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Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Date	Wednesday, May 21, 2025
Place	Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length	2h 45m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCQdNdmvQ_Q
- 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 2026-10-29. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:02] - I would like to call this meeting of the Prince William County School Board to order. Due to the unexpected technical issues with our online board meetings platform, board members will vote tonight by a show of hand and the clerk of the school board will record the votes.

[00:00:21] A motion is now in order for the approval of the meeting agenda. - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zagrapoor. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the meeting agenda. - Do I have a second? Mr. Jesse seconds.

[00:00:36] Any discussion? Please vote. - By hand. - Five yes, two not present at vote, Williams, Wall, one absent, Lateef, motion passed. - Moving on to a motion to enter closed session.

[00:00:52] A motion is in order, Ms. Zargarpur. - Mr. Chairman, I move that pursuant to the 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 2.2-3711A1.

[00:01:18] Two, to discuss and consult with legal counsel regarding the requests for religious exemptions pertaining to specific students under Virginia code section 2.2-3711A, section 2.2-3711A2 and eight. 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, seven and eight, code 2.2-3711A, 29.

[00:01:51] And four, to discuss and receive briefings by staff members related to the security of school facilities, the safety of persons using such facilities, and actions taken to respond to such matters where discussion in an open meeting would jeopardize the security of such facilities pursuant to Virginia code section 2.2-3711A, 19.

[00:02:10] - Thank you, Ms. Agripport, do I have a second? - Mr. Jessie seconds, any discussion? Please vote by hand. - The vote is five yes, two absent, two not present at vote, Williams-Wall, one absent Lateef, motion passed.

[00:02:26] - All right, the Prince William County School Board will now enter closed session

[00:02:29] and return to open session in one hour.

[00:03:33] Prince William County School Board is now returning to open session from closed session. The motion is in order for 8.01 closed session verification, Vice Chair.

[00:03:52] - I move that pursuant to Virginia code 2.2-3712, the closed session of the Prince William County School Board meeting of May 21st, 2025, be certified by adopting the following resolution. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Prince William County School Board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge, one, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements were discussed in the closed meeting to which the certification resolution applies, and two, only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed session meeting were heard and discussed or considered by the school board.

[00:04:25] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Agaraport seconds. - I second. - Thank you, any discussion? Please vote by hand.

[00:04:44] - The vote is seven yes, one absent. Lateef, motion passed. - Moving on to the closed session action items. A motion is in order for 9.01. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the appointments and releases of specific employees as presented in closed session.

[00:05:04] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Agaraport seconds. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote. - Vote is seven yes, one abstinent vote. Lateef, motion passed. - Thank you. Moving on to closed session, action item, a motion is in order for 9.02.

[00:05:26] - Thank you. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the request for religious exemption from compulsory school attendance for case number RE24-11. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zagafor. - Second. - Any discussion?

[00:05:42] Please vote. - Vote is seven yes, one abstinent vote. Lateef, motion passed. - All right, thank you. Moving on to the Pledge of Allegiance. I'd like to invite Ms. Williams to lead us in the pledge.

[00:06:19] Thank you. Moving on to Thriving Futures Focus. Good evening. Thriving Futures Focus is an opportunity to highlight the exemplary work being accomplished in our schools, fulfilling our vision that 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.

[00:06:50] 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.

[00:07:11] Tonight, the school board will recognize four awards that highlight the quality and care of our PWCS staff and schools. We will begin with Mr. Denik of the Brentsville District for the first two recognitions.

[00:07:27] - Thank you, Mr. Blake. The Brentsville District would like to first congratulate Patriot High School's Amy Dignan for receiving the 2025 Teacher of Excellence Award from the Southeast Region American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association.

[00:07:43] This award is given for outstanding teaching and service to driver and traffic safety education. A vital part of learning for our inexperienced drivers is that this knowledge not only teaches our students proper driving etiquette, but also compassion for those drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians who share the road and sidewalks.

[00:08:02] As some of you may remember, Ms. Dignan was also named Virginia Association of Driver Education and Traffic Safety In-Car Teacher of the Year in 2024. Ms. Dignan is accomplished here, Oh, sorry, accompanied here tonight by Patriot High School's assistant principal, Chris Brown.

[00:08:21] At this time, I would like to invite Ms. Dignan to share a few words. - Good evening, esteemed school board members and superintendent of the schools, Dr. McDade. Thank you so much for this opportunity to be recognized. I am incredibly honored to receive the Southeast Region ATSTIA Teacher of Excellence Award.

[00:08:41] This recognition means so much to me, and I'm grateful to be a part of a school division that values driver education and traffic safety. I always had a passion for helping teen drivers build the skills and confidence that they need to stay safe on our roads.

[00:08:57] It's more than just teaching the rules of the road, it's about shaping responsible decision makers and protecting lives. Thank you to our superintendent, school board, and leadership for your continued support. And to my colleagues and students, thank you for inspiring me every day with your dedication and drive.

[00:09:15] This award is a reflection of the work that we do together to make our community stronger and safer, thank you. - Congratulations, your work has made the Brentsville District immensely proud and Prince William County roads and walkways safer.

[00:09:36] On behalf of the Brentsville District, I would also like to recognize Buckland Mills Elementary School Student Advisory Council for being awarded the 2025 American Student Council Association Student Council Schools of Excellence Award.

[00:09:51] The award sponsored by the National Association of elementary school principals, honors the exemplary elementary and middle level schools and their student councils for their outstanding commitment to the four pillars of ASCA, community service, student leadership, citizenship, and school spirit.

[00:10:11] Buckland Mills is represented tonight by Principal Menaxi Odedra, Instructional Technology Coach Laura Shallow, and fourth grade teacher Courtney Warnell. At this time, I invite Principal Odedra to introduce the students here and to share a few words this award. Okay so I am George Murphy and I'm the president of the Student Council and this is Ian Colton the vice president and this is Emily the secretary and Baron Ogre the reporter is not here today. This is our school principal Mr. Mrs. Odedra and this is our teacher advisor Mrs. Warnell and

[00:10:50] Mrs. Shallow who is not here today. The purpose of our group is to help the community and our school to become a better place for students and adults through community service and projects and creating school spirit. Our three main projects that we have worked on this year were the Animal Drive, the Canned Food Drive, and the Coat Drive.

[00:11:10] In the Canned Food Drive, we donated 696 pounds of food, of canned food, to the Haymarket Food Pantry just before Thanksgiving, so that our community would be able to enjoy the holidays. In the Coat Drive, we donated 180 coats plus other warm accessories to the House of Mercy during the cold winter season.

[00:11:31] In the animal drive, we donated cat food and littered for the cat's sake, which is a non-profit cat rescue and dog food to the Fauquier SPCA. Guess what? Our school won an award called the ASCA American School Council Association Award and we won it because of our community service, our leadership, the only school spirit and citizenship.

[00:11:55] We are so proud to be given this award as we're the only school in the entire state of Virginia to win it. And we couldn't have won this done without, we couldn't have won this without our class representatives from every class from first to fifth grade who led our weekly class meetings to hear the voices of their classmates so that we could improve our building.

[00:12:16] We could work on bettering our building to include leaving our bathrooms clean and improving school spirit. We are very honored to receive this award and thank you for allowing us to share this great news with you today.

[00:12:39] - Would either of you like to speak as well? Are you okay? Okay. Congratulations, Buckland Mills, and thank you for coming. - Wonderful, wonderful. Congratulations to the Brentsville District. Ms. Wall.

[00:12:54] - Thank you, Mr. Blake. The National Merit Scholarship Program, established in 1955, is an annual academic competition that recognizes and awards college scholarships to high school students. I am honored to share that the National Merit Scholarship Corporation named Daniel Cho, a senior at Battlefield High School, as a 2025 National Merit Scholar.

[00:13:19] Daniel emerged from a pool of over 15,000 exceptional finalists and is among the 2,500 students nationwide to receive the prestigious National Merit $2,500 scholarship. While Daniel could not be with us here tonight, we do want him and our community to know how proud we are of his accomplishment.

[00:13:48] - Thank you, Ms. Wall, and congratulations to Daniel. Turning to our next recognition, the Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals, or VAESP, is a professional organization serving elementary and middle school principals and other educational leaders throughout Virginia.

[00:14:07] The organization serves as an advocate for excellence in education, promotes and maintains professional standards and serves in local communities. To elevate future academic achievement, this year the VAESP has selected one of our principals as the recipient of the 2025 Distinguished Principal Award for Virginia.

[00:14:31] And that recipient is in the Occoquan District. Mr. Jesse, please tell us about our recipient. - The Occoquan District proudly congratulates Carrie Dell Elementary Principal Elisa Zafiro I'm being the recipient of the Virginia Elementary School Principal 2025 Distinguished Principal Awards for Virginia.

[00:14:56] The award honors principals who excel in instruction, student achievement, character, and creating a positive environment for the learning community. Mrs. Safiro has been the principal at Caridale since 2018.

[00:15:12] Under her leadership, Caridale has many awards, including the designation as a national Title I distinguished school and the 2024 Virginia Highest Achieving Exemperer School Award.

[00:15:31] Carydale is also the only school in Virginia and one of seven in the United States to receive the Visible Learning Plus School Award. Recognizing schools that encourage students to take charge of their learning, using visible learning principles.

[00:15:49] I want to invite Ms. Safero to share a few words about your awards and I need to come to your school to learn how to say this stuff properly. - Thank you so much. Thank you as school board vice chairman, Mr. Blake, school members and Dr. McDade for the opportunity to be here this evening.

[00:16:12] I am humbled and honored that I have been named this year's recipient of the National Distinguished Principals Award for Virginia. by the National Association of Elementary School Principals. This recognition is not just a personal achievement, it is a celebration of the incredible work we have accomplished together as a school.

[00:16:32] As I reflect on my 20 years in education, this honor stands out as a defining moment. It brings me immense pride to serve as the principal of our school, leading a community that has created a nurturing and inspiring environment for our children to learn and thrive.

[00:16:51] Our collective commitment to fostering a strong sense of belonging and providing an equitable education for all has made a profound impact on students and their families. I deeply value the support, teamwork, and dedication of our teachers and staff and how they demonstrate that every day.

[00:17:12] It is through our shared passion and efforts that we have built a welcoming environment where every child can succeed. I thank them for their hard work and for being a part of this essential journey. Together, we continue to make a difference in the lives of our students.

[00:17:31] While my leadership and vision have guided Kerrydale toward excellence in education, this achievement is not mine alone. It is the result of the unwavering belief in my leadership and support from our amazing school community, colleagues, friends, family, and Dr. McDade.

[00:17:52] Their trust in my leadership has fueled our collective success, allowing us to bring my vision to life and to create an environment where students flourish and thrive. I look forward to heading to DC and the White House, proudly representing Prince William County Public Schools, NAESP, VAESP, and elementary principals everywhere, advocating for the amazing work

[00:18:20] leaders do for kids every day. - Congratulations, Principal LaFerro.

[00:18:43] It is now my pleasure to recognize the next award winner. The Neabsco District would like to recognize Neabsco Elementary School Counselor, School School Counselor, Lydia Larimore, for being selected as the 2025 Virginia School Counselor Association's Elementary School Counselor of the Year.

[00:19:04] This honor recognizes the outstanding and exemplary work of Ms. Larimore and the life-changing work and dedication to counseling students, families, and staff in PWCS. As you may recall, Ms. Larimore has also earned the Virginia Department of Education's 2024 Difference Maker Award.

[00:19:28] And she was honored as the PWCS Champion for Children in 2024 for her innovative STARS Support STARS program, which had decreased chronic absenteeism by 36% at Neabsco Elementary School.

[00:19:44] We recently learned that the Virginia School Counselors Association has selected Ms. Larrymore application to move forward for consideration at the national level for the American School Counselor Association National School Counselor of the Year.

[00:20:00] Congratulations. We know you will. Yes, yes, yes. We know you will represent PWCS very well on the national stage. Neabsco is represented tonight by Principal Brooke Lavecki and Lydia Larimore.

[00:20:18] I wish to invite Ms. Larimore to share a few words on this accomplishment. - Yeah, she don't like that. - Oh, thank you for the warm welcome. Good evening, Dr. McDade, Dr. Flanard, Ms. Worley, Mr. Blake, and the members of the Prince William County School Board.

[00:20:35] I am honored to stand before you as the Virginia Elementary School Counselor of the Year, a recognition made even more meaningful by the VSE committee's nomination for the ASCA School Counselor of the Year Award. This journey has been shaped by many who encouraged, inspired, and prayed over me.

[00:20:50] I started my career as a school counselor just four and a half years ago, driven by a deep desire to serve students during one of the most challenging times in our history. But obstacles don't define us. They help us grow, just like how a sea pushes through with the dirt to become a strong and beautiful tree.

[00:21:06] At Neabsco Elementary, we believe in empowering our students to thrive, not just to survive. When faced with ongoing chronic absenteeism and possible accreditation deferment, I drew on personal experiences and created the Star Supporting Stars peer mentorship program where 77 fifth grade students embraced a simple yet powerful idea, checking in with younger peers.

[00:21:28] The result, it was 36% in five weeks, but by the end of the year, it was 44% reduction in chronic absenteeism and a ripple effect of achievements and success that garnered attention even beyond Virginia. This recognition therefore belongs to all of us.

[00:21:44] NAPS's admin team, Mrs. Lebecky, Ms. Carington, Ms. Cunningham, my creative partners, Larisha, Diana, Magda, Alison Scott, Ms. Black, Ms. B, who's also here tonight, and all the dedicated teachers and staff, families and community members committed to student growth. You are rock stars.

