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Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, September 3, 2025

Date Wednesday, September 3, 2025
Place Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length 3h 8m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qvDPK9BuQ34>
- 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.

[00:00:01] - Prince William County School Board will now come to order for the first school board meeting of this 25-26 academic school year. Motion is now in order for the approval of the meeting agenda. Vice Chair Blake. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the meeting agenda.

[00:00:20] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - Zargarpur, yes, I second. - Any discussion? Please vote. All in favor, please signify with your hand in the air, aye. Any opposed?

[00:00:35] No opposition noted. Motion passes unanimously, missing Tredenik. All right, moving on the motion to enter closed session. Motion's in order, Vice Chair Blake. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that pursuant to sections 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712 of Dakota, Virginia, the Prince William County School Board, enter closed session for the following reasons.

[00:01:01] One, to discuss with staff the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, Salaries, discipline, or resignation of specific public officers appointees or employees of any public body pursuant to section 2.2-3711A1 of Dakota, Virginia.

[00:01:23] Two, to discuss and consult with legal counsel regarding requests for religious exemptions pertaining to specific students under section 2.2-3711A of Dakota, Virginia. 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 section 2.2-3711A, 7, and 8 of the Code of Virginia.

[00:01:56] Four, to discuss with legal counsel and staff specific legal matters regarding the advice of, requiring the advice of legal counsel related to the collective bargaining under section 2.2-3711A8 of Dakota, Virginia.

[00:02:15] And five, to discuss with legal counsel and staff the actual or probable litigation involving staff, students, and other civil litigation involving the school division and specific legal matters related to the federal civil rights complaint pursuant to section 2.2-3711A, 7, and 8 of the Code of Virginia.

[00:02:40] And six, to discuss and receive briefings by staff members related to the security of school facilities, the safety of persons in using such facilities, and actions taken to respond to such matters where discussion in open meeting would jeopardize the security of such facilities pursuant to section 2.2-3711A19 of the Code of Virginia.

[00:03:06] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - Second. - Please vote, signify raising your hand. All in favor, any opposition? No opposition, motion passes unanimously. At this time, the Prince William County School Board will enter a closed session, open,

[00:03:24] and return to open in one hour.

[00:04:15] Good evening, the Prince William County School Board is returning to open session.

[00:04:32] And at this time, we have to take a series of votes. The first one involving certification of closed session, a, where is that, no, yeah, closed session certification. Motion's in order, Mr. Vice Chair, Blake. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[00:04:48] I move that pursuant to section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, the closed session of the Prince William County School Board meeting of September 3rd, 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 closed meetings, to which this certification resolution applies and two, only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening

[00:05:26] the closed meeting were heard and discussed or considered by the school board. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:05:56] - Vote is seven yes, one not present at vote. Wall, motion passed. - Okay, we have a series of action items we must do now. The first one will be 9.01 approval of appointments and releases and motions in order. Vice Chair Blake. - Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the appointments and releases of specific employees as presented in closed session.

[00:06:16] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Mrs. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:06:43] - The vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed. - Moving on to 9.02, a motion's in order. - Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the request for religious exemption from compulsory school attendance in case number RE 25-1 through RE 25-15.

[00:07:07] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion, please vote.

[00:07:29] - Vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed. - Moving on to 9.03 approval of legal counsel's recommendation, motion to order Vice Chair Blake. - Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board authorize the actions recommended by legal counsel as discussed in closed session.

[00:07:45] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - I second. Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:08:05] - The vote is six yes, two no, Tredinic Wall. Motion passed. - Okay, moving on to the Pledge of Allegiance. At this time, I'd like to invite our new student representative, Beulah Sarsa, senior at Hilton High School to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

[00:08:41] Excellent, thank you, Beulah. Okay, moving on next to, well, you know, this is great 'cause I'm gonna take a moment to introduce our newly elected school board representatives and our alternate and let me do that here.

[00:09:01] Here we go. Okay, hold on. All right, so I'm excited to, joining us tonight on the dais is Beulah Sarsa, senior at CD Hilton High School. And let's give her a round of applause.

[00:09:19] Beulah is passionate about public policy, political science and constitutional law. Her favorite subject is history and she wants to become a public interest lawyer. Our next school board representative who, and I believe she's here tonight, is Karina Grover, senior at Charles Colgan Senior High School.

[00:09:36] Karina is the vice president of the Virginia Student Council Association, which is the statewide organization of all student councils. And she is interested in becoming a child psychologist and she hopes to attend the University of Virginia next year.

[00:09:56] And our student alternate student representative of the year is William Billy Tyler from the Brentsville District High School.

[00:10:15] Billy is a top athlete on the Brentsville wrestling team and is ranked in the top 10 in the nation at 165 pounds. He is already committed to the Army's West Point, the West Point Academy for wrestling.

[00:10:34] And he plays seven instruments including guitar, cello, fiddle, harmonica, piano, ukulele, bass, and more. Thank you. This will be a great year with these three and we're very excited to work with them, collaborate with them and learn a lot about what our students want this year.

[00:10:53] Thank you very much. And so we welcome you again. Okay, before I go on to the Thrivings Future Focus, I'll just take a minute as chairman, because this is the first school board meeting of the year, the 25-26 school year, I wanna welcome our families, our students back to school, all our staff and everyone.

[00:11:12] I wanna talk about the good news that we can report to you, and you've seen some of it in the papers over the last few weeks and few months. SOL scores in Prince William County have increased across the board last year in all subject areas. They are above the state average and continue to progress nicely.

[00:11:31] Our graduation rate this past June was 95%. It hit the target for our four-year strategic plan, 94.7, yeah, 94.7, we're almost there.

[00:11:47] We're almost there, 94.7, I'm rounding. 95 was our goal, and so we're very close, folks, and I wanna thank all of our staff and teachers for doing that. We won record scholarship dollars last year. I

think we crossed \$150 million for across all high schools of scholarship dollars, won by our seniors, very proud of that.

[00:12:10] We have a record this year for the first time, Prince William first year teachers are gonna be paid the highest in the entire Commonwealth. And that is something that this school board has focused on for the last seven years and has made a concerted effort to make that happen.

[00:12:30] Along with Superintendent McDade, we have worked really hard over the last few years to address that and it is gonna help our ability to recruit and retain top-notch teachers. And it's already been working. And we all know that the number one criteria to help students improve as a quality of the teacher in the room, the quality of the principal in the building.

[00:12:50] Those are the top two things that matter. And all of this work we're doing with our human resources department is helping us retain and recruit some of the best people to work in those classrooms for our children. And I'm very proud of the work that Dr. McDade has done on instructional leadership because that has been paying off.

[00:13:09] We have completed or near completed the strategic plan four years ago, launching thriving futures. We are about to embark on a listening tour in our community with all of you, like we did four years ago. Many of you participated on the effort to write the strategic plan last time.

[00:13:28] I can tell you if the best predictor of future performance is past performance. If we've accomplished, as you'll hear in the next few months, most of the goals in our last strategic plan, you should know that Dr. McDade and this board is committed to accomplishing our next four-year strategic plan.

[00:13:45] So I would tell you all, and when you make recommendations to us, be ambitious, be proactive, and I think be really innovative and excited about what you'd like to see our school division offer over the next four years.

[00:14:03] And with all that, we've entered a school year where we continue to focus on safety and security of our students. You see the evolve systems at our schools, at our games. We'll continue to do that. We continue to sort of adopt best practices.

[00:14:18] And the other reason I think, you know, you've seen a lot of success over the last four years is we've been committed to our students, right? Student mental health supports, improved student counseling and career services. These things all have impacts on how we do, especially with our students, our English learning students, our students with disability.

[00:14:37] We've really made a strong commitment to that. our parent liaisons, all of you in the audience who continue to support your children is successful for this work. And I'd ask your favor for this year as we embark on the new cell phone policy, which has had a tremendous first two week rollout.

[00:14:53] Anecdotal evidence has shown that students are actually reading books at lunch. There's more noise at lunch. There's more engagement in the hallways. And so we're very excited by that. And we believe that will also be an added layer of improved student engagement that will lead to further success.

[00:15:10] I wanna thank you all for being here this evening. Thank you all for supporting Prince William County Schools. Thank you all for choosing this school division to educate your children. We will now move on to launching Thriving Futures Focus, which is next up on our agenda.

[00:15:28] Get that here. Thriving Futures Focus is an opportunity to highlight the exemplary work being accomplished in our schools that fulfill our vision that every student will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community. In our meetings, we acknowledge students, staff, and schools who've received state or national honors.

[00:15:47] The school board is proud to publicly recognize these honorees for their positive contributions to Prince William County Public Schools. Tonight, the school board will honor state champions in athletics and distinguished principals selected as Khan Fellows. We begin our recognitions with Miss Lisa Zargarpur, school board representative for the Coles District who will introduce our first honoree, Miss Zargarpur.

[00:16:09] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. It is my privilege to recognize the achievements of Charles J. Colgan Senior High School. Congratulations to Laurel Robertson, who earned the title of state champion in the 200 meter dash. I would like to celebrate Lauren's remarkable success and pride that she brings to her school community.

[00:16:28] And now I invite Dr. Healy, the principal of Colgan High School, or his designee, to share a few words on behalf of Lauren's championship. I'd also love to hear a word from Lauren too. - Thank you, Ms. Zargarpur. If it's okay, I'll let Melissa Tyrone, our coach speak.

[00:16:44] Is that okay? And then of course Lauren as well. - Hi, my name is Melissa Tyrone. Thank you very much to Ms. Zargarpur for recognizing us tonight and to the whole school board. I'd like to also thank Dr. Healy for his support for our track and field program and our cross country program.

[00:17:01] And Mr. Nate Staples, who is no longer with us at Colgan, which makes us very sad, but he has been a big support of us throughout his time at Colgan and has been with us as our student athletic activities for all of Lauren's career.

[00:17:17] So he watched her grow as an athlete. Lauren, honestly, her work ethic is meticulous. She has been at the state meet since her freshman year, placing in the state meet in her freshman year, second on our four by 200 meter relay. And since then she has made it to the state meet every single season.

[00:17:36] So it was wonderful for us to see her finally get an individual state title in the 200 meter dash. She also was the runner up in the 100 meter dash at the outdoor state meet this season. And she helped our girls team secure a second place team victory overall, which was the highest we've had a track and field team at Colgan place.

[00:17:58] So we're very proud of Lauren. We are looking forward to what she's going to do in her next two seasons that she has remaining with us for indoor and outdoor track and field. and excited to see where she's going to go next year as she attends and runs in college.

[00:18:13] Lauren, would you like to say anything? Oh, and of course, and I'm sorry, I also need to recognize Coach Sheena Brown, who is also here with us tonight. She is our sprint coach, and she has been, she came to us two years ago and has been such a help to our program, so I want to recognize her as well.

[00:18:32] - I just want to thank my parents and my coaches, 'cause I wouldn't be able to do it without them. - Thank you, Ms. Zargarpur, Thank you all.

[00:18:47] Vice Chair, Mr. Tracy Blake of the Neabsco District, you have the next honor. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. It is my distinct honor to recognize the achievements of the Garfield High School. And I just wanna say congratulations to Joshua Kai Smith, who earned the title as state champion in both the 110 meter and the 300 meter hurdles.

[00:19:10] I'm so proud of Joshua Kai's determination and excellence on the track. You know, I just want to say, I don't, so this kid, he broke Grant Holloway's 110 meter hurdle record, state record.

[00:19:28] And now, if you guys follow the track, Grant Holloway in 2024 won the gold medal in Paris, right? Or where was it, where was that at? Paris? So, yeah. So I would like to invite you to expect gold medals from this young man.

[00:19:47] Is that what you're saying, Mr. Lee? That's what, I mean, you see him. You see him right there. Tell him, Joshua. So I would like to invite, you know, this guy, this kid, he's quiet, most humble, hardworking kid. He's very, very good, very great representative of our community.

[00:20:04] But I'd like to invite Mr. Matheson, principal of Garfield High School, or whoever you want to share a few words on behalf of this double state champion title holder. I see Mr. Payne and Mr. Miller, too.

[00:20:20] Thank you. Well said, Mr. Blake. Thank you for that. And Dr. Lateef, Dr. McJade, and the rest of the school board, thank you for having us here. On behalf of Garfield, just want to say how proud we are of Joshua Kai and his competitive spirit. That's what drives him to continue to pursue excellence.

[00:20:41] He's not just a two-event state champion, he's a two-time, two-time state champion, repeating in these two events, and Mr. Blake, as you mentioned, state record holder, and I think you captured him very well, humble, quiet, hardworking, and just a great example, and someone that we're very proud to call a part of our Wolf Pack.

[00:21:09] And again, just on behalf of your coaches and your teachers and all of us at Garfield, congratulations, and we're looking forward to continuing to support and celebrate your future achievements as well. And I'm sure, knowing Joshua Kai, I'm sure he just would love to get up here and give a few remarks as well.

[00:21:28] I would like to thank my parents and my school for allowing me to get reach here, reach, reach, reach so far.

[00:21:45] - Go ahead, man, thank you. - Congratulations, Joshua Collin and the entire Garfield community. Keep up the good work. - Thank you, Mr. Blake, wonderful.

[00:22:01] Miss Erica Trandenik, school board representative for the Brentsville District. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. - Our final state champion. Go for it. - It is my honor to yet again recognize the outstanding achievements of Brentsville District High School.

[00:22:17] First, congratulations to Brentsville District High School's Kayla Smith, who earned the title of state champion in the 100 meter dash. I am extremely proud of Kayla. This is my first year not going to every track meet to watch her, to hear her scream.

[00:22:35] I mean, not her scream, to hear us all scream for her. Mom just told me, because I was guessing, but this is our sixth state champion that you've, championship that you've brought to Brentsville, and that you're gonna go for four more this year to have 10 all total, so.

[00:22:54] - Six more. - Six more, oh, we're going for six more. - Don't forget the release. - Okay, six more. Kayla is also a multi-sport athlete as well, a phenomenal cheerleader, and I am just so proud of you, and I hope to make it to watch you run this year again.

[00:23:11] I would like to invite Dr. Meintz, or Coach, to say a few words. - First, thank you all for having us here to celebrate all of these wonderful athletes. I always love to brag about Kayla. This is, like she said, this is Kayla's sixth state title.

[00:23:28] And for me, this one I think is, I'm the most impressed with. She started off early in the season, we had a foot injury and it restricted her training and how much she could do. And trying to get this one to not train is like pulling teeth. So it was a little difficult, it was frustrating.

