



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, May 20, 2026

Date Wednesday, May 20, 2026
Place Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length 3h 4m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I4FN8Xlb84I>
- Official School Board page (PWCS): https://www.pwcs.edu/about/school_board/

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

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-27. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:00] - I would like to call the meeting of the Prince William County School Board to order. The motion is now in order for the approval of the meeting agenda, Vice Chair. Just, somebody want to read that for me. Oh, agenda.

[00:00:16] - I got it, yeah. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approves the meeting agenda as recommended. - Mr. Vice Chair. - Do we have a second? - I'll second. - Ms. Williams second. Do any discussions, please vote.

[00:00:36] - Vote is six yes, one not present at vote. Lateef, motion passed. - Moving on to the motion to enter closed session. The motion is in the order. - Mr. Chairman, I move that pursuant to section 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, the Prince William County School Board enter closed session for the following reasons.

[00:00:58] One, to discuss with staff the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body pursuant to section 2.2-3711A1 of the code of Virginia. Two, to review the grievance appeal of employee T 26 point, sorry, -003 pursuant to sections 2.2-3711A1 and eight of the code of Virginia.

[00:01:22] Three, to discuss with division counsel and staff actual or probable litigation and specific legal matters involving staff, students and other civil litigation involving school division under sections 2.2-3711A7 and eight of the code of Virginia. Four, to discuss the potential for disposition of school board owned property in the Ocupe district because discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position of the school board and consultation with legal counsel regarding this matter pursuant to sections 2.2-3711A3 and A8 of the code of Virginia and five, to discuss and receive briefings by staff members related to the security of school facilities, the safety of persons using such facilities and actions taken to respond to such matters

[00:02:01] where discussion in an open meeting would jeopardize the security of such facilities pursuant to section 2.2-3711A19 of the Code of Virginia. - Mr. Vice Chair, I'll second. - Any discussion, please vote.

[00:02:21] - Vote is six yes, one not present at vote. Lateef, motion passed. - The Prince William County School Board will now enter closed session

[00:02:28] and return to open session in approximately one hour.

[00:03:33] - Thank you, the Prince William County School Board will now reenter open session from closed session. The motion is in order for 7.01, closed session certification, Vice Chair Jesse. I move that pursuant to section 2.2 last 3712 of the code of Virginia, the closed session of Prince William County School Board meeting of May 20th, 2026 be certified by adopting and filing a resolution.

[00:03:59] Now therefore be resolved that the Prince William County School Board hereby certify that to the best of each member's knowledge, one, only public business matter lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements were discussed of closed session to which the certification resolution applies and two, only says public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed session meeting were heard and discussed or considered by the school board.

[00:04:29] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:04:57] - Vote is seven yes, one absent. Tradenik, motion passed. - I move to the Prince William, or what am I doing? Moving on to closed session action items and motions in order for 8.01. Vice Chair Jesse. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approves the department and releases of specific employees as presented in closed session.

[00:05:14] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:05:35] - Vote is seven yes, one absent. Tredenik, motion passed. - Moving on to 8.02, Grievance Appeal for Employee T26003, action item. Vice Chair Jesse. - I move that the Prince William County School Board uphold the superintendent recommendation of dismissal in employees case number T26-003, and further that the chairman at large is authorized to provide written decision to an employee reflecting the school board decision.

[00:06:09] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:06:28] - Vote is seven yes, one absent. Tradenik, motion passed. - Okay, 8.03, approval of legal counsel's legal recommendation action item. Vice Chair Jesse. - I move that the Prince William County School Board - Authorize the action recommended by the legal counsels as discussed in the closed session meeting session.

[00:06:44] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:07:04] - The vote is seven yes, one absent. Trudinic, motion passed. - Thank you, that concludes our closed session action items. Moving on to the Pledge of Allegiance, I'd like to invite our student representative, Beulah Sarsa, to lead us in the pledge this evening.

[00:07:28] - Receive. - All right, next up we have our Thriving Futures Focus. We will go to that.

[00:07:43] The Thriving Future's focus is our opportunity to highlight the exemplary work being accomplished in our schools that fulfills our vision that every student will graduate on time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community. Tonight, the school board is honored to acknowledge outstanding achievements in civic leadership, science and engineering research, choral performance, and Project Lead the Way.

[00:08:05] These recognitions reflect many ways our students are leading, learning, creating, and representing Prince William County Public Schools with excellence. I will now turn the proceedings over to Ms. Jennifer Wall of the Gainesville District. Ms. Wall. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef.

[00:08:21] Tonight, we begin by recognizing students who earned awards through the Virginia Model Judiciary Program. In 1975, the Virginia Model Judiciary Program was launched in partnership with the Young Lawyers Division of the Virginia Bar Association.

[00:08:37] This program provides students across Virginia with a hands-on educational experience in the Commonwealth's judiciary system, culminating in competition at the Virginia Supreme Court. The Gainesville District is proud to recognize Battlefield High School students Sakshi Gouda and Ethan Marco, who received the best appellant and best overall team award at the Virginia Supreme Court Appellant Argument Competition.

[00:09:03] Sakshi and Ethan, your achievement reflects the critical thinking expected of PWCS graduates and a deep understanding of civic responsibility. Battlefield High School is represented this evening by Principal Dolores Lucas. To all, congratulations.

[00:09:29] I love it. I would now like to invite Mr. Wilk of the Potomac District to recognize our next honoree in behalf of the Brentsville District. - Thank you, Ms. Wall. It's an honor to present on behalf of Erica Tregenig of the Brentsville District. The Brentsville District is proud to recognize Neela Harouni of Patriot High School who received the best order award at the Virginia Supreme Court Appellate Argument Competition.

[00:09:55] NILA, this honor reflects your ability to communicate clearly and advocate with confidence and professionalism. Those are skills that will serve you well in school, in your future, and as an engaged citizen. Patriot High School is represented this evening by Assistant Principal Monica Seiler and sponsor Randy Warren.

[00:10:16] Congratulations. - Standing ovation from our attorneys in the building. - Yes. The board will now invite Ms. Warren, social studies teacher at Patriot High School and primary sponsor coordinator for the competition to speak on behalf of our award winners tonight.

[00:10:41] - Thank you. Distinguished members of the board and Superintendent Dr. McDade, I'm proud to share highlights from this year's model judiciary program, an innovative hands-on extension of our mock trial and moot court competition that brings the law to life for students across Prince William County.

[00:10:58] The program begins with a mock trial. This year, the students from eight different high schools in our county prepared and competed as attorneys and witnesses in a simulated courtroom appearance. This year's case centered on a first degree murder case held in Prince William Courthouse this past February.

[00:11:17] Students mastered every stage of litigation, opening statements, witness examinations, objections, evidence, closing arguments, working alongside their dedicated teachers and sponsors. After the mock trial is complete, students may advance to the appellate round level and ultimately to the Virginia Supreme Court model judiciary round.

[00:11:36] This program would not be possible without the amazing teachers, but also includes an incredible group of attorneys and judges from the Prince William Bar Association, as well as the unwavering support of the Sheriff's Department, all of whom welcome our students into their courthouse with eager enthusiasm, and also Ms. Lucas's daughter is one of them.

[00:11:56] Just wanted to point that out. This year saw record participation at every stage. We had 400 students attend the mock trial program followed by nine appellate rounds and ultimately five of our teams from Prince William County advanced to the Supreme Court level. That is the most ever to compete from our county at this level.

[00:12:14] And then at the Supreme Court level, the students argued complex constitutional issues, change of venue, effective assistance of counsel in a fast paced appellate format. And they argued in front of appellate judges and including a former Chief Justice of the Virginia Supreme Court, so that was quite intimidating for me.

[00:12:33] And their poise and their preparation was extraordinary. So we're really especially proud that they earned three statewide honors at this program. I'd also like to note that this is the fourth year in a row that students have won top honors and awards at this program.

[00:12:50] The Model Judiciary Program exemplifies inclusive, high-impact learning, building critical thinking, confidence and civic understanding through authentic, rigorous experiences. Thank you for continuing to support this program.

[00:13:11] - Wow, truly incredible. Thank you, Ms. Warren, Mr. Blake, Mr. Denik, Ms. Wall, and congratulations to our Model Judiciary Program honorees. I would now like to invite Mrs. Lisa Zargapur, the Coles District, to begin our Science and Engineering Fair recognitions.

[00:13:29] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The school board is proud to recognize students who earned special awards at the Virginia State Science and Engineering Fair or VSSEF. Founded in 1985, VSSEF began with a little more than 100 projects and has grown to include participants from across the Commonwealth.

[00:13:47] In 2026, 250 exhibits were expected from students who advanced from local and regional fairs. Only students nominated from official Virginia State Science and Engineering fairs may participate in the Virginia International Science and Engineering fairs, making it one of the state's most competitive STEM events.