[00:22:00] To the incredible student services and college and career support staff at the KLC, Denise Huebner, Becca Schlatter, Annie Henry, Lisa James, Brianna, Alyssa, and Nate, Annette, your unwavering support fuels this work. To my husband Maddie and our boys Ethan and Luke, thank you for your love and understanding of the time and energy that I pour into my work, coming home late even. I love you very much and to my students, you inspire me every day with your resilience, empathy, and growth.

[00:22:27] Together we lead, we listen, encourage, adapt to your unique learning styles to develop an inclusive, supportive learning environment where every student can shine. NAPSCO stars we lead together. Prince William County School Board, thank you again for having me here tonight and for leading with us.

[00:22:45] Thank you. - Thank you, thank you Ms. Laramore, for all you do for our students and for our families. And before asking Dr. McDade to congratulate, to congratulate, I want to ask the families of our honorees to stand for applause.

[00:23:06] Thank you. Yeah, go ahead and stand up so we can recognize you. There we go, there we go. Okay, I now invite Superintendent Dr. LaTanya D. McDade to share a few words.

[00:23:25] - Thank you, Mr. Blake. Well, I just wanna take a few moments to congratulate each of our honorees here tonight because the recognitions that were shared here this evening really reflect the deep commitment of our PWCS staff and students to excellence, innovation, and service, which are all hallmarks of creating a thriving educational community.

[00:23:46] I'll start with Ms. Digman. Congratulations times two for your recognition as the 2025 teacher of excellence in driver and traffic safety education, which underscores the vital role that you as one of our educators plays in preparing students not only for academic success, but for real world responsibility and care for others.

[00:24:08] Thank you so much for your continued commitment to our students and their success. I'm so thrilled to see Buckland Mills here and our students. What a wonderful speaker from Buckland Mills. Can we give him another round of applause?

[00:24:23] Our student council president, you did an amazing job. I wanna thank each of you for all the work that you're doing leading in your school community and earning the ASCA School of Excellence Award, which demonstrates how we cultivate student leadership, community service, and citizenship from an early age, directly supporting our vision for graduates.

[00:24:42] We say in our vision that we want students to not only graduate, but to be able to create a thriving future for themselves and their community. And I believe that at Buckland Mills, our students are a shining example of that vision. I am so incredibly proud of Principal Elisa Farrow from Kerrydale, year over year, you continue to show what true leadership really is and the impact that can be made in the lives of all students.

[00:25:07] Your distinction as the 2025 VAESP distinguished principal just reaffirms that strong school leadership really does drive student achievement and a positive climate and culture, which are all represented at Kerrydale. So congratulations to you. I tell you every time that we speak how proud I am of you and your leadership.

[00:25:26] Keep shining and making PWCS proud. To Miss Larry Moore, actually was just at Neabsco and you are absolutely right. Everything that you said about Neabsco school community is true year over year. Your STARS support, STARS program, and I know it's been fully supported by the staff.

[00:25:45] It's a powerful example of how PWCF staff lead with heart to remove barriers and ensure that every child thrives. And I wanna thank you for believing in every single student at Neabsco and for all of the support of the staff at Neabsco for you to be able to receive this honor.

[00:26:03] And then finally, I know that Daniel Cho couldn't be here tonight, but we are immensely proud of his accomplishment as a National Merit Scholar, which is a huge deal for a student to become a National Merit Scholar. So we're so proud and he represents all of PWCS.

[00:26:19] It's an incredible honor and I look forward to witnessing everything that Daniel will accomplish in the future because his future is certainly bright. To all of our families, staff, and school leaders here tonight, I just wanna thank you for not just being here to celebrate our honorees, but for your continued support in making sure that PWCS continues to launch a thriving future for every student every day.

[00:26:40] So once again, to all of our honorees, congratulations. We are PWCS proud. - Thank you, Dr. McVade. At this time, I invite all our honorees to come forward for a group photo with the school board and receive a token of our appreciation.

[00:27:05] We'll begin with Amy Dignette.

[00:32:30] Thank you all for being here tonight. This concludes our Thriving Futures Focus recognition. Now moving on to 12.01, adoption of the consent agenda.

[00:32:48] - 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. - Ms. Zagaford. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote. We're still voting by hand.

[00:33:05] We're voting by hand. - Vote is seven yes, one absent. Lateef, motion passed. - Now we are moving on to 13.01, approval of acknowledgements and recognitions.

[00:33:25] Vice Chair. - Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approves the adoption of the acknowledgements and recognitions as recommended. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - A second. - Any discussion? - Yes. - Yes. - I just wanna say we are recognizing Caribbean American Heritage Month, LGBTQ Pride Month.

[00:33:45] I'm sure that's what you wanted to mention. National Immigrant Heritage Month and 2025 Internal Audit Awareness Month. That's clearly the most interesting one yet. - Ms. Williams. - Thank you. As Ms. Zargarpur said, one of the things I did wanna highlight was LGBTQ+ Pride Month.

[00:34:05] I think now even more is an important time to remind our school community, meaning our students and our staff, that we continue to be supportive and there has been no changes from us as to how important it is to recognize difference and how valuable a contribution you make to our school community, be it student or staff.

[00:34:25] Thank you. - Ms. Waugh. - I wanted to highlight internal audit awareness month. I'm gonna make some comments on that later when I give a committee update, but I just wanna thank our office of internal audit for all they do.

[00:34:42] I will make it, okay, so let me get my notes, sorry, I have some notes on this, so I want to make sure I don't, okay, I will give the committee update in June, I'm sure you're all dying to hear it, but I will say that internal audit is a very important function

[00:35:17] of local government, and it doesn't get a lot of attention, but it gets a designation as May of May as Internal Audit Awareness Month. It's a vital part of strengthening organizations and protecting

stakeholders. And it is key to helping identify and manage an organization's risks and ensuring policies, procedures, and controls are in place and working appropriately.

[00:35:40] And our auditors, we have a small office. We have two auditors in our office. They are independent objective professionals who help us improve our operations and achieve our goals. And I believe they are, they are integral in achieving all of the commitments in the strategic plan.

[00:36:01] So I just wanna thank them for everything that they do. It really does make us a better school division. And a lot of that work, like I said, is in the background, but they do support every aspect of our strategic commitments. And I wanna thank them for their efforts.

[00:36:16] - Thank you, Ms. Wall. Please vote. - The vote is five yes, two abstain. Wall Tredinic, motion passed.

[00:36:33] Okay, so now we're at citizen comment time. To those citizens who have signed up in advance with the clerk may address the school board this evening when they are called to the podium. The citizen comment period for regular school board meetings is one hour and citizens may speak on agenda items or other topics germane to the operations and policies of PWCS.

[00:36:56] Please use proper decorum and manners while at the podium or you will be asked to step aside. We ask that the podium, that the audience, please be respectful to each speaker and refrain from any clapping, cheering or jeering to avoid disruption of the meetings.

[00:37:14] If you do not, the board will recess and I will ask the room to be cleared to restore public order. Tonight, we have seven citizens signed up to speak. When I call your name, please come up to the podium, state your name and address for the record.

[00:37:30] I'll call the first five people, Jessica Scherr, Gloria Jordan, Catalina Kleros, Tara Crandall, and Lily Gomez.

[00:37:57] - Good evening. I'm here tonight to talk about food insecurity and the urgent need to protect access to school meals for students in Prince William County. According to the most recent report in the DMV region, Prince William County has the second highest rate of food insecurity with 43% of households affected.

[00:38:16] Even more concerning, 40% of those households have children and more than 16,000 children are food insecure in Prince William County. Right now, Congress is considering significant cuts to SNAP and Medicaid. These programs are critical to how we determine eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals through a process called direct certification.

[00:38:38] If these cuts pass, fewer students will qualify automatically, which would directly impact our ability to feed the kids who need it most. This puts at our risk participation in the Community Eligibility Provision or CEP. So CEP allows the schools to serve free meals to all students if at least 25% of the students are directly certified.

[00:39:00] If Congress raises that threshold or if direct certification numbers drop, many of our schools will lose their CEP status. While current eligibility is locked in until 2028, changes made right now will affect future qualifications. This gives us a very limited window to act.

[00:39:17] So tonight I urge our PWCS families and community members to contact our U.S. representatives and senators and make sure that they reject cuts to SNAP Medicaid, they protect direct

certification pathways, they keep the CEP threshold at 25%, and they preserve access to free and reduced-price meals for every eligible student.

[00:39:38] I want to thank PWCS for promoting Virginia Sun Bucks, a program that provides a one-time payment of 120 dollars per eligible child to help families with summer grocery cost. Benefits are automatically loaded into family snap card or special prepaid Sun Bucks card. This is a lifeline for many families and we truly appreciate the division's efforts to raise awareness. Finally, a thank you to PWCS for continuing to offer free meals this summer through the summer food service program. Meals will be available at 35 elementary schools, five middle schools, and two high schools and are open to all children, 18 and under,

[00:40:17] at no cost or income eligibility. However, barriers still exist. USDA rules allow for meal pickup sites only in rural designated areas. And so we ask PWCS leadership to publicly reaffirm that our school meal sites are safe spaces for all families and to continue upholding the policies that build trust and keep our communities supported.

[00:40:40] Our students' access to food should never be at risk. Let's continue doing everything we can to ensure that every child in Prince William County is nourished, supported, and ready to learn. Thank you, and I look forward to speaking with you after tonight's meeting about food insecurity.

[00:40:55] Have a good night. - Thank you, Gloria Jordan. - Good evening, school board members and Dr. McDade. My name is Gloria, and my address is on file. I want to express my gratitude to our teachers, social workers, counselors, principals, and nurses for their incredible dedication to our students.

[00:41:19] A few weeks ago, the federal government announced a $1 billion cut to school mental health funding. Your ongoing commitment to maintain a nurse in every school, provide trauma-informed training for teachers, ensure access to special education, and provide mental health resources are vital to student well-being.

[00:41:40] Public money should fund public schools and the essential programs our communities rely on. Please continue to fund student mental health regardless of what the federal government does. According to the American Psychiatric Association, teachers rank gun violence, mental health, and cyber bullying among their top concerns facing students.

[00:42:01] Maintaining and expanding free mental health resources directly addresses these issues for both educators and families. However, I've experienced difficulties locating these free services in PWCS, and many other families face that same challenge with access.

[00:42:18] I urge the board to make these vital free resources more visible in schools, on our county website, and in multiple languages to better serve our diverse community. Please continue prioritizing mental health and support for our students, regardless of federal decisions.

[00:42:36] Public money belongs in public schools. I want to thank the educators at Benton Middle School who assured me they would uphold the law and do what's best for students, regardless of the federal cuts to the Department of Education. Because of their ongoing support and my daughter's own hard work, my daughter with ADHD and a learning disability was recently invited and accepted to join the Junior Honor Society.

[00:43:02] I also want to recognize the incredible professors at the Governor's School at Innovation Park. My graduating senior excelled in that environment and I am so grateful for these public specialty programs that meet the needs of diverse learners. As a young mom in my 20s raising a gifted child, I was overwhelmed.

[00:43:19] He was smarter than me in third grade. While private school built his work ethic, it couldn't meet his intellectual needs. More work does not mean stimulating or innovative learning. Thanks to the gifted programs in this county, he earned over 20 college credits, went to prom, built robots, and just got to be a kid while still being academically challenged.

[00:43:39] He's earned hundreds of thousands of dollars and will attend the University of Michigan to study aerospace engineering. You helped make that possible. PWCES sees every type of students and helps them thrive. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for keeping public funds in public school.

[00:43:56] This mama is grateful. - Thank you. Catalina Claros.

[00:44:22] - Good evening, Dr. Medade and school board members. My name is Catalina Claros and I have been giving speeches here since fourth grade. And now I'm back as a middle schooler. Being in middle school has stressed the importance of leisure time slash recess in the school day. Students in middle school are more disruptive and distracting, which can also affect other kids' learnings.

[00:44:45] But if we had a break slash recess period in the school day, kids would get their energy out. People say that's what PE is for, but PE is a required class that is also graded, and not everyone does well in PE.

[00:45:01] Some of the reasons our recess initiative has been denied are the following. P PWCS was one of the shortest school days in Virginia, limited teacher support. Principals need to allow prayer times for diverse populations.

[00:45:17] 32% of middle school students are below grade or below grade reading level. We are still fighting for recess and for PDWCS middle schoolers. Thank you for your time.

[00:45:33] - Thank you. - Tara Crandall. - Tara Crandall. lilly gomez anisa store story anisa story and my address is on file her virginia code

[00:46:13] 22.1 dash 276 0.1 defines bullying an aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm intimidate or humiliate the victim and so on my daughter experienced threats insults humiliation teasing and pushing all which are considered bullying behaviors however i was told repeatedly that what she was experiencing was not was not getting bullied another student at covington

[00:46:46] harper was violated when student a looked over the bathroom stall while students b's genitalia was exposed administration felt this incident did not need to be reported keep in mind there is no bullying prevention coordinator currently at covington pwcs has a commitment to organizational coherence however what are the checks and balances in place to eliminate not only just bias but personal opinion when disciplinary action is needed the implementation of the code of behavior

[00:47:20] should be for the most part uniformed and handled the same how is school staff being held accountable when behaviors are not being addressed appropriately. I ask that an audit be completed to determine the 64% of bullying online inquiries that were found at not bullying.