[00:23:46] You know, we got closer to the state meet and we were a little worried about our fitness level and how we were gonna do. thing you need to know about her is she hates to lose um i think she hates to lose more than she loves to win it's it's it's pretty interesting but she doesn't quit um her fight is impressive and i knew i watched her 70 meters into that race i knew that title was hers she made a choice and she went for it and it was well deserved we are uh we're going to be so sad to see her go this is her last season with us but we are so excited to see what she's going to do both this season with

[00:24:24] us and then when she moves on to college with a dream of the Olympics so I want to say thank you for everyone there nice words thank you mr. Nick for all your nice words I want to give a very thing special thank you to both of my parents and my whole family for supporting me and my coaching staff I would not be where I am today and a very very special thank you to God because I could not do

[00:24:53] this without him you second congratulations to Henry Burge of Patriot High School who earned this title of state champion in the 800 meter run. Henry, I don't know how many you have, but I know I've seen you so many times here. I invite Mr. Van Gelder, principal of Patriot High School or his designate to share a few words on behalf of Henry. Hi, my name is James DeMarco.

[00:25:25] I'm the head track and field coach at Patriot High School. It's my honor to be here before you all and I thank you so much for recognizing all of our fantastic athletes in Prince William County. I get the honor of talking about Henry Burge. Henry is now a senior at Patriot.

[00:25:41] Besides his track and field accolades, he's a part of the Patriot Seniors, has a 4.2 GPA, and is also a fantastic athlete. He's won four state championships. He holds the state record for the 1,000 meter run and indoor track, and also has a team state title that he helped us win his freshman year.

[00:26:01] So just an outstanding individual, works incredibly hard, is now going through the recruitment process and just has fantastic schools recruiting them, but he somehow balances it all. It balances his grades, the singing, the track, and just makes it look so easy.

[00:26:18] So just a remarkable young man, just an honor to be there. I also like to thank Mr. Qualls for his outstanding support of our program and helping it grow and reach the heights that it has. And Mr. Van Gelder, their support's been tremendous. Thank you so much.

[00:26:39] First of all, thank you so much for having us here. I really just wanna thank God, my parents, my coaching staff, and my teammates. I really wouldn't be here without them, so I give a big shout out to them.

[00:27:04] - Next up, a big congratulations to Trent Daniels of Gainesville High School, who earned the title of state champion in both the 1600 meter and 3200 meter runs. Trent's also been here a lot, so I'm gonna let him tell you how many this is for him, but I would like to invite Mr. Beach, principal of Gainesville High School or his designee to share a few words about Trent.

[00:27:27] - All right, hello members of the school board. I'm the designee. I'm coach Connor Lee. I'm the head cross country and track and field coach at Gainesville High School. And you're right, Trent's been here a number of times. And it's wonderful to see the same other athletes come back a lot as well.

[00:27:42] This county is so deep when it comes to track and field and cross country that it's been a really exciting time getting to coach him for four years and coming to the end of that, watching him do what he's done as a sophomore and a junior and now entering his senior year. It's a really exciting thing to be a part of.

[00:27:58] It's a really hard working kid, great student, and obviously his accolades on the track speak for themselves. He was the fourth place finisher indoors last year at the New Balance Nationals in the 3,200 meter run. And he was a finalist in the 5k at outdoor nationals.

[00:28:13] He'll be looking to make another national meet in outdoor track and field this year, as well as his first in cross country. And like I said, great student off the track And the laundry list of schools that is after him this fall is truly impressive. So it's really excellent to watch him be as humble as he is when it comes to the life he is living.

[00:28:33] So, again, very congratulations to Trent. Congratulations to everybody else that is here today. And a job well done. Thank you again. I just want to thank my coaches and my family without their belief in support in me.

[00:28:50] I could not be anywhere. I am now without them. And my teammates, they're always there for me. Best group of guys I've ever been with in my life. and so thankful for them, so thank you.

[00:29:09] - And finally, the Gainesville High School baseball team won the class six state championship title, defeating Battlefield High School with a final score of eight to six. This victory marks a historic milestone for the Cardinals as it is their first ever VHSL baseball state championship.

[00:29:31] It's also the school's first state championship since opening in 2021. I'm gonna take a quick point of privilege here to tell you boys that although I never came to watch you in person because your parents are fierce, fierce parents that believe in, you know, superstition a little bit, these baseball parents.

[00:30:00] And years ago, I went to a Patriot game and I guess it was like the worst game ever and I happened to be in attendance, so I'm not allowed to go to baseball anymore. But I followed you all on social media. I read articles about so many of you and how you behave on and off the field and your camaraderie.

[00:30:19] I happen to know one of your coaches and just think the world of him. So I think this program did an amazing job and it was such a privilege to watch you guys do this, even if I had to watch from far away. Secretly wanted to sneak up on the last game but didn't want to ruin anything.

[00:30:35] So I didn't, you're welcome. And I'd like to invite one of the coaches to come and talk. - Hi, my name is John Miller, I'm the head coach. - One of three Millers up here. Thank you for having us. Thank you to Mr. Beach for his support over the past four years.

[00:30:53] He put together a great staff that has helped these guys get to where they want to get to at the next level. Thank you to Mr. Rittenour, our athletic director, who was on the team the last time a Prince William County school won a state championship 30 years ago. So thank you to them and everybody at Gainesville.

[00:31:12] As a new school, I got to coach an amazing group of over the last four years. They grew together and really made this about family and setting a high standard for ourselves. Two years ago, on the first day of practice, we stayed inside. We did a little presentation on team culture and explicitly told them what we wanted to continue to build upon.

[00:31:32] Things like ownership, competitiveness, intent, and selflessness. The last slide of that presentation had 21 high school names on it. And I asked the kids if they knew what it was. And one kid stepped up and he said, that's the name of all the state champions in baseball in the last 30 years.

[00:31:50] And there wasn't a Prince William County school on that slide. And they decided then that we wanted to make it a goal to be bring it back to Prince William County. So we did, we graduated a lot.

[00:32:08] So we don't have the full squad here, but the juniors are now seniors. I'll go ahead and announce them as we go down the line. And if they want to say anything, they can, which scares me a little bit, but in the back, we have assistant coach, Drew Miller and assistant coach, Scott Halsey,

[00:32:27] Coming down the line, we have our last catch making Ian Fournier, not Jeremy Hayden, Luke Gonzalez, Sean Mellinger, two-run home run to win the state championship, Aaron Rittenour, Gavin Genovese coming through in the clutch again and again, Ida Miller scored the winning run in the state semifinal, Cam Weeks, Jackson Morgan, and Luke Gravely.

[00:32:51] Two for three in the state championship? That a boy. So, that's us. If they want to talk, I don't know. I mean, wonderful.

[00:33:13] So first of all, I think coach Connor Gainesville said that the depth in Prince William County's athletics is incredible. I mean, if you have two Prince William teams competing for a baseball championship after not being in, winning one over 30 years, what a great testament to the depth in our county and all the great work our coaches, our teachers, our principals, our parents, our staff, and our students continue to do.

[00:33:40] Let's give them another round of applause. Amazing. As chairman, I could root for both teams and I wouldn't have lost. So thank you guys for doing it. Let's do it again this year.

[00:33:55] And next up, we have some more honorees and we are gonna, oh, and I would also like to note that Mr. Nate Staples, Supervisor Athletics, you heard about earlier in student activities for our division is here tonight to support our students. And thank you for being here.

[00:34:11] Mr. Justin Wilk of the Potomac District will introduce our next honorees. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Khan Fellowship is a prestigious national program that honors principals who demonstrate exceptional leadership, commitment to equity, and a record of improving student outcomes. Fellows join a network of outstanding school leaders from across the country to share best practices and strengthen their impact on education.

[00:34:34] And these leaders are among only 60 principals chosen nationwide. We have three right here in Prince William County. For me, in my district, it is an honor to congratulate my friend, esteemed

principal, Mr. R.J. Luchiotti of the Great Patti Elementary School.

[00:34:53] Mr. Luchiotti has been a change agent of that building since taking over, I think nine or eight years ago, has brought the team concept to the building with the elements. He's the father of two younger students and his dedication, as you see, he's here tonight.

[00:35:10] He's often at a lot of events at the school, missing his own kids activities. So it's someone I really admire. And so RJ, you have a captivated audience tonight. Would you like to say something? - Well, I don't know if I could follow that, but thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Wilkin. Thank you to the school board and everybody here tonight.

[00:35:26] I wish I had some cool athletic accomplishments to brag about, I'd feel much cooler, but congratulations to all of you guys. I just wanna say leadership within a school setting is very unique, it's fascinating, and it's extremely challenging.

[00:35:42] And to be recognized as an effective and transformative leader is something that I am extremely proud of. And as a con-distinguished principal, I look forward to continuing to examine leadership in deep and meaningful ways with other transformative leaders from around the country.

[00:36:00] But I also truly believe that this recognition is not my own. Patti Elementary School has an amazing staff who not only go to tremendous lengths to be great for children, but they also trust me to challenge them and they never settle for being good enough.

[00:36:15] And so I look forward to sharing Patti's story and representing the entire Patti community throughout this experience with the Khan Fellowship. And I hope that we as a school division continue to recognize and celebrate our school leaders for their incredible work. So thank you very much.

[00:36:37] - Thank you, Mr. Wilk. I turn to the Aquan District Representative Mr. Jesse to speak on behalf of his principal. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. It's my honor to recognize and congratulate Dr. Heather Abney, principal of Woodbridge High School her appointment as a con fellow i've known miss avenue now for almost 12 years i don't know if i remember meeting her husband first or her first but it's been a privilege to know you and we're looking forward to a lot of great things to continue with you i'd like to invite you to

[00:37:16] say a few words and congratulations thank you and again thank you to all the students that are here as a baseball bomb it's exciting to to see gainesville here so congratulations to the gainesville team and we got here early tonight my husband's here we got here early so he could sit in the front row i walked in and i see he's in the back row thank him for me dr latif members of the board and dr mcdade thank you for taking the time to recognize the three of us for being selected as con fellows i'm incredibly grateful to lead such an amazing school but this recognition is

[00:37:52] really a reflection of the incredible team that i work with every day our counselors our teachers our support staff our librarians our administrators they pour their hearts into our students every day all 2865 of them and i'd also like to thank my direct supervisor mr hood who's here tonight and mr jesse not only for supporting me but and for believing in me these 10 years as i've served the principal since i'll be with con fellows from across the country participating in advanced leadership development i hope to learn about new ways that we can improve student learning

[00:38:30] and outcomes at woodbridge and how i can better support our staff in achieving our goals being selected as a con fellow is an exciting opportunity for me to grow as a leader and i'm committed to

using that growth to better serve the woodbridge school community in the in the years ahead and again thank you as was mentioned earlier thank you for supporting the professional growth of principals because it really does help us grow as leaders and we're then able to support our staff

[00:38:59] who then support our students so again thank you i would just like to add again thank you dr ebony very proud of you and the reason joe's been in the back is he doesn't want me to tell about his driving backwards great thank you mr jesse up next is miss jennifer wall the gainesville district also has a distinguished recognition as well thank you Dr. Lateef it is my honor to recognize the achievements of the Gainesville district and I am thrilled to do so congratulations to Mr. Matthew Fithian

[00:39:38] principal of the Bull Run Middle School on your appointment as a con fellow Mr. Fithian and I first met when he was a new principal at Bull Run Middle School back when my oldest attended Bull Run Middle so he's just been a great principal for so long at Bull Run with and has served with distinction and I can just I could go on and on about the great qualities of mr. Fethian so congratulations and I'd like to invite you to share a few words with us about what this fellowship means to you thank you mrs. Wall for your kind words a good

[00:40:17] evening dr. McDade dr. Lateef and the school board members first of all I'd like to congrat or give a thank you to my area associate Mr. Harris for his support and the superintendent staff being selected a Khan distinguished fellow has been a great experience for me both professionally and personally it's a rare opportunity to continue to reflect grow and lead alongside a community of passionate and equity driven school leaders at the Khan fellowship this fellowship has reignited my commitment to lead with a purpose and with clarity. At Bull Run Middle School, our challenge is always closing the

[00:40:57] learning gap, in particular our students who are English language learners and students with disabilities. I believe that a fundamental shift in the way that we approach our instructional practices through a student-centered approach, project-based learning, can be a catalyst for real change. Project-based learning empowers students to explore meaningful and real-world problems that matter to them and their communities. It gives them a voice and ownership and what makes their learning experience feel relevant and authentic. It is my passion to bring this to Bull Run Middle School and my teaching staff so when students are

[00:41:35] engaged they feel that their learning experience is relevant and authentic. This work not only works inspire our English language learners and students with disabilities but it will inspire all students at Bull Run. This will be my focus on my project during the school year. I want to make a emphasis on Dr.

[00:41:55] McDade's recent speech at our leadership conference on cross-curricular project based and personalized learning. It deeply resonated and inspired me as I go into the Khan Fellowship program. That when we create inclusive, rigorous, and student-driven learning environments, we not only close the gaps, but we build unity, community, and a culture of excellence for all. The The Khan Fellowship will provide me with additional tools to my toolkit, network, and inspiration that will lead this project boldly.

[00:42:28] I'm very grateful to my community at Bull Run to continue this journey, and I'm excited for the impact that it will have on our school community. So thank you, once again, thank you, Mr. Harris, for your support, and the school board for your support.

[00:42:51] - Wow, congratulations. I think, you know, I have to say this, and it's not in my script, but you know, had the opportunity just you know having four kids in the school division and living in prince

william county now for 20 23 25 four years um that i i look at you know i see mr fithian who i our daughters played soccer together years ago uh i look at miss dr abney whose son played baseball with my son years ago a long time ago dr healy who coached my youngest kid in baseball or my oldest kid in baseball, like, and we're talking 15, 20 years ago.

[00:43:31] And what you're seeing here, folks, is a group of principals, leaders, coaches. Mr. Miller back there, who I didn't know was the assistant baseball coach at Gainesville, who's leading our horticulture program over there at Brentsville District High School.

[00:43:47] Turf, yeah, turf, horticulture, everything, right? He's doing it all up there. And we have folks in this community who are not just in our schools, they're in our communities and they're deep in our communities and they've been giving not just on their school time, but in their community time. And I think, you know, it is truly a reflection of, you know, the kind of people that come here and work and the kind of people we are lucky to have teach our children and work with them.

[00:44:12] And so let's give them all another round of applause for all these amazing people. Before we take a few pictures, Dr. McDade, would like to share a few words. Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Congratulations to our outstanding student athletes and staff that are here being recognized tonight.

[00:44:33] You truly are the example as to why PWCS is a destination for excellence in education. To our Gainesville High School baseball team, congratulations on bringing home the state title to Prince William County, which hasn't been won since 1995 when Princeville, I believe, took the Class A crown.

[00:44:54] So congratulations, we are PWCS proud. To our state champion track athletes, you are simply amazing, but more than that, you really are a model of perseverance, resilience, and dedication. I know what it takes for you to run track and to win a title, and so you are a shining example for all of your peers.

[00:45:16] And to our distinguished Khan Fellows, I want to congratulate each of you for your leadership. You are a powerful example of what leadership means to an entire school community. We're so proud of the work that you're doing, the challenges that you take on, on behalf of students every single day, to ensure that they are able to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[00:45:38] Thank you so much for your dedication, your hard work, for your entire teams, and their commitment to our students and our families. And so to each and every one of you, I just wanna say congratulations on these remarkable accomplishments. Not only are we proud, you represent all that it means to be the profile of a PWCS graduate.

