our interns in both Explore and Project Search are to prepare them for successful transitions into the workforce by helping them identify their job preferences and strengths, gain and refine practical job skills, and build confidence through real world experiences.

[01:53:22] These programs also focus on supporting interns as they transition from school to work, ensuring they are equipped to navigate competitive and integrated employment environments. Interns develop essential skills and tools like resumes and portfolios, which highlight their abilities and experiences, setting the stage for long-term professional success.

[01:53:46] Mentors within the business host sites support our interns in their rotations. Many students in explore and project search end their experience with an offer of competitive integrated employment. Definitely worth celebrating.

[01:54:05] Students engage in work-based learning programs to acquire essential experience in various areas. The benefits of participating in these programs are numerous and impactful. They help students transition smoothly to adulthood by providing structured opportunities for career exploration and skill development.

[01:54:25] Through hands-on experiences, students can apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings, significantly enhancing their learning and retention. These practical experiences allow students to build their professional networks, connecting with industry professionals and mentors who can offer guidance, support, and potential job opportunities in the future.

[01:54:48] Networking is a vital component of career success, and these programs provide a platform for our students to establish and grow their professional relationships. Participation in work-based learning programs enhance students' employability. By gaining practical skills and experience, students become more competitive candidates in the job market.

[01:55:09] They develop a strong work ethic, learn to adapt to different work environments, and acquire essential soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and problem solving. These programs offer tailored support to meet the individual needs and preferences of each student, ensuring they receive the guidance and resources necessary to succeed in their chosen career paths.

[01:55:32] Work-based learning programs play a critical role in preparing our students for their future careers, providing a comprehensive and supported environment where they can grow, learn, and thrive. I would like to highlight some of the recent achievements and outcomes of our work-based learning programs.

[01:55:52] In 2024, Explorer Totos Neighborhood Market won the prestigious Innovative Partnership of the Year Award from the Chamber of Commerce. This recognition underscores the impactful collaboration between our program and the local business community.

[01:56:07] Just as exciting, our Project Search Westminster at Lake Ridge program was nominated for two significant business chamber awards this year. Project SEARCH Westminster at Lake Ridge won the Innovative Partnership of the Year award just last month.

[01:56:23] We are incredibly proud of this recognition, which showcases the hard work and dedication of everyone involved in the program. Our employment outcomes are equally impressive. At Project SEARCH UVA Health, 74% of our graduates have received competitive employment offers upon completing the program.

[01:56:44] This success rate demonstrates the effectiveness of our partnership with DARS, Deadlake, UVA Health, and Westminster at Lakeridge, and the dedication of our interns. Similarly, Explore Todos Neighborhood Market boasts a 67% success rate with graduates receiving competitive employment offers.

[01:57:05] This achievement highlights the real-world impact of our hands-on learning experiences for our interns and the partnership with our business partner, Todos Market. Finally, I'd like to note the growth in student participation over the years and the growth of our programs.

[01:57:23] Since 2011, the division provided the opportunity for 10 interns to participate in Project SEARCH UVA Health. With the expansion of Project SEARCH to a second site and the development of our EXPLORE program, we have a projected 60 students that will be enrolled across six full day internship sites for the upcoming 2025-26 school year.

[01:57:48] This growth is a testament to the value and demand of our programs, as well as the success of our students. At this point, we are going to take a few moments to watch a video of our interns in the work-based learning environments at Project SEARCH Westminster at Lake Ridge and explore Capitol Ridge Gracious Retirement Living.

[01:58:11] Please roll the video. The Explore program is a full-day vocational program for individuals with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 22. So the ultimate goal is to teach them job skills so that they can be employed.

[01:58:28] I'm doing the project Explore here and I'm a kitchen helper. Explore is giving us good work skills, preparing me for a job. We have students that work in the kitchen. could be from food prep for filling up water bottles to setting up the dining room tables. My job here is to help the kitchen prep team. We have students that do more housekeeping laundry type work, washing the sheets and towels, drying them.