[00:47:39] I'm going to quote Mr. Wilk today that some of the worst bullying can be mental bullying. I believe in this statement. It is easy to be dismissive when there are no physical bumps and bruises, easy to belittle what many children are going through, easy to not be sympathetic and understand that bullying and cyberbullying must be addressed with more seriousness.

[00:48:03] Therefore, I do support Mr. Wilk that after, excuse me, that after innovation, the consequences should not be at a level three. When my daughter endured on May 8th is proof of this.

[00:48:21] When her hair was violently tugged twice during recess by the same student that was removed from sharing the same classroom and had been spoken to three times prior. I heard her saying recently, speak up even when your voice shakes. I will continue to do so even when it hurts and when it's exhausting.

[00:48:38] My voice shakes because I am a mother. My voice shakes because my heart is hurting, not just for my daughter, but for all children and families that are victims of bullying, for those that feel hopeless and for those that are no longer amongst us. Thank you.

[00:48:53] - Thank you. Kaitlyn Weston. - Dr. McDade and members of the school board.

[00:49:09] My name is Kaitlyn Weston and my address is on file with the clerk. PWCS must do more to protect immigrant families and students who are living under the growing threat of immigration enforcement in our communities. As the National Immigration Law Center states, the Trump administration has increased the threat of immigration enforcement in our communities.

[00:49:30] The government has also canceled the longstanding policy of limiting immigration enforcement in schools and other protected areas and replaced it with a directive that gives ICE agents unbridled power take enforcement actions in any of these areas using common sense. As a result, many immigrant students and families are living in fear of arrest, detention, separation, and deportation.

[00:49:54] While PWCS has taken some steps to safeguard vulnerable communities, these efforts are not enough. The information currently provided by PWCS is limited, difficult to access, and insufficient for families who need urgent clarity about their rights in the face of possible immigration enforcement we call on pwcs to do more families must be informed and students must feel safe while schools cannot provide legal advice they can and must share publicly available multilingual resources such as know your rights guides from trusted legal and advocacy organizations

[00:50:34] that help families understand what to do if they are approached by immigration agents 65 community members have joined us in signing the following petition we are reaching out to to urge you to take additional actions in support of immigrant students in our community.

[00:50:51] It's important that all students in our district, regardless of their immigration status, feel safe, supported, and protected. Here are additional steps you can take. One, define and mark private school areas. Anything past the visitor's side of a school front's desk to uphold Fourth Amendment rights.

[00:51:08] Two, require all guests, including law enforcement, to pass through an administrative office. Officers must present a valid judicial warrant or subpoena for review before entering the school. And three, provide Know Your Rights materials, posters, and trainings to educate immigrants, students, and families on their rights.

[00:51:27] Other districts across the country, including Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun counties, are providing general resources to their families, and we need to do the same. Please live up to your promise of protecting every student. I have a copy of the petition to share with you this evening, and I will be following up with an electronic copy for your records.

[00:51:48] Please take the time to review each petitioner's comments. Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue. - Thank you, thank you. I'd like to turn it back over to Dr. McDade for agenda item 15.01.

[00:52:07] - All right, so at the last board meeting, Mrs. Huebner presented the 2526 code of behavior. And so tonight is the night for the board to take action on this policy. We can take questions if you have any additional questions beyond the presentation questions from the last meeting.

[00:52:26] Mrs. Huebner will not be presenting anything new this evening, but is here to answer any additional questions that you might have. I do want to make note that there was one question that was posed prior to that I wanna address up front around students with special needs.

[00:52:47] So, and I do believe Mrs. Huebner is prepared to answer this, I know Dr. Reier's not here, but the question was really around students with special needs in terms of discipline and the difference that maybe some parents are not clear about in terms of the code of behavior and how it applies to those students that may have a disability that affects the consequences that may be administered when there's an infraction.

[00:53:16] - Sure, absolutely. You've heard me talk before that all discipline requires us to consider the age developmental ability of the student circumstance by circumstance. Additionally, when there are certain infractions that occur for a student with a disability, we also have to consider, is this a manifestation of their disability?

[00:53:34] So meaning, is this occurring or happening because or related to their disability? And in that situation, the consequences would be different. It would be a learning experience. It doesn't mean that we don't still address the behavior, but in certain situations, we would not apply the same sanctions that we would for a non-disabled peer.

[00:53:54] I do also wanna just to build on that, I am not Dr. Ryer because she's really amazing and would probably have a more comprehensive answer, but also I wanted to just note that behaviors, when that does occur, we do address that through the IEP process, so there are certain aspects of doing an FBA, a functional behavior assessment or a behavior intervention plan, so it's not that behaviors go unaddressed, it's just we address them differently through supportive measures.

[00:54:18] - Thank you, Ms. Hevener. - Mr. Blake, any questions that the board might have on this policy? - We're gonna do the motion and then discussion. Do I have a motion for agenda item 15.01, the proposed 2025-26 code of behavior?

[00:54:36] - Mr. Chairman? - I move that the Prince William County School Board approves the proposed 2025-26 code of behavior. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman? - Ms. Agaford seconds. - Second. - Any discussion? Mr. Wilk?

[00:54:52] of course, Ms. Huebner, I know you're gonna miss me and I'm gonna miss you. This is our annual little event. No longer now you're not the COVID queen anymore. We moved past that. So we're

now gonna miss you on the code of behavior as well.

[00:55:07] I know your staff spent an inordinate amount of time working on this and I'm very appreciative. I'm very appreciative for the easy to read charts. I know that was a recommendation. Actually, I think a lot of the recommendations were implemented in regards to some of the areas with the code of behavior.

[00:55:26] And just gonna reiterate my points, these are not questions, of course, this is my little sage on a stage before the vote. Focusing on a couple of different areas and just reiterating my concerns, my concerns are more about the severity of discipline. It's not so much the consequences necessarily that are laid out, but where the consequences start or where they might end.

[00:55:47] I want to pay a little bit of attention to assault and battery. I understand that legislation may not require a mandatory report to law enforcement, but I think we, as a school system, should make any type of assault a battery or causing physical injury to another person, or most especially striking staff, the use of force against staff member when no injury is caused as a requirement for police report.

[00:56:20] I think, you know, and it's not just here, overall in society there's been a degradation against the profession of educators and teachers all across the board in this country. And I've seen it in the severity and the levels of respect even since I've left the classroom in 10 years.

[00:56:36] And again, this is not just for us. This is kind of more a societal thing. And, you know, often in issues when it comes to discipline and behaviors, you know, the teachers in a sense become like the punching bags they're put on social media they're put on blast it seems like they can't do anything right in the eyes of some of the public and not only is this degradation with students but in a lot of cases it's the adults you know the the parents you know I think gone are the days you know I feel like maybe I'm a boomer when I say this but you know 30 years ago

[00:57:13] if a teacher called my parents you know there was going to be an issue at least it was going to be addressed and there wouldn't be the automatic assumption that the teacher was wrong and did something to your child. So when those assumptions or those decisions are made even before a conversation occurs, I see that as problematic.

[00:57:33] And again, that's not just us, this is a societal issue. So I feel in the sense of, especially if you look at striking a staff member, I don't think it should be incumbent on the teacher to have to decide if they wanna call the police and press charges.

[00:57:48] I think that's something we can take off them and have that decision made by someone else and not necessarily put that on the staff to have to make that decision should they be assaulted by a student, especially at the 612 level. I think again, the K2, 3, 5 is a little bit different, but if you've hit middle school and you're assaulting your teacher, I think we're at a different point of contention there.

[00:58:14] Next area, second area, and then I'll go to three and then I'll be done. board members, don't worry. You know, it was said two weeks ago, the normalization of bullying, which really stuck out and that's why I have it written down from last week.

[00:58:30] This has been an ongoing issue of mine when it comes to bullying. I understand we are obligated in most senses to follow some of the state regulations as it pertains to bullying and the severity

sometimes of discipline. I'm concerned when we look at various things, and I think it was flagged earlier, I'm concerned about what happens after intervention.

[00:58:54] Because when I look at the chart, when I see the bullying first initiate that it can be options starting at level one, two, and three, then it goes about the three. But then after intervention, there's still the opportunity for a principal can give that child a level one, two, or three.

[00:59:12] I personally disagree with that. I think if you are going to be a repeat offender, bully, whatever you want to do it, And I said this two weeks ago about the unfortunate, the horrible tragedy of people who take their lives because of bullying, cyber bullying, mental bullying.

[00:59:35] Bullying can be pernicious and can be something that could really destroy lives and families. And I think when we look at these different levels and severity of bullying, especially after intervention, I think the consequences should start higher on the chart.

[00:59:50] And again, with the uniformity piece, my fear is that if you look at after intervention, you might have a leader say, you know what? We're gonna still do a one and do a restorative circle or whatever. Whereas another principal might say, we're gonna go to three, we're gonna go to four.

[01:00:09] And so me, to make it more uniform, I would personally say, after intervention, it should start at least at a three, not leave the options of a one and a two for the severity level of bullying. That's just me. Okay, and then lastly, I wanna focus on a last concern, transportation.

[01:00:30] You know, over the years, and I think post COVID, you know, we're seeing a larger amount of parents drive their kids to school. And I think again, that a lot of that is the post COVID effects and stuff like that. You know, unfortunately, as Vern will often say, like our schools, a lot of them were not designed with the kind of the arrival and dismissal entrance ways, and even the parking lots itself for that type of influx and the sheer number of parents who are driving their kids to school.

[01:00:57] I look at the transportation expectations and I look at, especially on a bus, endangering the safety of others on a bus and the maximum something like that can go even for a six to 12 grade level is a level three.

[01:01:18] And to me, if you're in a position where our bus drivers already have enough on their plates with the liability having all these students on the bus and having to also obviously drive their route and maintain the safety of the road. And you have a student who clearly is having these issues more than once over and over again.

[01:01:37] I think it should be able to escalate to a four or five, definitely losing their bus privileges. And I definitely believe there should be more severe consequences. Put the onus and the responsibility in that case on the parents if the child's gonna endanger the lives of other kids on the bus over the repeat amount of times, the repetitive amount of times.

[01:01:55] So long story short, those are like three of my biggest, most glaring concerns, and I could expound on this for a long time, but I'm not going to, 'cause we are making the vote tonight, and I have colleagues who want to talk too. But ultimately in the end, I will be voting no on the code of behavior tonight.

[01:02:12] - Thank you, Mr. Williams. - Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Vice Chair. This is, as Mr. Wilk said, Ms. Huebner, I will also miss you this time of year for Code of Behavior. It's my favorite time. Usually Mr. Wilk

and I have opposing views for the most part in agreement this year.

[01:02:29] I do wanna thank you, Ms. Ryer and Dr. McDade for making comments for special education. I spoke with a few special education parents and they were very concerned about the new layout and my comments were that exactly what you said, we do have pay special attention to that.

[01:02:48] I think that that's a wonderful thing. my ask is that we just kind of bold it a little bit more in the actual document, going through and reading it. I note that it's there, but I think it's very easy to miss and it's something that I heard quite a bit of feedback on, which leads me sort of to my next statement, and I'm gonna be quick, which was their belief of increasing the school-to-prison pipeline when it comes to assault and battery and those kinds of things.

[01:03:14] As someone who has advocated for the reduction of the school-to-prison pipeline for a number of years, I just want to rest assured that every individual disciplinary case is handled as its own. We recognize that all students don't intentionally do things.

[01:03:30] It depends on whatever their diagnosis may be that may interfere in their decision making or their behaviors and that we acknowledge that as a division and that we're aware of that. So it's not something that is a blanket approach for everyone. I do believe that having a dean of students next year to help implement the code of behavior with fidelity will also help our school community understand a little bit better about how that process works.

[01:03:55] They'll have a direct person to speak to about it. But back to that, just wanna remind our school community that we're dealing with children. And my expectation has always been that we should not treat children harsher than adults are treated, and that this is the environment where we are supposed to educate them and teach them appropriate behaviors, as well as their home environment to support those decisions.

[01:04:20] And that's pretty much what I wanted to focus on because we don't wanna be sending kids to jail unnecessarily. Once you have contact with law enforcement, it's highly likely that you'll continue to have contact with law enforcement and that you may end up further incarcerated.

[01:04:36] So the goal is not to have that happen, to teach them good behaviors, to model good behaviors, because we know that harsher discipline does not equate better behavior. That's why we have restorative practices and that's why children aren't treated like adults.

[01:04:52] So thank you, Ms. Huebner and Dr. McDade for answering the question earlier. I really appreciate that and I would just like for us to continue along the road of treating children as children who have the opportunity to learn and grow and change behavior. Thank you. - Thank you.

[01:05:08] Ms. Zargarpur. - Yeah, just very quick. Our code of behavior is research or evidence-based, right? Correct, okay. And we will be using data to inform decision making and yada yada yada, right?

[01:05:25] Okay, and we are offering training to our principals, teachers, staff. - Yes, consistently. - Okay, and when it comes to anti-bullying, we want to reduce the incidents, so we want to be proactive by offering social support, peer groups, group activities, do social skill training, things like that.

[01:05:42] That would start in elementary, presumably. We can grow our efficacy in our kids to also be proactive in this as well. - Yes, at the elementary level, our counseling lessons do address that. We have our positive behavior interventions and supports through Dr. Barker's office.

[01:05:59] And so it's embedded into all that we do. - And then bridging into middle school, you have, we now have the deans who will presumably be the data keepers and the peacekeepers and all of that good stuff. All right, I support this. Thank you.