[00:45:58] And our staff members, you represent all that it means to help to create a thriving future for students. So congratulations, job well done. - Thank you, Dr. McHade. At this time, I'd like to request our honorees to come forward for a photo of the school board and receive a small token of our appreciation.

[00:46:17] We'll start with one photo that includes our track state champions, followed by a photo of the baseball team.

[00:46:21] And the third photo will include our con fellows.

[00:47:15] - Oh, you good. This is fine, this is fine. Yeah, are you ready?

[00:47:24] One, two, three.

[00:49:02] Okay, wonderful, thank you all very much.

[00:55:15] That was a longer one 'cause we had to do all the spring athletes and a lot of those champions come in after our last few board meetings and even after commencement actually in some cases. We are now moving to 12.01 adoption of the consent agenda.

[00:55:31] Vice Chair Blake, motion is in order. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the public meeting consent agenda as recommended. - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - One second.

[00:55:46] - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:56:04] - It is eight yes unanimous, motion passed. - Okay, moving on 1301, approval of acknowledgements and recognitions, a motion is in order, Mr. Blake. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the adoption of the acknowledgements and the recognitions as recommended.

[00:56:21] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - Second. - Okay, any discussion? - Mr. Chairman. - I just like to make the announcement since the beginning of school year that most of these we approve a month in advance so that they're already done for the upcoming celebrations.

[00:56:39] This particular one, the first one, National Security Officer Appreciation Week is actually in September. So I just wanted to make that designation. Thank you. - Great, thank you, Ms. Williams. Please vote.

[00:57:06] - The vote is seven yes, one abstained. Tridentic, motion passed. - Okay, moving on to citizen comment time. Those citizens who've signed up in advance with the clerk may address the school board this evening when they are called to the podium. The citizen comment period for regular school board meetings is one hour and citizens may speak on the agenda items or other topics germane to the operations and policies of Prince William County Schools.

[00:57:27] Please use proper decorum and manners while at the podium or you'll be asked to step aside. We ask that the audience please be respectful of each speaker and refrain from any clapping, cheering or jeering to avoid disruptions in the meeting. If you do not do so, the board will recess and I'll ask the room to be cleared to restore public order. A couple other points, because it's the first meeting of the year.

[00:57:46] We are, because we have so many speakers tonight, they're going to two minutes a speaker. We have 30 speakers. Speakers who speak at this meeting will not get to speak at the next meeting unless there's open slots, so you're allowed one meeting.

[00:58:03] That's one of our rules. And those who don't show up today don't get to speak at the next meeting. They have to take a meeting off if they showed up and took a spot from someone who wasn't able to do it. A couple other rules. You cannot allot your time to anyone else.

[00:58:20] Time to speak at Prince William County School Board meetings is allotted to people that are citizens of Prince William County, Prince William County School employees, parents, guardians of students and owners, employees of businesses or other organizations with a mailing address in Prince William County.

[00:58:39] And I think that's it. And so tonight, like I said, We have 30 citizens signed up to speak. When I call your name, please come to the podium and state your name and address for the record per policy 134.

Again, the speaker's allotted two minutes today. I'll call the first five up and they can come up and grab seats up front while they're waiting to speak.

[00:59:05] Okay, here we go. Speakers in this order will be Josie Gillespie, Monon Davis, Carl Greetin, Mary Ann Jensen, and Emily Cherry. Josie Gillespie.

[00:59:30] - Good evening, name's Josie Gillespie. Chairman Lateef, members of the board, thank you for allowing me time to speak on a matter of great importance.

[00:59:48] My name is Josie Gillespie. I am a resident of Prince William County and a history teacher in Fairfax County Schools. Recently, the Trump administration has launched an attack on our schools and their students. I wanted to first say thank you for standing up for trans students across the county.

[01:00:06] These attacks have caused real harm for our students and community. The attacks by President Trump and Secretary McMahon are illegal and unconstitutional. They claim our schools are going against Title IX.

[01:00:23] However, as has been pointed out in your response to the DOE, this could not be further from the truth. In Grimm v. Gloucester County Schools Board, the courts ruled that trans students are protected under Title IX. Further, a higher court has not overturned this.

[01:00:43] Additionally, Virginia has passed code 22.1-32.3, which required schools to adopt protections for trans students. This led to Prince William County Schools adopting regulation 738-5, which further protects trans students.

[01:00:59] While Trump and McMahon may feel that they have the power of kings, they do not. The executive branch does not interpret the law. That is not their job. Rather, the courts have the power to interpret the law. therefore complying with-- - I'm sorry about that, I missed the time.

[01:01:17] Your time ended, thank you. Next up, Monon Davis. - Good evening, Dr. McDade, Dr. Lateef, and esteemed school board members.

[01:01:39] My name is Monon Davis and my address is on file. Tonight I speak to you with deep gratitude and two powerful reasons. First, as a proud Fitz-Turner commissioner for the Virginia Education Association and a member of the Prince William Education Association, I wanna thank you for honoring our collective bargaining agreement during these challenging times your commitment to fairness stability means everything to the hard-working employees of this county it is a gesture that speaks volumes about your integrity respect for those who serve our schools secondly i want to thank you and incur as i am for excuse

[01:02:17] me thank you for embracing every student in the school system for exactly who they are as a parent teacher mom teacher family member of the lgbtq plus community i know the vitality it is for our schools to be placed a place of acceptance and love my favorite book reminds me who am i to call unclean what god has called clean and who we are not to judge other but we are to uplift your support tells our students loud and clear you see them you value them and you and they belong for that

[01:02:55] am truly and deeply grateful thank you very much Carl Green good evening I'm Carl Gretton of the Gainesville district do the right thing and use title 9 and the Virginia Human Rights Act to protect girls from boys that say they want to be girls why is the school board incorporating resistance over safety and

common sense parents and students are fighting for democracy transgender students can participate on teams yet please add a rule that they cannot

[01:03:34] participate in sports on county property. What steroids or medical procedures are giving these transgender athletes an ability that other students are not allowed to have? This is unfair. Why are we listening to 1% of students and what they want? The Prince William County School Board is acting against 99% of students. Years ago this is the same situation as handicapped students. Now there's a Special Olympics in which specialized group of students can participate and win. If boys want to play in girls sports, the solution is simple. All the girls

[01:04:08] should quit and join recreation, travel, or select leagues. I am sure there will be enough coaches and locations to play. That will also create a stand against high school sports. Who needs that? The transgender boy? There may be only one player on that team. We are not forgetting Chairman latef putting parents last in the pecking order as he says you have to listen to god teacher parent the current stance of the prince william school board is political we say their stance when board members do not win candidacy for higher positions justice delayed is justice denied thank you

[01:04:48] maryann jensen good evening my name is maryann jensen i am frustrated to be here again addressing this board's repeated incompetence. It's starting to feel like a part-time job given your repeat behavior. So here we are. It's appalling that you won't protect private spaces for girls, including their bathrooms, while you sanctimoniously claim to defend all students.

[01:05:21] Instead, you push a dangerous and unpopular policy that endangers young women for your misguided political agenda. And you're using a county supervisor-granted \$40 million slush fund to circumvent the executive order to do it. Taxpayers did not approve this, and we do not want to pay for it.

[01:05:39] It's absurd, but typical of this board, that the dignity of our boys and girls is being stripped away in the safest of places, children's bathrooms and locker rooms. Prince William County risks becoming the next Loudoun County, where these policies have caused chaos and actual harm. You are actively choosing this path, and it's horrifying.

[01:05:58] How much longer will you let politics blind your common sense? Are you waiting for irreversible mental and physical harm before you act? And don't say you're helping so-called trans kids from self-harm. That has been debunked. You ignore the real harm. You cause the rest of the children.

[01:06:14] You're on the wrong side of truth, again. Other leaders are protecting kids by grounding policies in biological reality. But you, you are raising a generation of girls who are too afraid to speak up and use their voice. You are silencing them. You're gambling with children's health, pushing trans housing by proxy nonsense it's some noble crusade it's not it's wrong parents see it Virginians see it and the nation sees it we're done watching you work against children act now or history will mark you as the ones who failed them jensen next up emily cherry the five after her just so you all know is katherine petway jeff

[01:06:51] lofgren victoria staubly jen donnelly and lucian bode emily chair hi my name is emily cherry and my My address is on file. I'm the mom of two Prince William County students, a fifth grader and a ninth grader.

[01:07:08] My guess is that my family is similar to a lot of families in Prince William County. Like a lot of moms, I tend to be a worrier and my beginning of the school year worries have probably been similar to a

lot of the other parents here tonight. I worried about finding all of those back to school supplies, especially the exact brand of pencils that my ninth grader insisted were needed.

[01:07:29] I worried about our new family schedule because wow, that high school bus comes early, especially for use of middle school hours. I worried about figuring out the easy A2B bus app, which honestly is still a mystery to me. I worried my fifth grader wouldn't have friends.

[01:07:46] I worried that my ninth grader wouldn't find a place to sit in the high school lunchroom. Like every parent, I send my kids to school each day, excited about all they're going to learn, thankful for their teachers, but always with some worry deep down inside. But my worries have been closer to the surface lately because one of my kids is transgender.

[01:08:06] So I worry because they don't always have a bathroom that they feel safe in. So sometimes they go all day without eating or drinking. I worry because I see the pain in their eyes when they come home and say they've been called a slur or purposefully misgendered. I worry because last year, approximately 50% of transgender students seriously considered attempting suicide.

[01:08:28] Like all parents in this room, Hearing that statistic about my child's community, I worry every second of every day if I've done enough to guarantee that my child is never part of that 50%. Thank you. - Catherine Pettway.

[01:08:52] - Good evening. I'm Catherine Pettway, 1229 Creekview Circle, Woodbridge. Woodbridge Senior High School, class of 2014. Thank you for defending the rights of transgender students.

[01:09:07] Thank you for keeping them safe, like me and my classmates should have been. See, I went through Prince William Public Schools before policy 738-5. I remember the world that the Department of Education wants to take us back to. It erased the trans kids and it dehumanized everyone.

[01:09:26] They taught us that there were exactly two ways to be, male or female, defined by the gonads. Or according to sex ed at Lakeridge Middle School, women are like crock pots 'cause they heat up slow, but men turn on like a microwave.

[01:09:42] My high school policed girls' bodies and clothes relentlessly, but I was still sexually harassed in class on a weekly basis. Then they went in gendered graduation gowns. Instead of school colors, girls wore white. I remember it viscerally.

[01:09:59] I felt like I was wearing someone else's skin, not a boy, not quite a girl. Didn't know the word genderqueer, non-binary. Back then, I just called myself broken. This fight isn't just about bathrooms. It's about public schools as a locus of government control over our bodies, our families, and our values.

[01:10:18] If they convince us to sacrifice the trans kids, who and what else can they make us give up? But in this county, we love our children, we love our neighbors, and they cannot take that away. Board members, we're with you. Thank you. - Jeff Lofgren.

[01:10:36] Jeff Lofgren. - Hi there, my name is Jeff Lofgren. My address is on the record with the clerk. I'm a parent here in the county. I asked my dad, who's an 81-year-old veteran who lived in Northern Virginia for much of his life to share his perspective on the importance of our non-discrimination policy.

[01:10:55] He couldn't be here, but he asked me to read this for him. Members of the board, I'm Curtis Lofgren, and I'm the proud grandparent of a gender-diverse teenager who was a student at a Prince

William High School. I wanna thank you for your courage and leadership in face of the recent directive from Trump's Department of Education.

[01:11:12] As someone who spent three years of my childhood in Lower Alabama prior to the Civil Rights Act, I never expected to be fighting for educational inclusion in 2025. I looked at the Civil Rights Act as a major win for American education and continuing acceptance of diversity in our public school system.

[01:11:31] When a federal agency threatened Prince William Schools with imminent enforcement action, many of us held our breath or muttered, "Not again." But you did not waiver. Your commitment to standing firm and upholding policies that protect all students, including our transgender and gender diverse youth is a testament to the values of this county.

[01:11:51] For my grandchild and for so many others, these policies are not political talking points. They are the foundation of a safe and comfortable school life. Your support allows my grandchild to feel seen, respected, and most importantly, safe at school. And that allows them to focus on what matters most, their education.

[01:12:09] The rights and dignity of each student matter and make Prince William County a welcoming, growing place where people wanna live and raise their family, signed Curtis Lofgren. Thank you. - Thank you. Victoria Stabley.

[01:12:27] - Hi, I'm Victoria Stabley. I live in the Occoquan District. My address is on file. I'm a citizen of Prince William. I wanna begin by thanking the school board for supporting trans kids. For many years now, but particularly over the past year, pressure has ratcheted up from Washington and you have displayed grace under fire.

[01:12:50] I'm proud to be represented by a school board has rejected the false choice presented by the federal department of education and said we can find a way to support all our students i'm proud to be represented by a school board who cares more about the children of prince william county than currying favor with the administration finally to the trans kids of prince william county i say you are not alone i want to end by quoting the lord of the rings movies um samwise genji says to to frodo uh that there is some good

[01:13:28] in this world mr frodo and it's worth fighting for thank you jen donnelly hi my name is jen donnelly and my address is on file today i stand before you not just as a parent but as a voice for those boys who are increasingly being silenced in our discussions about gender and policy we often hear about the impact of these policies on biological girls and while their challenges are significant I urge you to consider the consequences of these same

[01:14:05] policies for our boys take for instance the heartbreaking situation in Loudoun County where boys were suspended simply for pointing out that there was a girl in their bathroom imagine that teenage boys just trying to make an observation are now facing severe repercussions my heart sank when I heard about it I can picture any typical teenage boy who might not might point out the obvious they're not trying to be hurtful they're just trying to navigate a complex world the implications of these policies are far-reaching they can jeopardize their futures affecting college admissions and opportunities that should be available to them based on their merit and character by compelling them to

[01:14:45] disregard biological realities we are not only silencing their voices but also putting their futures at risk all in an effort to accommodate a small minority The solution cannot be to force our boys to

compromise their comfort and rights in their own spaces Let's explore options that respect everyone's dignity What if we designated gender-neutral facilities for those who need them while allowing the majority of our boys and girls to use the bathrooms and locker Rooms that align with their biological identity. Thank you

[01:15:17] Good evening members of the board. My name is Lizanne Bodie. I live in the Occoquan district and my address is on file I want to begin by expressing my sincere gratitude for your decision to affirm and protect transgender students alongside their cisgender peers.

[01:15:44] In a time when so many young people are watching how adults respond to their identities, your leadership sends a clear message. Every child belongs. As a parent to a transgender teen and to other children who don't fit neatly into traditional gender norms, I've seen firsthand the power of affirmation.