[00:14:04] This year, 42 students, seven from PWCS high schools, earned top honors at VSSEF, competing against 200 of Virginia's most accomplished high school researchers. The Coles District is proud to recognize Akhtish Vaughan from Colgan High School, recipient of the American Psychological Association

Award for Outstanding Research in Psychology and the John Burkow Award, recognizing excellence in social and political science research related to political psychology and social media.

[00:14:35] Aktish, your work reflects curiosity, discipline, and the ability to explore complex questions through research and evidence. And I'm just gonna add a personal point of privilege. I keep running into him at places because he's definitely, you're onto a thing, and it's building, I love watching this develop over your education here.

[00:14:56] Colgan High School is represented this evening by Assistant Principal Chad Cavender and Biology Teacher Todd McGee. The Coles District is also proud to recognize students from Osmer Park High School and the Governor's School at Innovation Park. Congratulations to Mazen Bin Suica, oh, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry, I messed your name up 'cause it was in three different places.

[00:15:16] Mazen Bin Suica, Michael Obing, and Devin Wanshu, recipients of the Leidos Award for Excellence in Applied Science for their work on the AeroCool Project. Your recognition demonstrates innovation, collaboration, and applied scientific thinking that connects classroom learning to real-world challenges.

[00:15:35] Osborne Park High School is represented this evening by Principal Dr. Lisa Marie Kane, and the Governor's School at Innovation Park is represented by Dr. Eilish Sacher and Dr. Felipe Gutierrez. Congratulations. I now invite Mr. Wilk again to represent the Brentsville District on behalf of Erica Trudenik.

[00:15:57] - Thank you, Ms. Zagapur. The Brentsville District is proud to recognize Lana Wadden of the Unity Reed High School recipient of the Mark Lakita Award for Biotechnology, honoring innovative biotechnology research and the Office of Naval Research Award, recognizing strong scientific inquiry, engineering design, and innovation with relevance to real world naval science and technology challenges.

[00:16:27] Lana, your achievement reflects the absolute best of student research, curiosity, creativity, and the courage to pursue challenging questions. Unity Reed is a high school's represented this evening by assistant principal, Cameron Matheson and biology teacher, Elizabeth Golden.

[00:16:46] Congratulations. At this time, it is my privilege to invite Sarah Plumet-Talon, administrative coordinator of elementary science to speak on behalf of our VSSEF winners. - Good evening, Dr. Lateef, school board members and Dr. McDade.

[00:17:03] On behalf of the students and their families and school leadership, I thank you for the opportunity to recognize and celebrate these incredible young scientists. These accomplishments reflect not only the exceptional talent of our students and their dedication to their research, but also serves as evidence of the quality of support provided to them by our division.

[00:17:22] We are proud of our students for representing PWCS at such a high level with such distinction. As astronomer and planetary scientist Carl Sagan reminded us, we make our world significant by the courage of our questions and the depths of our answers. Students, we look forward to seeing where your curiosity and perseverance takes you next and hope that you continue to conduct research at such a high level.

[00:17:44] Thank you again for the opportunity to recognize these students and for your continued support of STEM initiatives. - Thank you, Ms. Clementalo and Mr. Wilk for Ms. Trudenik and

congratulations to all our VSEF honorees.

[00:18:02] I would now like to invite Ms. Laurie Williams, the Woodbridge District to begin our choral recognition. Once all the choirs have been recognized, the board will ask Dr. Bellino, Supervisor of the Arts to speak on behalf of the group. Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The school board is proud to recognize students who earn top honors through the 2026 American Choral Directors Association Southern Region Conference held in Memphis, Tennessee.

[00:18:27] The ACDA Southern Region encompasses 11 states with hundreds of students in grades four through 12, auditioning each year for a limited number of ensemble positions. PWCS recently sent 11 students to the Southern Region Honor Choirs as part of this conference.

[00:18:45] This distinction stands among the highest honors for student singers and reflects the dedication of students, families, and music educators who champion artistic excellence in schools. The Woodbridge District is proud to recognize Danielle Odom, a seventh grade student from Rippon Middle School who was selected for the Junior High Choir.

[00:19:07] Danielle, congratulations on this outstanding achievement. Your selection reflects your strong commitment to musical excellence. Rippon Middle School is represented this evening by Assistant Principal Elizabeth Parsons and Choir Directors Danielle Cabrios and Julia Pazmio.

[00:19:26] Correct me if I said that wrong, please. I would now like to invite Ms. Lisa Zargapur of the Coles District to recognize our next ACDA honorees. - Thank you, Ms. Williams. The Coles District is proud to recognize two students from Colgan High School who earned top honors at the 2026 ACDA Southern Region Conference.

[00:19:45] Congratulations to sophomore Isabella Nicastro and senior Madeline Byrne for the selection to the Senior High Honor Choir. Madeline could not attend tonight due to a prior engagement. Isabella, your selection reflects an exceptional vocal ability, preparation, and artistry.

[00:20:02] You represented Colgan High School and PWCS with distinction. Colgan High School is represented this evening by Assistant Principal Chad Cavender, And unfortunately, choir director Carrie Staley could not attend tonight due to a prior engagement. I would now like to invite Mr. Wilk of the Potomac District on behalf of Erica Trudenik of the Brentsville District to recognize her honorees.

[00:20:23] - Thank you, Ms. Zagapur. The Brentsville District is proud to recognize seven Patriot High School students who are in top honors at the 2026 ACDA Southern Region Conference. All earned a spot to the senior level honor choir. Congratulations to Megan Berzeron, Liana Cruz, Anthony Bodnar, sorry, all three of those are grade 11, Cameron McGee, grade 11, Vaughn Schweizer, grade 11, Beckett Weissel, grade 11, and Grant Williams, grade 12.

[00:20:53] Patriot High School is represented this evening by assistant principal Monica Seiler. Choir director Elizabeth Shelby is also here tonight. Congratulations to all of our Patriot High School nominees. From the Brentsville District, I am proud to recognize for Mr. Jenik, Michael Winsock, who is grade nine.

[00:21:12] Brentsville District High School is represented by Assistant Principal Katie Salas and Choir Director Anna Bachunas Lou Ellen. Sorry, I'm learning these. I just found out I was doing this today. The Brentsville District has one more recognition to make in the field of music excellence.

[00:21:30] I am proud to recognize the Marcellar Middle School eighth grade women's choir, which earned a distinguished honor of being selected by the American Choral Directors Association to perform at the Southern Region Conference. The Marsteller Middle School eighth grade women's choir performs seven selections under direction of their teacher, Julie Phelan.

[00:21:53] Marsteller Middle School is represented this evening by Principal Lisa Warner and choir teacher, Julie Phelan. Ms. Phelan, would you please introduce the students with us here tonight?

[00:22:11] - Good evening. The Marsteller Women's course is made of 42 students and I have 22 with me here this evening. Nora Castellar, Sydney Douds, Audrey Ellis, Alex Hanna, Lamar Hassanah, Ariana Howell, Malia Iqbal, Avani Jaka, Scarlett James, Andrea Johnson, Zuriel Kang, Naomi King, Ella Machovic, Natalie McCartney, Sophia McEwen, Peyton Moikins, Charlotte Podkufka, Sharice Pollard, Chyna Reed,

[00:22:42] Lucia Rupert, Paula Santos Berrios, and Rhea Shaw.

[00:23:00] - Thank you. At this time, I welcome Dr. Annemarie Bellino, Supervisor of the Arts to share a few words on the accomplishments of our choir community. - Good evening, Dr. Lateef, members of the school board and Dr. McDade, and of course, our honored students and teachers.

[00:23:16] As always, I'm delighted to be with you tonight as we recognize the outstanding achievements of our choir community. As you can see, PWCS was well represented on such a distinguished stage. These ensembles and students reflect some of the most accomplished singers from across 11 states, and our PWCS students earned their place among them through dedication, perseverance, and a true commitment to their craft.

[00:23:42] To our singers, this accomplishment reflects your talent, discipline, and passion for music, and you should be really proud. Your voice is a gift, and I hope you continue to keep the joy of singing in your lives long after you graduate.

[00:23:57] To our teachers, thank you for your expertise, your care, and unwavering support you provide each day to make opportunities like this possible for our students. These accomplishments showcase not only our students, but this larger tradition of excellence that continues to grow across our schools, and that is because of you.

[00:24:17] Together, our students and our teachers represent the very best of our arts programs and our school community. And to our parents, administrators, school board, and community, we certainly do not forget all of the work that you do behind the scenes for all of these students and teachers to encourage and support their work.

[00:24:35] Please join me in congratulating once again our students and our teachers for their remarkable achievement. - Thank you. - Thank you, Dr. Bellino, and congratulations to our talented musicians.