[01:06:15] - Thank you, Ms. Zaginpour. Ms. Shredinik. - Sorry, there's a lot of comments. Thank you again for all your work. I know it's a lot of work. I do genuinely appreciate the charts.

[01:06:31] I do feel like they're very eye-opening though. Like I would like to blow them up and put them on board so people could see. I can only imagine as a teacher something happens in your classroom and if you don't memorize the code of behavior, having to turn and find this chart and then being given all these different options and which one do I choose?

[01:06:52] So one of the things that I have an issue with, I'm just, again, these are comments, not questions, but a principal or designee may use any of the following, and there's a whole list of 15 options, going from warning or counseling, all the way to class restriction, to short-term suspension, to a referral to law enforcement or removal.

[01:07:16] One of my biggest struggles with this whole thing is the lack of consistency. If we are leaving it up to a dean of students, which I appreciate, I think that a dean of students can help, but each dean of students each school can choose anything from that list of 15 as long as it matches up to the chart. What if you know that it ranges with any of those possibilities but it did say a principal or designee may use any of the following. So anything from warning you get a warning or we call law enforcement. So one school can call law enforcement and someone else can warn the kid. I just struggle with

[01:07:51] that wholeheartedly. The lack of reporting to law enforcement is very eye-opening on this chart as well for illegal drugs we don't report to law enforcement and that's on the chart on here it says it on BES07 on the chart it says lack of reporting to law enforcement no illegal drugs no so I just that's another another struggle our our goal is to prepare our students for the real world and in the real world your actions have consequences and so I think

[01:08:31] think in school, providing that environment as well, which we do, but again, it varies and that's one of my struggles. We do have support groups, we do offer all of those things, but at some point there has to be a consequence for these actions that occur and for verbal bullying, which for verbal bullying over time can cause a child to then act out in another way in a physical manner and nobody knows that that child endured years of verbal bullying before a physical act occurred.

[01:09:01] and um that's a struggle you know if something would have been done before that could we have saved that child that heartache possibly um and another thing i feel for my principals um a lot of pressure on one principal the principal shall be responsible for deciding what actions constitute a fight again at one school a principal can say this constitutes a fight and in another school they can say that happens every day it is what it is and i think that that's um that's another struggle that the bus transportation was eye-opening to me um mr wilk pointed that out

[01:09:39] endangering the safety of an entire bus should just be a larger consequence those are kids lives um if that was my baby on a bus i would be very upset very very upset um so again and and the dress code i you know i mentioned this last last meeting but the dress code is something that um these middle schoolers and high schoolers talk to me about all the time um you know again they can and and this is boys and girls they wear a shirt and they can wear it all year and one teacher finds that shirt offensive and

nobody else did and it's it's a struggle of mine because i feel like we need more clear guidelines or or a girl wears a shirt um you know i saw that undergarments

[01:10:18] exposure was was not allowed yeah if that's not consistently enforced so it's i i just think we need more clear clear guidance but i understand this is um i don't even know how many pages it is is Ms. Huebner. So I understand that there's so much verbiage, there's so many things that we're adding and I appreciate your hard work, but I also cannot vote in favor of this code of behavior.

[01:10:42] So thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Denik. Ms. Wall, you got something? You got something? Okay, Ms. Wall. - All right, thank you, Mr. Blake. Thank you to you and your staff for all the hard work. It's a big document.

[01:10:57] I know you guys spent a lot of time on it. My general thoughts, I actually don't have a question for you. So you have to stand and listen to us talk, but thank you for doing that. The proposed changes to the Code of Behavior are in most respects excellent, in my opinion.

[01:11:19] The proposed revisions contain a number of good improvements, and while I may take issue with one level here or another level there, for the various different types of infractions, I agree assault and battery may need to be edited or modified bus behavior is a big one, and drugs and drug use, those are things really bother me that you know they happen in our schools and I just discipline is a tool to help kids get their attention besides any number of other purposes for discipline anyway but oh as a whole it's a great document and it's been greatly improved and I would like to go through and speak on some of

[01:11:57] the things that I really do feel like are excellent but before I do that I'm gonna disagree with the inclusion of the student voice bill of rights in the beginning of the code of behavior well I appreciate the efforts of the students create this document and I know it took a lot of work and I appreciate knowing their perspective as a collective body of student leaders to come up with that the list of rights in the end it is a student it is a statement of what the students believe their rights to be and not necessarily what I think their rights should be or legally speaking represent objectively and with a

[01:12:30] specificity or clarity that I would like for what their rights are and I do know there were a number of changes that improved it you know little footnotes and things and I read listen I read every single word in the entire thing but I still am troubled by the fact that it is placed at the beginning of the code of behavior I don't think that's the right place for it and I don't want to vote on the students work so I have issue with that so but anyway speaking to the code of behavior apart from the student voice portion we do need to remember that the code of behavior is a public facing document that parents and students access and use.

[01:13:09] There are other documents and other guidance for principals and leaders of schools and who are involved with discipline and all the other aspects that, I mean, obviously it correlates, but this is our public facing document. And as a result, I think it is, it does accomplish those purposes.

[01:13:24] I'm really glad to see the inclusion of the unauthorized possession or use of cell phones or personal electronic communication devices in the code of behavior. In past years, this was one issue for me. I was like, where does it say, you know, How can we behave with cell phones in school? So I am thrilled that we have incorporated our cell phone policy and the behaviors around cell phone usage into the code of behavior.

[01:13:46] That is a huge improvement and I wanna champion that. I also am glad to see the unauthorized, it says the title was unauthorized or misuse of technology. I'm gonna give you a suggestion. I do think the headline should be edited to say unauthorized use or misuse of technology.

[01:14:09] makes more sense that way that's on page 45. I also approve of the additional detail on page 47 that spells out what items can lead to serious disciplinary disciplinary consequences such as pocket knives box cutters pepper spray ammunition blades razor blades fireworks slingshots and other items and look like toy weapons I think it's good to spell this out so nobody's surprised and nobody says why I didn't think that there would be a problem if I brought an airsoft gun TO SCHOOL AND BRANDISHED IT. I ALSO APPROVE THE LANGUAGE MADE IN THE CATEGORIES OF BEHAVIOR ON PAGE 63. THAT LANGUAGE, WHOEVER WORKED ON THAT AND PUT THAT IN THAT INCLUDED RATIONALES AND

[01:14:47] EXPLANATIONS, I THINK THAT IS HELPFUL BECAUSE IF SOMEBODY TAKES THE TIME TO READ THROUGH ENTIRE 63 PAGES OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOR, WHICH THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO, THEY'LL UNDERSTAND MORE THE RATIONALES FOR WHAT WE'RE DOING. SO I WAS HAPPY TO SEE THAT. THE PURPOSE STATEMENT ON PAGE 11, loved it right there up front great great addition um including the section on monitoring pwcs computer systems and networks and safety screening technology i felt like that was an excellent addition very necessary to have that in there i'm glad to see it there um boy i have a lot i'll try

[01:15:21] to shorten it um i appreciate the definitions of the disciplinary penalties being spelled out i think that's really helpful for families and students um it's some of the stuff that we get when we are on the disciplinary committee and we see all the language and they you know once a student has misbehaved seriously they get a letter which outlines all of this but now that language is in the code of behavior which again improves transparency everybody's on notice like if you commit you know one of these level four level five things like this is this is what we're going to tell you so i really like that um transparency is really important and i think there's a big effort to improve that here um likewise for if you are getting assigned to an

[01:16:01] alternative education program or expelled those details are spelled out that's also very good the edits to the level responses are also helpful I do like the SBAR codes being included in there the tables are easily accessible you can see kind of the range of discipline options that are available for student or for building administrators within reason I mean some have lots of X's in the boxes and some are very narrow so it does inform the public on what we think is really serious and what we're willing to work

[01:16:38] with kids on okay I just have to become I like the additional language on page 38 that addresses the possession sale distribution or use of a controlled substance I do think that's that additional language was important that in to have in there that we spelled out the details for parents and students I I also like the additional language on drug paraphernalia, alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, or nicotine vapor products.

[01:17:06] In my opinion, drug use and abuse is serious, serious, serious. And unfortunately, we do have this problem in our society, and a lot of kids think it's not that serious. And they will do these things in school. So if there were a category where I'd like us to be a little tougher, that might be the category.

[01:17:25] but I do understand that we have great substance abuse specialists who are helping us work on the front end, putting up the fence at the top of the cliff instead of the ambulance at the bottom. So I do appreciate that. So for all of those reasons, I'm just highlighting what I think is an improvement in the code of behavior and I wish to thank staff for all of those thoughtful additions.

[01:17:47] Holding in reserve my primary concern, which was the student bill of rights or whatever it's called, the student voice bill of rights ended up in there, which I don't think It should be in there, and I don't wanna have to vote on it. So anyway, but I do appreciate the students' efforts.

[01:18:04] Thank you very much. - Thank you, Ms. Wall. Go Mr. Jessie, and then you missed your minute. I'm gonna go, go ahead, Mr. Jessie, and then Mr. Nenek, and another. - I think the problem we have is that we're dealing with people.

[01:18:23] You got 100 schools, you want everything to be exact in the same way, and everybody to come to the same conclusion all the time. It's not going to happen. - It will never happen. We have a policy that we're putting in place here that covers a lot of areas.

[01:18:44] And as you can see, even on an eight-person board and seven members here tonight, you're not gonna get total agreements. But I do think that we have come up with some reasonable agreements and things that can be amended or changed later.

[01:19:02] So to not vote for this policy at this point in time, I think is not the proper way to go. Because to get it to exactly the same way you want it is probably gonna not work for somebody else on board.

[01:19:20] So I think we can deal. I definitely do not feel that every fight should be reported to the police department. I would have been probably in trouble. I was never a big fighter, but I did get in a fight and started the fight when I was in high school.

[01:19:41] which was out of character for me because I was considered a goody-goody kid but every now and then but to call the police department every time is going to be difficult for the police department and as is this something I don't think we should do but I do think and I will support this tonight but I think we have to be realistic and I think in my opinion some of our board members are you want things that can be changed later, but it should not be a reason not to support this tonight.

[01:20:21] Thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Jessie. Mr. Dinnick. - I just, I did get a few questions from constituents about the Student Voice Bill of Rights. And I just feel the need to read this statement because I did read this to a couple of parents that were also concerned about the Student Voice Bill of Rights.

[01:20:42] And I know you all spent a lot of time doing this, but at the bottom of the document it says, the Student Voice Bill of Rights is a document created by Prince William County students communicating to the school board, Prince William County School Administration and parents, the student body's collective views of their needs and expectations that being met would allow them to achieve academically to feel safe and to participate as stakeholders in the school community.

[01:21:06] The Student Voice Bill of Rights is aspirational and not intended to create any legally enforceable rights beyond those set forth by federal and state laws, Prince William County policies and regulations, or other provisions of the Code of Behavior.

[01:21:21] So it does not over or supersede the Code of Behavior or Prince William County Schools regulations or guidelines. So I do support the fact that the students did put this together and that they have a collective voice in this. It does not mean that this trumps or goes over the actual Code of Behavior or rules or violations.

[01:21:42] So I do appreciate the students' work on that And I think it's an awesome practice to have them practice their voice, their government, doing student government. You know, we encourage these students

to do all of these things. And so stifling that within our code of behavior, I would not agree with that.

[01:21:57] And I do appreciate the statement. So I could read that to any constituents that were concerned about that or students or parents. So thank you for doing that. I know it took you guys a lot of work, hard work, so. - Thank you, Mr. Denning. - So I would just say thank you, Ms. Huebner.

[01:22:16] and the broader student services team for your dedication and thoughtfulness in this approach to revising this code of behavior. The clarity, comprehensiveness, and responsiveness to the community feedback are evident throughout this proposal, and I'm definitely gonna support this.

[01:22:37] What stands out to me the most is the intentional effort to create clarity for families through the simplification of the language, the user-friendly navigation and the link policy supports that. So I think that's all good, especially in the area where family school communication is paramount, this is very important.

[01:22:57] So it's appreciated and it's essential. I'm also, I'm very happy about the inclusion, like Ms. Wall said, of the clear cell phone and wireless communication section. So that reflects a timely and much needed policy alignment that addresses one of today's most prevalent school-based challenges, so I thank you for that too.

[01:23:20] And so I just think the revisions of this code of behavior demonstrate a significant step forward in building the more inclusive, transparent, and responsive discipline framework for our schools, and I fully support it.

[01:23:38] Thank you. Do I have a second? Or I had a second. All right, all in favor? All opposed?

[01:23:54] - The vote is four yes, three no. Wall, Wilk, Judenik, motion passed. - All right, thank you. We are now moving on to student representative time.

[01:24:10] Joining us tonight is Amadouna Latorre. She's a senior at C.D. Hilton High School. Ms. Latorre, the floor is yours. - Good evening to the board members, Dr. McDade, and everyone who has taken the time to be here today or watch from home.

[01:24:29] As always, I'm honored to be here sitting in front of all of you as a student representative. Today, more than ever, I am filled with bittersweet feelings will be my last time giving solo remarks in front of the school board. I'll try to make them the best yet. So words cannot describe how important diversity and inclusion are in Prince William County. This is why I'm proud to say that in April Garfield High School hosted a unified prom.