[01:58:57] Students that help with the housekeepers actually cleaning inside residents home. I feel comfortable being an intern. I'm learning to clean better, learning how to vacuum. They're being able to come here to the EXPLORE program and receive that undivided vocational assistance and training that they deserve and they should receive. Everybody deserves a shot and this is their shot and then they can finally open the doors to whatever is imaginable for them. Project SEARCH is an employment training program for students with disabilities who are

[01:59:36] interested in seeking competitive integrated employment. Students come to retirement community to participate in three different internships alongside a mentor to develop their job skills. Project SEARCH is a partnership between Prince William County Schools, Diddley, STARS and Westminster at Lakeridge. So the mentors and the students have had a great partnership right from the beginning. They really have worked well together. Not only are our mentors teaching our students, but our students are teaching our mentors every day as well. The program is offered to all of the high schools in Prince William County Schools. Part of their transition program and it really is great. It's a great opportunity and I'm

[02:00:15] so glad to be a part of this. My job is to assist the interns with perfecting their skills and developing their transferable skills. Project SEARCH is helping me reach my goals so I can get a job in food service. Currently I am a tornado intern. I help plan events for residents and design the calendar. I interact with residents every day.

[02:00:40] My job is I cut out fruit and vegetables. Project search helped me make my resume and learn job skills. I feel like as a community we get to give back to these interns and the interns are giving back to us just as much.

[02:00:56] I really love this job. It's so fulfilling to make such a difference in these students' lives. And prepare them for a thriving future.

[02:01:13] As we continue to grow transition programming, I'd like to share our exciting plans for postsecondary transition next steps and continued enhancements in our high-quality work-based learning opportunities. First, we are broadening our high-quality work-based learning initiatives through the addition of new community partners.

[02:01:32] These partnerships will provide even more opportunities for our students to gain valuable work experience across all industries. Next, we are adding two new explore sites for the 25-26 school year. These sites will offer more students the chance to participate in hands-on learning and to develop essential job skills.

[02:01:54] For the 20-26-27 school year, we are enhancing our programming and access to high-quality work-based learning for students transitioning to supported employment. This will ensure that all students, regardless of their needs, have access to high-quality work-based learning experiences.

[02:02:12] We will continue our strong partnership with the Career and Technical Education Department around the employee curriculum. This collaboration is crucial for aligning our programs with industry standards and preparing students for successful careers. Finally, we are focusing on developing a comprehensive post-secondary transition plan in the middle school level.

[02:02:35] By starting this process earlier, we can better prepare our students for future educational and career paths. This concludes our presentation for this evening. We sincerely appreciate your time and your support. We are happy to take any questions. Thank you Dr. Ryer and Ms. Johnson for sharing that valuable information and all the work that is happening with our students to make sure that they transition from Prince William County Schools ready to create a thriving future for themselves and their community. At this time Dr. Lateef that concludes the superintendent's report and we're here to answer any questions

[02:03:11] that the board might have related to the presentation on special education mr williams thank you mr chairman i don't have any questions i just want to emphatically thank you for this program as someone who has visited the toto site and i mean it's just absolutely amazing it really is life-changing for these students and for our staff i know the hard work that has gone into this is something beyond I can personally imagine the amount of sites that we have the opportunities for students directly coming from within our school division

[02:03:49] to be employed to just makes me think when I was at I've never felt so much love visiting a work site in my life it was just absolutely incredible to see not only the students working but to visit the training room to see how they were getting reinforced the academic standards how to communicate and collaborate with each other right there getting those skills I can only imagine I haven't had the pleasure of visiting other sites but it was absolutely phenomenal and for me having a close family member who went through the special education program wasn't afforded these opportunities just to know that we have grown so much in that time it was years ago grown so much in

[02:04:28] that time but to know you know just to think back of how much better positioned this individual would be doing fine had a great education here don't want to say that don't want no slack no slack from Prince William County Schools did great service for him but just it's it's the additional add-on and and to think that we are now going as far back as middle school to help plan these transition transitions I know is important not only to the student but also to the parents who wonder you know what is my what is my student going to our parents our guardians what is my student going to do what meaningful opportunities have they had while they've been in school and this is again

[02:05:01] i'm a huge supporter of cte i love this this other lens of cte is able to provide for this niche group of students and it's wonderful the video is fantastic and it's wonderful to see that it's continued growth i just want to thank both of you ladies for the amount of work that you have put forth in this program as well as the rest of your staff i would absolutely be remiss if i did not recognize miss christie bowie young who is sitting behind you who i can't see because i'm so short because of the podium. Hello, Sor, and all the hard work that she has done. I know that she has been with us for several years and is a part of SEAC as well. So I just want to, again, thank the team

[02:05:39] for continuing to have these opportunities for our students and opportunities for growth in our community as well, because we are a part of our community. And I can't, I'm hard-pressed to think of a program that says this more with love and dedication and service to our students and those families. So thank you. Mr. Wilk. I want to echo a lot of things that Ms. Williams said there.