[01:16:02] It's not just about policy, it's about survival. According to the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 41% of LGBTQ+ students have seriously considered suicide, my own child included, compared to just 13% of their cisgender heterosexual peers.

[01:16:21] And yet, when those same students are supported in affirming environments, their mental health outcomes improve dramatically. Your decision is not only compassionate, it's evidence-based. I also speak to you tonight as a special education teacher. My daily work centers on protecting and empowering students who are often overlooked or underestimated.

[01:16:42] Whether they struggle with reading, attention, or identity, my duty is the same, to ensure they feel safe, seen, and supported. That duty doesn't stop at the classroom door. It extends to every hallway, every policy, every moment of care. You've chosen to stand on the side of dignity and inclusion.

[01:16:58] You've chosen to protect children who are statistically more vulnerable and who are so often told they don't matter. I want you to know that your decision matters deeply to families like mine, to educators like me, and most of all to the students who will walk into school tomorrow.

[01:17:13] Thank you. - All right, I'm gonna call the next five. Kathleen Daly, Lauren Phillips, Rina Stapp, Christopher Saylor, and Adam Bowling.

[01:17:32] - Hello, my name is Kathleen Daly, and I am a mother of four children currently enrolled in Prince William County Schools. I am here tonight to say thank you. Firstly, thank you for upholding your non-discrimination policy. When the news came out that PWCS had decided to stand by their policy, I immediately felt a swell of pride and gratitude.

[01:17:52] I'm incredibly proud to have my children in a district that stands by and supports all of their students. Secondly, I want to say thank you for providing free breakfast and lunch for summer school. My son was dreading going to summer school this year.

[01:18:08] When he found out that he was getting free breakfast and lunch every day, his attitude towards coming to summer school completely changed. He was so excited, like he was actually excited to go to summer school. I sincerely hope that free meals for all students is something that PWCS can continue to do for years to come.

[01:18:28] Thank you. - Thank you, Lauren Phipps. - Good evening, my name is Lauren Phipps and my address is on file with the clerk. I'm from the Gainesville district.

[01:18:44] I'm here tonight to express my sincere thanks to the PWCS board for standing their ground and defending their students from discrimination. I graduated from Colgan High School in 2023 and could say without a doubt but the policies regarding trans students allowed me to focus on my studies and my future.

[01:18:59] I knew that the school had my back. Unfortunately for many trans students, school is their only safe place. Our senior year, a close friend of mine was kicked out of their home for being transgender. They bounced around from couch to couch, all while still determined to finish school.

[01:19:15] Unfortunately, they passed away just months before graduation, but they were a dedicated student who saw school as an escape, a place for them to learn like everyone else and start on a path towards creating a better world for all of us without the heavy burden of discrimination hanging over the heads of our youth.

[01:19:32] So thank you to the board for fostering an environment that gave so many students, like my late friend, a reprieve from the gritty struggles in their lives. Thank you for your time. - Rena Stapp.

[01:19:55] - Good evening, Dr. McDade, I guess Chairman Lateef, wherever he is, and other members of the school board that are here and community members here tonight and listening along. My name is Rena Stapp. I'm a parent, a citizen, a teacher here in Prince William County, and my address is on file with the clerk.

[01:20:13] Tonight, I want to thank you for standing up for our non-discrimination policy here in Prince William County, a policy which is aligned with Virginia State Code, a policy that in executive order has no power to change, a policy that was voted in eight years ago after many impassioned speeches and a lot of research.

[01:20:32] Thank you for standing up for our schools. All our children benefit from an inclusive school environment. safe place where they can learn, make friends, and deal with the business of just being kids for a few short years. My own children have benefited from PWCS schools accommodations, whether desk fidgets for ADHD, speech therapy, predictive text typing programs, even if my son would rather play Fortnite than actually use his school computer to do his homework. If the federal government targets one protected group this time, what is stopping them from attacking all the others including migrant children children with disabilities or any group

[01:21:09] seen as other right now that's you you are the ones protecting them and I wanted to make sure you knew that we appreciate what you're doing and we want you to know that the same passion you had eight years ago to protect all children in our school system is here again tonight keep it up Christopher sailor and then the next five will be Adam bowling Caitlin Weston Jeannie louder Shane Wells and Carol Fox good evening school board and Superintendent McDade. My name is Chris Saylor and my address is on file. Last

[01:21:48] February I stood before you as a product of Prince William County Schools and as a proud father of four PWCS students, two cisgendered, one non-binary and one transgender, asking you to retain our school system's LGBTQIA+ inclusive policies. That evening, after many impassioned comments, you made the commitment to leave them in place. Today I'm here to thank you for keeping that commitment, especially in the face of the unprecedented bullying from the Oval Office. Thank you for understanding that inclusive policies directly protect the

[01:22:26] health and well-being of all students. Thank you for ensuring that all students will feel welcomed at our schools. Thank you for not adopting anti-inclusive policies that would target our trans and non-binary students and staff, but most importantly thank you for not bowing to the white nationalist overreach from those currently in power their regime will fade but the impact you will leave upon the children that grace the halls of our public schools will last a lifetime the impact of your decision is already palpable in our home last year after Trump's election our non-binary high schooler would come home concerned about what the onslaught of executive orders would mean for them on a weekly

[01:23:04] basis my husband and I would have to assure them that they were going to be safe no matter what fast forward to now and with your decision to keep them safe they are thriving they come home with joy telling us about what they've learned what their friends are up to keep it up thank you so much adam bowling good evening dr mcdade and school board my name is adam bowling and my address is on file with the clerk i am the pastor of first united presbyterian church

[01:23:40] of dale city and the proud father of a recent prince william county school graduate and the the parent of three other PWCS students, including a transgender student. I want to thank you tonight for following the established law in Grimm versus Gloucester and for standing with transgender and non-binary students by upholding your non-discriminatory policies under Title IX.

[01:24:06] This policy saved my daughter's life in middle school, and I'm certain it has saved other lives as well. We are not just talking about policies here, we are talking about lives and futures of students in our community.

[01:24:25] As a faith leader, it gives me hope to see this board standing up for marginalized and oppressed folks, just as so many of our scriptures call us to do. And as a parent, I am grateful that my child can walk into her school knowing that she belongs.

[01:24:47] I am also thankful that we can stand firm against federal overreach into our community, especially when politicians use fear and misinformation rather than truth and compassion. So tonight I'm simply here to say thank you.

[01:25:04] Thank you for doing the hard thing and speaking truth to power. Thank you. - Caitlin Weston. - Good evening. My name is Katie Weston and my address is on file with the clerk.

[01:25:24] It is such an honor to be here with all of you this evening. And I wish to continue sharing in the appreciation for your leadership. Thank you for continuing to do what is right and stand up for all kids, including trans kids.

[01:25:40] We support you and we stand with you. As we begin the school year, it is imperative to increase our awareness of those struggling with mental health, especially with the extreme pressure students may feel with the return to school.

[01:25:57] Parents and guardians, please check in with your loved ones. All students across the district have access to no-cost mental health telehealth services through Hazel Health. I encourage all to take advantage of this important resource.

[01:26:13] Now, please join me in a moment of silence to send our love and thoughts to all those impacted by suicide or suicide attempts.

[01:26:42] Remember, you are not alone. Thank you. - Next, Jeanne Lauder.

[01:27:01] - As stated, my name is Jeanne Lauder and I live in the Princeville District. address is on file. Eight years ago I stood before this board, many of you were here, and expressed some of my concerns. My husband also came that day and shared a story about going on an airplane and being asked to take his carry-on luggage and check it. He arrived at his destination with no clothes and an important business meeting to go. The airline promised him that his

[01:27:33] things would get there and he um equated that with what this board is doing is making policies that they can assure the safety of some of the students over the last eight years i've had the opportunity of talking to many people and their views and concerns one of them is a friend whose child attended prince william county schools and went under a different name and gender unbeknownst to her until that child came home from school and in college fully transitioned.

[01:28:06] Another friend contacted me knowing my background in mental health and expressed to her to me her concern that she was threatened with CPS intervention for one of her children who was identifying as a different gender and they she was told that she needed to get her gender affirming care um i realize my time is very short um but i want to really reiterate to each of you the importance of thinking about all of the children and also thinking about the original

[01:28:37] intent of title 9 and that is to protect biological women and girls thank you shane wells good evening my name is shane wells my address is on file as a proud pwcs parent i just wanted to express my my sincere gratitude for in continuing to stand up to marginalized group or for marginalized groups and people in our community it is important to me that my

[01:29:13] children go to school every day knowing that they are safe that they are they can be who they are and that there's that bullying and discrimination is not gonna happen keeping your non-discrimination policy as it stands not only follows the law as it as it exists and continues to protect these marginalized groups and employees it actually stands up for public education the federal government should not be allowed to enforce changes to an inclusive policy that has been implemented and protected by locally

[01:29:50] elected representatives I believe in the values our district has continued to commit to and I am confident that you will continue to do the right thing thank you Carol Fox and then after her the next five will be Hina Ansari Blake Harrah, Nicole Scheiding, Jenny Reed, Angie Trier Tola, and Arvinder Jory, Carol Fox.

[01:30:18] Good evening. I'm Carol Fox and my address is on file. Tonight I'm talking about Title IX and the trans student. That is the reason for the big dispute between the Office of Education and Prince William County. Title IX was enacted in 1972 to prohibit sex-based discrimination in schools receiving federal money. Its purpose was to bring equality, not equity, to the sports teams and the sports scholarships for girls and women. If you had a boys sports team, you had to have a girls sports team with all the uniforms, coaching, and travel just like the boys had. College sports scholarships

[01:30:57] must be evenly available to both male and females. Title IX was based on sex, not gender identity, or rather gender dysphoria. Gender dysphoria is actually a mental illness requiring mental health intervention by psychiatrists or psychologists. Why does Prince William County support ongoing mental illness even to the point of concealing it from parents who are the main caregivers of their children? Let's take a look at some of the mass shootings. Notice the common thread. The Denver shooter, trans. The Aberdeen shooter, trans. The Nashville shooter, trans. The Georgia shooter, trans.

[01:31:35] The Philadelphia shooter, trans. The Iowa shooter, gender fluid. The Uvalde shooter, trans. The Colorado shooter, trans. And the latest, the Minnesota shooter, who has stated in his writings that he was brainwashed to become a trans.

[01:31:51] Prince William County Schools must honor Title IX based on biological sex. - Thank you, Ms. Fox. - Keep girls sports and locker rooms for the girls. Thank you. - Inan Sari.

[01:32:08] - Thank you to the board and to Super Nintendo McDade for allowing us to be here. My address is on file. I'm not sure who I'm pointing at. I just wanted to come here and thank you on behalf of all the trans students. I work in the school system too. I'm a substitute teacher, so I'm not really a teacher. I'm just a pretend teacher. But I wanted to tell you that I was trying to think of what I could do to help you guys, to help defend your position.

[01:32:29] I thought to myself, I'm studying for the LSAT, which is the law school entrance exam. So to your student advocate, I've been studying for years as in plural. So there you go. If you're not a very good test taker. anyway so in the LSAT it's made up of all arguments so you have to dissect the arguments to figure out what they are and then break them down to their little parts and then attack the flaws so I thought I would try to help you out because the best offense is a good defense right unless you're Redskins fan I don't know so if you break it down so I'll just go down with the evidence of the premises so I'm just gonna go over what the pieces of the evidence are for the argument and then we can decide what we think is valid or not based on the conclusion being made by the anti-trans argument so kids need to use the

[01:33:08] bathroom trans kids cisgender kids and then the premise I'm going to concede to them is violence and discomfort occurs in the bathroom which is not statistically valid there's no not enough data for us to click on that and the conclusion is that trans kids are causing this there's no there's a causal relationship but it's not proven with any evidence they have one case and as anybody who studies statistics and has had the misfortune of taking statistics one does not a significant statistical sample size make it's like me saying I went to Panera and I had bad food and every time I go to Panera, I'm gonna get sick, that's ridiculous.

[01:33:40] So anyway, thank you and I hope that helps you and. - Blake, Hara.

[01:34:01] - Good evening, distinguished board members and chair. My name is Blake Hara and I'm here to discuss concerns regarding the safety and security of our students and concerns that are shared by a number of parents. I would also like to address violations of Virginia law 8VAC 20-780-320 by Prince William County Public Schools.

[01:34:19] Currently Covington Harper Elementary School is operating at more than 130% capacity. recent years overcrowding has necessitated the use of portable classrooms as a remedial measure this situation has developed due to the school board's failure to rezone since it opened in 2017. Portable classrooms have also required the installation of an external bathroom trailer as a spotted health measure. 780-320 states that centers shall have at least one standard size toilet and one sink per 30 school-aged children and no privy or outdoor toilet shall be located within 75 feet of other buildings or camp activities. The current external facility

[01:34:56] is only 24 feet from the nearest portable. This facility is inaccurate inadequate, violates Virginia law and puts our children at risk of sanitary issues. Currently there's only one security device portable near the portables which cannot monitor the entire area. If a child leaves the classroom in the

farthest area to use the external bathroom they must walk more than 51 feet before being seen by the security camera and 239 feet before being seen by the main building camera this is unacceptable and puts our children at significant risk and dangerous situations including the potential for school shooting kidnapping and sexual harm there are more

[01:35:32] than 20 registered sex offenders within a five mile radius of cuttington harper dr latif thank you mr haram nicole shiding nicole shining jenny reed jenny reed hi my name is jenny reed um my

[01:36:06] address is on file i'm prince william county west resident and um first of all i just want to say you guys do an awful lot of good things um like for example you mentioned that the test scores are going up the people the kids are graduating better i mean a lot of things are really good um probably not everything but a lot but um what one thing that you have been doing really well recently is keeping all students transgender and non-transgender alike they're they're all

[01:36:44] valued and and respected and and given a place and you've been doing that really well and i am just wanted to say thank you for continuing for doing that for so long and for hopefully continuing to do that i know it's getting really rough out there with them trying to tell you that that other students will suffer if you don't make these students suffer and that just says everything you need to know about how if you give this time it'll keep going to other kids next time and so

[01:37:21] on and so forth so keep doing what you're doing you're you're awesome thanks bye-bye angie good evening dr mcdade and members of the school board my name is angie tray rotola first time speaker and longtime listener i'm a prince william county school social studies teacher and proud to be your first vce virginia personal finance teacher fellow as of 2023 i want to begin by thanking you

[01:38:00] for your ongoing efforts to make our schools more inclusive tonight however i'm here to ask that we as a community work together with the current school board to ensure our technology is truly accessible for all students i'm also practicing what i've taught over 1500 students this county across my teaching career to use their voice to advocate for change because i can't vote in prince of William County, I choose to work here.

[01:38:22] I'm fed up and so are hundreds if not thousands of my colleagues across the county. After three weeks of wifi outages and outdated laptops that continue to disrupt the learning environment. I often tell my students that infrastructure is my favorite word. It's the unsung hero of our society that we rely on, that we ignore until it breaks.