[00:24:52] Just a note, last night the school board and the retiring teachers and principals were entertained by the Marsteller Women's Choir led by a fantastic mom who played the piano that night, Ms. Jensen, and so we are grateful for the incredible show you guys provided us last night, and we can attest and witness your talent directly as we were there last evening.

[00:25:17] Up next again, we'll have Mr. Wilk from Mr. Denik of the Brentsville District, which the Brentsville District is frankly on fire tonight, continue with the Project Lead the Way honorees. - Yes,

continuing this burning flame. - Thank you, it is my honor to proudly recognize the schools that have been awarded Project Lead the Way Distinguished Program Recognition for 2025 and 26.

[00:25:41] Project Lead the Way provides students with engaging hands-on learning experiences in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Four Prince William County high schools were awarded the Project Lead the Way Distinguished Program Recognition designation for 2025 and 26 To earn the distinguished status at the high school level, the schools had to offer at least three Project Lead the Way high school courses from one of the Project Lead the Way pathways.

[00:26:11] Demonstrate efforts to ensure broad and inclusive access to Project Lead the Way opportunities. Meet one of the following benchmarks. 25% or more of all students grades nine to 12 enrolled at least one Project Lead the Way course or 33% or more of Project Lead the Way students completed two or more Project Lead the Way courses.

[00:26:36] This recognition reflects a school-wide commitment to expanding access to high-quality STEM learning and preparing students with problem-solving, collaboration, and innovation skills needed for the future. Congratulations to the Brentsville District School tonight, represented by Assistant Principal Katie Salas and technology education teachers, DJ and Tiffany Shuley.

[00:27:02] I would also like to congratulate Gainesville High School represented by assistant principal, Isabella Yearwood, biology teachers, Roslyn Wingo, and Victoria Friedol, chemistry teacher, Sarah Antion, earth science teacher, Erica Nichols, Nichols and Tim DeFelice, technology education teacher, - Lisa Emmett, bio med teacher.

[00:27:28] Ms. Zagapur, please recognize your Project Lead the Way schools. - Thank you, Mr. Wilk for Ms. Trojanek. The Coles District would like to recognize Colgan High School, represented by Assistant Principal Chad Cavender, and Technology Education teacher Cheryl Niles.

[00:27:44] Congratulations, and Ms. Wall, please introduce your school. - Thank you, Mrs. Zagapur. The Gainesville District would like to recognize Battlefield High School, represented by Principal Dolores Lucas, and technology education teacher, Brooke Mallon.

[00:28:00] Brooke Mallon, congratulations. Tim Vaughan, our CTE administrative coordinator, will provide a few words in recognition of these award-winning schools. - Thank you. Dr. Lateef, board members, and Dr. McDade, thank you all for the opportunity to celebrate this wonderful achievement.

[00:28:20] Project Lead the Way Schools of Distinction honor school communities that go above and beyond to provide students with transformative learning experiences in STEM and career-focused education. This recognition reflects a deep commitment to expanding opportunities, fostering engagement, and equipping students with the critical thinking, collaboration, and technical skills they need to succeed in an ever-evolving world.

[00:28:42] I'm proud to recognize the 2526 PWCS/PLTW High School's Distinguished Programme Recognition Award recipients, Battlefield High School, their sixth consecutive year of receiving this distinction, Colgan High School, their fourth year of receiving this distinction, Gainesville High School, their second year of receiving distinction, and last but not least, receiving it for the very first time, Brentsville District High School.

[00:29:08] We are very fortunate to have some talented and dedicated Project Lead the Way teachers and very supportive school administrators to ensure that every student has access to meaningful, high-quality learning experiences that spark curiosity, build confidence, and prepare them for success beyond high school.

[00:29:26] I am proud to congratulate these outstanding schools for their commitment to excellence and for inspiring the next generation of innovators, leaders and problem solvers for Prince William County Schools. Thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Vaughn, and congratulations to our Project Lead the Way Distinguished Schools.

[00:29:48] I'd like to ask all those involved in supporting our honorees, including the parents, family members, teachers, sponsors, directors, and school leaders to please stand in recognition of your support. Please, folks in the back, parents, thank you for everything.

[00:30:09] Before taking a few pictures, Superintendent Dr. McDade would like to share. - Thank you Dr. Lateef. - Thank you so much Dr. Lateef. Congratulations to our Model General Assembly and Model Judiciary honorees from Battlefield and Patriot High Schools. Your achievements demonstrate the importance of civic learning, public speaking, critical thinking, and thoughtful engagement with the systems that shape our commonwealth and our communities.

[00:30:32] And to our Virginia State Science and Engineering Fair honorees, congratulations. Your research reflects curiosity, discipline, and innovation, the kind that we want to inspire in every student in Prince William County Schools. And to our ACDA Southern Region Honor Choir students, congratulations on earning one of the highest distinctions available to student singers.

[00:30:53] You have represented not only your school, but our entire school division with excellence. And to the Marcellar Middle School Eighth Grade Women's Choir, congratulations on being selected to perform at the ACDA Southern Region Conference. and I was certainly delighted to be able to hear you last night as you honored our retirees.

[00:31:14] I want to commend you on your artistry, your teamwork, and your commitment to musical excellence. I also want to recognize our four schools who have earned the Project Lead the Way Distinguished Program Recognition Designation 42526, Battlefield, Brentsville, Colgan, and Gainesville High Schools.

[00:31:34] I also want to thank all of your teachers, directors, sponsors, principals, families, and staff members who have supported these programs and helped make these accomplishments possible. Each of tonight's recognitions connects directly to our mission as a school division to prepare students to be critical thinkers, to be responsible digital citizens, innovators and visionaries, global collaborators, and most importantly, resilient individuals.

[00:31:59] And on behalf of Prince William County Public Schools, congratulations to all of tonight's honorees. Thank you for representing your school and our school division with such excellence and we are PWCS proud.

[00:32:20] - Thank you, Dr. McDade. At this time, I'd like to request our honorees come forward for a photo with the school board and receive a small token of our appreciation.

[00:32:26] Diana Gulotta will direct you up front.

[00:41:55] Okay, thank you all for that. That was a great event, great evening. Now moving on to the adoption of the consent agenda. Mr. Jesse. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approves a public meeting consent agenda as recommended. - Do I have a second?

[00:42:10] - Mr. Chairman. - A second, Ms. Williams, any discussion? Please vote.

[00:42:37] - It is five yes, two not present at vote. Blake Wall, motion passed. - Up next, acknowledgements and recognitions. Mr. Jesse. - I move that Prince William County School Board approve the adoption of the acknowledgement and the recognition as recommended. - Mr. Chairman. - Do I have a second?

[00:42:53] - I second. - Ms. Williams, any discussion? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - I just would like to congratulate our school division for continuing to honor LGBTQ+ Pride Month. these acknowledgements and recognitions are a month ahead of time, so this will be for June.

[00:43:09] Thank you. - Please vote, please vote.

[00:43:30] We're waiting for Jen. Ms. Wall, we're waiting for a quorum. I lost my quorum. Go ahead and vote. Now we can vote again.

[00:44:00] - Mr. Blake, how do you vote? Vote is five yes, one abstain. Wall, one not present at vote. Jesse, motion passed. - Moving on to the office of the, oh no, I'm sorry, we're doing citizen comment time.

[00:44:18] Those citizens who signed up in advance, the clerk may address the school board this evening when they are called to the podium, citizen comment period for regular school board meetings is one hour and citizens may speak on agenda items or other topics germane to the operations and policies of PWCS. Please use proper decorum and manners while at the podium or you'll be asked to step aside.

[00:44:34] We ask that the audience please be respectful of each speaker and refrain from any clapping, cheering or jeering to avoid disruption of the meeting. If you do not do so, the board will recess and I'll ask that the room be cleared to restore public order. Tonight we have 14 citizens signed up to speak. When I call your name, please come to the podium and state your name and address for the record.

[00:44:50] The first five, just so you all know, The order is Mona Sneed, Doug Shin, Raya Knight, Yuko Stack, Kimberly Melman Orozco. Mona Sneed.

[00:45:10] - Good evening, members of the school board, those on the dais, my name is Mona Sneed. My address is on file with the clerk. I stand before you today as a parent, backed by 20 years of front line credibility and support as a veteran team mom, board member, and fundraising coordinator of ages five through 15 athletes.

[00:45:32] I have seen literal blood, sweat, tears, injuries, deep parental disappointments that come with competitive sports. Throughout my years, I will not challenge how any family or any parent feels that the process did not work for them.

[00:45:51] However, when allegations appear to tear down not only a coach, but a school program, I feel it is my duty as a parent that has qualified experience to justifiably continue to fight for the demand that we look at undeniable facts of the program and the coach in question.