[02:06:02] um thank you all for the presentation um i i think it's good that the community is aware of these things i remember earlier this year i went and visited a site in ohio while i was traveling for work and i had no idea that these programs really existed in our school system and i think it's great the presentation was trenchant and really informative and i think it will help the community get a better understanding of the programs we do offer in the pathways and services you know they they always you know the the the saying is you know college and career readiness begins in the

[02:06:39] cradle and you know oftentimes for parents like myself who have special needs children you're always there's this worry and fear that you know what is your child going to do after they either graduate or age out at 22 if they stay in the system and you know and i think after seeing i know after seeing that actually that it does provide you know me with more reassurance and confidence as i hope it does to a lot

of other families that we have rapidly expanded this program you know i can remember when i first came on the board and a lot of the changes that have

[02:07:16] developed of course as you know special needs populations are growing in all school districts across the country I can't think of one that I haven't talked to even in my day job where the needs are not increasing along with the numbers so you're seeing more severe cases with students with you know moderate to severe disabilities and I think our programming and our supports have to reflect a lot of that too because you know for those students who even have the most severe needs we want them to be productive we want them to transition to some type of independent lifestyle and learning and I think we're on that track we're doing great things the partnerships I thank you for incorporating a lot of

[02:07:56] those I know one of my pieces of feedback was I think the community would love to see you know some of these 151 names there you know I can't say enough about TOTOS Carlos Castro is a great man and I'm the partnership as he has helped foster with our school system is amazing so I can't say enough I could go on here a lot but in the effort of time thank you so much for the presentation mr. Jesse yeah I think this is a really bad I know this is a really valuable

[02:08:28] program I grew up with a my sister who was had challenges and I look around today when we look at all the homeless people and all the stuff we are helping prevent some of that from happening and that's very important I do have one question there was a list of one of your slides has a whole bunch of organization one of which was Claywood Elementary School what was that list

[02:08:59] about and what did they do yes so that list was a small sample of the many partnerships that we have out in the community and many of those are our own elementary schools so our high school students do go into our elementary schools and they are afforded the opportunity to have different internship of opportunities at our elementary schools, especially if they have a post-secondary goal of being in education.

[02:09:33] And so our interns do go into those elementary schools. - That's what I thought. So my question is, I only saw one school? - That is a small sample, but we have the entire list that we can provide and it is actually on our website.

[02:09:49] - Okay, thank you. - Yes, there are more elementary schools. - Ms. Trudenecht. - I wasn't gonna chime in, but he said a key word for me, which was T Claywood. That program has happened for a long time.

[02:10:08] The kiddos come over from Patriot High School, and the really cool part is they also, those kids also serve in other roles, other activities, things like a carnival. They were able to run the games for a school carnival years ago, but they bring them in for other things like afterschool activities as well.

[02:10:27] And I think it's just a great opportunity and program, and it's awesome to see them all walking over from Patriot, so it's nice to have those sister schools right next door, but thank you for the presentation. Again, since we already heard it once, but thank you again for giving that to us.

[02:10:45] - Ms. Wall. - Thank you, this was really informative. It does show how we are working to help every student with their specific needs, knowing that we have a very wide variety of students that we educate and we get ready for what comes next after they leave our halls, so I really appreciate it.

[02:11:07] You shared some exciting news and updates besides the presentation being very informative. I do believe it's very important, the work that you are doing, Dr. Reha, the work that you're leading in your department or your office. And I'm pleased to see the expansion of high quality work-based learning in so many different areas.

[02:11:26] At least I'm trying to still kind of wrap my head around all the different sites and how they differ one from another. But I get the general idea that we are expanding and providing additional opportunities for students. and those partnerships with our schools and our community businesses are really valuable.

[02:11:42] I had no idea we had 151 different partners. So that's awesome. And I look forward to learning more about the two new sites that you mentioned. And I'm assuming you didn't specifically say it because it's not time to reveal it yet.