[01:38:39] We don't notice until the power's gone and we certainly take wifi for granted until it disappears. These past few weeks have made it painfully clear our current technology infrastructure cannot support the innovative tools we wanna use in the classroom. We are now at eight out of 10 days with connectivity issues, and I'm at the point where I must decide whether I use my hotspot to take attendance or check email during some periods.

[01:38:57] This is no longer just a tech inconvenience, it's an accessibility issue. Many students rely on text-to-speech, speech-to-text and large fonts, translation tools, and other digital supports to access the learning in a district where students speak over 170 languages where biotechnology is not optional. I know we're committed to innovation, and we need to come together to a community to figure out what the solution is, because we would like to be able to use all the tech we can. - Thank you, Mr. Geritol.

[01:39:20] Arvinder Jori, then the next five after her will be John Breen, Martha Kutsinger, Chris Vunderburg, Riley Oldenburg, and Melissa Jerk. - Good evening, my name is Arvinder Jori and my address is on file.

[01:39:39] I'm the co-chair of PWEA's Social Justice Committee and a teacher in Prince William County Schools. As an educator, one of my core responsibilities is to authentically understand and respect my students. The Virginia Department of Education's framework for culturally responsive teaching emphasizes the need to establish a classroom and school culture in which all dimensions of diversity are respected and valued, which aligns with state law, mandating that educators receive training in cultural competency.

[01:40:16] Experts agree that for students to thrive academically, they must feel seen, heard, and accepted. In midst of tectonic policy shifts, It is paramount to create a safe, compassionate, and supporting environment for our students in which all students feel safe to be exactly who they are meant to be.

[01:40:40] Policy 738-5 is crucial in ensuring that transgender and gender non-conforming students attend schools free from discrimination. I would like to commend the school board for reaffirming your commitment to equity by refusing to change this policy.

[01:40:58] By doing so, you are advocating for hope and solidarity. Your decision not only codifies non-discriminatory protections for all students, but also clarifies our ethical obligation to advance equity and respect.

[01:41:13] - Thank you, Ms. Jory. Thank you. John Breen, John Breen. Martha Cutsinger.

[01:41:38] - I'm Martha Cutsinger, and I'm reading from a gender clinic whistleblower named Jamie Reed. My name is Jamie Reed. I'm a queer woman, politically left, and married to a trans man. In 2018, I began working at a transgender center for intake and oversight of our young patients, but I realized we were permanently harming them.

[01:41:55] I witnessed lack of formal protocols for treatment, a huge increase of teen girls with no gender distress history, suddenly declaring they were trans. About 70% of new patients were girls. They had comorbidities, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, autism, and many declared disorders that none of us believed they had.

[01:42:13] The doctors privately said these declarations were manifestation of social contagion, but insisted gender identity declarations were innate. A therapist needed to give a letter of support and we provided therapists with a letter template. Next, only a single visit to an endocrinologist for testosterone.

[01:42:28] That's all it took. Puberty blockers and hormones can cause sterility, but teens can't grasp what it means to become sterile. I saw dangerous side effects. A 15-year-old boy given the prostate cancer drug that also feminizes the body. It caused him liver toxicity.

[01:42:43] Children left with atypical genitals to permanently mutilate and cause irreversible sexual dysfunction, just one or two short visits with a therapist was needed. And you will now be providing that from school. I saw little regard for parental rights. If there was a dispute between our parents, the center always took the side of the affirming parent.

[01:43:01] What is your policy? I witnessed desisters and detransitioners returning for help. One cried, "I want my breasts back." Because I began speaking out, I was told to get on board or get out. I resigned in 2022. Then I heard DHS Secretary Rachel Levine say that-- - Thank you Ms. Cutsinger, thank you.

[01:43:18] - How did that happen? Please stop paving the way from utilization and sterilization of students, thank you. - Chris Funderburg.

[01:43:38] - Hello there, you all know me, and I told you so. Three years ago, I told you that you risk federal funding and we're putting our daughters at risk in order to pander to gender ideology. You and I both know that male humans do not belong in female human only spaces, such as locker rooms and bathrooms.

[01:43:56] It's crazy that I have to use the term male human and female human so that you know what I'm talking about and not just boy or girl gender ideology has made you dumber and I'm sure that you feel the cognitive dissonance required to hold it if you really believe that boys girls are the same except for presentation then there would be no need for sex segregated sports we should get rid of that and let the girls stand on their own against their male counterparts and have all sex restrooms and locker rooms but you won't do that because you know that there would be no girls on any sports teams and people would riot knowing that you're fully mixing boys and girls in private spaces if you truly believe in gender ideology then I dare

[01:44:35] you feminists fought long and hard to remove female stereotypes but gender ideology relies on them are you a boy that likes pink and playing with dolls and being around girls well according to gender ideology then you are a girl based solely on those stereotypes gender ideology is dying all over the Western world you simply fail to see that I for one look forward to seeing

[01:44:56] how that works out for you and laughing at your misfortune. Riley Oldenburg. Good evening. I am Riley Oldenburg. My address is on file with the clerk and I am a student in Prince William County.

[01:45:22] More importantly, I am a transgender student in Prince William County. So this entire meeting is kind of about me. I came here today to thank you for supporting kids like me. In 2021, I came out to my family as a non-binary transgender person. It was an extremely difficult time for me from bullying to insecurity to not being fully accepted for who I was but by the end of eighth grade I was supported by my family and peers and had socially transitioned to be who I felt I was and who I wanted to be. However, acceptance from family and friends wasn't the only reason I felt supported and was beginning to thrive as a person. A large part of the reason I was able to thrive

[01:46:01] as a transgender kid in America was because I am in Prince William County. when I went to high school I wasn't scared of being bullied or having to use the wrong bathroom or being dead named this is because of the policies Prince William County currently has in place that help people like me I wasn't scared of being bullied because of our no gender based discrimination policy I wasn't scared of having to use the wrong bathroom or be dead named by my teachers because of my ability to change my name and gender in the school system a right given to me by Prince William County this is the resource that myself my friends and countless others have that make our lives so much easier and better

[01:46:38] in our current political climate I and many others are scared we are scared that our teachers will have to use our birth names publicly shaming us we are scared that we may have to use the bathroom

of the gender we are assigned at birth and risk being hurt by others who can't tell that we are transgender we are scared that others will bully us solely from the fact that we are so thank you miss

[01:46:56] Oldenburg next up Melissa York thanks for getting my name right you have heard arguments based on emotion. While this is an emotional topic, your policies cannot be

[01:47:31] based on that emotion. I'm here because our children's dignity, innocence, and their ability to stand up for themselves is in grave danger. When I broached this topic last week, your office directed me to an official statement on your website dated last Thursday. The statement referenced old model policies from the past governor's administration. You are being deceptive.

[01:47:54] There are other options for this bathroom situation. No child has been denied a quality education and civil behavior. You are opening Pandora's box. Bathrooms are notorious for being the least safest place in schools. How will you determine who is truly transgender or who is just playing a part in order to get into a bathroom of the opposite sex?

[01:48:15] You know this is a recipe for disaster. It is illegal for a male to watch a woman undress through a window. How is it okay for a male to walk into a bathroom or locker room to watch a woman undress? cannot prove motive by what a person is wearing you cannot claim you are following title 9 while you violate civil rights and protections of biological biological girls and boys in their own safe spaces your policy 738-5 is very ambiguous and leads to and can lead lead to bypassing parents and their right to do what is best for their child whatever that may be you stated just tonight that you are committed to the safety and security of your students

[01:48:54] but not in the school bathroom apparently are you prepared thank you mr that concludes citizen comment time at this time we'll move to 1501 proposed sale of vpsa bonds for the fall of 2025 dr mcdade thank you mr chairman i would like to at this time invite mr shakiel yousef our chief financial officer to provide a brief overview on the proposed sale of vpsa bonds for fall 2025.

[01:49:26] good evening dr latif members of the school board and dr mcdade we have before you a resolution to ask for approval of the sale of vpsa bonds from the board of county supervisors the total amount for the bond sale is 105 million in addition there is a request of 180 million dollars for

[01:50:02] refunding previously issued bond this is a standard procedure we have we have very prudently used our one-time funds and project costs to low our bond sale from initially 162 million to 105 million and we request that the school the board approves this resolution when it comes before them at the next meeting.

[01:50:40] Are there any questions? I'd be happy to answer them. - Any questions for Mr. Yusuf? Okay, at this time I will, we're not doing, this is just on for information, correct, Mr. Yusuf? Right, we're not voting tonight.

[01:50:57] We're voting at the next meeting. Okay, thank you. Next off, 1601, I'll turn it back over to Dr. McDade. Dr. McDade. - All right, so student code of behavior agenda item. First, I want to just give a little bit of background on this.

[01:51:15] In an effort to strengthen our code of behavior based on division policy, state law, and feedback from school board members, as well as a diverse body of stakeholders, we are bringing forward

recommended changes to the Prince William County Schools code of behavior. We believe that these to be positive changes that bring a higher level of transparency to our families and the public.

[01:51:38] The Code of Behavior brought forth tonight reflects updates specifically related to SBAR reporting codes. These newly added codes are referred to as SBAR, which stands for Student Behavior and Administrative Response. These reporting codes are a framework that serves as guidelines used by the Virginia Department of Education to define specific types of student misconduct.

[01:52:01] The codes you will see added are primarily related to persistently dangerous behaviors. It is important to note that these codes have always been available to school administrators. However, the addition of the SBAR codes to the PWCS Code of Behavior makes these codes transparent to parents and the public.

[01:52:18] There also were a few minor typographical errors that you will see are presented as corrections in tonight's presentation. However, the primary changes being reviewed are the addition of the SBAR codes. The Code of Behavior does not require a first and second reading to be voted on.

[01:52:35] We typically do, though, engage in this two-step process for the benefit of the public. But tonight, we are asking the board to take immediate action as the Code of Behavior has already been adopted for the 25-26 school year, and we would like these changes to become effective immediately as school is already in session.

[01:52:54] To provide the board with an update on the revised Code of Behavior, I would like to introduce our Director of the Student Hearings Department, Ms. Teresa Duvall.

[01:53:12] - Thank you, Dr. McDade, Chairman Lateef, members of the school board for the opportunity to come before you and present the changes. And while we as a committee in place last year, we've learned some lessons regarding moving forward and appreciate the opportunity to share our revisions for your consideration.

[01:53:34] First off, just a reminder what our code of behavior is and why we have it established. It's definitely for the expectations for our student behavior to be clear and how we enhance our school safety. In addition to supporting preventative and age-appropriate reasons to discipline before resorting to exclusionary practices we provide access to quality education and behavioral interventions for our students who are removed from the classroom and also encouraging our partners with students and families to improve our school climate and the learning conditions that we have

[01:54:08] with that as we review through the adoption of the changes the recommendations first you will notice that we have two different categories one are our technical errors that we'd like to note and then we also have admissions omissions of the s bar codes that were inadvertently from the initial adoption were admitted again this is the first year we've transitioned from our prince william county codes to our student behavior and administrative responses any changes will be denoted in red and I definitely would like to stress if you see an asterisk in the code of

[01:54:47] behavior it indicates that available disciplinary response is higher than the minimum Virginia Department of Ed recommendation so first our technical changes so under assault and battery we have before you looking at BES01 adding level 4 for grades pre-k to 2 for grades 3 to 5 adding level 4 and for

[01:55:18] grades 6 to 12 adding the level 5 under BES02 we've added for pre-k 3 to 5 and 6 to 12 under the mandated reporting column yes as noted that's assault and battery causing physical injury so yes it would be a reportable to mandatory law enforcement under bullying and cyberbullying art B1 we have asked for consideration under grades three to five to add a level four and under grades six to twelve at a

[01:55:56] level four. For cyberbullying RB2 notice an asterisk for grades three to five under level four as an option and an opportunity and then under dress and grooming you'll notice in red BS07 that was just a transposed technical error the code is BSO7 so we just need to make that change under fighting BES01 the red box indicates that that is no longer an option for consideration for grades pre-kated to our levels would be a 2 3

[01:56:34] or 4 for 3 to 5 a 2 3 to 4 for 6 to 12 our options would be a level 3 4 or 5 Under BES02, Assault and Battery, Pre-K-2, 3-5, and 6-12 all have noted mandatory report to law enforcement is a yes due to causing physical injury.

[01:57:00] In addition, in 6-12, Level 3 is no longer an option. Under BES03, all three grade bans are mandated report to law enforcement. Gang or gang related activity, RB8, under grade three to five, it is no longer an option for a level one, it would start at a level two, three, four, is our recommendation.

[01:57:30] Under prohibited substances, alcohol and marijuana, under the offense, part of the entirety of the offense was omitted, so it should read alcohol, possessing, using, or being under the influence of alcohol. prohibited substances tobacco and nicotine vapor products if you'll note under grades 6 to 12 level 5 has been added for additional consideration our next section that we would like to review with you as our SBAR omissions

[01:58:07] these codes were covered by other codes but to be transparent we'd like to present these to you for consideration under arson BSC 11 it is a fire alarm falsely activating a fire or other disaster alarm and you'll note the levels pre-k to two or one to three grades three to five are level one to three grade six to twelve levels two to four then under bomb threat in the description prior to the SBAR chart it needs to have the addition of use of

[01:58:44] bomb which includes any explosive device which is a PD five which is a persistently dangerous code and then there were no additional changes in the SBAR chart to bomb threat disruptive behaviors BSO 1 is altering an official document or record pre-k to 2 it would be a level 1 to 3 3 to 5 is going to be a level 2 to 4 and under grades 6 to 12 levels 2 3 and 4 BSO 2 giving false

[01:59:19] information and misrepresentation pre-k to two is going to be a level one to three and then under three to five grade band it's a two three or four level and six to twelve grade band a level two three or four under harassment sex-based harassment the addition of BSC listed so for students in pre-k to two it'd be a level 2 and 3 under grade 3 to 5 a level 2 3 and 4 under grade 6 to 12 it would be

[01:59:54] a level 4 unauthorized or misuse of technology BS 011 BSO 12 and in those BSO 11 unauthorized use of school electronic or other equipment pre-k to 2 would be levels 1 to 3 grades 3 to 5 level 2 to 4 grades 6 to 12 level 2 3 and 4 and BS 0 1 2 is a violation of the acceptable use technology internet

[02:00:27] policy so for pre-k 1 to 3 for grades 3 to 5 level 2 to 4 and for grades 6 to 12 level 2 to 4 under theft for RB 5 this is a technical error noted in addition to the admission at both in this slide under level 2 it would not be an option for grades 6 through 12 it would start at a level 3 then under BSC 22 pre-k to 2 is a

[02:01:01] level 1 and 2 grade 3 to 5 is a level 2 3 4 5 and grade 6 to 12 is a level 3 4 5 and under mandated reporting in all three areas of BSC if injuries evolved involved then it would be reportable this This next group of 16 that we're going to review, I'm gonna do them kind of in a larger group, all 16 of these are under the persistently dangerous category, which were noted in our original code of behavior and noted that every student succeeds act,

[02:01:41] the federal act, that they all were level five and that they all were mandatory. However, for transparency, we have listed the 16 persistently dangerous codes here. slide it is PD one through five on this slide we have our persistently dangerous six through ten and lastly we have persistently dangerous 11 through 16 and again just to reiterate all of those are level five all are mandated reporting to law enforcement that information was in our

[02:02:20] original code of behavior in may but we've listed the specific PD codes for your consideration so at this time I would like to as the opportunity to see allow for any further questions or discussion around these um and appreciating your time and attention thank you it was a resplendent surprise to get this in my inbox uh I feel like after its years of amendments uh just came to life and sprung

[02:02:57] it was like a state of jubilation and I am just absolutely thrilled to see so many of the gripes I had over the previous years and why I voted, I think four consecutive years in a row against Dakota behavior. It's just amazing. And I just very happy. Some of the lesser punishments were removed, expunged, gone, and it's increased the penalty in certain areas. I remember a sticking point to me was this last round about the salt and different types of attacks that did not have mandatory police reporting. So yeah, no, those are my feedback. I was thrilled.