[00:46:11] Coach West at Osborne Park High School did not stumble into his leadership in a coaching position by chance. He has been preparing for this his entire life. The son of a basketball coach with two lifelong educators right here in Prince William County is truly in his DNA.

[00:46:31] When he chose to forego the professional basketball aspirations of playing overseas, he chose to come home. He chose to be a teacher here in Prince William County. As a high performer, the facts speak for themselves.

[00:46:46] He has scored over a thousand points, earned state honors, secured a Division I scholarship, and led Tusculum University to a national tournament appearance. He's demonstrated commitments to his academics by being named the Athletic Directors Hall of Fame, as well as graduating with his bachelor's degree in three years, followed by a master's degree in sports management and business.

[00:47:12] Upon returning to Prince William County, he sought out the opportunity to be coached and mentored by a renowned multi-year coach of the year, Chrissy Kelly at Osborne Park. He started as the JV coach on the girls basketball team. He's helped the team move forward to their first state championship in school history.

[00:47:32] He then moved forward this year was named Osborne Park Boys Basketball Head Coach. The program previously won six games total in three seasons. In his first year, he has won nine games, in his first year as head coach.

[00:47:48] The dedication to changing the culture of the students, the parents, this year alone has been tremendous. He is well-respected and accomplished school education teacher at OP, who has rightfully and was named Novice Teacher of the Year. The relentless support and pursuit of excellence, passion for the game and phenomenal role model he brings to OP is exactly what we should be demonstrating to our student-athletes on and off the court. We must protect our educators, coaches, and staff of this caliber to continue PWCS elevating towards positive climate culture

[00:48:24] as we strive to move forward. Thank you for your time. Good evening. My name is Dong Shin. I believe my address is on file as well i'm a father of noah shin he plays a sophomore at osborne park high school plays for the varsity basketball team and i gotta be frank he's not the easiest kid to teach

[00:49:03] or coach in his first year last year at osborne park he had a tough year his grades were bad he was getting in trouble in fact um he broke into some cars at the parking lot very bad decision and he got kicked out and he ended up in independence for the last few months so when his second year started you know obviously I was very concerned right they got a new basketball coach which basketball is a big part of his life I didn't I wasn't even sure if he could even play right but when the workout started coach West and his staff really took him under his wings

[00:49:37] and with his accountability his grades went up he was committed and motivated and I'm very grateful for coach West and the staff you know there's a beauty in sports especially basketball because the things that make you a winning athlete it's the same thing that's gonna help you succeed in life it's hard work being a good teammate learning how to lose and win and learning how to follow instructions a lot of those things you can't learn in class but coach west he talks to the players

[00:50:12] right he takes them under his wings so he from what i've seen he really embodies those things so not only is he raising good athletes he's really preparing these students to have a bright future.

[00:50:29] Thank you. - I'd like to remind people not to clap and stuff please.

[00:50:49] - Good evening. My name is Ryan Knight. I'm gonna follow suit. My address should be on file. My child does play for the OP basketball team. And I'm just gonna say that the coaching staff altogether

has just changed the whole program.

[00:51:12] There's more student and parent participation at the games. They've won more games. The students are more engaged. So I don't think that we should discredit the new staff. They've done so much for these kids.

[00:51:29] They're getting them more engaged in basketball, giving them more, what do I wanna say, exposure. So I think that what's gonna happen in the years coming that OP is going to be number one and we're going to see some good things if we continue with this

[00:51:54] coach and the coaching staff. Thank you. Yoko Stack. A Fairfax teacher once said do not be afraid

[00:52:26] to speak up for your children. They are voiceless and rely on you. Today I want to honor the message by speaking up for autistic children like my daughter who quietly mask their struggles and a face sensory overload every day their challenges are often unseen denying support to children who mask is discrimination because they have to endure the neurological harm to

[00:52:58] access an education denying them the same opportunity to learn as their peers over time this can lead to school avoidance anxiety burnout and even being pushed out of the school system entirely they are being failed by a system that rewards appearance over reality the moment my daughter cried out why am i alive that moment i realized that that was never a behavior problem

[00:53:32] it was the voice of a child who had been unheard for far too long that is not defiance so i ask all of us how many have been labeled difficult dramatic or disruptive and if a child has to scream why am i alive for us to finally notice the their pain then the problem was never the child the problem was promo problem is that we were not listening we must act the current idea and 504 guarantee

[00:54:11] access these children are often placed in classrooms but denied the education they true they actually need leaving access as a legal shield while real learning and equity are denied we tell children to mask to endure to survive and call it equal access this is a warning if you keep ignoring these voices the consequences will be profound when these children are forced to sacrifice their neurological safety and mental health just to access the same education as their

[00:54:50] peers and some are driven into suicidal despair we are not no longer we are no longer talking about inconvenience or policy gaps we are talking about harm we must act now to prevent further tragedy including the risk of suicide thank you waiting on next week the next five is our

[00:55:24] blake harrah blake harrah then kate olson flynn britney robinson megan fiedman and renee renee reese My name is Dr. Kimberly Melman Orozco. My address is on file. Prince William County Public Schools has an operating budget for fiscal year 2027 of 2.1 billion dollars. That's billion with a B.

[00:55:57] About four percent of that or so comes from the federal government. In order to get that money, in part, you need to certify that you're complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act, that you're complying with the IDEA, that you're complying with the things that that parent, as well as many other parents have told you there are systemic violations occurring within this county. There is mass discrimination against children with disabilities where there are violations to their basic civil rights. They're being denied a free appropriate public education.

[00:56:30] That is a fact. I am calling on the Department of Justice. I'm calling on the US Department of Education. I am calling on the Office of Civil Rights to investigate this board for those certifications to see whether they actually are complying with the law, whether children with disabilities are getting the services. Just today, because of my advocacy, you offered my daughter 600 minutes in compensatory services because you weren't providing them. Parents don't know that you're not providing them. They don't know that you are failing these children, but they're starting to realize it. I realized it after a whistleblower teacher called me

[00:57:09] and told me on recording that they were violating so many laws and I had such grounds and that you were denying my daughter her basic civil liberties and rights. That's on recording. Then, to keep me quiet, you offered me \$20,000 if I signed an NDA with teeth. You all have absolutely no idea the volume of evidence that has come out against this school district.

[00:57:32] Since my last speech a month ago went viral, amassing three million views, I've gotten calls from multiple parents, emails from multiple parents, from professors, from other executives and other people who are leaders within this field and to that point again you have no idea the evidence that we have against you you have no idea the audio recordings you have no idea the voluminous information that can come out with a u.s department of education investigation or federal investigation but to give you some insight into that mr wade anderson you don't know i have

[00:58:07] this email it's dated july 9 2024. it's from nicole thompson to you sir says attorney client privilege. FYI, I'm concerned that they're going to settle just to get out of due processes without thinking about the consequences of other matters pending and in the future.

[00:58:25] I see this is going the way of the NDA in the Lassiter case, which I verbally advised them to remove, but they thought it would be fine. I was in that case. I advocated against that NDA. You have zero idea how many good people have disclosed information and it will come out in in the near future.

[00:58:45] So I advise you to comply with the law. - Thank you. Blake Hara, Kate Olson Flynn, Brittany Robinson, Megan Feeman, and Renee Reeves are the next five. Up next, Blake Hara.

[00:59:07] - Good evening, board members, chair and Dr. McDade. My name is Blake Hara and my address is on file. Before I run out of time, I'm gonna speak in opposition to the code of conduct for next year. Before I run out of time, page 27 of the bomb threat under BES 017 and page 43 of the same thing have conflicting statements.

[00:59:31] Page 27 says you have to do a mandatory police report. Page 43 says you do not have to make a mandatory police report, so I would look at that. So most of us in here are either boomers, Generation X, or millennials.

[00:59:49] no one would accept the code of conduct that just came out. Granted, it is better than it was in previous years, but it's still very weak. So under this, there is tardiness and skipping class.

[01:00:04] There's little to no consequences. It says no ISS, no OSS, or class restriction can be assigned for this violation. You ran into this with the Woodbridge incident where 300 students walked off of this. They can now, just without that consequence, Now they can just do it and they're not gonna be worried about any form of kind of punishment.

[01:00:29] So that was one of the biggest things. So let's see, bullying. Bullying has one of the biggest loopholes in it and that was one of the strongest things you guys talked about last meeting.

[01:00:45] So bullying does not include ordinary tests or does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict. Yet it does address cyber bullying and such like that. What I do is you need to make those, address those to begin to address all forms of bullying.

[01:01:04] So the board is held accountable by their voters. You even hold your own members accountable through methods of parliamentary procedures. Why can't we hold our students accountable? I mean, this code of conduct is extremely weak for all of our students.

[01:01:24] they're just gonna keep doing it until they actually learn. I mean, you bring for students for appealing particular, I don't know, conflict, conflicts that present themselves, but this still needs to be adjusted.