[02:11:58] But if it is, go ahead and say, but if not, I understand. But that's pretty exciting. Also, the number of going from 10 to 60 in just a few short years is tremendous. And I know that this is going to grow even more.

[02:12:14] So I wanted to say thank you. Did you want to respond to the one thing I said? So I'm going to give Ms. Johnson permission that we are able to release the name of one of the sites that's been confirmed for next year, so we're super excited about that. Plans for the second are underway, and it's just a matter of finalizing a couple of last details.

[02:12:34] - Yes, so very exciting for our Western group of high schools, we have established a partnership with Hilton Inn and Grand Manor Banquet Hall over in Manassas. So that will be our second explore site for this upcoming school year. - Wow, that's great.

[02:12:49] That's exciting. - And as Dr. mentioned, we continue to work for the Eastern end of the county. - I appreciate that. I had one question if it would be all right for me to ask. You mentioned in the reading supports issue, I think it was early on, maybe slide four.

[02:13:07] And I know this is something that sometimes comes to me as a board member for families with students who are really struggling. Do we do comprehensive, in our special ed variety of things that we do, do we do the comprehensive screenings to see if there may be some dysgraphia, dyslexia?

[02:13:26] I know there are other terms as well. Or do we outsource that to specialists? And then how closely do we work with the families to make sure they get the diagnosis they need and then the reading specialists understand what the diagnosis is because that's something that I do interact with community members on a regular, I assume to be quite regular, just concerns about reading, like maybe there's something more going on here besides just maybe a little bit of difficulty.

[02:13:57] - So the answer to your question is yes to everything that you mentioned. So we do have ability through really our core curriculum to be identifying students who are struggling. So an example is in our VALS assessment that's utilized this year that all students in our younger grade levels participate in.

[02:14:13] There's a specific measure that might flag the rapid automatic naming if a student is really struggling with reading difficulty at that basic phoneme level. From there, a school might then take a student through the child find process where they would be referred to be evaluated by our staff, but that would be a more comprehensive diagnostic look through psychoeducational assessments, which would

ultimately then move into an eligibility process for consideration of the student being eligible for a student with a specific reading disability.

[02:14:48] I will just, it might be helpful just for some of the questions that some may have. We approach the look at reading disabilities from an educational perspective. So we would not diagnose something that is a medical diagnosis and exists in the DSM, such as dyslexia, but what we're looking for is characteristics of students who are struggling and then being able to pair with those difficulties, the appropriate instructional match and remedy.

[02:15:15] - Thank you, that's really helpful. And I appreciate that explanation. I don't have any other comments except just to say great work and thank you. And thanks for helping us be more educated on the topic so that we can speak with community members at a higher level as we seek to explain what we're doing here in Prince William County Schools.

[02:15:34] Thank you. - Mr. Blake, you didn't have any. - No, I just, well, thank you for that presentation and just all the work you guys are doing and just to secure and make sure that some of our most vulnerable learners get the same opportunities and access to a thriving future.

[02:15:59] So thank you. - Okay, thank you guys very much. Truly appreciate it.

[02:16:18] Okay, next up, 1801, sale of surplus property. We're now moving, I need a motion. - I move that the school board adopt a resolution determining that the school board has no use for 3.06 acres of land adjacent to Gainesville Middle School and declaring the land to be surplus property.

[02:16:49] - I have a second. - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - I second. - Okay, so to be clear the way this motion is written, a no vote means that the school division will keep the property. Is that correct, Mr. Anderson?

[02:17:04] A no vote means the school division will retain the property because the school division believes we still have a use for the property, correct? - Correct. - Okay, so everyone should be clear that that's what a no vote means. Okay, discussion, Ms. Wall.

[02:17:21] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I visited and observed the land in question in item 18.01. I viewed the perimeter. I walked across the crosswalk between Gainesville High School and Gainesville Middle School and then the lighted walkway, I walked across the field toward the baseball diamond and looked toward the high school from that direction, walked along the path along all of the trees and stood on the field and viewed the trees and ground cover as viewed from the middle school property looking back toward the high school and spent time just observing the environment.