[02:03:35] - Thank you. - Thank you, Vice Chair Blake. So a few questions and some concerns. Obviously for me, I have sat here to diminish the school to prison pipeline and what I see added here does not benefit that.

[02:03:59] I'm wondering if we could add a link to the definitions for each of the code for what assault and battery looks like, what it means, because I know from just sitting up here a long time at what a parent walking down the street assume to be assault and battery may not meet the definition of the code because these are videoe codes so i want to make sure that we're clear when parents are looking at this and don't go you know you can take my kindergartner to jail for assault and battery for being a kindergartner because it's a mandatory offense reportable also could you check that for the kindergartners

[02:04:35] the the we don't have any control over these codes because these are at the state level but i think if we're going to include them it'd be nice for our parents to have some understanding of what they mean and where to go find the rest of that information because it's not just as simple as somebody hit me or somebody did this when it comes to police involvement or following codes correctly so thank you for this addition if you could also check that mandatory ordinance for kindergartners that'd be great um and if we could be a clear link so that parents understand and we can send out something after we do this revised code of behavior so that they're aware that it's

[02:05:12] not just as simple as this graph looks because it's not it's we have our policies we have our levels but also how the state folds into that as well so there's no confusion yep so we definitely can look into the possibility of that but i also want to make clear that you know this is um it's not a one-size-fits-all in terms of if you have a PK-2 student the school administration has this as an option but it also they also take into

consideration the situation you know it's not to think that there aren't ever times where there are really egregious incidents that occur at the primary

[02:05:51] level they're not often or frequent but should something happen they do need to know what to do and so that's what those codes are there for in terms of what we've gotten from the video e but also it is a case-by-case situation and administrators do have contacts they can contact their level associate if they have concerns they can contact the student hearings department so it's not just an automatic call the police so i just want to make that clear but we do have to be transparent about what the options are in terms of these reporting codes and it is one and so we're putting it out there so everyone can see that but there's always context

[02:06:29] that goes with it and we certainly can um look into adding some some definitions there to just address the concern that you have we could just get a link because i think everybody wants to know um what it is they're reading and what it means because one word in a courtroom in a school classroom or out on the street could mean a lot of different things so i just want to be sure that we're all working from the same page because that's the best thing for everybody thank you Yep, definitely agree.

[02:06:54] Mithwa. Thank you. I want to commend the high level of transparency in the Code of Behavior. And I know that there is an online version, which I think is great, because parents can refer to it if they ever have any questions.

[02:07:11] And I hope that they do refer to it. I do believe it will be helpful for parents and students to be on notice for what we are designating as behaviors that we are going to discipline within a range. And I do appreciate the clarification on the range of responses depending on the context.

[02:07:31] That's really important. And so recognizing the reasonableness of the request to move on this with deliberate speed due to the school year already underway, I think that's a really good idea because we're already almost three weeks into the school year And I think it's important that we recognize that we need to do this quickly and move forward with it.

[02:07:55] And these are changes that are responsive to, I remember the conversation that we had, responsive to the concerns that board members raised. And I think when we can also clean up typographical errors or any other little omissions, that's always a good thing. So I'm in favor of it. And I want to thank everybody who worked on it.

[02:08:14] - Mr. Jess. - Correct me if I'm reading this wrongly, but my understanding is that if a student is using drugs or alcohol, they can be disciplined under this policy.

[02:08:33] Is that correct? That was a concern I had last year, where a student would come in selling drugs or giving drugs, but the kids who are using them are also doing something inappropriate, and if they are not encouraging somebody to bring the drugs to them and so forth, they should be punished also.

[02:09:00] And so I'm happy to see this in here this year. Thank you. - Thank you. - Mr. Denning. - I would just like to thank you guys for doing this and doing it quickly before the school year starts so we can implement it this year.

[02:09:19] I also appreciate that you reached out to each one of us and asked if we had concerns on any of these issues ahead of time so that we could discuss those with you. I know my colleague, Mr. Wilk, and I

felt very strongly about the code of behavior and have voted against it twice and asked for more severe consequences for these categories.

[02:09:43] And so I greatly appreciate this and I feel like a lot of parents are going to be excited to be able to read these and understand that this just further helps our children to be safe in school. So again, I appreciate it. I appreciate the swiftness that we're doing this with at the beginning of the school year too so we can implement it quicker and thank you.

[02:10:07] - Thank you, anybody else? Okay, thank you, Dr. McDade. I think this is good work. I appreciate the feedback that you've taken from the school board and the hard work you guys have put into this and I'll fully support this.

[02:10:23] I think, please vote. - Oh yes, I need a motion. Mr. Vice Chair Blake. - All right, Mr. Chair, I move that the Prince William County School Board approves the proposed revisions to the 2025-26 code of behavior.

[02:10:42] - Second. - Mr. Chairman. - Mr. Chairman. - Yeah. - Oh, second, Ms. Williams. Thank you. Oh, you guys were racing the second.

[02:10:58] You wanna say, do you defer to her second? Mr. Denik seconds the motion. Historic moment here this evening. Historic, everyone. All right, any discussion? We've discussed it. Please vote, please vote.

[02:11:25] - Vote is eight yes, unanimous, motion passed. - Excellent, all right. - On to student representative time, we now move to student representative time. Tonight we welcome Bula Sarsa, as you heard from earlier from CD Hilton High School. Ms. Sarsa, you may have the floor. - Thank you.

[02:11:40] Good evening to members of the Prince William County community, members of the school board and superintendent McDade. My name is Bula Sarsa. I'm a senior attending CD Hilton High School, and this is my first time on the dais as one of your student representatives. This year, I'm looking forward to collaborating with fellow student leaders in the county as we work to strengthen the feedback loop between students, administrators, school board members, and other leaders.

[02:12:03] I want students to know that their voices have power and that hearing their feedback, concerns, or input is of the utmost importance. After all, students are the main stakeholders or beneficiaries of all that we do here at the Kelly Leadership Center. Before I begin my remarks, I'd like to say a very big thank you to Ms. Viola Askey, Dr. Shaver, Ms. Wines, my teachers at Hilton High School, the teachers and mentors who taught me before I went hilton and everyone who's ever believed in me i'd also like to acknowledge my partners fellow student representative karina grover who is here in attendance and alternate student representative billy tyler the three of us are very excited to represent and amplify the over 90 000 student

[02:12:43] voices here in prince william county additionally i'd like to incur i'd like to acknowledge our student senators from each of the 14 high schools they met for the first time at our orientation last month and i can proudly say that these students are hard-working passionate and dedicated individuals who look forward to working with members of our middle and high school student voice committees their teachers administrators and other staff within the county the first two weeks of the 2025 to 2026 school year are behind us and i can speak for myself and many others across the county when i say that it was so great seeing all of our friends and favorite teachers

[02:13:19] again seniors at Colgan Osborne Park and many other high schools have held wonderful events like Senior Sunrise, football games, and spirit weeks. Additionally, students at Patriot High School have started painting their parking spaces. A first of what I can imagine will become a cherished tradition.

[02:13:39] The new phone policy, which the county has established as a result of the governor's executive order, has taken effect in our schools since we began on August 18th. Feedback from student senators has shown that although students do not appreciate the fact that schools cannot be used during lunch times and passing periods, it is important to acknowledge that there are obvious positives countywide as a result of the new phone policy, like increased face-to-face conversations during lunch, passing periods, and in the classroom.

[02:14:06] Student senators have also heard from students in schools across the county who are curious as to why personal devices that are not smartphones, like iPads and laptops, cannot be used, when in some cases, school-issued devices cannot keep up with the demands of the average student due to slow Wi-Fi, short battery life, and insufficient storage space.

[02:14:24] The new phone policy has also impacted performing arts students. Students in performing arts classes across the county are facing challenges when they try to record auditions for all county choir, audio for the sake of feedback, or audio for personal use, such as reflection.

[02:14:40] Students in these classes are currently struggling to adapt to using their school-issued laptops for assignments that were previously completed using their personal devices. This is mainly due to the fact that school computers do not capture quality audio. Additionally, concerns have been raised about the distraction to school security personnel.

[02:14:58] Students are worried that security guards may be distracted from potential dangers like fights or active threats if they are called to classrooms to confiscate phones. Students would also appreciate a clear explanation of the rules. For example, there are students who understand that phones cannot be out, but they do not know that their wired earbuds or headphones cannot be out as well.

[02:15:19] It is my sincere hope that adapting to the new policy will be easier for all of us as the school year progresses. Moving on to the subject of grading. Students are expressing concerns about the grading policies in their schools. While I am aware that it is a county regulation for subject departments to set grading policies within their schools and notify students and parents to that effect, students in some schools are left confused and dissatisfied.

[02:15:45] For example, students at Freedom High School, which has recently implemented a 90/10 rule, feel as if it overemphasizes the importance of summative assignments and downplays the importance of homework and other formatives. There are also schools that exercise the 80/20 rule for some classes, but the 90/10 rule for others, like Colgan High School.

[02:16:03] It is important for staff to share the reasons behind these perceived inconsistencies with students so that they may better understand the grading policies of their schools. To close my remarks, I would like to acknowledge that the month of September is Suicide Awareness Month. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10 to 14 and the leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 15 to 24.

[02:16:27] This month aims to raise awareness, defeat the stigma associated with suicide, and provide those going through suicidal thoughts or the loss of a loved one with a supportive community as they

move forward and start their healing journey. It is also important to note that our acknowledgement of Suicide Awareness Month should be paired with an increased emphasis on the impact of mental health on our students.

[02:16:48] Participation in various clubs and sports, family responsibilities or challenges, and internal conflicts combined with the challenges pressures of school work can cause students to suffer mentally and negatively impact their performance at school though we already notify students about some of the resources at their disposal like Hazel Health their school counselors or their trusted adults via newsletters advisory periods and student surveys there is so much more that we could do as a county we should make more of an effort to ensure that students know about and have access to all of the resources at their disposal like school psychologists or social workers in addition to the ones previously

[02:17:27] mentioned school social workers or psychologists could reach students by meeting with them during grade level assemblies and introducing themselves and services like Hazel Health could be promoted with the help of student leaders within schools in order to decrease the stigma and shame that often comes with mental health challenges when schools make more of an effort to promote our mental health support staff students know where to go and who to speak to when difficult times arise Additionally, students, when students see their peers participating in what they, in what may seem like a shameful or embarrassing conversation, they are more likely to open up about their own problems to those who could help them.

[02:18:04] And this openness may be the first step towards healing. These conversations and resources are an important part of turning our schools into a safe, nurturing environment for all of our students. Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak on behalf of students across the county and advocate for their interests.

[02:18:20] Have a great rest of your night. Thank you, Ms. Garza. - Now we move on to superintendent's time. Dr. McDade, the floor is yours. - Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. As we begin the 2025-26 school year, I wanna extend a warm welcome to our families, staff, and most importantly, our students.

[02:18:39] Whether this is year one as a student in Prince William County or year 12, we are so grateful that you were here with us. I've had the pleasure of visiting 44 schools since the first day of school, and the first weeks of school were filled with excitement, and I'm deeply grateful to our educators support staff who made the opening of school a success. A strong start sets the tone for the entire school year and together we will continue to ensure that every student graduates on time with the knowledge skills and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community. This evening I'm also pleased to introduce Dr. Maggie De La Rosa

[02:19:16] who has joined our leadership team this is our her first board meeting so welcome to Dr. De La Rosa our new Associate Superintendent for Central Elementary Schools. Dr. De La Rosa brings a wealth of experience, expertise, and a passion for student success that will strengthen our work and help us to continue to move our school division forward.

[02:19:39] And we're very fortunate to have her here in Prince William County Schools. And I know that, Dr. De La Rosa, your impact will make an immediate and lasting impact on all students and schools within your portfolio. I also want to welcome our new school board student representatives. Beulah's already done an exceptional job today on the dais. Karina Grover from Colgan High School, Beulah Sarsa from C.D. Hilton High School, and our alternate William Tyler, William Billy Tyler, from Brinsfield District High

School. We're so excited to have these student leaders join us, and I've had the personal privilege to work with each of them over the past year, and I've seen their talent and skills,

[02:20:19] And so I'm looking forward to not only them being a part of the work, but them challenging us to get better at getting better in Prince William County schools. As we celebrate our high school students, I also want to share a wonderful opportunity for students in grades 9 through 12.

[02:20:37] Join us from 6.30 to 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 9th, for an informative webinar in which students and families will gain a clear understanding of the PSAT, which is administered each fall to students in grades 9 through 11.

[02:20:53] Additionally, representatives from Khan Academy will demonstrate how Prince William County Schools students in grades 9 through 12 can access and utilize the free platform to strengthen SAT preparation and build confidence. More information can be found at pwcs.edu.

[02:21:11] I also want to share our instructional focus for this year each year during our opening kickoff to the school year with our administrative teams for all schools across the county, which our conference is called Triple E. I usually share the focus for the upcoming school year and I wanna share that with the public as well.

[02:21:29] We have our strategic plan and each year there are some key priorities that we identify for the year. This year is year two of the implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act and there's gonna be a heavy emphasis and expansion on middle schools. We're also moving forward with the implementation of high quality instructional materials in our math curriculum, this is long overdue.

[02:21:49] We're really excited about this new math curriculum. It is rigorous, really has a high cognitive demand on students for conceptual understanding rather than rote memorization of skills and drills. And so this will give students an opportunity to grapple with complex problem solving and real world applications.