[01:01:40] So I would recommend that you not vote against this tonight until you find either a better vote, just don't vote on this adoption of it 'cause it needs to be reviewed and you also have conflicting statements as I brought up just previously.

[01:02:00] Thank you. - Thank you. Kate Olson-Flynn. - Good evening, school board. Dr. McDade, my name is Dr. Kate Olson-Flynn and my address is on file.

[01:02:18] I'm here to implore you to limit students' access to technology in classrooms. Children in elementary school, at least, do not need to learn on iPads or computers. Solely a taking away YouTube will not change the outcome. The problem is the computer itself. Bring back paper, journals, writing with pencils, learning centers, and have children begin to use real books again.

[01:02:39] PWCS has spent millions of dollars on tech programs, online curriculum, iPads, with the mistaken belief that this technology would be the panacea for test scores and to prepare our students for the digital age. The reality is that our kids are struggling more than ever. They can't focus, they're bored, overstimulated visually and cognitively because they are now spending much of their time on computers, their free time on computers, isolated with headphones on in classrooms, staring at screens.

[01:03:08] and the teachers are forced to spend way too much time fixing computer glitches, monitoring computers, and regulating programs instead of teaching. Ask yourself, are you really doing the right thing with the budget, with our teachers, and with the precious time our children have in the classroom?

[01:03:23] Every administrator here with a higher degree knows the research on child learning and development and knows that none of it asserts that children develop their skills and knowledge in isolation or singularly on a computer. Besides, we experienced it already during COVID, and we know what a mess that was for social and academic development.

[01:03:43] Research shows that watching or reading a computer or iPad is not the same as reading a book or being read to by a teacher or parent holding a book. Seeing a video of a plant growing from a seed isn't the same as doing the experiment with lima beans.

[01:03:58] Counting actual manipulatives is not the same thing as watching a video count for you. ABC mouse is not preschool. We are humans. We learn through shared humanity with the emphasis on shared. That is, we learn through our actions and interactions in collaboration in classroom practice.

[01:04:18] While I realize that you have already agreed to your budget for next year, that doesn't mean that you can't continue to make policy and enforce practices that support teachers in their essential face-to-face work with kids to facilitate classrooms that have common goals of helping children that can read, write, and think.

[01:04:36] Skills that best happen with real books, real paper, real pencils, real activity with each other in real time. School board, I implore you to follow the lead of Virginia Beach City and Arlington Public Schools and others across the country and limit the use of Google Slides, iPads, and online computer programs in classrooms.

[01:04:57] Our kids may not thank you for it now because they're so used to screens, but they ultimately will. Thank you. - Thank you. Brittany Robinson, Megan Fehmann, Good evening my name is Megan Fehmann and I'm here tonight as a parent, a PWCS staff member, and a concerned citizen. Thank you for the opportunity to speak and thank you to Mr. Wilk for your constant

[01:05:36] presence at our events in your district and always being available for questions and discussion. Yesterday evening we received the email acknowledging concerns surrounding YouTube access in PWCS and the plan changes for the 26-27 school year. I appreciate the action is finally being taken, however I wish these concerns had been recognized sooner. One of my own students was using YouTube during the school day to search for things like Lego and hockey videos. Over time the algorithm began suggesting disturbing and inappropriate content. I did not consent to that exposure. My student does not have access to school issued iPad at home so when I review the device for a school day it is alarming

[01:06:15] to see how much time is spent not only on the device itself but specifically on YouTube during school hours. Meanwhile we are placing iPads into the hands of children as young as five years old and increasingly relying on screens for instruction despite growing evidence about the addictive nature of technology and its impact on learning and development. Other districts including the Los Angeles Unified School District are moving in the opposite direction by limiting screen time and reducing technology use especially in elementary schools. We have seen declining test scores and literacy rates that correlate with increased screen use. Research continues to show that recreational screen time both inside and outside the classroom negatively

[01:06:55] affects attention, reading development, and learning overall. In my part-time role as a support nurse for PWCS, I have treated multiple students in just the last month for headaches that they directly attributed to school screen time use. Some required medication. If I'm seeing this in a limited role, how many more students are experiencing similar physical symptoms every day? Beyond academics and health, there's also a social cost. Walk into almost any school cafeteria and you will see students on devices instead of interacting with one another. We have an opportunity and a responsibility to create environments where human interaction still matters. I have spoken to students who openly say

[01:07:33] that they wish the screens were not part of the school day because it makes connecting with peers harder. I'm not suggesting that all technology is bad, but I am asking the board to take a closer look at our priorities and more carefully evaluate the tools we place in our children's hands. We have seen positive results from the no cell phone policy. We should not simply replace personal phones with school-issued iPads that provide many of the same distractions and are often used for non-educational purposes. I appreciate the statement in last night's email that PWCS will continue evaluating instructional

technology and seeking feedback from teachers and families. I hope to see meaningful action come from these words. Technology will continue to

[01:08:11] be a part of our students lives, but we must find a healthier balance that allows students to learn, build relationships, and develop healthy habits. Thank you for your time. Thank you. Renee Reeves. Hi, my name is Renee Reeves and my address is or should be on file. I am here to express my deepest gratitude for our varsity boys basketball coach, Coach West,

[01:08:47] and the entire basketball coaching staff and advocate strongly for their continued support. As a parent, I see firsthand the profound impact this staff has had on our children. They are making a massive difference in the lives of these young men, both on and off the court. Their core values and mission align perfectly with my vision as a parent.

[01:09:07] They prioritize teaching the boys to be good citizens first, excellent students second, and athletes last. The coaching staff holds every player to an exceptionally high standard of honesty, hard work, and respect for their parents, families, teachers, and peers.

[01:09:23] Instead of focusing only on individual success, the boys are taught to think beyond themselves and act as servant leaders. The varsity coach, Coach West, and his staff do not just preach these values, but they embody them, and they lead by example every single day. In the classroom, the varsity coach is deeply involved in academic success of every single player, providing tailored support to everyone who needs it. While progress reports are routine for athletes, this staff treats them as the bare minimum. The varsity coach stays constantly informed about academic progress, maintains

[01:09:58] regular contact with teachers, and consistently offers his own time for extra academic help. He enforces or he enforces a strict boundary school always comes first He's made it clear with the players who fall below academic or behavioral benchmarks that they won't play in a time Where athletic skill is often so allowed to override the importance of learning I am incredibly thankful to coach West who firmly emphasizes Scholarship and drives home the true meaning of academic achievement Lastly an intentionally leases the sport of basketball itself through the game the boys learn teamwork

[01:10:37] strategic thinking and quick decision making they learn to use grit and dedication to accomplish their goals on and off the court the coaching staff takes the time to teach these life skills intentionally reinforcing them through their own behavior day after day coaches have a challenging job especially those who teach they must constantly self-evaluate and hold themselves at the highest standards to ensure they are guiding our future leaders by the right example we are incredibly fortunate at osborne park high school to have coach west this level of dedication in our varsity program staff as well i hope that we will continue to have them leading our program

[01:11:17] for many years to come and that we continue to support this program as they support our children thank you thank you next for hannah ansari robert smith steven katula robin norris hannah ansari all right thank you the school board for letting me come back at some point i'm sure i'm going to I'm gonna wear out my welcome.

[01:11:48] Always a pleasure, Super Nintendo McDade. My address is on file. My mom is in India, so party at my house, but it ends at nine 'cause I gotta go to bed. I wanted to take a break from my usual political fair and take a moment to give some much deserved credit to our two outgoing seniors, Bula and Karina.

When the school board year started and many of us decided to attend school board meetings regularly, we weren't sure.

[01:12:06] We were really in for a treat with our student representatives being so articulate and well-versed in what all was going on. I can't even imagine how intimidating it must have been sitting on that dais with all those folks, some of whom are professional top politicians, yet you looked your fear in the eye and you didn't blink, you held your own, you kept, and I can't imagine what the future holds for you in that respect.

[01:12:24] Public speaking is an absolute skill and you crushed it. You took the limited time the school board gave you and you advocated for things that mattered to you and other students. And sometimes that isn't easy and as I well know, it isn't always popular either, but that's what life is all about. Do you let injustice slide by or catch it on the next train or do you stop at every station and gather more people with you?

[01:12:41] And please don't let this skill of public speaking atrophy. It's a skill, and while I won't say I'm a gifted public speaker, what I do have is a lack of fear of humiliating myself in public, which is a different skill entirely, and I'm sure you all know that. As you embark on your college journey, you'll be surrounded by other overachievers, but not all the overachievers can speak publicly, and you did it consistently, and you were always articulate.