[02:17:57] It's very clear in my mind that this property is not surplus. And for one, the path is a very valuable addition approachability for the two schools and the fields and the parking lots of the schools. It's a sizable path with lighting for when it's a little dark but games always happen after school and that path connects those two schools and it provides a distinct and desirable way to approach the high school from nearby neighborhoods out of the way of traffic. There's a lot of traffic that comes in and out of Gainesville High School using the road that's by the fitness center but this crosswalk is further away from that and out of the way of

[02:18:34] traffic it's very desirable location and students are using it the path is also used for access to the parking lot that's available on the high school side when athletic events are occurring on those ball fields

on the middle school property so people are parking in the high school and then they're walking across this property to the baseball diamonds and the fields on the middle school site in addition I'm aware that Prince William County Schools facility staff are using that path to access the middle school campus for property maintenance um second broad reason is the view shed there is is significant even though it's it was late winter when i well i guess it was late february um when i walked the site

[02:19:15] the trees were still providing a significant amount of view shed and privacy for the school properties um and i have no doubt that as the trees fill in for spring and summer and fall there will be a lot of natural beautiful scenery between these two properties that enhances the experience for the students on our campuses that connect these high school and middle school properties. So for all of these reasons my clear conclusion is this property does have school use and it is not surplus property. Ms. Zargarpur. I had spoken with Ms. Wall when she was planning

[02:19:54] to make the trip over there so we had talked a little bit and she also you left this one out so I thought I'd just add it that the substation that you can see through the trees right now it's it gets a screen presumably when the when the foliage comes out and that that provides not just a visual buffer but it's you know aesthetically pleasing as well but she had talked about how it was pretty clear that this pathway was something that was well used it looked like it provided access

[02:20:30] between those two fields really well and as somebody at some point had told me there was it helped increase in availability for parking for games as well is there a parking lot that's nearby that people would park and then they just walk over to a field yeah so so it sounds like it's got a lot of use already so thank you for your day there okay great yeah Ms. Wall I also want to add because of the way Virginia's environment is I think the property also It also provides a place for water to collect, kind of some of the environmental aspects

[02:21:09] of water drainage and places for water to run off, which is also an important aspect to have some of that natural growth of bushes and trees and other things. It's important for Virginia's climate and ecosystem to not cut down all the trees.

[02:21:27] Okay. Please vote. And remember, the no vote is to not sell the property, a yes vote is to sell the property.

[02:21:52] is seven no one abstained judenic motion failed okay uh moving on to board matters um where did we start last week last week we started with lisa this week we'll start mr wilk mr wilk what we yeah we want it to fail i kind of said it three times may it always fail um i'll be brief tonight uh i do want to mention a statement i guess you know a previous speaker two weeks ago um brought up

[02:22:27] and challenged the board to make their um viewpoints known on various topics and although you know this one is not necessarily the most important one at the moment given all the fluidity of what's happening daily in our country it still i believe is germane to the conversation with students and it goes to i strongly oppose the rescission of the dh dhs memo that protected sensitive areas like churches and most importantly k-12 schools from immigration enforcement every child deserves to learn in a safe welcoming environment without fear as a school board member

[02:23:03] i take my responsibility seriously to ensure our 90 000 students receive a high quality education and feel secure in our schools removing these protections creates fear that disrupts learning and prevents children from assessing the education they deserve no student should be too afraid to to attend school.

[02:23:22] I do fully support law enforcement when urgent action is needed, such as threats of harm, gang violence, or national security risk. But broad enforcement near schools only harms students and families. Schools should be places for learning, not fear.

[02:23:38] I want parents to know that I will always stand up for every student's rights and privacy following state and federal laws. Our schools must remain safe spaces where all children can learn, grow, and dream without fear. Thank you.

[02:23:56] - Mr. Nennick. - Thank you, Mr. Blake. - You're welcome. - I had the privilege of going to Cedar Point last week and watching Mrs. LaFleur, I hope I said that right, put, and her students put on an amazing show of Newsies.

[02:24:18] Elementary school level plays are not always like productions, but this was like a production. And I was very excited. I even brought my own little candy stash and ate candy and watched the kids, and it was extremely impressive.

[02:24:35] What was even more impressive to me were the middle school theater teachers there scouting for their productions for the next year. So when we say our teachers are dedicated, we mean it. They were actually there scouting their talent for next year, which I loved.