[02:22:07] So we're really excited about that 'cause it will prepare them for the future and careers of the future. Training for all of our educators has occurred over the summer and still ongoing and all schools are implementing this instructional framework this year we are also aligning all courses in the social sciences with an inquiry based design learning model this model will help students to become explorers researchers and appliers of their learning creating new knowledge as they learn in social science so this is going to be critically important for us to emphasize this year and then lastly we are focused on the integration of artificial intelligence tools for students teachers and staff

[02:22:47] will have ongoing training and this will be the first year that we will have opportunities for students at the secondary level to access artificial intelligence tools one of the characteristics of the profile of a pwcs graduate is to be responsible digital citizens and so in this technologically driven world it is important that in our classrooms it mirrors what's happening in the world around us and so we will be expanding on access to artificial intelligence in prince william county schools families can also expect to see new opportunities for career exploration expanded mental health resources and strong community partnerships that opens doors to

[02:23:26] post-secondary success more importantly this year will also mark the launch of vision 2030 that is our strategic plan this plan builds on the success of vision 2025 and i'll speak a little bit more about that later in the fall i encourage everyone to tune in in november where we will go through the full four-

year strategic plan and the accomplishments from that plan goals met goals approaching as well as goals not met and then vision 2030 will set the course for the next four years emphasizing global competency personalized and adaptive learning and empowering

[02:24:02] our educators our four-year strategic plan will guide every decision that we make as we prepare our students not only for graduation but for the rapidly changing world beyond like vision 2025 will launch vision 2030 we're also going to be releasing a survey monday september 8th to the entire community to provide feedback for the new strategic plan i hope that all of our pwcs families and community members will take advantage of the opportunity to respond to share your experience as well as your valued voice in the development of vision 2030 i will also along with members of my

[02:24:39] team be hosting community roundtables for families and community members to get direct feedback on what they would like to see within the strategic plan so we are well on our way towards the full development and launch of vision 2030. we're excited about it and hope that everyone will be a part of something new and innovative in prince william county schools mr chairman that concludes the superintendent's report thank you dr mcdade very good moving on to committee reports we have a committee update tonight from mr gafor regarding um the joint environmental task force thank you

[02:25:18] dr latif um the the information that we received back in june was um oddly fascinating it was talking about salt on the roads the county is working on not using as much of the salt that you see as crystals but the brine and there was a whole presentation that they did talking about how much salt gets into our water systems and how difficult it is to we can't remove it it's just there permanently so in an effort to do better they have a plan in the county and they shared

[02:25:56] that with the school division and the school division and the county are going to work together on some maybe some better practices but essentially um one of the things i learned dr mcdade that was very interesting and and to those of you who are interested in snow days um when vdot plows a road and they they make one lane passable they consider that checked off and done so i know mr wilk and i get a little upset on behalf of all the phone calls we get because some of our territory gets a little not so nice sometimes and what I learned was once a road has been salted and plowed you

[02:26:33] cannot put down more salt especially if the temperatures are too low so we we do have a problem here in Virginia we don't get enough snow and this past year when we had so many issues with getting things plowed I know I know it's we're not Chicago I'm so sorry so but it was fascinating because the brine will work very well here.

[02:26:56] If our temperatures dip too low, then we don't have the actual ice remover, like anything brine or salt that actually works at lower temperatures. So that was the oddly fascinating things that I learned about. The last meeting we had, we spent some time discussing some of the projects that both the county and the schools have going on that are using like solar power, things like that.

[02:27:24] The federal government taking back some of the benefits that governments and sometimes homeowners are getting is definitely will impact our ability to be able to move forward with some of the things that we had planned, making fleets more electric rather than gas fuel.

[02:27:44] Those are considerations that both the county and the schools are working on. So those were the big fascinating things we talked about. - I thought I had at least three more months before we, you know, I had to talk about snow.

[02:27:59] I didn't know it was coming this early. - Yeah, well, thank you, Ms. Zargarpur, for the salt explanation. I come from the north where they salt the roads and you know it's salted. All right, let's move on to where are we at next?

[02:28:14] Board matters now, 20.01. First reading, Dr. McDade or Dr. Flournard, whoever you wanna go. Due in attendance, absences, excuses and tardies.

[02:28:31] Do we have, okay, I guess, does the board have any questions regarding this? Okay, so, okay, this is all first reading. So we'll just zip through it. 20.2 is attendance records policy 726, 2003 is new policy 603 for automatic math acceleration.

[02:28:52] You know, I do have a quick question on that one since we're, yeah, we're going to ask about math. 603, we're getting serious here. 603 math, Dr. Sullivan, can you just quickly in like 10 seconds, tell me what this is about?

[02:29:10] - Yes, the Commonwealth through the General Assembly recently passed some new language regarding mandatory acceleration for students who score in the upper quartile of the SOLs. And so now every student in that band is placed in the subsequent accelerated course.

[02:29:32] Parents are notified and parents are given an opportunity to opt out if they'd like. For Prince William County, we found that the vast majority of our students in this category were already recommended for accelerated math. Those who weren't were given additional opportunities to do new learning in the summer to ready themselves.

[02:29:50] - Excellent, and so we're gonna just make this more formal. - And the, correct, the code of Virginia requires us to have a policy stating this. - Excellent, okay, very good. And then we have 20.04 revisions of school board calendar.

[02:30:07] So these are all on for first reading for the public to take a look at, board members take a look at. We will return in two weeks at the next board meeting to vote these through, amend them, addendum. - Yes. - Oh, that's actually on for today.

[02:30:24] Oh, it's on for action. Okay, I need a motion. - Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County school board revised its previously adopted meeting calendar approve moving the special meeting of the superintendent's goal setting conference to Saturday October 18th 2025 do you have a second second okay second can I comment on this real quick yes we do publicly and in front of everyone thank you um I loathe that we have a Saturday

[02:30:59] meeting and I've said it for the last two years there's plenty of Wednesday's on a calendar I think this should go on a Wednesday when we normally meet and we could do it back there instead of taking a Saturday away from families children sports life I think we can do this in the middle of the week that's just my opinion I know everybody doesn't share it but I thought I would voice it publicly I do not appreciate a Saturday meeting thank you thank you Mr. Denik please vote

[02:31:27] vote a seven yes one not president vote motion passed Williams motion passed okay great thank you um what are we at 20.05 okay this is board matters now at this time um last meeting we started with

[02:32:03] with Lisa, we'll start with Mr. Wilk. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman, appreciate your time. I wanna thank everyone for coming out tonight. Both sides have some very passionate feelings about the issue at

hand.

[02:32:20] I heard words about sanctimonias, things based off emotion, ideology, religion. I'm gonna reassert my opinion that has maintained consistent over the last couple of years about this. this goes back again to grim versus gloucester back in 2020 where the courts rule that you cannot deny restroom and locker room facilities to transgender students to me that's where the law stops harry truman had that line the buck stops here that's where i think it stops the fourth circuit made

[02:32:55] their decision and at that time the supreme court kicked it back to them so the supreme court had the chance to assert their opinion or opine on the issue but they didn't this was restated a couple weeks ago when the fourth circuit affirmed again that grim is the current law of the land the controlling law of the land and it would take a supreme court ruling to overturn it and that's where my position remains i support the law i will continue supporting our students under the law with under grim and we will see where this goes i have told transgender families of transgender students

[02:33:35] that strong possibility that the court could overturn this and then there's going to have to be some conversations probably had at home i think we can be at the forefront of this and proactive and think because things oscillate between administrations whether it is trump right now or whoever president trump right now or whoever comes next however the pendulum swings so safety being our utmost priority for protecting our students.

[02:34:05] I think it would be good to go beyond just compliance, but look and improve our quality here by implementing potentially looking and researching single stall restrooms. I believe the single stall restrooms would help alleviate this concern in the future.

[02:34:24] But I also beyond the transgender issue of usage of bathrooms. If I go back and look at over my ten years, some of the biggest issues that have happened whether it's fights being filmed in the bathrooms whether it's destruction of property and vandalism at forest park if their bathrooms leading to one bathroom having to be unlocked and monitored whether it's loitering skipping class vaping i believe looking and moving in this direction or at least researching it further would better support this approach follow the grim ruling at this time where we're at but it also gives us the ability

[02:35:02] to lead with solutions that protect rights reduce problems and create an overall better school environment so that's where my position is i don't hide it i'm not afraid to state where i'm at with this i maintain again just like the courts have ruled that grim is the law and i will follow the law at this point where it is thank you miss erica truden i thank you for that i i do um i do want

[02:35:34] to point out too that um i did work at a school for a short period of time but i lived there for a little while too because i volunteered so much and children that had anxiety or issues going into the larger bathrooms would go up to the nurse's office and use that private bathroom so that is an option just saying that out loud um in that same vein i care deeply about students and their safety and their ability to focus on learning because that's what they're at school for. We've all seen what has unfolded in a neighboring county. Boys

[02:36:11] who spoke up about a girl in their locker room ended up suspended and labeled as harassers. Completely terrifying and unacceptable. Filming in a locker room and bathroom definitely violates privacy and happens to violate our cell phone policy. Biological sex is not a matter of opinion. It is a fact.

[02:36:32] Restrooms, locker rooms, and private spaces should reflect that reality. In everyday life, this is understood without question. If a man were to walk into a woman's restroom at a restaurant, at a stadium, or at the workplace, it would be frowned upon immediately. And in most cases, action would be taken by the establishment. Why should our schools be any different? We must especially be vigilant about protecting our boys and girls from being put in

[02:37:09] uncomfortable and compromising situations in their own bathrooms and locker rooms or at risk for very painful injuries on the sports fields. I've also been contacted by families who have raised religious freedom concerns. Certain faiths require modesty and their children cannot change clothes in a locker room if someone of the opposite biological sex is present. These These students would be forced to choose between their faith and participating in school life and that is not fair.

[02:37:40] This is not about exclusion. It's about protecting privacy, dignity, and safety for all students, boys and girls alike. I believe our responsibility is to establish policies that are clear, consistent, and rooted in both common sense and biological truth.

[02:37:58] This is how we protect our students, earn parents' trust, and prevent chaos like we've witnessed in Northern Virginia. is why i continue to stand firm on the issue and i support the doe and our current administration in their efforts to protect our students also i would like to thank lieutenant governor winsome sears for making the trip to prince william county today i'm sorry i didn't get to say hello because we were in closed session um i also would like to say welcome and thank you to our three student reps who joined us beula billy and karina did i get that right okay um i am very thrilled to have

[02:38:37] you guys. It's been such a privilege to listen to the student voice and opinion over the last couple of years, but I am especially thrilled to finally have some male representation, and so that's exciting as a boy mom. I'm excited about that. I'm also excited that you girls are here, but very excited to hear a boy's perspective on things. Oh, I'm going over my time today. This is great for me. The cell phone policy is going extremely well. I'm hearing from so many students that they that they love this and they're getting to talk to each

[02:39:13] other and they're enjoying the face-to-face time and I am enjoying not getting texts from my child during the day. It is especially wonderful and I think the focus has been on learning where it should be. Another thing I am thrilled about is girls flag football is coming to Prince William county and we've had a high rate of girls trying out and i can't wait to see them crush it on the football field and um of course i'm excited for friday night lights again let's go tigers outstanding

[02:39:50] mr danny mr jesse yeah that was really good okay uh first of all i'd like to apologize or not so much to apologize to my schools but my wife had surgery on july 1st and we have been in the hospital four different times for three to four days at a time and actually got out of the

[02:40:22] hospital this morning at 11 30. she is doing well she has surgery on her back and the surgery on her back went extremely well she is probably 90% better than she was before going in hospital but as a surgeon told us I can control and do very well on the surgery of the back but how your body react to having surgery is another matter and that's what we have the things that happened to her was a minor blood clot and then we had some internal bleeding all of which could be serious but none

[02:41:00] of them were real serious this time but we have to fix it the stuff so I apologize for not being at school I'm a little confused about the bus situation and I like the members of the board to me I don't recall

have we I mean at the end of last year we were celebrating how well we were doing with the buses but this year it seems to me we have a number of parents complaining about this and I'm not talking about the software to tell you where the bus is I'm talking

[02:41:35] about overcrowding on buses I'm talking about people having issues with the routes and if that's a concern to two other board members I'd like to have them call and get it on the agenda to have a discussion about that I grew up in Dixon Illinois 20,000 people 5,000 were in a mental hospital 15 there were not I don't think there were a hundred black people in my community all my years in school I usually was the only black kid in schools when I went into the Marine

[02:42:14] Corps as enlisted I had a lot of black other fellow Marines but when I went to also candidate school and so forth I was the only black there and the situation why I point this out it is one thing when I think about the gender issue it's to me how do you feel when you're the only person in the room how does it impact you and it does impact you you know I could go into a room as a marine

[02:42:52] officer and I could sense the fact that I wasn't welcome there because I was black and some of our kids because they are gay or because they are transgender are feeling the same way so you know I support the issue do I always feel comfortable with it no but at the same time a lot of our ancestors did not feel comfortable with a black person walking through the front door of their house or sitting on a toilet so after nobody thinks about that at this point in time

[02:43:27] And to me, the issue with that transgender kids, somebody pointed out the people who were mass murderers, but I don't hear a lot of issues with that.

[02:43:43] So I support them and I will continue to support them. And again, like I said, if there's some other people that'd like to talk about the bus issue, let me know. Thank you. - Ms. Jenwall. - Thank you, good evening. I'll start off by congratulating Battlefield High School football team on their very spectacular win two weeks ago.

[02:44:04] And I am looking forward to a great season and enjoyed so many fun social media reports about that game. I also enjoyed meeting so many Battlefield High School parents at our back to school night and I'm looking forward to back to school nights for the rest of my schools.

[02:44:25] And I wish to address the issue surrounding PWEA, VEA. Suffice it to say, I feel like it would be appropriate for me to say that I'm not surprised. It is beyond the pale what PWEA leadership has done if proven true.

[02:44:41] From what has been reported, the audit reveals a shocking pattern of deception and personal enrichment. This from the organization that lobbied for a seat at the table, only to misuse the trust that was given to them by our employees. It is my position that further investigation into wrongdoing is warranted so that those are responsible are truly held accountable, not just removed from their positions of power.

[02:45:04] I also am very concerned and would like to warn against any future representation of our employees by any individuals who had knowledge of or participated in what appears to me to be unlawful conduct worthy of further investigation. Moving on to Title IX. Title IX is a vital federal law dating to 1972, go 1972, rooted in American values of fairness and equal opportunity, it's pretty much existed for my lifetime.

[02:45:33] The purpose of Title IX as enacted was to protect women and girls from sex-based discrimination and to guarantee they have access to safe and competitive academic and athletic environments free from prejudice. Upholding Title IX ensures women's sports teams remain fair and separate, safeguards privacy and school facilities and keeps parents informed about decisions that are affecting their children.

[02:45:56] And as for our policy, I'll tell you where we can start. We can make it mandatory that parents be brought into the conversation about names, pronouns, and access to facilities. We can start there. I think we can all agree on that, that that would be a win for all of our children and is a pro-child policy.

[02:46:15] Pivoting to a topic upon which I like to spend time talking about attendance data and academic data, as I have reviewed the SOL pass rates by subject areas for our division, I want to commend students for working hard and teachers for preparing students to take these tests.