[01:12:59] And I wanted to stop at that point also, because I know being called articulate as a person of color can sometimes be construed as backhanded compliment, but in comparison to your generation, you both are truly one in a million. Many of your peers could never, or maybe would never, do what you did, So give yourself all the credit in the world for it.

[01:13:15] And if I can give you some unsolicited advice, as you go off to college and I have a strong suspicion you won't stop at undergrad, but you'll go on to grad school, having a recommendation letter from an esteemed politician could prove useful. Don't hesitate to ask these fine folks sitting right next to you to write something nice.

[01:13:30] Also some of them have what I call electoral hoop dreams, and they may not be on the school board. They may be governors or delegates or senators or representatives and a recommendation letter from there at grad school, very valuable. Right now you have access to both the current and former governors of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[01:13:46] Don't let that advantage slip through your fingers like I did when I interned in the White House and I have zero contacts now. The other piece of unsolicited advice I wanted to give you comes with a short anecdote. To this day, and you kind of know how old I am, my mom has still not forgiven my sister, my older sister for not thanking her or my dad during her graduation speech.

[01:14:05] So if you're doing a graduation speech and I strongly believe that you probably are, don't forget to thank your parents. And if you want to get double points, Add your grandparents, if they're still alive, then you're so lucky to still have them in your life. Add them, you'll be the favorite grandkid forever and ever and ever. You'll own all your other cousins and your siblings.

[01:14:21] And if you wanna use an Uno reverse card, thank your least favorite sibling. Then they have to thank you and then they'll be really confused about it forever. So thanks for coming to my TED Talk. I look

forward to seeing to what you both accomplished and I wish you the best of luck. Congratulations on graduating and making us PWCS proud.

[01:14:37] - Robert Smith. - Good evening, honorable chairman, members, Prince William County administrators, community members and parents.

[01:14:56] Tonight, I come before you as a concerned IT professional and a frustrated parent. As has already been stated earlier this evening, I found an alarming amount of what is commonly known as brain rot on my child's electronic device that she's issued through the school.

[01:15:15] After finding all of this material on her iPad, I had a conversation with her, trying to figure out where she got the idea that this was a good use of her educational material. Through our discussions, it was relayed to me that this is a common practice in her class, that her peers will use their access to YouTube to generate sounds to disrupt the class, up to and including obscene or explicit noises from soundboards and videos that are on the YouTube website.

[01:15:49] If we as professionals hold standards that we are not allowed to consume or subsume materials on social media sites such as YouTube and Facebook? Why are we allowing these children, underaged, and with no guidance or no discipline, access to these things that are inherently adult in nature and are explicitly forbade in every single code of conduct from here until they end their professional careers?

[01:16:25] I am glad that I'm not the only one bringing this issue to light. I'm also glad to hear that this has already been addressed and is continuing to be addressed. But I would like to add my voice to those who would like to see a return to interactions inside the classroom, outside of these screens.

[01:16:44] I spend three hours a night on most nights, not hanging out with my daughter and learning what she did at school, but having to reiterate lessons that should have been taught in the classroom.

[01:16:59] I should have had to spend 30 minutes to 60 minutes to help her review for these tests, for these SOL exams. Instead, I am holding an entire math class in my kitchen. I see these accesses as the root of this problem and I am glad it is being addressed.

[01:17:21] So I add my voice to this concern and to this motion that we return to bringing the humanity back to the classroom. Thank you. - Steven Ketula. Steven Ketula.

[01:17:41] Robin Norris. good evening. I am Dr. Robin Norris and my address is on file. Thank you for your continued willingness to learn about dyslexia and literacy differences. I want to acknowledge that this district has taken important steps forward and that many district leaders are working with good intent to support students. I would urge the board to remember that progress at the district level does not always

[01:18:18] translate into progress at the school level at the same rate. The gap between policy and practice this is still quite wide at some campuses. Families can hear strong messaging about dyslexia support from central leadership while still encountering misunderstanding at the building level.

[01:18:36] This includes what dyslexia actually is, what appropriate intervention looks like, and how deeply it can affect a student emotionally, academically, and later in life. This disconnect matters because for students, school has experienced one classroom, one teacher, and one administrator at a time.

[01:18:55] In our continued collaborative journey, I invite every board member, administrator, and educator to watch the free short film entitled, "What is Dyslexia?" by Kate Griggs. It's about eight minutes long and helps bring to life what reports and data do not always capture.

[01:19:11] And as summer approaches, I would strongly recommend reading "Visual Thinking" by Dr. Temple Grandin, an awesome, brilliant autistic person and professor. The subtitle, "The Hidden Gifts of People who think in pictures, patterns, and abstractions."

[01:19:27] The book challenges us to rethink what schools reward, what they overlook, and how many students can be underestimated simply because they learn differently and show up in ways that are often described as behavioral concerns. It also reminds us how important it is for systems to work in coordination rather than in isolation.

[01:19:48] I would suggest consideration of bringing the chairs of all of the board committees together at least once or twice a year to strengthen understanding and shared improved coordination across committee work throughout the district, especially with events because they're doing awesome ones, and I'd love the chairs to know that each other is doing awesome work.

[01:20:09] Very similar capacities. It offers a powerful reminder that many students who struggle in traditional systems are often the exact minds our future workforce needs. Innovators, designers, engineers, entrepreneurs, and creative problem solvers, including in the field of healthcare, those who will elevate all of us.

[01:20:30] Thank you again for continuing to listen, learn and grow in this area as literacy changes lives and so does being understood. - Thank you, that concludes citizen comment time for this evening. Moving on to the Office of Chief Equity Officer, we have a school naming for the Woodbridge Area Elementary School, Dr. McDade.

[01:20:52] - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is my pleasure to introduce Dr. CJ Atkins, Chief Equity Officer to provide an update on the naming of the Woodbridge Area Elementary School.

[01:21:11] - Good evening, Chairman Lateef, members of the board, and Dr. McDade. My name is Dr. CJ Atkins, and I serve as the Chief Equity Officer. I'm happy to be here this evening to review the school naming process for our newest elementary school, currently referred to as Woodbridge Area Elementary School.

[01:21:30] The naming committee is composed of Dr. Lateef, Chairman at Large, Ms. Williams from the Woodbridge District, and Mr. Blake from the Neabsco District. First, a little background. School Board Policy 854 calls for the creation of a naming committee, but also notes the final approval of the school's name rests with the entire school board.

[01:21:54] The policy also states that the naming committee will be comprised of the chairman of the school board, the school board member in whose district the school is located, and any school board member whose district is overlapped by the attendance area for the school.

[01:22:10] In this case, no school board member has an overlapping attendance area. The school board chairman at large appoints a school board member. It is important to note that the naming committee is charged to consider these naming criteria.

[01:22:29] Geographic elements, historical items, names of deceased persons who have made significant service contributions, character or values of the community culture. Please note that selection preference will be given to those individuals who have made significant contributions to the field of education, arts, and sciences, or public service.

[01:22:56] It is also important to note that names for consideration shall not conflict with names of other schools or programs in the school division or in the surrounding school divisions, be a person who's primarily identified as a religious leader, be a current employee with an active role in the naming process, or be a relative of a current school board member.

[01:23:22] In choosing a name, the school board shall ensure that the name contributes to a positive climate and culture that meets the key commitments of the division's strategic plan, vision, mission statement, and core values, and consider the historical background of the name and its relevance to the school community served by the school.

[01:23:46] Names of people shall take a holistic view of the person, but focus primarily on the person's significant contributions. The naming process began on March 4th, 2026 with the appointment of the naming committee.

[01:24:05] The second step in the process was on March 23rd, 2026 with the naming committee holding its first community input session to solicit recommendations and suggestions from the public. Subsequent community input sessions were held on April 7th, 2026 and April 14th, 2026.

[01:24:28] Additionally, members of the public were able to provide feedback by filling out an online portal form from March 9th through April 15th, or by emailing the Community Outreach Business Partnerships and Philanthropy Department.

[01:24:45] The next step in the process is tonight's meeting, presenting the naming of the Woodbridge Area Elementary School to the school board for information. The school board is scheduled to take action on this topic on June 3rd. As a reminder, there is an opportunity for the public to provide input at the June 3rd meeting during citizen comment time.

[01:25:11] The school is located off Route 1 on Prince William Parkway in Woodbridge and falls within the Woodbridge District. Here are some visuals of the school facility. As you can see, construction is well underway and continues to progress well. And the school is on track to open for the start of the 2026-27 school year.

[01:25:35] We've received 76 recommendations through public input. Of the total recommendations received, 59 were distinct names. Tonight, I am sharing with you those names that received more than one recommendation in order of frequency first we have woodbridge elementary school potomac view elementary school shibuzi elementary school zeller brown elementary school barack obama elementary school longview

[01:26:14] elementary school potomac elementary school potomac view 2 elementary school and road ridge elementary school the full list of recommended names were shared with board members via email it is also important to note item 7 of policy 854 requires that pwcs staff shall contact the chairman of the prince william county historical commission so that a member of the commission may provide appropriate input to the naming committee at the

[01:26:52] At the May 12th, 2026 historical commission meeting, the Woodbridge district representatives raised no objections to the proposed names. This concludes my presentation and myself and Dawn Davis, the director of the department are able to answer any questions you may have.