[01:24:55] Now, earlier this month, Ronald Wilson Regan Middle School was the host to a unified middle school track meet. I applaud those that came together to plan the event and the students, parents, and teachers that participated. 16 schools participated overall. That means that students across 16 schools had the opportunity to witness what were capable of as a community. In the future, let's keep up the great work. To continue my remarks, I want to remind everyone that the month of May marks more than just the blooming of flowers. It is also the Asian American and Pacific

[01:25:29] Islander Heritage Month, the Jewish American Heritage Month, and Mental Health Awareness Month. Today I wanted to take some time to talk about the latter: mental health. As a county, we have to do our best to ensure that no one suffers in silence.

[01:25:44] Throughout my time as a representative, it has been clear that bullying is a topic of concern for students and parents. I am hopeful that the revision to the code of behavior that makes reporting links for discrimination, harassment, and bullying more visible will give more students the ability to report incidents. However, this will not happen unless students feel supported.

[01:26:07] Parents and teachers, it is important to educate students on the signs and effects of bullying. It is important to listen for the concerns of kids, regardless of grade level. The Safe and No Place for Hate organizations already have chapters in some schools. Students in these clubs work towards creating safe school environments.

[01:26:26] With the help of all parents and teachers, this mission can be accomplished. To the parents and teachers who already advocate for students, thank you. on a slightly similar note the student senate was able to present the student bill of rights last school board meeting after more than a year of work we finalized a bill of rights that we believe accurately reflects the needs of the students in prince william county this document is important because it ensures students have a voice and it promotes promotes a more equitable education i am glad that the board agrees with the standards that we have set as a student myself i am happy

[01:27:03] and proud to see it implemented in the code of behavior continuing on to a different topic this week's marks the final week for most seniors in prince william county to everyone in the class of 2025 graduation starts on may 28th that is only a week away for students of the class of 2025 at the governor's school and innovation park congratulations these former students became graduates last week i am so excited to see what they do in the future these coming weeks are are time to celebrate the graduates that worked hard to complete their high school education.

[01:27:38] It is also the time to celebrate the teachers and family members that helped them get there. It is thanks to them that I personally became the person I am in front of you today. Next, I want to discuss some topics that I want everyone to keep in mind as possible revisions to the grading and assessment policies are discussed later today.

[01:27:56] It is critical for our school system to focus on ensuring student successes. Our mission is to help students graduate on time with the skills necessary to succeed in their future careers. In order to do this, students and parents should have quick access to grades once they are available. Dates and times for remediations should be clearly set in advance and accommodations should be made in the case of a student faces extenuating circumstances. Late penalties on an assignment should be communicated in advance since students are not used to having them in the first place. Finally, teachers should

[01:28:31] work towards ensuring past summative assignments are graded before the next summative assignment is given. Otherwise, students wishing to remediate have to complete two remediation assignments in a short period of time. In my opinion, summative and formative assignments should accurately reflect what was taught in class, and they should not be used as punishments. Now, I'll share some comments on the revision of policy 124 student representative to the school board. As one of the current student representative for the remainder of the year, I want to ensure that the selection process for those who feel at this position in the future is equitable. I believe the revision to policy

[01:29:09] 124 will help with this goal. Giving students a broad range of time to complete the initial application will allow for more people to demonstrate their interest in their role. It will also give us, student reps, more time to communicate with the people who reach out for advice. I was happy to see that

the number of applicants increased this year and I hope this trend continues moving on i'll now share some news and updates about student voice committees and the student senate recently the student senate had its last meeting i speak for all senators when i say we are eternally grateful for the support of miss viola and dr shaver gave us

[01:29:47] throughout the school year we were only able to accomplish all we did thanks to their help and dedication i hope next year senators continue to receive the level of mentorship we did finally I want to congratulate high school and middle school student voice committees. This year was amazing and I enjoyed all the events we were able to participate in. I know some SVCs are still holding recruitment meetings so if you're an underclassman and you're interested it's not too late. At the beginning of next school year, SVCs will also host recruitment meetings. We hope to see participation grow even more than it already has. All voices should be heard and that is what

[01:30:25] we're working towards this concludes my remarks for tonight and my last solo remarks for the year i thank the board once again for allowing me to be a student representative to the school board of prince william county board members dr mcdade and everyone listening thank you for having me thank you miss latore we now move on to superintendent's time dr mcdade the floor is yours thank you so much mr blake and good evening to all i would like to invite the pwcs community to join our family engagement series webinar which will be hosted from 6 30 to 7 30 p.m tomorrow

[01:31:04] night may 22nd it's titled stop the scroll take control pwcs cell phone policy in this webinar we will discuss the new cell phone policy for the 25 26 school year the online seminar will cover research supporting self phone free education and provide strategies and resources for a collaborative approach to electronic device usage as we get closer to the end of the year i also want to wish and congratulate our class of 2025. While I cannot be at every graduation ceremony, and I absolutely would love to be, I want you all to know

[01:31:40] how incredibly proud I am of all of your accomplishments and the fulfillment of the PWCS mission to see every student graduate on time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community. Graduates, the support of your families and teachers has been instrumental in helping you reach this important milestone. Their unwavering encouragement, guidance, and dedication have provided the foundation for you to achieve your goals and dreams. Be sure to thank your families, teachers, and other supportive mentors and friends for the role that they've played in your success. Congratulations, Class of 2025.

[01:32:20] As a reminder, two important dates. Monday, May 26th, schools and offices are closed in observance of Memorial Day. And Thursday, June 12th is the last day of school and it will be an early release day. As students plan for summer, I encourage our families to take advantage of the many learning opportunities available to all students. PWCS summer school offerings include our academic recovery program and discovery, an enrichment program for students in grades kindergarten through 12. Registration for our summer programs is in high demand and selection is limited to one enrichment program per student registration concludes this Friday May

[01:32:59] 23rd for elementary middle and discovery programs for our high schoolers registration will end Friday June 6th so please visit our website select academics and programs then summer programs to make your selection today as a reminder our school-age childcare summer provider is alpha best education which also provides two summer programs specialty enrichment and excursion Students can

balance the relaxation of summer with the excitement of discovery and I encourage families to take advantage of this program. I am proud to share that for the sixth consecutive year the NAMM Foundation, NAMM Foundation,

[01:33:39] has named PWCS a Best Community for Music Education. Yes, that deserves a round of applause. The NAMM Best Communities for Music Education designation is awarded to school divisions that demonstrate outstanding achievement for for providing music access and education to all students.

[01:34:00] Congratulations to our very own Dr. Anna Marie Bellino, PWCS Supervisor of the Arts, and our amazing music teachers, students, and their families. Additionally, nine PWCS schools have earned the Virginia Music Educators Association Blue Ribbon Award for 2025.

[01:34:20] Ms. Zargarpur, we're really trying to make you proud here. Each year, secondary band, orchestra, and choral ensembles perform at the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association District Concert Assessment and Virginia Choral Directors Association Stage Assessment.

[01:34:37] During these assessments, student ensembles perform for a panel of adjudicators who assess students on their performance and provide feedback based on specific categories such as tone, intonation, rhythm, technique, diction, balance blend, and artistry musicianship.

[01:34:57] To qualify for this award, all disciplines in a school must receive a rating of superior at their respective state music performance assessments. Dr. Bellino and all nine schools will be here in June to be recognized during Thriving Futures for this unique accomplishment.

[01:35:13] We are so proud of them and I want to wish them all a congratulations. At this time, I would welcome Dr. Tim Neal, who is our Director of Research Assessment and Data Services Department, and he will be presenting the final quarter overview report, the 24/25 quarter three overview report.

[01:35:32] Thank you, Dr. Neal. - Good evening. Tonight, I'm gonna do the quarter three, excuse me, update. I'll be covering our active enrollment information, our attendance and chronic absenteeism, course performance, and progress towards graduation before we discuss some of the strategies and supports that we've put into place.

[01:35:55] So the table shows the active enrollment at the end of the third quarter. And you can see we have had a fluctuation in the various levels and student groups over that time. It is important to note that this is active enrollment. So these are students in the school.

[01:36:13] Just to contrast that with our projected enrollment, which is a different process used to anticipate what we're going to be looking to have at the start of the school year. This is actual counts of students. In terms of the next few slides, some of the key points that stand out is our attendance rate has stayed pretty steady at 94 to 95 percent average daily attendance.

[01:36:39] As of the end of April, our chronic absenteeism rate was just over 16 percent, and our student, our 12th grade students have demonstrated progress towards graduation. So this line plot shows the average daily attendance from the start of the school year through the end of March and again you can see it is pretty steady there about that 95 94 95 percent range chronic absenteeism which is defined as missing 10 percent or more of the membership days this is unexcused or excused and it

[01:37:17] is a component of our current accountability system when we look at the time span from the beginning of school year through the end of April what you As you can see, compared to the last year at

that same time span, we have a decrease from 16.9% to 16.3% in the current year.

[01:37:39] We see this pattern manifest when we break this down by level. So if you look, the gold bar is the current year, blue bar is the last year for a comparable time span. And across all three levels, elementary, middle, and high, we do see a decrease, sometimes a substantial decrease over the prior year.

[01:38:01] So this slide shows course performance broken down by elementary, middle, and high school level. On the left, the stacked bar charts show quarter three from 23-24. On the right, you see the current year, 24-25 for quarter three.

[01:38:19] The solid blue bar shows a percentage of students that are passing all of their courses. So when we compare percentages to the prior year in the same time span, what we see is there has been a slight drop in the percent of elementary students that are passing all their courses but we see increases at the middle and high school level of students passing all their courses. It is important to note that at the elementary level this does reflect only grades three through five and D's and D pluses are incorporated into that failing category. When we look at progress

[01:38:54] towards graduation it is tracked and monitored on a dashboard and there are lots of different indicators that we would look at to track a student's progress towards graduation. We've chosen to look at some key indicators, and that would be our core academic classes and our verified credits. So the gold bar on this chart shows course credits.

[01:39:19] The solid blue bars are verified credits. That means they've either passed an end of course test or a substitute test such as a workies that would give them the verified credit for that course the horizontal line on each of the bars represents where we were at the end of last quarter so when you look across the core content areas that would be English math science and social studies compared to last quarter you see slight increases in overall course credit accrual but then when you look at verified credits we see significant increases there the percent of seniors that have achieved those credits this point I'll turn the

[01:39:58] floor over to dr. Sullivan to talk about our instructional strategies and supports thank you Dr. Neal good evening for this overview of the quarter I wanted to focus on some unique strategies and approaches that we haven't talked about thus far in our other updates one of the ones that I'm really proud of from the student learning team is the work we have done on the development and implementation of SOL preparation unit guides you've heard us talk all year about the great data resources we have, the information we have from different assessments.

[01:40:34] And for this project, we took together all of that work, all we learned from progress monitoring, and identified the general weaknesses and strengths that we see in our student performance. We compared that against the SOL blueprint data.

[01:40:49] So the Virginia Department of Education releases an extraordinary amount of information on what is going to be on the SOL, And we wanted to make sure we culled all that information so that every teacher had that information at their fingertips and every student had the benefit of that knowledge.

[01:41:07] We didn't want that information just sitting on a VDOE website. So our team rallied together and developed fourth quarter curriculum guides for the teachers in every single tested subject that brought back top of mind the skills and strategies necessary for success because ultimately our students are facing that assessment and we wanna make sure they have the benefit of everything.

[01:41:33] We did some cross-curricular preparations, we utilized all the resources to make sure teachers had clarity on how to focus their instruction. So for example, you just see one of the sample ones from math, we can clearly see from the blueprint the percentage of questions that are targeted in certain areas, that with our knowledge on how our kids are doing have helped us make sure that our students have that last ditch support and really focused content.

[01:42:04] On our next slide, highlighting some of the additional supports, 'cause we don't end support at the end of the school year. We know that some of our students need some continued work throughout the summer to build those skills necessary for success in the subsequent year.

[01:42:19] And I'm really, really proud of our summer school team, which includes our fleet of teachers who are really remarkable educators committed to this work. Our teachers came to us and said, we want the kind of clarity in the summer that we have during the school year.

[01:42:34] We want unit guides that give us really clear expectations that we can monitor our student progress and we can report weekly out to our families. But we also know that sitting and doing work in a concentrated environment all day, especially for our little ones, is a little exhausting.

[01:42:52] And so you heard earlier this year from our gifted education team, they collaborated with our summer school team to plan enrichment activities and games and hands on to support summer school. And so all that came from our gifted education team.

[01:43:10] So I thought you all would appreciate that as well. And then of course, continued resources for families after summer school, how they can continue to ensure that summer slide does not occur. And then finally, I know you've heard a lot.

[01:43:25] You've heard on-time graduation task force a lot. You've heard the phrases a lot. I just couldn't leave this school year without really shining a light on the incredible work that's being done. Wanna thank Dr. Flannard for really spearheading the entire team that are related to instructional practices.

[01:43:42] And this is everything from our social workers to our counselors, to our teachers, to our principals, to multiple departments in my office. we were meeting with extreme regularity, with really focused deliverables on understanding every single student, their risk, their situation, and then troubleshooting how we could mitigate some of those strategies.

[01:44:08] And we came up with some ways this year that are new to Prince William County that expand flexible opportunities for kids. And so I really thought that was worth sharing. Summer school last year, we began some additional supports for especially those seniors that we're gonna get through at the end of the summer.

[01:44:26] We're gonna have an amazing end of summer graduation for those that need a little bit more time. But we've added counselors, we've added L teachers, we've added special education teachers and social workers. So we have the full panoply of services helping kids get across the finish line.