[02:24:50] They just always put on a great show. And what I love even more is how many parents are involved in helping with the show, makeup, costumes. I mean, these, I was so, so, so impressed. I also was able to watch Marsteller's Seussicle, also extremely impressive.

[02:25:12] I, these kids just love every moment that they're doing this. And when it's over, they're kind of sad because they've spent months and months doing this every night. But it was really wonderful to watch and see. And, of course, I got to watch my little guy perform, and he did a solo and just did a fantastic job.

[02:25:29] He never sings for us at home, but getting to see him sing there was just really awesome. So kudos, Mr. Miles. I also went to Gainesville High School's Advisory Council meeting. They invite or have invited me the last couple of years. We got to talk about the budget and the different things that are happening at Gainesville High School.

[02:25:47] Again, those parents just love their school and love that community. And I'm just glad that we're able to talk about any concerns regarding traffic or anything like that and talk about the things that we're doing to mitigate that. I also got to watch my very first lacrosse game.

[02:26:03] I don't even know what that is. It was very intriguing. There's a lot that happens. It was just a big deal. So we got to watch that. And I'm learning a lot about lacrosse, so it's fun. And then I'd also just like to end, even though my kids never watch these meetings, and say happy 19th birthday to my oldest son today.

[02:26:25] Sorry. Thank you, Mr. Jesse. Go ahead. Thank you, Mr. Blake. This has been a busy week for me, and it's been dominated by robotics and drones and competitions.

[02:26:42] Okay, you know, you can go to a football game, and you spend two, three hours there. You go to robotics, and particularly things, it's Saturday morning, starts around nine, doesn't end until about 5.30, 6 o'clock. Saturday, well, Saturday is one thing, but the competition goes on to Sunday.

[02:27:02] and so you're there from Sunday morning that those kids and those coaches and the parents it wears you out but it's really really a lot of fun learning the difference between a different type of robotics

and drones is very confusing the competition it's just something but I have said before Lake Ridge Middle school is really tearing it up and then i have to remember it's a drone team that's really tearing it up so for example i think the picture you were gonna they're gonna put a picture up on

[02:27:41] on the screen for you i hope uh there you go every one of these kids there are six teams all six teams are going to the state competition in West Virginia in the end of May.

[02:28:04] Not one team, not two teams, but all six teams. They, that's the drone team here. Mrs. Heather Odom is a coach. She does a wonderful job. Their trophy place is so packed now with awards from the robotics team and the drone team.

[02:28:26] to have their own separate section for them. It's just wonderful to see that and it's just very exciting. The most exciting thing, these are skills that are profitable skills going into the future that these kids are learning.

[02:28:46] And it starts in elementary schools. So it's just amazing. But I want to thank everybody. and this has been a good meeting. Again, I'm really excited about the budget and I just hope that we continue with all the good things that we're doing.

[02:29:05] Thank you. - Ms. Wall. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. This past month has been full of exciting events for families across the Gainesville District and beyond. I've had the pleasure of attending some wonderful school activities.

[02:29:23] I've been really, really busy this last month where I've seen your students engaged and thriving. And some highlights include Gravely Elementary School's Literacy Night, which had a winter theme, which was very fun. Mullen Elementary's Multicultural Night, which was amazing.

[02:29:40] The Orchestra Concert at Reagan, which was a pyramid concert, so the elementary school kids that feed into Reagan were there. Battlefield High School's Orchestra Assessment, they earned all ones. They had a superior rating, so congratulations to Battlefield Orchestra. Bull Run had their first ever, their inaugural Multicultural Night, and it was a huge success.

[02:29:59] Sinclair Elementary had a black history celebration, which was a riot. It was so much fun. I was a gravely guest reader at their read-a-thon and I read Harry Potter, the first book, and the kids loved it. We had a science engagement night at Unity Braxton led by the kids themselves with their own independent science research and their explanations. There was the PWCS Arts festival for elementary schools i loved that it was amazing job everybody who worked on that i also have done done a deep dive into robotics the vex middle school qualifier the vex robotic

[02:30:36] states and the vex robotics sorry states also for high school and middle school there were two different events uh the sea perch underwater robotics at colgan and the roaring robotics rumble drone event at unity reed and cedar points musical newsies also i have been going far and wide across the division.