[02:46:30] We made some good progress in a number of areas and a number of schools. So great job to all those who were able to get into that category. I look forward to hearing more from our division superintendent about the data and our next steps at an upcoming board meeting. On the topic of attendance, I agree with Governor Youngkin who said every child deserves the opportunity to learn and thrive in a classroom and that starts with being present in school.

[02:46:52] And I hope we can continue to put emphasis on supporting children and getting them to school and helping them stay in explorer mode for as much time as possible so that they can love to learn and they can learn to love learning. I wish to acknowledge that September is suicide prevention month. I spoke yesterday with a parent of a student at one of my schools who had attempted, student had attempted suicide last week.

[02:47:12] I was so saddened to hear what happened, but also glad to know that the parents were able to find and help their student. The start of the school year can be very stressful for a number of reasons. Students need our support as they navigate school pressures, difficult family situations, trouble with friends, mental or physical illnesses and other big stressors in their lives.

[02:47:33] Parents, please remember to check in with your kids, start the conversation, be the difference. The school division efforts to prioritize student mental health wellness and suicide prevention during the month of September will be very important. And I urge everyone to take a look at the resources that are available for how to start the conversation, how to reach out for help, what to do if someone tells you that they're thinking about suicide and how to talk to a suicide loss survivor.

[02:47:59] Wow, I'm totally out of time. Parents, thank you so much for your support with our new cell phone policy. Teachers, I'm hearing good news and you are holding strong. I love it. Please continue. The success of our efforts requires all of the leaders, adults and parents to be on board to help our children.

[02:48:18] And we'll work through some of the things that the kids are telling us that are difficult, such as for the performing arts. And I will close my remarks by quoting Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 3, the advice of Polonius given to his son, Laertes. This above all, to thine own self be true.

[02:48:34] Thanks everyone and have a good night. - Lori Wood. - Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think maybe we should have advocated for a longer board matters timeframe instead of four minutes. - It's the first meeting year. I will tolerate, this will not become a habit.

[02:48:51] - Where will we be without our humor? Welcome to the 2025-26 school year. Welcome to those new to our school community and those who are returning. It is the mission of Prince William County Schools to serve as trusted partners in education with our students, families and communities.

[02:49:11] We prepare our students to be critical thinkers, excuse me, thinkers, responsible digital citizens, innovators and visionaries, resilient individuals and global collaborators. We have committed to be inclusive practices, equity and equity with, excuse me, expectation of excellence from every student and every day.

[02:49:36] That is our mission. And I say that to remind us that we are all under that mission because we are all part of the same community. Our vision is for every student to graduate with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[02:49:53] The same community that we are a part of. Learning is what we do here. And it's a shared experience by all. This school year is full of learning opportunities for all of us.

[02:50:08] We'll talk about school boundaries, budget, school calendar, our various policies, technology, state education requirements, student achievements, student supports, adult education, my favorite specialty programs and CTE, and so much more, including our strategic plan.

[02:50:30] I bring this up to say that there's never been a time where we don't want to hear everyone's voice. That doesn't mean that we're all going to agree with what everyone has to say, there's never been a time where there hasn't been an opportunity for you to share it this board has many many ways for you to reach out to us we have let's talk you can call cell phones or email us the same goes for your school that your student attends i have yet to hear a school turn down

[02:51:03] volunteers all are welcome we are a community i would like hopefully for this year for us to engage and dialogue that's meaningful for all of us that doesn't mean standing firm in your position I think it's pretty clear what our positions are on our most controversial topics so now that we know it's time to move to find common ground and to return to the conversations of what our students need every day in our classrooms what are our teachers need the primary thing that I heard tonight was technology and innovation do we have the need the correct devices for our

[02:51:40] students use do we want to have innovative students do we want to have innovative teachers we've missed so much of that conversation because we have been busy defending our positions and there's nothing wrong with that but there comes a point in time when we are at a stalemate and that's exactly where we are right now legally and out in the community there aren't very many moves to be made except to remind all of us that we're all human beings you can have a difference of opinion and do it respectfully and have these conversations and that's where we should be going

[02:52:16] the conversations that are had in my household by students graduates and current students revolve around hey did you know my teacher said that she put this up in canvas and i can't access it please don't let me get in trouble it's really i can't do anything until i go back to school tomorrow my favorite one so far from a 12 year old that i love is hey mom if this is what they're going to do who's going to stand in the bathroom and how is it going to feel how do i feel if i've only known sarah and now she has to go to the bathroom with all of us i can't answer those questions and we're not talking to our children about them we're not being respectful or nice

[02:52:54] most of the time to each other and these are the examples that our children look up to as us as adults what i saw this evening and i want to bring special attention to is we had two different groups of people out front before our board meeting started and i would like to thank them for being out there and being peaceful and not causing problems because it was about four years ago when this boardroom was not peaceful so if nothing we should take the opportunity to celebrate how far that we have come and to know that it can be done respectfully and we can dialogue together because as adults it is our job to set an example for us for

[02:53:31] our children and that's what we should do and we each have our own right to our own culture but we must remember that public school is here for all because that's the common thing that everybody says, no matter what side of the table you're on, no matter what controversial topic is before us, is that everybody wants all of us to have a safe school and for all of our children to be educated, for all of our staff to be paid well, and to be treated respectfully.

[02:53:58] And it can be done. I'm just going to close on a few things. One, this year we are piloting unified robotics in middle school. It's really important. If you would like to participate, please reach out.

[02:54:13] The three middle schools that will have them will be Lake Ridge, Saunders, and Fred Lynn. This is a very big deal for our special education students who do not have the opportunity to participate in regular gen ed programs. And then I just wanna congratulate not only this board, but Dr. McDade and all her staff.

[02:54:33] We don't often hear about all the awards 'cause there's a lot of them that have come out in the last year or two. But I just wanna say thank you for all of the hard work every one of you do every day on behalf of us as a board because we are policy and governance and they are operations and they are the forefront of our school division they are the faces that you see first every day board members we don't do operations but we advocate for those and we make decisions where finance matters so as we start the school year parents family and community please join in these discussions share your opinions whether they are the same or not but

[02:55:07] But let's do it in a respectful way, in a way that has meaningful dialogue so we can learn and grow from each other. And the last thing I'll say, I'm sorry, since we're all going, is I'm going to stand on my commitment. And what I have been here to do is to continue to advocate for those whose voices aren't reached by all.

[02:55:28] As a mixed race person, I didn't have a box to check until the late 90s. So I know what it feels like to not belong to a group. It's not the same, but it matters. Everyone is human and should be seen as such. So thank you guys. - Thank you, Ms. Williams, Ms. Zargar.

[02:55:44] - Thank you. Been a truly historic night, hasn't it? All right, I wanna start off with recognizing that this weekend on the September 7th, there's an out of the darkness walk at Harris Pavilion starting at 10:00 a.m.

[02:56:03] I know I've said this before, one of my children made several attempts and it was a long, really difficult path. And parents who are concerned, there's help out there, it's a little more than when I was going through it, but find your people and make sure that you're getting the help you need.

[02:56:25] Hope to see you Saturday. Moving on. We often speak about the importance of our schools, and at the heart of that conversation is the future of our children.

[02:56:41] This summer, while students were preparing for the year ahead, our teachers were preparing for the year ahead, Our central offices were trying to prepare for the year ahead. This administration put that future at risk. These are not abstract budgetary adjustments.

[02:56:59] They are decisions with tangible and lasting consequences. The first and most harmful impacts fall on the students who need us most. Programs that provide basic stability, such as meals, housing assistance, and academic supports are being targeted.

[02:57:16] The McKinney-Vento program, which ensures students experiencing homelessness can remain in school, is at risk for elimination. Title III funds, which are critical for supporting multilingual learners, face similar threats.

[02:57:31] These reductions do not save money in the long term, but instead they create greater barriers to learning, shift costs onto state and local budgets, and undermine our collective responsibility to ensure equity in education. Every child deserves a safety net, not just those families who can provide one privately.

[02:57:52] The challenges created by this administration extend beyond K-12 education. The very systems that we are preparing our students for, and we are preparing to sustain for our future workforce, are being dismantled. Limiting public service loan forgiveness deters new teachers, social workers, and health professionals from entering essential fields.

[02:58:14] Reducing research grants stalls scientific discovery and weakens our nation's global competitiveness. Pell grants and federal student loans will close the doors of higher education for countless students who have earned the opportunity but lack the financial means. And these actions do not represent fiscal prudence. They represent an erosion of our long-term investment in talent, innovation, and opportunity. So we must resist framing educational access as a zero-sum game where one group of students' needs are pitted against another. Our role as leaders is to build

[02:58:51] systems that elevate all students. That requires ensuring access to rigorous, well-rounded education while safeguarding the dignity and rights of every learner. Schools should be places of stability and growth, not institutions that leave the most vulnerable behind. The path forward is clear.

[02:59:10] Invest wisely, protect equity, and strengthen the foundations of opportunity for every child. Our shared humanity demands nothing less. - Mr. Blake.

[02:59:27] - Thank you, dear Latif. Good evening, everyone, members of the community, my colleagues, I'd just first like to start this off by saying welcome again to Dr. De La Rosa. I know she'll be hanging out in Dell City a lot, so I appreciate you being here.

[02:59:48] And then I would also just like to welcome each of our three school board reps, or our two school board student reps in the alternate. okay so um to start this school year it has been um the word i would use is very powerful the energy and excitement and the sense of possibility are live across all our schools i know they weren't in the neapso district but i just want to begin like with this year i began at the uh the triple e conference where we reaffirmed our commitment to ensuring every student regardless

[03:00:25] of their background zip code or zip code has access to to the resources opportunities and elevated expectations they need to thrive that spirit carried right on into the triple l conference which is our new teacher orientation where we welcome more than 700 new educators into prince william county

schools each one bringing a fresh energy passion and creativity that will ripple into the classrooms across this county.

[03:00:57] And then I also was able to attend the preschool institute where I was joined by over 400 early childhood educators who are building the very foundation for our youngest learners.

[03:01:13] And this is where thriving futures truly begin. And it's why I remain a strong advocate for universal pre-K access. But it's just not about these conferences. Over the past two weeks, I've been all over the Minneapolis district I visited probably eight out of my 11th school so far, maybe nine.

[03:01:33] And then at every stop, I saw staff going above and beyond to welcome students and families. I saw students walking with joy, curiosity, in the hope of an exciting year ahead. For me, showing up is not just symbolic. It's essential, right?

[03:01:49] It's our students deserve to see us present, engaged, and invested in their success. And I know that's a big deal for them. And then I also want to say as we move forward, I also just want to reaffirm my unwavering or our unwavering commitment to Title IX.

[03:02:10] PWCS will continue to fully follow the federal law and provide safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments for all students. And let me be clear, the dignity, the safety, the well-being of every child in Prince William County Schools is not negotiable.

[03:02:27] Our principals, teachers, and leaders can count on my support as they carry this work forward. This is also a year that we elevate. We elevate learning, we elevate teaching, and we elevate family and community engagement.

[03:02:45] Because when we elevate together, we open doors and opportunities wider and ensure every child has a chance to thrive in the future. And then, so I have one call to my colleagues and to the community. This is a year of promise, but it's also one of responsibility.

[03:03:04] Let us keep our eyes on what matters most, preparing our students not just to graduate, but to thrive. Let us build schools where every student has a fair shot, every teacher feels supported, and every family feels connected and heard.

[03:03:19] Our legacy will not be written in policies alone, but in the lives of the children who will go on to lead, to serve, to innovate, and to aspire. And they are ready. The question is, are we ready to give them everything they deserve?

[03:03:38] I say yes. Let's rise up to this challenge together. Thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Blake. All right. Well, it's been a great beginning to the school year. I'm thrilled to be back. I thank all the folks that came out for Citizen Common Time, the folks that came out front.

[03:03:56] You know, I remain committed to Prince William County Schools being an open and welcoming place for everyone, a safe and secure environment for everyone. so the learning gets done. And that's what I've been most interested in over my, as I begin my sort of middle of eighth year serving on this board.

[03:04:13] And over these last seven years, we have made dramatic improvements in performance, student performance. We made dramatic improvements in scholarship dollars one, athletic performance on the field, off the field or extracurricular.

[03:04:28] So much so that there was a great article came out by, I think it was realtor.com and some of the news stories picked it up that Prince William County School, County was one of the top counties in the country that folks Googled to look at the school district for because they wanted to move to that area.

[03:04:44] We were one of the top districts in the East Coast that they wanted to do that. So we are, you know, making dramatic improvements. As I started the meeting with increased pay to teachers, really putting us in at a competitive sort of, we used to be at a disadvantage.

[03:05:01] We're now maybe at a competitive advantage and attracting some of the top and best talent coming out of our universities to teach our kids. I am very committed to the math curriculum that is being overhauled.

[03:05:16] I fully agree with all of the efforts by the Virginia Department of Education, all the recommendations, all the efforts, you know, to make our math curriculum rigorous. I'm even committed to making it far more rigorous than they've even recommended.

[03:05:33] I think it is really important, especially in this age of AI, algorithms, statistical analysis, data analytics. There will be no shortage of jobs requiring people to understand math at its most basic form and its most advanced form.

[03:05:57] And so I'm very excited about that. I do care deeply about, and I'm excited about our focus on AI. You know, the school division decided that we would incorporate AI as we can. Now, AI is gonna be hard to incorporate. It's gonna require, just like the abacus did, the calculator did, and the computers did, our pedagogy and our teachers to teach differently.

[03:06:22] You know, while calculators gave an answer, it only gave an answer to the right question that it was asked. It's the same thing with Google. It's the same thing with AI. If the students can't ask the right questions, you're not gonna get the right answers. And so it still requires that we teach our students to be creative, innovative, critical thinkers, all the things that we have committed to in our strategic plan on making our students.

[03:06:45] And so AI is another tool in enhancing human productivity, innovation and creativity. And I firmly believe as a school division, we have a responsibility to teach our students how to use AI ethically, responsibly, but it's gonna require us to give assignments that if we're letting them use AI to see what we can come up with.

[03:07:14] So just like with math, we said, okay, you can use calculators on the SAT and those things. We're gonna say, well, now we're gonna use AI, but we can now solve more complex problems. We can demand more complex work to be done by our students, but it's gonna require all of us learning and committing to this effort.

[03:07:33] So I'm very excited about that. I'll reiterate that I wanna see a strategic plan that you all help us create that is bold, that is ambitious, that is aspirational and innovative. I think in the next four years we can do that and we can make Prince William County, not just one of the top districts in the Commonwealth, but I really believe the top district in the United States of America.

[03:07:55] We have everything going for us. We have a diversity, an open and welcoming environment, a commitment to instruction, a commitment to our students And as you saw today in launching Thriving

Futures, we have parents and families and in this room who are committed to helping their children and our children realize their full potential.

[03:08:16] And that's what I'm most optimistic about about this school year. And so thank you all for being here and have a great evening. Meeting is adjourned.



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