[01:44:43] We've also expanded non-traditional education. we've spoken before that there's some flexibilities in the VDOE for our accelerated students and our students who need support to take courses through additional online opportunities. And in the past, some of those have been barriers to students either for financial cost or disorganization or support from their school.

[01:45:06] So we've shined a light on that and opened up opportunities. The VDOE affectionately calls them MOPS and that means multi-division online providers. and new to some of our schools and families is that the VDOE has pre-screened online providers from throughout the country and have already validated their courses.

[01:45:27] And so if a parent wants their child to take a course flexibly, whether it's for remediation or my child has to work or my child wants to take accelerated coursework, those opportunities are available with no questions asked and those are automatic transfers on a student transcript.

[01:45:48] So we've shined a light on that, opened up some of those opportunities, again, through the support of Dr. Flannard, mitigated some of the costs in certain circumstances for students who might not have otherwise taken advantage of a multi-division online provider. And then finally, the work we are doing in maximizing credits for our international students.

[01:46:08] As you all know, Prince William County is a global destination. Our global community is really the spotlight of who we are and our identity. And with students coming from all over the world, being able to handle those transcripts is really important.

[01:46:24] And so we've extended our work with the Metropolitan Area Foreign Student Advisors, affectionately known as MAFSA. That is the national organization that helps us translate international transcripts into Virginia Department of Education credits and ensures that our students are getting maximum benefits regardless of where the transcript is from.

[01:46:47] At the Global Welcome Center, our counselors are actually certified MAFSA counselors, which is really unique, and they can translate transcripts to ensure that our students are getting maximum credit. So those are just some of the ways that we continue to rally, and just when we think we've thought of every strategy, we pull out another strategy to make sure there's no stone left unturned and ensuring our students graduate on time.

[01:47:13] And so I think I'm gonna turn it back over to Dr. Neal. - So to close up the presentation, we wanted to give you a glimpse into where we are taking some of the data analytics and the information that can be used by staff across Prince William County.

[01:47:31] Throughout the presentations over this year, you have either seen examples of dashboards, for example, the focus student support dashboard or heard reference to dashboards such as the progress monitoring dashboard for graduation. The office of the CIO is spearheading the establishment of a unified data analytics platform that will be available to schools and central office that will help provide this information in a real time, much easier accessible format.

[01:48:00] We'll increase through baby steps our use of predictive analytics and advanced statistics to provide information that can inform targeted support for our students and our staff members. and we're also making a concerted effort to make deliberate and intentional use of artificial intelligence to enhance the accessibility of this information and ease of use.

[01:48:21] So our goal is to take the information that we have been sharing with you all year and turn accentuate and enhance its use across our school division to impact students and staff. That concludes the third quarter overview.

[01:48:39] Be happy to address any questions you may have. - Thank you, Ms. Wong, or Williams. - Thank you. First, I wanna say thank you, Dr. Neal, Dr. Sullivan, and Dr. Fennard for all of your hard work. I appreciate the update. I see that we are continuing to, our students' grades are continuing to improve, and I know that that is a collaborative effort from everyone from the building here, Kelly Leadership, to our boots on the ground in the classroom.

[01:49:05] I know that when we started this journey of data and reporting out, the numbers weren't where they are, but I like to remind people that a division this size, like trying to turn a cruise ship or a battleship, it takes a while to get everyone on board and on the same page.

[01:49:23] And the results for what you present here and have we've seen even coming up to this evening, show that effort is starting to pay off for all of us school families. I am very, very excited about the update of summer school.

[01:49:38] It's something that I've been asking for for a very, very long time. and I feel like we finally have all the right pieces in place, the people in place, and the technology in place to continue to provide more rigor for summer school and have better benefits for our students and our families, as well as our teachers.

[01:49:54] I really like the weekly report thing. For the first time ever, I will not have a summer school student, so I'm a little sad 'cause I was excited to see it, but that's a whole 'nother story. I also like the way that we are trending towards utilizing AI and technology of the future.

[01:50:09] I think that's very important. It's finding its way into corporate America in all aspects. So I like the fact that our staff is having the ability to put their feet in the water and to test it out. And eventually I know our students also will be utilizing in the classroom, even if we don't let them have their cell phones.

[01:50:25] I'm super excited about, yes, that was a little of my own personal thing. I'm super excited about the direction that we're going and I really want to commend everyone for all of their hard work. It is noticeable. I can tell as a parent, but also as a board member and I'm really excited and I just want to say thank you so much and to keep up the good work.

[01:50:46] We'll always have room for improvement, but the hard work that has been put in is noticeable and it's paying off and that's also why I do not have a summer school student this year. So thank you very much. - Mr. Blake, it was one statement in there that I would like for Dr. Sullivan to just unpack for families 'cause I don't think that they'll understand what that means.

[01:51:09] When you talked about the different online providers, it said multi-division. Can you just kind of break that down and what that means in terms of offering? - Yes, so several online providers outside of Virginia's online platform have applied to the state for their courses to be accepted as core courses.

[01:51:34] And so some of those providers are based in various states and families can look to them to see if they wanna take a course in a different platform 'cause it suits their family better. And so one of the ones that we actually work, started working with this spring is called Edoptions and it's through Edmentum.

[01:51:55] You know the name Edmentum because we do some credit recovery with our teachers. They also have a full online platform that involves a certified teacher. And so different than what we do currently in our schools, they have a different platform where if you wanted your child to take a course just because maybe they wanted an additional course or maybe they knew that for this type of course they do

better online and it doesn't have some of the wait lists and challenges that the Virginia platform has, families may choose those courses.

[01:52:28] Sometimes they're advanced placement courses, courses that are not available in their school. And so there is a list that Virginia has pre-vetted And if a provider is on that list, any division in the state can accept those credits at face value without further vetting.

[01:52:49] And then those courses can be placed on their transcript. And like I said, it's a process that's actually been in place for a while, but it hasn't had light on it. And we realizing more and more, we wanna support our families with flexible options for their children.

[01:53:06] And these are options that have already been vetted and approved by the state of Virginia. - Thank you, Dr. Sullivan. - Can I just ask, sorry, I asked Dr. McDade about what that meant. Can you send us an email with those providers, possibly a little bit of an explanation that we can share with the public?

[01:53:26] And then I have one more question. So if a student were to take that course over the summer, and that fulfill it, or could it fulfill a course requirement so that they can-- - Absolutely. - Okay. - Yeah, absolutely, no question at all. I will share the link, and the link takes you directly to the VDOE website, and it lists all the approved providers and the conditions of it, so yes.

[01:53:53] - That link is where, on our website? - I'm gonna send it to you. - Okay. - I can't say off the top of my head where it is on our website. I know exactly where it is on the VDOE website, and I will make sure it's more visible on our website as well.

[01:54:08] - Maybe you can have our sweet student rep do one more video before she leaves, 'cause we all-- - She's pretty great, yeah. - Very, very, very-- - She's very convincing. - And convincing, yeah. - I agree, because we really do want parents to feel comfortable in exploring these other opportunities for their children.

[01:54:25] So, like I said, we've been shining a bit of a light. We'll make that light brighter, so that all of our parents fully understand the flexible options available to them. - And I just have a couple more questions, sorry. My colleagues are groaning.

[01:54:43] The county, did we take away access to SOL pass this year? They used to use it to review for SOLs, Jefferson Lab, SOL pass, do those no longer exist?

[01:54:59] I've never heard the phrase SOL pass, so I'm going to speak to that. The state of Virginia utilizes what's called test nav, which is sort of the state access to the official preparation and readiness for it.

[01:55:14] So for sure, we utilize that, shared it with all teachers in our schools. That's where they're practicing in the format and structure of SOL. So we might be speaking the same language, but with different terminology. And so kids have an opportunity to practice the calculators and the responses.

[01:55:33] And there's a whole series of strategies built into it that we built into our SOL preparation guides. - Okay. - Yes. But I will do a quick follow-up and provide to Ms. Botel if there's anything else I need to share on SOL Pass. - But we are still offering options for preparation.

[01:55:52] There's different things, the guides, things like that. - Yes, ma'am. - Which were extremely accessible to students this year, so. - Yes, and we were quite thorough in working through teachers and administrators and assistant principals that all of our students should have access to these resources.

[01:56:10] And so, for the first time, that included all the high school courses as well as middle school courses in elementary. Elementary had that practice before, and we added that to it, so. - Okay, Generation Genius was another one that I got asked about if that went away as well.

[01:56:28] So, any information? - We did not mandate anything away, I can tell you that. So, but I can certainly follow up. - Okay, Mr. Wilk would like ABC Mouse as well. Thank you, Ms. Dr. Sullivan.

[01:56:46] - Ms. Wall. Thank you. So that was a lot of great information. I appreciate it. The summer school information, the clarity for teachers on the SOL guides, monitoring student progress, communicating with families, getting the gifted team's input into summer school content, it's all awesome. I mean, if summer school is a little bit fun, right, because gifted education is often very fun, then we're going to have more engaged students. So I really like that. It's great to hear all of of the different instructional strategies and student supports like the

[01:57:24] graduation task force the multi-division online providers I've had people reach out to me you know saying oh my kid found this class at like this university now it will be even easier for them because they can have a pre-approved place where they can go get a class and it will automatically transfer no questions asked so I think that is awesome and then I guess just the front is going to be publicizing it socializing it I do really like the idea of the unified data analytics platform we made a decision yet on what platform we're going to use or we still is that like going to go through the procurement

[01:57:59] process no we have we are using click which is our front end that is it's extremely straightforward and simple for the end user okay great so we already know what our data analytics platform is okay I think it's fantastic I know in a lot of different industries predictive analytics AI it can help you so much with data so I'm really excited about that because I know that will make a difference I mean it's already making a difference the focus on data and data analytics but having harnessing the power of AI is going to make a

[01:58:32] huge difference so that's great um what uh I had a question about um uh sorry I think it's actually on a different issue so I'll wait with that question I actually don't have any more questions I know we're going to do a fourth quarter update but that'll probably be in the fall right when when will our next update be when will we get an update on everything that's happening in the fourth quarter so typically we would send something over the summer over the summer okay and then we would maybe talk about it publicly and then the fall and then the fall we would revisit kind of the in the state of the school so the summative for the full year I'm encouraged by what I'm

[01:59:11] seeing here in the data from third quarter you know those things those things ticking up for the verified credits etc do we have any now I'm asking you to speculate do we have any indication how things are going because I know SOLs have already started and AP tests have already started but we don't have a lot of transparency into that but do we have any idea how we're doing so what I can say is all the data is still really formative so students are still accruing credits they're still earning verified credits we are seeing improvements in terms of more kids earning them as to how it's going to ultimately end up when we

[01:59:50] compare last year it's still too early to say okay that's good that's fair enough I'm really hopeful um you know we do see that progress that we're hoping for all right well thank you thanks to that was great to hear uh the data and the things that we're doing that are going to help our students so thank you very much all right thank you I just want to take this moment just to acknowledge that real progress that we're

seeing with this third quarter update and uh even though You know, there's more work ahead, of course, but this just reminds us that we are really moving in the right direction and you guys are doing a good job.

[02:00:26] So thank you, yeah, thanks.

[02:00:41] - At Board Matters, that takes us to Mr. Wilk. No, but, oh, that's right, that's all of them.

[02:00:57] I was gonna hand it back to Dr. McDade, but that's, that is, this is for you, Policy 661. Do you wanna talk about it? It's on for first reading, right? - Yes, thank you. Oh good, I believe the magicians were gonna make it come up.

[02:01:15] And so, Vice Chair Blake, members of the board, Dr. McDade, thank you for this opportunity to share the work that has been done on modifying the existing policy on student evaluation and reporting.

[02:01:31] I have to open up and say that I think this has been a process you all can be very, very proud of. Our community has been highly engaged in the work and providing feedback that is directly in what you are gonna see here today.

[02:01:47] I also wanna thank you for your thoughtful engagement in the two by twos. So you'll see some of those adjustments that we made after our discussions at the two by twos and brought some of that into today as well. And so Policy 661 is currently entitled Student Evaluation and Reporting.

[02:02:07] We are, as part of this request to change policy 661, we are also recommending a name change to grading and assessment practices because we want to be clearer. We don't wanna make the search for policies and regulations more difficult on teachers and families than it needs to be 'cause I don't think a lot of people naturally go to grading when they see that policy name.

[02:02:32] So we have changed that as well. What you see here is all of the regulations that currently live under the policy. So the policy as it is has very little to I would say zero guidance to our schools and our division on the expectations in grading.

[02:02:51] And when the policies are lacking coherence around that, the grading regulations are not providing the structure in support of the board's intent. And so throughout these regulations, you see overlap, you see sometimes misaligned guidance because one of the regulations may have been written at a time different than a different regulation.

[02:03:14] And so we would often get calls from parents, actually even students directly and teachers, confused about the expectations and where to check. So today you'll see the beginning of the work in transforming grading practices in Prince William County to be aligned with first and overarching policy.

[02:03:34] And then the work will begin on the regulations to hopefully simplify and clarify the expectations. On this next slide, you'll see additional policies and regulations that also touch upon grading. And so as part of this work, all of these will be reviewed as well.

[02:03:52] So I just want to be clear, we started off at the top of Policy 661 and all the rest of that work will follow to include the additional policies.

[02:04:07] And so how did we go about this work? I first have to recognize Mr. Bill Bixby, that is a name from the past. He did some ROP work with us last year to reengage school communities into standard-based grading.