[02:30:55] Your students continue to amaze me with their talent, dedication, and hard work. And as we enter the final stretch of the school year, which is gonna be filled with testing, final projects, college scholarship applications, all the post-graduation planning, I encourage you to cherish these moments with your children.

[02:31:12] Wishing, I am wishing everyone the best for a strong and successful final quarter for the 2025 school year. I do appreciate hearing from community members on matters that are of greatest importance to them. I am working to help resolve some of the concerns that have been shared with me most recently.

[02:31:29] I do appreciate your support and confidence as I work to help find solutions. One thing that I can very much appreciate is how important it is for families to have outstanding teachers who teach effectively, diligently, and communicate with students and their families regularly.

[02:31:44] Nothing is more important to our families than excellent teachers when it comes to their children's education. I'm gonna conclude by some final thoughts on perseverance and fearless courage from a Shakespeare measure for measure our doubts are traitors and make us lose the good we oft might win by fearing to attempt Nelson Mandela said it's always seems impossible until it's done and a Japanese proverb is fall seven times stand up eight I hope that we all continue to stand up in every opportunity and I leave you with that good night

[02:32:17] Ms. Williams thank you Mr. Chairman as our um month of March meetings here comes to to close and um march is women's history month i just would like to make special note to some of the wonderful things that we have in our lives because of women things like wi-fi gps bluetooth windshield wipers home security systems kevlar telecommunications aquariums treatments for malaria automatic dishwashers computer programming coffee filters space station powder liquid power

[02:32:53] excuse me liquid paper paper bags foot pedestal trash cans monopoly signal flares circular saws retractable dog leashes invisible glass computers chocolate chip cookies and of course all of us here came from a woman and those are just a few highlights of some interesting things that I some of them I knew some of them I didn't but I wanted to take the opportunity to share also like to just recognize a few women that we don't often talk about and I would I encourage you to go look these women up on your own.

[02:33:26] Women like Christine Jorgensen, Althea Garrison, Gwendolyn Ann Smith, State Senator Danica Roam, Kim Koko Awamoto, Amanda Simpson, Stacey Lawton, Nellie Bly, Henrietta Lacks, Grace Hopper, Heidi Lamar, and Margaret the Human Calculator Hamilton, just to name a few.

[02:33:47] There are so many amazing women. There's just not enough time to celebrate them all. would also like to thank uh our vice chair uh tracy blake for attending the woodbridge women's club 60th anniversary the woodbridge women's club has been instrumental in providing community service out and about the woodbridge and aqua district as well as generally in the community but as well as within our schools they have in the 60 years of existence here given over a hundred thousand dollars of scholarships to our students in the community I am off by 100% biasly proud my mother is the current president and under her

[02:34:25] leadership the scholarships have gone not only for academic but for also CTE students as well so I'm extremely proud of that I'd like to remind everyone that we have I think it's open registration now for Prince William County Schools summer camps there are scholarships available for those camps if you go in and click in the link and another reminder is it is the end of well the 27th will be the end of the third marking period please everyone make sure you check your grades talk to your teachers in case you need to boost grades all of the necessary things that come at the end of a grading quarter don't panic reach out ask for help and see if maybe someone else in your in your peer group

[02:35:05] may need help as well and lastly I would just like to celebrate Fred Lynn's PTSO Chair, Ms. Myrna. She held the first ever bingo night at Fred Lynn and was able to get sponsored by not only by not sponsorships by not only Urban Air but Foodline as well. It was an amazing event and with that I will come to a close. Thank you. Ms. Zargarpur. Thank you. Got to go to the VEX middle school state competition on saturday and i got to see teams from the parkside and

[02:35:42] benton and i ran into some other kids that were on some private teams in the county and thought it was really neat that they decided to kind of collaborate amongst themselves because they were so interested uh in robotics and i went to bennett elementary's international night they also had a book fair so i picked up a couple of uh books for my grandsons as their birthdays are coming up um the highlight of my my week though was absolutely the the best part on saturday going to richmond

[02:36:16] to watch the osborne park girls basketball win the state championship beating manchester 60 to 48 This was their sixth straight season of going to the championships, and they finally bring the trophy home. And this is the first time in the entire history of the school that the girls' basketball has done that.