[01:27:17] - Anybody have any questions, Ms. Williams. - I'd just like to take this time to thank Dr. Ekans and her team and everyone I think I see spark out there. - Yes, the entire team who came and organized all of our meetings in person in Zoom and was able to collect input from our community.

[01:27:37] I really appreciate the extra added meetings that we had and just the community involvement in general. I also appreciate all the hard work that's gone into updating the committee and keeping us current on the name. So I just wanna take the time to say thank you.

[01:27:53] - You're welcome. - Very excited about the naming. - Okay, thank you very much. - Thank you. Moving on next to, where we have, where we at?

[01:28:11] Code of Behavior, Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Daryl Sampson, our Associate Superintendent for Student Services and Postsecondary Success is available to answer any questions from the board. He did present at the last meeting, and so if there's any additional questions prior to the board vote, we're here to answer those.

[01:28:30] - Anybody have any questions? Any concerns, discussions? Okay, please vote. Mr. Jesse, please read the motion. Oh, I guess we have to read the motion then discussion.

[01:28:47] Yeah, sorry. I think we're on, I don't know, I lost it. - 1501. - Yeah, sure, 1501. Yep, yep, that's the one. - I move that the Prince Rainey County School Board approve the proposed 2026-27 code of behavior.

[01:29:04] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - I second. - Any discussion? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - I would just like to, again, thank all of the staff for their hard work. The code of behavior is complex 'cause it's not only our county policies, but also we have to deal with the federal and the state laws.

[01:29:21] There's a lot of updating. I appreciate the clear and ease of being able to read the code of behavior. And as I always say, I highly encourage students and parents to read the code of behavior so you can keep up on the policies and regulations for the school division. It's really important.

[01:29:38] It's a requirement for when you go to re-enroll your student, but it never hurts to check a couple times a year. And thank you everyone for your input. I think it strikes a nice balance of educating our students as well as teaching them how to be good citizens and provides clear definitions because we are such a diverse community and one person's, or one culture's envision of discipline or teaching a young person how to be a good citizen may be different from another's and the code of behavior, I think, just strikes a nice balance of a norm, so I appreciate it, thank you.

[01:30:13] - Mr. Wilk. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not gonna go into this elongate if you're going to this really further, I do wanna say one thing that I find frustrating, and I know we're not in control of this, is I feel like every time, every week, I hear a new law or a new regulation is being passed in Richmond, changing the material ability for us to actually enforce discipline in our schools.

[01:30:36] I think a lot of the language is misaligned to actually enforcing discipline. And I think a lot of the wording is ambiguous. And I think that handicaps the school system's ability to truly control and maintain order. So I just wanted to add that, thank you.

[01:30:54] - Anybody else, Ms. Wall? - I wanted to direct some of my comments generally to the idea of a code of behavior. So first of all, I wanted to thank Dr. Sampson and his team for their work on the code of behavior revisions this year.

[01:31:10] And anybody who has put in hours upon hours of work behind the scenes to bring this revision to us that we can evaluate and approve. Obviously this is a living document. We change it and address it every year. We do this every year. This is a ritual that we do every year.

[01:31:28] And as part of my broader comments, as part of the authority vested in us as a constitutionally established government body to supervise the operation of public schools, we have the authority to discipline students for misconduct in violation of the code of behavior and PWCS policies and regulations governing student conduct.

[01:31:49] As Mr. Wilk has indicated, we also have to follow state and federal laws and those constrain our actions and our language as well. But in order to effectuate this authority, we adopt a code of behavior to establish the rules and expectations for student behavior.

[01:32:08] Stated clearly, the board expects high standards of student conduct. These high standards reinforce a commitment to a learning atmosphere that's free of disruption and threat to person or property and reinforces commitment to individual rights. And of course, we work within the confines of the law order to do this the goal of a robust code of behavior is to protect the rights of all students to seek and obtain an education that meets their needs while providing safeguards for student and employee health safety and welfare legitimate government interests right there and for the protection of school property as such our code of behavior identifies behavior that is prohibited

[01:32:47] and outlines the disciplinary process for when rules are violated while the teaching and training our young students is a burden shared by all stakeholders parents students educators support professionals families everybody the code of behavior does serve as clear evidence for what behaviors will or will not be tolerated in our schools as well as a clear process for adjudicating a violation and determining the consequences our code behavior and related policies and regulations are intended to fully comply with applicable state and federal law as i have stated the code provides

[01:33:25] important notice to families as to what is required by the law and by our school division these proposed changes that we have that we have before us bring additional clarity to our students and families of course no document is perfect there is always room for improvement however importantly there are a number of proposed changes that are responsive to the feedback that we have sought on the code of behavior from past years from administrators advisory committees and students they contain requests for clarification on important topics such as artificial intelligence including plagiarism

[01:34:05] cheating and misuse of technology exclusionary discipline discipline for truancy substance abuse education harassment student speech under the First Amendment and suspension for grades 3k through 3 definitions for key Terms in the Code of Behavior such as fighting, assault and battery, and distribution of prohibited substances have been clarified.

[01:34:30] I feel like those are important clarifications and an important improvement in this version of the Code of Behavior. Throughout we see an improvement in the document's organization and coherence, including a reduction in redundancies.

[01:34:46] I'm sure there's more work to be had in that regard as well since the document is quite large in my opinion. It is comprehensive, however, so sometimes you have to have a lot of words in a document to be comprehensive.

[01:35:01] Last time we heard about plans for continued professional development for administrators, continued working groups for aligning practices across schools and at the student hearings department level and among our deans of students. And I look forward to those additional efforts to continue to hone our approach to student discipline.

[01:35:26] obviously behavior is one issue code of behavior is a different issue the Dakota behavior seeks to address student behaviors and give everybody clear notice on what is tolerated and what isn't and what the procedures will be for when behavior has become problematic so is this gears code of behavior text and move in the right direction i believe it is is there work still to do yes of course there is and do i support the proposed changes in the code of behavior yes i do thank you anybody else

[01:36:00] - Please vote.

[01:36:18] - The vote is six yes, one no. Wilk, one absent. Tradenек, motion passed. - 1601, update on grading, Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this time I'd like to invite Dr. Stephanie Sullivan, our Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning to provide information and updates to our grading practices and policy.

[01:36:41] You'll recall that she presented to the board updates prior And then since that time, she has engaged families as well as community and educators and leaders and has some edits and changes that she will be presenting tonight.

[01:36:59] - Thank you, Dr. McDade. Good evening, Dr. Lateef, Vice Chair Jesse, members of the board, Dr. McDade and Beulah. Thank you for having me tonight to share these comprehensive updates to further align our assessment and grading practices within Prince William County Schools.

[01:37:19] To begin, I wanna remind our audience and our viewers that this has been a multi-year process. The information gathering and work began last school year and in the period we'll call phase one. And in phase one, we were focused on a coherent school board policy because policy drives all the expectations of the organization.

[01:37:44] And in order to create that policy, We worked with research partners, did extensive peer district review, data analysis, and research of best practices throughout the country. We also worked extensively with the Superintendent's Principal Advisory Council, and I especially wanna call out the Superintendent's Advisory Council for Instruction.

[01:38:06] That is our largest council with a parent from every single school on it. They have been active partners with me on this two-year journey to right-size our strategies. Last year, we did a comprehensive survey with respondents from students, parents, and staff, numbering over 7,000.

[01:38:26] I conducted eight teacher Zoom sessions to hear directly from teachers. Our research partner conducted board member interviews, and we engaged in a gradebook audit. And from all of that work last year, we identified these main areas that continue to come up, whether it was from the survey or comments.

[01:38:50] You'll see some of the topics in each, the elementary column, middle school column, and the high school column. Some of these topics were addressed in the policy work last year, but many of them were really appropriate for the regulations to detail the actual actions of staff.

[01:39:10] And so some of the recommendations that came from phase one. First and foremost, I wanna emphasize for the board and our community, we heard loud and clear that standardizing grading practices was a high priority. Our community as a whole wanted consistent practices across school, clear guidelines and expectations, and stronger coherence in the strategies used in our schools for grading.

[01:39:38] This was a universal ask by all stakeholders. The other one of note was about addressing the impact of grading practices on student motivation and engagement. And this was actually a surprise finding for us from all the stakeholder feedback.