[02:04:23] And he just did a remarkable job of working with a leadership team within the district made up of teachers and principals and additional staff, and then went and engaged with the student leaders, with students at their schools, the parent groups and teacher groups, and did a significant amount of work in identifying where we are at right now and what steps we need to take.

[02:04:48] And the word that comes to mind is inconsistent. We were most certainly at an inconsistent point, so we started off this work already having that work. Then we had the opportunity to partner with Hanover Research, because we felt it was very important to make sure that we were using third-party research perspective in identifying all the trends and patterns, because people feel deeply and differently about grading.

[02:05:17] And so it is a topic that we know has to come with a sense of balance with those deep feelings and those different feelings. And so working with our partner has been great, and they have allowed us to look at things through some fresh lens. So starting off the beginning of the year, we did peer district reviews, where we analyzed the policies and practices at all of our peer districts in Northern Virginia, and peer districts across the country with similar size, scope, and demographics.

[02:05:48] So this was not just a look in Northern Virginia, this was a look nationwide. Then we worked really closely with the Superintendent's Principal Advisory Council, which is made up of elementary, middle, and high school principals who are committed to engaging in work beyond their school doors.

[02:06:05] And they are a really valuable team to work with to identify trends and patterns from their lens. I'm really thankful to our community for coming out strong and boldly on our surveys. We launched a division-wide survey for students, parents, and staff in the fall, and received some outstanding information from that as well.

[02:06:27] and I had the personal joy of leading multiple Zoom sessions myself directly with teacher groups. We extended the invitation to teachers across the division, sometimes support teachers, sometimes direct teachers, to participate in a series of Zoom sessions where I literally listened and we tackled some of the areas and they were able to give me very honest, very direct feedback and that was incredibly beneficial.

[02:06:57] and they were professional and focused and as amazing as you know, our teachers are. And so I really wanna thank our teachers who did that. As you all know, our board members had an opportunity to participate in interviews as well. I wanna thank Laura for working with the Hanover team to set up those interviews, because obviously it's board policy.

[02:07:17] So we were not going to do a draft without board member feedback. So I really wanna thank those of you who had the opportunity to participate in, and our final step being a gradebook audit. And so what you see here are the trends and thoughts that were coming through all of these stakeholder engagements.

[02:07:39] And what was amazing is despite all of this work, the trends started coming together pretty quickly. And what we were first trying to determine is, this is essentially a first policy, because the one that currently exists doesn't have any guidelines.

[02:07:57] So the question was, as we draft a policy representing the voice of the board, what are the things that are coming to the top that our board would likely to have like clear division wide voice on? And these are the things that, I know when we did our two by twos, everybody was kind of shaking their head.

[02:08:16] These are the things you're hearing, these are the things I'm hearing, these are the things that are coming through our parent inquiries, our teacher phone calls. These are the topics that did not have clarity. What you see after each one, for example, if we look at elementary, late work, you see that it is currently in Regulation 6611.

[02:08:37] And so as you look across this chart, you can see bits and pieces are in different regulations and some not at all. But we wanted to start figuring out what parts that are in regulation do we wanna bring and elevate to policy, And then what parts and regulations do we wanna modify as related to policy?

[02:09:00] And so the next big step was those surveys. We had over 7,800 respondents to this specific survey on grading practices. It was a really substantial turnover. We were able to validate that that was an appropriate sample size for our population.

[02:09:18] So we hit the mark that we were hoping to hit. And the words you're gonna hear again and again is consistency. We heard from our teachers, our parents, and our students that consistency is important to them.

[02:09:33] And I'm really excited by that because it reflects a move from individual school guidelines and practices to wanting to be a part of the collective and wanting to see Prince William County schools being that system and not just individual rules at different schools.

[02:09:52] And that was our teachers, parents, and students telling us that. So I was really excited to see that concern, if that makes sense. One of the things that was also interesting was the focus on how does grading impact student motivation? Is the way we're reporting grades encouraging more thinking?

[02:10:11] Is it encouraging reflection? Is it encouraging effort? Or is it discouraging it in some cases? And are we utilizing those tools effectively to encourage kids to move forward. And then strengthening clarity through teacher professional development.

[02:10:31] And again, I said our teachers were amazing, but our teachers also reported very honestly in transparency and transparently the lack of clear guidance around grading. And they want us to give them professional learning and expectations.

[02:10:48] And again, that tells you the quality of our teaching staff. And so some of the just key overall findings when we looked at the trends in the survey, it was a pretty comprehensive survey, so I tried to pull out the essential elements. You'll see one of the ones that I thought was interesting, staff largely agrees that grading practice is an accurate assessment of students and learning.

[02:11:10] Students and parents don't agree to the same level that staff does. They most commonly indicate that the lack of feedback And perhaps the oversimplification of how we grade is something that we wanna work on, that it is a limitation of the system, that there's not representation and feedback enough to encourage positive performance from the student.

[02:11:41] You'll see the word consistency again in the next bullet. So ironically, consistency is the most consistent feedback. This is something that our community is really looking for. Again, you see the comment on lack of guidance and the comment on valuing grading for reinforcement and positive motivation, you see getting called out again.

[02:12:07] And so I'm sharing a couple of charts that I know are likely very difficult to see on the screen, but showing you some overall trends in some of the key response areas from our school community. So

the first one for our viewers online that may not be able to see it clearly is what effect do you believe the current grading practices in your classroom, in your school, across the district have on the following.

[02:12:32] So they're telling us that the grading practices are influencing or not influencing them to certain degrees. So you look at student achievement, motivation, engagement, and their overall learning experiences. And these are components that are critical to what we do in education.

[02:12:49] So we certainly wanna see a positive correlation there. And as you can see, we have some room for growth on how people are responding to our current grading systems in these areas. I will remind you all that that lovely top teal line are our lovely pre-K families where we're not actually assigning grades, but I appreciate how much they appreciate the feedback they are receiving on their children, 'cause that is important too.

[02:13:18] On our next slide, this is an interesting one as well, where we've asked how much they agree or disagree about current grading practices, accurately reflecting dot, dot, dot. So accurately reflecting their skills, accurately reflecting where they are struggling, accurately reflecting where, how they prepare for future courses.

[02:13:44] So I thought those were some really interesting questions in the survey. So if I'm an eighth grader, how the grades I'm receiving now are accurately preparing me for rigorous coursework in high school. And so again, we're seeing, we're not really connecting the dots on how we grade and how that impacts students' futures.

[02:14:09] And then on the final slide I'm showing you with the data is how much you believe each of the following should impact student grades. And this is a really important data source. One of the trends that we have seen over the last few years is that testing has become a more significant part of student grades than we believe was originally intended in some of the work that was done in this district around standards-based grading.

[02:14:37] And that we want to remind our teachers and our families that you can assess student mastery of a standard in multiple ways and that our students often demonstrate mastery in different ways. And so we wanted to make sure that we got some feedback on that and as you can see, there's a pretty wide range of responses where our families, our students and our teachers are saying we believe grades should reflect these things.

[02:15:08] It's a current mismatch when we look at our grade books. So again, gonna focus on some of the areas to add some more explicit guidance in that space. And on that one, you can see the differences in how students, parents, and staff responded. And interestingly, not all that different in a lot of categories.

[02:15:28] And so from our board member interviews, I culled a few notes from the report provided to me. The report was anonymous from, again, using a third-party vendor made that really helpful. And you're seeing a request on clear guidelines.

[02:15:45] you're seeing transparency and consistency. So again, in every single stakeholder group that consistency is coming up, obviously wanting to improve parental involvement in communication. How can we ensure our assessment and grading practices are creating more meaningful parental engagement, teacher feedback, student self-reflection, and then reevaluating the homework policies?

[02:16:08] I promise you it's on the list. And so if you recall, it's one of those that we will be looking at in this review of all grading practices. And so before we get to where we landed, I think it's really important to share the considerations that we made.

[02:16:27] And so something that was a big sticky point was what is most appropriate for policy versus regulation. So I know that we want to be as clear as possible with policy, but that the specificity necessary really needs to be in regulation.

[02:16:46] I'll give you one of the most common examples, late work. That is a good example of, there's a very different approach to late work for a first grader than an 11th grader. There's a different approach to late work when you're working with students in different settings, whether it's homework or classwork.

[02:17:04] There's a lot of nuance. And so while we universally want to see students doing work on time, we recognize that the language outlining those expectations really belongs in regulation. And really belongs in regulation specified by grade bands, by ages.

[02:17:20] And even within elementary school, K2 is very different than 3-5. And so we want to honor that and really work to choose the things for the policy that made sense from the governing board perspective versus the staff fleshing out the details.

[02:17:38] Really important point that I've emphasized to every stakeholder group I've met with. We all said consistency, but to achieve consistency, there's shifts for everybody. And so they're shimmying, right? So some may want stronger here, some may want looser here or stronger or tighter.

[02:17:57] But to get to consistency, there has to be some give and take and balance in finding what really does make sense for a school division of 90,000 students with their volume of teachers and staff. So I really tried to find that sweet spot balance of where I thought we could come together.

[02:18:15] And consideration for what level of autonomy is appropriate. Where do we want our teachers to have autonomy and flexibility, where do we not? Those are things that are part of the consideration. I want to call out that there's most definitely a need for explicit guidance on grading L and special education students.

[02:18:33] We currently have a regulation on grading special education students. We do not currently have a regulation on grading L students, but it is a work in progress. Because the expectation of our teacher's ability to be able to mitigate language against content mastery is very important.

[02:18:52] And so when you're measuring, for example, an English language learner's growth in math, you want the grade to reflect their math skill, not their English language skill. And so how can we assess students in different ways for content area where we make sure the grade truly reflects their abilities?

[02:19:11] And then, of course, in English language arts, we are focusing on English language acquisition. And then consideration by grade levels. Like the example I gave earlier, what makes sense for a first grader versus an 11th grader. I don't think any of us would want the exact same rules applied to all.

[02:19:28] And so how we separate some of those ideas out. And so the drum roll, if you will, what I've done for you today to try to help bring some clarity is I pulled out the language of the six main recommendations in the policy.

[02:19:44] And again, I think you will see your feedback was taken to make some necessary adjustments after the two-by-twos. And I'm just going to do a quick overview on all of them and not directly read them

to you. One, I think we all universally agreed with the importance of prompt feedback.

[02:20:05] We had some robust discussions around what makes prompt. And then we talked about, again, if it is a short quiz versus a research paper. If it is artwork that the student's taking a long time with, with something smaller in class.

[02:20:21] So we added some language about the timeliness of the feedback should be related to the complexity of the task and the time needed for the teachers to meaningly review the student work. So we really wanted to tie in the board's understanding of what assessment looks like, but really underscore the importance of feedback.

[02:20:41] And we are reminding everybody that feedback goes through potentially corrective feedback in the grading process, self or peer evaluations. To your point, the board member's calling out about that self-reflection piece. informal comments or other annotations so from a board policy point of view this clearly sets your values in the regulations we will map out the details in the second recommendation i mentioned to you earlier that tests have kind of taken over as the primary measure of student

[02:21:17] mastery so we wanted to call out and remind staff and families that you know a minimum of nine graded assignments is more appropriate. That was currently in regulation. We pulled it out of regulation.

[02:21:33] That was one of the ones that we plucked out to add some light on. And then we specifically, one of the board members mentioned, let's specifically name it as separate assignments. So we added some of the adjustments as well. I also added the language from later in the policy, just to be repetitive with intention, grade should be updated every week and so we outlined that there needs to be regular grading and they should be updated weekly that was currently in regulation that we also had to pluck out and add its importance of it because we know that's important and then we go on to spend a considerable amount of time

[02:22:13] reminding everybody that you can measure progress through a variety of different assessments and I think every one of us would not want to be judged on single mechanisms that we want to remind that there's multiple ways to measure. In the next recommendation is where we really talk about timeliness, and we emphasize timeliness because lessons are developed sequentially.

[02:22:40] Lessons are developed to be taught in a sequence for students to master concepts along the way, and therefore students should complete work fully and on time. Again, we're not saying there aren't exceptions. What we're saying is, in general, we are recognizing through policy that we value this.

[02:23:00] Of course, we emphasize that teachers have to align things. A lot of times an IEP may call for extended time. We expect, and well, more than expect, those to be honored as well. And that we know that things happen. And so that, to Eliana's point earlier, that any penalties if you're turning in something late should be transparent and clearly communicated in advance.

[02:23:25] And again, there's a difference between a day late on a long research paper and three months late on classwork that was done previously. So we did not want the board to directly address those nuances, we can do that through regulation, but we do wanna say yes, we believe timely engaged work, students being engaged a long way is important, but things happen, penalty should be clearly outlined.

[02:23:53] And then recommendation four, I've made a couple of tweaks of this since we last met as well. We talked about students being able to retake, if you will, do test corrections, but I added another layer to that from some additional feedback, because some of our teachers are actually very adept at students' future assignments that include the same standard, them using that to replace it.

[02:24:22] And so that's a great practice that we also wanted to encourage. So in some cases, a student may sit and retake an assessment. In other cases, a student might do test corrections, very common in math.

[02:24:37] In other cases, the teacher is at a level where they're tracking student progress because they're hitting the standard later. And so picture pretty, in math, when you're handling a more complex issue, when the student is succeeding at that, it is demonstrating their proficiency at the other skills.

[02:24:55] Some of our teachers are using that to replace grades now. We don't wanna discourage that. So we cleaned up the language to make sure it recognizes that we know that that is a great skill for teachers to work on. And of course, they should be done by the end of the marking period and extenuating circumstances must go through a teacher, counselor, administrator.