[02:36:37] Head coach Chrissy Kelly, I think she builds the quality of the team. I've been watching them since I've been on this board. And, of course, there's girls who've matriculated through our school system so that they're no longer on the team, they created the basis for the team that exists today and there was a quote in the prince william times by coach kelly and it says we just focused on our identity and that's defense osborne park head coach chrissy kelly said we are a unit a single unit that defends one basketball we're

[02:37:14] going to have breakdowns we're going to get scored on we're going to have lapses but at the end of the day it's got to be 32 minutes of trusting that identity trusting ourselves defensively kelly added that's just what this group is all about they're just phenomenal and i truly believe you can't be phenomenal without the support of great coaches a great school great families who are making sure the athletes get to the the practices and are fed and taken care of and i will leave you this evening with this is unusual for me by the way sports quotes but i i love um you just can't beat the

[02:37:50] person who never gets up by babe ruth champions keep playing until they get it right by billy gene king and it's not whether you get knocked down it's whether you get up by vince lombardi have a great week mr blake thank you mr chairman first i'd like to just start by um just a moment of silence for howard glowson senior he was a one of the assistant principals at garfield high

[02:38:20] school he just passed away so i'd just like to say a moment of silence and um okay sorry i've I've had the pleasure of attending several community events that highlight our district's ongoing commitment to student success and engagement.

[02:38:40] At Neopsville Elementary, I participated in a lively bingo night that brought the community together. It was a fantastic opportunity to interact with families, educators, and community members and see firsthand the positive relationships that are being fostered in our schools.

[02:38:56] At Penn Elementary, I had the privilege of attending both the Advisory Council meeting and the PTO meeting and I was particularly impressed with how well the PTO functions at Penn their efforts are a model for all of us setting standards for the community involvement and support for our schools they probably should be have best practices as a PTO I'm just saying and then additionally I had an honor of

joining the read across America event at King Elementary School I got to read to a pre-k class for breakfast. It was truly an honor to see

[02:39:34] the students so engaged in learning. And the teacher also told me that that was the quietest that her breakfast had ever been in nine years of teaching. So I was humbled by that too. So you know if you need me to come read in your classroom I'm here for you. And I also too want to just take a moment to just shout out to Osborne Park girls basketball team on their first state championship. That was a big deal. And as always, I want to be responsive to the concerns raised by members of the community. And I just

[02:40:09] want to ensure everyone that we are fully committed to following all federal and state laws. Prince William County Schools has always operated in compliance with the legal framework that governs our schools, ensuring that we provide a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for every student. While we welcome open discussion, let me be clear that our practices align with the laws in place to protect all students and ensure their educational opportunities are secure and equitable. In closing, I'd like to leave you with this quote by Winston Churchill that I find

[02:40:45] particularly relevant in today's climate. The price of greatness is responsibility. We all share in this responsibility, whether we are educators, administrators, parents, or community members, And it is our duty to safeguard with the integrity of our schools.

[02:41:03] Let us continue working together to ensure that our policies reflect the values of fairness, tradition, and the well-being of every child. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Blake. Well, wonderful. Let me start off by saying congratulations to Osborne Park High School girls, state 6A state champions.

[02:41:22] What a fantastic run they had this year. and it was an incredible game on Saturday and I'm so glad for them and congratulations and we'll be recognizing them here in one of the upcoming meetings. You know I said it during the budget discussion are you know oftentimes I said it's the budget's a reflection of your values and I think this budget truly reflects the values of this board who's committed to the student achievement salaries and safety of our students and that safety includes mental health that includes having an open and welcoming environment for all students regardless of who they are where

[02:42:02] they come from you know i've pointed out that 20 000 students or so maybe um you know are born overseas in this division we have one of the most diverse counties in america 10th most diverse our Our division reflects that diversity in every color, shade, and variety here in our county.

[02:42:22] And I'm thrilled to oversee a school division so diverse and a division, as you heard from many folks this evening, so welcoming, and we want to keep it that way. And it is our commitment to doing so and making sure here in our county, we do what we've always said we're going to do, what's reflected in our strategic plan, regardless of who's sitting in Washington, D.C. or frankly who's sitting in Richmond. We will continue to do the work that this community has asked us to do and the work that has gone into our strategic plan and the work that we hear daily from our folks. So with that I will adjourn the meeting. You guys all have a great night.



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