[02:25:19] unless that situation that I just told you, the teacher's gonna measure it on a later assignment. So got some great feedback, actually from a couple principals on that, so that adjustment was made. And then in the next recommendation, I cleaned up the language on this one, 'cause I know the original language was super confusing.

[02:25:42] But to simplify the language, the final yearly grade shall be calculated by those quarterly percentages being converted to the corresponding points of the letter grade and to some points that were made in the two by twos.

[02:25:59] Yes, we will be aligning with our current practices of where we have B pluses and C pluses and leaving the A range the same for our high school students. But we tried to simplify that language to make it a little easier to understand.

[02:26:15] And this means the teacher's grade book is authentic. We're not asking the teacher to change a student's percentage from a 40 to a 50. We're not asking a teacher to manipulate a child's grade in a way that might make them feel uncomfortable, but we are doing equivalent intervals between how they're scored on A, B, C, D, and F, which makes it fair, which makes it appropriate, but also teachers being able to be true to their grading.

[02:26:45] And then finally, you'll see a reminder again on that weekly basis, we put it in there twice for emphasis and some reminders. What's not on here that I did want to mention is also in the policy draft for our viewers who may not have read the actual draft.

[02:27:03] We also added all the language on appeals, again, so it was in one spot for our families. And so if you were interested in the appeal process for a grade, that was also added to the policy as well. You've seen it in the draft.

[02:27:19] And then our next steps would be once the board approves a policy, when the board approves a policy, I'm going to be an optimist. Work will begin on revising the regulations and working through implementation. We'll need to make some modifications, some of the technical aspects of the gradebook, and then we'll commence professional learning, parent communications, and continued student outreach.

[02:27:43] Hopefully you've seen that we really tried to find that balance of that little bit of a give and take to get to a point where we can be consistent throughout the division. And I am happy to take any questions.

[02:28:00] - I think that this is just the first reading, right? - Yes, sir. - Or you could just email. We'll just email you if we have any questions. Just email you if we have any questions. Thank you, Dr. Sullivan. We appreciate you. - Yes, sir, thank you.

[02:28:17] - Okay, moving on to board matters. Mr. Wilkes. - I pass. - Mr. Denny. - And I pass as well.

[02:28:34] - I'm not passing. First of all, I just want to say, my heart goes out to the family, the country, and us on the passing of Jerry Conley. He was, for a large part of Prince William County, a congressman for a long time.

[02:28:56] And his death came fairly quickly and suddenly and so forth. So I just want to say, you know, I'm gonna miss him. He supported my wife and I. He was a friend, and in my opinion, a great congressman, so my heart goes out.

[02:29:19] I do want to show, I think I have a picture. You know, we talk about building people in the system, so I want to give you an example. This was taken at the retirement at Hilton Performing Arts, and this lady is Shirley Bunch.

[02:29:46] Shirley started working for my wife in 1995 as an aide. She did not have a college degree, but she was an aide. And my wife kept encouraging her to continue to get her education.

[02:30:03] And at first, she was taking college courses, but they were like PE and stuff like that. She was taking the courses, but she really wasn't serious. But my wife kept encouraging her. And then she became, she got her undergraduate degree.

[02:30:22] then she says i'm going for a master's and in 2000 i think it was 2012 my wife has the date she got that she got those uh the degree and she became a teacher and she retired this year but that's the system the next picture please these two ladies this is another lady that was worked for my wife in 1995 and my wife believes in celebration and this was at a celebration I asked her, "What are the red shoes for?"

[02:31:00] The red shoes are for moving forward, stepping up. And these two ladies, this was another aide that became a teacher. And so, you know, the retirement of Mrs. Bunch, we love her.

[02:31:17] And the other thing about Mrs. Bunch, if you want somebody in your school to create a celebration, call on Mrs. Bunch. It's called the Bunch Attack. she will she will decorate the room she would do this and she will tell you she we hired her once to come over our house uh after lily left as principal but when she was running to do it lily got up at eight o'clock to help her and mrs bunch says you know i don't work with anybody i'm doing this all by myself i tell you what i want you get it and i'll fix it so she she was

[02:31:55] thing so that that was really good the other thing i i just want to say uh these it's important and this is this is a story and i talk everything about the teachers wanting this feeling and i'm going to give you one example my wife talked about the doing the sols and they uh the classes one class did uh had the sls they were meeting this is the elementary school they were meeting in the

[02:32:29] library. And the teacher called her and she came down and she fussed at them. And she was telling them, you know, this is something serious. We had this situation and I just need to talk to you. And, you know, the kids were really tense at that point. And she said, everyone in this room in this grade passed

the SOL. And, you know, the kids who knew they were going to pass got up and started jumping and running around the room. They were really excited. And then the kids who said, are you sure? They got up. And there

[02:33:08] was one little boy that never got up for a while. And she asked him, why are you not running? And he looked at her and he said, me? I pass? And if you get that feeling as a teacher that you help someone get the confidence to know that they passed when they didn't even think they would pass that's a win for you thank you thank you mr jesse miss wall

[02:33:42] awesome uh first congrats to battlefields anandia sampath and sakshi gauda who i got to meet today um for their big win at the 47th annual model judiciary program supreme court round i'm sure they'll be in here at some point hopefully in june um but they got to argue before the supreme court of virginia and they not only won their round but they also won the state competition and i was um earlier this evening i was at battlefield and i got to meet with the student council association the leaders the outgoing leaders the incoming leaders and um it was really awesome and she came up to me and introduced herself to me which was which was absolutely awesome so congrats to

[02:34:22] those amazing girls um i want to just touch on a couple of events that i've attended since our last board meeting on May 8th I went to battlefield high school senior awards night at that time they quoted that they've received 19 million in scholarship awards I'm sure it's higher than that even now because you know it kind of rolls in so I think that's awesome proud it's so proud of the class of 2025 on May 9th I attended Miss Ralston's funeral she was a super sweet lady who lived a great life of service and found great meaning and lifting others around her so she'll be greatly missed May 10th I attended horse parks 25th anniversary celebration and they are going to do a new brick walkway which

[02:35:01] will be really special for the Bruin community I had no idea how many people like went to Forest Park or had kids who went to Forest Park it just seems like everybody went to Forest Park that and Osborne Park so I also went to Porter traditional 20 year anniversary that's a really special school they have a wait list that is just absolutely gigantic I think the quote that I heard something like 1,300 students want to go to that school so I'm going to continue to say this but perhaps we can look into creating a traditional high school since it's such a successful model we only have two in the middle school level but there's something there that families really crave I think there's a demand

[02:35:37] maybe there'll be a supply I attended Beetlejuice Junior at Reagan middle school that was an absolute romp and there was just so much personality the kids worked so hard and their efforts were really really paid off I attended the PWCS retirement ceremony congratulations to all our retirees that was on May 13th that was a very special ceremony I want to acknowledge these individuals for their efforts to help kids succeed every person whether they directly interface with kids or not is part of the team and we're what we do is is number one focus is what helps kids so you will be missed I hope your

[02:36:15] retirement holds opportunities for community service time with family loved ones perhaps some hobbies and some travel and maybe you'll even come back can roll up for us. So that would be fantastic. On May 14th, I attended the VSBA North Eastern Spring Network Forum, which we hosted, which was a wonderful event. Thanks so much to our school board office staff for all the work that they did. And we had a great time talking about collective bargaining. I don't know if that goes together. Great time, collective bargaining and board advocacy. It was really, it was fun. It's always fun to get together with other people who understand this unique role that we enjoy. It was even more powerful

[02:36:50] during covet but it's still powerful to get together um and last saturday was the first graduation of the season starting it off with governor's school innovation park congratulations to all the seniors they are so impressive they're such a distinctive group of scholars and i know they're going to go on and do amazing things they they embody pwcs proud um and then signing day was last night for cte that was really cool to see there were so many great kids who walked straight out they're going to walk out of Prince William County Schools with a job offer or an internship

[02:37:25] offer or military career path it's just really great to see all of the different pathways we have in Prince William County Schools and how we're trying to help kids wow in seven seconds I'm so excited about the stop this girl take control I'm just everybody join into that webinar if you can and I know we have a lot of work coming up to socialize and educate but I'm looking forward to seeing that implemented thank you very much everybody have a great night thank you miss wall miss williams uh thank you mr blake i want to start by also acknowledging um with deep sadness

[02:38:03] the passing of congressman connelly um he was also uh someone that i would consider a friend but more importantly someone that i looked up to as to how to be a leader and how a leader should act he by some amazing superhero ability i used to tease him all the time would make it from fairfax to prince william on time through pre-pandemic traffic which i thought made him a superhero when i first became an elected official because i couldn't do that in my own county but more importantly he was a someone who recognized when an individual was working from the heart and from

[02:38:42] the goodness and purpose of what they ran for office for and stood by his principles and values and I think that no matter what party you come from where you come from that those are qualities that all leaders should have and I really appreciate him his life of public service more recently he did not really represent much of Prince William but he was just someone that I really to truly do believe embodied leadership and good morals and I know this area and I'm sure Fairfax County as well will be deeply saddened by his loss

[02:39:17] but his legacy will absolutely live on and I'm proud to have been able to know him and be able to have served at the same time in other news I just want to make it quick and say congratulations to all of our upcoming grads and those grads again who graduated from governor school that usually kicks off our graduation season I look forward to attending some other graduations this year for the first time in a while all of my life life's happened and I missed a few of the things that I would have liked to go to so I just want to say extended congratulations to all our retirees and and in case I miss a few

[02:39:56] other graduations now we had firefighters cadet last night there's nursing programs there's so many above and beyond our traditional high school graduation and so congratulations to all of y'all I want to give a special shout out to our clerk's office for putting together everything for the VSBA's spring regional meeting this was the first time that I heard so many school divisions praise all of the work that went into hosting that event and I would be remiss if I did not publicly congratulate miss Laura Mills and the entire office for such a wonderful job really appreciate it I look forward to all the upcoming graduations and hold tight to all of our staff and students we're almost there I know this is the time where everyone kind of acts a

[02:40:35] It's a little wild if you're a student, especially the young ones, but we're so close, so close. You can make it. And the last thing I want to say is on the 30th of May, Fred Lynn will be having its first ever resource fair from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. So I hope to see you there.

[02:40:50] And that's all I have to say. Thank you. Have a good night. - Ms. Nagel, oh, hold on a second. - Sorry, one more thing I forgot. I just want to embarrass my parents a little bit and today is their anniversary and say congratulations for 47, so it must be 49, 48, 48.

[02:41:06] I'm bad with years, but 48 to 49 years of marriage, and congratulations to them. - Okay, Mrs. Agapur. - Well, congratulations to the Williams family. I'm gonna keep this pretty short. I have a broken bone in my foot, which has kept me not at so many events, so I am very appreciative to board members who have carded me places.

[02:41:27] I appreciate it, thank you. My niece is a CFPA student over at Colgan, and I'm so proud of her efforts. She has been one of the students who has been nominated for a Cappy. She was nominated for Supporting Actor in a Female Role in a Musical.

[02:41:44] It was Hadestown. It was excellent. Colgan, by my count, looks like they have nine Cappy Awards nominations in sound, stage management, ensemble in a musical, vocalist in a male role, Supporting Actor in a Female Role, which is my niece, I am, Supporting actor in a male role in a musical, lead actor in a female role in a musical, song, wait for me, and overall musical.

[02:42:11] So I hope to hear some wins from Colgan. I know I went to see Hadestown. It was excellent. They did such a good job. I've gotten a chance to see various performances from the elementary, middle, and high school when kids are doing theater, musical theater.

[02:42:30] And it's a really important, we talk a lot about academics and we talk about robotics and we talk about athletics and we talk about winning scholarships. I don't want people to forget that there's a quiet importance in some of the work that goes on in theater.

[02:42:50] Specifically, there are roles for everybody. If you are a shy kid, you can work on the set and costume and makeup and all of that good stuff, lighting, things like that. If you kind of want to do it, but you're not quite ready to step out in a major role, you can be in an ensemble.

[02:43:07] There's just so many ways that you can participate. So I just wanted to remind people that the arts are always a great place to be. And that's gonna be it for tonight. I hope everyone enjoys the last little bit of school. Looking forward to the graduations I can get to, and have a good night.

[02:43:29] - Thank you, Ms. Nagapur. - Okay, that's it, all right. Well, I would be remiss if I did not also just honor the life and legacy of Congressman Conley. And I know this sudden passing is gonna leave a deep void in Northern Virginia, and especially this, you know, Fairfax, Prince William area.

[02:43:53] He was somebody that was a true public servant, and I don't think many people know he started from, you know, soil and water to board of county supervisors. He went all the way through everything, so he really was for the people, really for the community. And, you know, he endorsed me.

[02:44:11] He offered me guidance, too, along the way. But, like I said, more importantly, he just helped shape, like, the Northern Virginian that we live in today. I don't think many people realize that. And I just hope we can continue his work and just carry his example forward.

[02:44:28] And then, so on to some happy news, I just would like to say happy 15th birthday to Bella Simone. She turned 15 today, so, you know, we'll leave with that. And then I'll just close with this quote from James Baldwin, which I believe speaks to some moments that we're living in.

[02:44:50] And not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it's faced. And so let's just keep showing up for our students, for our communities, and for each other. Thank you. There being no further business to come before this board, I now declare this meeting adjourned.