[01:39:55] And I'll explain that a little bit more, but in essence, the grading practices for ongoing work in many cases were demotivating students for participating in those ongoing assignments that build the skills necessary for success on summative tests, and so AKA classwork, homework, those important milestones that are along the way, our teachers were expressing a really high degree of frustration, and our students and parents acknowledge that their students put in less effort, and so we wanted to address that.

[01:40:33] Our teachers were very clear that they want explicit guidelines. Our teachers want to support universal grading practices, want to understand what's expected of them and put those things in place. Certainly from our board, our parents and our students, we heard a lot about prioritizing timely and meaningful feedback, 'cause that feedback cycle is how we learn.

[01:40:57] And so we wanted to add some strength in that. And we also wanted to address high expectations. In Prince William County Schools, we have high expectations for our students. We had some guidelines and some regulations that perhaps devalued some of those high expectations.

[01:41:13] So we wanted to bring some strength to the language to ensure that all of our students understood their high expectations and for academic performance while also teaching those habits and skills necessary for post-secondary success.

[01:41:30] And so as a result of last year's work, just wanna remind the audience, the board passed the policy amendments in June. Again, knowing that this year we would be working on the regulation, The six high points of the policy regulation, you see it again, first and foremost, we wanted to call out that the board has a high expectation that our students and families receive timely feedback.

[01:41:54] We wanted that to be literally at the top of the policy. We also talked about our teachers using a wide variety of assessments. We had found through our data analysis that we were pivoting towards the importance of tests, but maybe not the importance of all the other ways that students demonstrate their learning, identified nine minimum assignments.

[01:42:19] I do wanna call out that that nine minimum assignments was always in the regulation. We elevated it to the policy, in some cases, again, to really make clear. We addressed the on-time issue, giving some language and some strength and some consequence to completing work on time.

[01:42:38] We created a better focus for retake. Students do get an opportunity. However, they have to fulfill the teacher's expectations for additional learning and work. We addressed the switching of the grading to quality points.

[01:42:55] We're gonna talk a lot more about that later in the presentation. And again, that grade should be communicated promptly to parents on a weekly basis through the online grade book. You will see the

restate of that multiple, multiple times because that's an area that we need to continue to grow as a division.

[01:43:14] It was always in the regulation written that way, just needed a little bit more emphasis. And so this school year, we began phase two. And phase two was all about reviewing and updating all the regulations that are in service of Board Policy 661.

[01:43:33] We continued to work with our research partner, again, to make sure our stakeholder feedback critical, but rooted also in research best practices. One of our primary objectives was identifying redundancies, inconsistencies, and points of regulations.

[01:43:51] Much of the conflict that we have had around grading is because in many cases, one regulation was slightly different than another regulation. In many cases, you read the main regulation, not realizing it was 12 regulations later that another issue was addressed.

[01:44:12] We also did extensive analysis of performance data for three years. We looked at those patterns of gradings for three years in each and every one of our schools. And then I did another entire round of stakeholder feedback. Worked with our parents again, our students again, Student Senate, super valuable again, wanna thank them for their work.

[01:44:32] Teachers, counselors, and principals. I held another eight teacher Zoom sessions where our teachers were phenomenal. They shared concerns with great specificity that allowed us to get these regulations right. And so I wanna thank our teachers 'cause they came out in droves to share some really good feedback, had an opportunity to work with our counselors as well as extensively with our principals.

[01:44:57] And then I also wanna call out in full transparency where we didn't get it right at the beginning was that tight alignment with our IT department with integration for the grade book. We are now attached at the hip, realizing that your conceptual work has to be done with that technical work, because we had some glitches with the technical changes in the grade book.

[01:45:20] We are now marching this out side by side. And so what you see here is an example of some of the challenges. And so if you are a parent, let's say you wanted to understand the grading regulation, you might go to 661-3, but what you're looking for might have been in 661-01-1 or 04-4 or 04-8, and you often had to read 13, 14 regulations to make sure you had clear information.

[01:45:56] I myself had to often read 13, 14, 15 regulations. And so one of our primary steps this year was to eliminate that. any parent, any student, any teacher, any principal in wanting to verify and review regulation should be able to go to the elementary, middle, or high school regulation.

[01:46:19] And so what you will see is we've eliminated all the rest of those regulations, not the content. We've embedded the content seamlessly into the base regulation. So if I'm a parent of an elementary school, every single thing I need is in that. I don't have to worry, is this question living somewhere else?

[01:46:37] And that was the reality of our parents and our staff and our principals. They, with good diligence, read the regulation but not realizing this one clause lived elsewhere. And so I wanna next go through some of the big changes in each of the regulations, but our board and our public has access to the complete draft in the links that are attached to this presentation.

[01:47:07] So some of this I'm gonna give in further detail in elementary 'cause some of it is repetitive in all the stages. So first you'll see we clarify the importance of expectations for both formative and

summative assessments. Summative assessments for our elementary schools will make up 60% of their overall grade with formative assessments making up 40% of their grade.

[01:47:31] Meaning that we are making sure that the tests have an important role, those end of unit assessments, tests, project, and main things, but that ongoing work that the student does is also important and valued. And here, thank you, Mr. Wilk, you will see some examples of both formative and summative.

[01:47:52] Wanted to make sure for our public as we go through this presentation, we are real clear formative could be class assignments, quizzes, exit tickets, all those small moments with summative being those big tests. We also added grading flexibility for our encore teachers.

[01:48:09] And again, I'm so thankful they participated because our encore teachers had the challenge of only seeing students every five, six, seven days, and they were tied into a regulation that did not recognize that they lead differently.

[01:48:25] So now the regulation has some specific language for our elementary encore teachers to have a grading requirement of four items versus nine, and then they will get some additional guidance on how to do those assessments. Want to thank Ms. Zargarpur for her insight in that space.

[01:48:43] We also integrated the expectations for students with disabilities and English learners. Our teachers have classrooms full of diverse students. There should not be separate pages for them to go to to understand how to grade and assess our students with differences.

[01:49:01] So now in each of those base regulations, will see the clear language on what grading assessment and reporting practices, what things differ for some of our federally protected groups of students. We also integrated the homework expectations. Again, that was in a whole nother regulation and so we made it clear that that what the time limits are, how they're to be assigned, where the priorities are, and if they are graded that information is clear to the parent and based on content they've had practice with in class already.

[01:49:41] In elementary school, that is less prevalent than it is in our middle and high, so there's a little bit more language in our middle and high. And then we also gave ourselves a clause for when weather-related events happen. As you all recall, we were closed for five days during the last week of the marking period this year, and so we want to have the flexibility to not have our teachers racing the stack assignments to students right before they post grades.

[01:50:08] Little bit of that happened. Now we have some flexibility to adjust that. Moving on to our middle schools. So what you'll see here is a staggered approach. In our elementary schools, we have that 60/40 split.

[01:50:23] For our middles, you'll see a 70/30. So we're seeing an increase in accountability for the mastery of the standards while still acknowledging the importance of that ongoing work. So you'll see that importance of both, summative 70, formative 30.

[01:50:41] I wanna also add that this is now aligned grade six through 12. And so this is a big sigh of relief for many of our teachers, many of our families and our students. And I do wanna add why that was such a high priority for us.

[01:50:56] Because right now our students hit a cliff in ninth grade, much more rigorous standards, much more expectations, and we don't want that to be the first time they experience it. We want them to be able

to make those mistakes and grow and learn in middle school with those same expectations, but then be ready for when that transcript starts building in ninth grade.

[01:51:20] The data on ninth grade is clear. We want to make our students have some of those expectations in middle school. So we now have clear six through 12 expectations. You'll also see again those integrated homework expectations in the regulation for our middle school.

[01:51:38] I do wanna mention that our homework policy and regulations and now this embedded language does remind our educators that we do prohibit homework over holidays. And we also expect our teachers, particularly in middle school and high school to coordinate their homework and assessments.

[01:51:57] It is now clearly in writing in this regulation that the math, English, science, social studies teachers should coordinate when they're giving assignment and the amount of the assignments. We also added clarification to late work. Again, we were trying to balance increasing those expectations that timeliness does matter and there are unique circumstances.

[01:52:21] So really trying to fit that perspective in between. So a penalty would not exceed more than the value of a letter grade. However, late work would not be accepted after two weeks, barring unique circumstances where counselors, principals and teachers can work together on those because our families and our students do have unique circumstances.

[01:52:44] And then of course, supporting the provisions of any IEPs, 504 plans or English learner accommodations. And then again, you'll see those integrated expectations for students with disabilities and English learners. I wanna say as we're starting to see the increase in some minor adjustments, change was necessary for us to get to that number one goal of coherence.

[01:53:09] Everybody had to shift a little. And our teachers and our principals have been great about that. Everybody feels deeply and differently about grading, but everybody values coherence. And so the shifts from different sectors is happening positively.

[01:53:25] Speaking of shifts, this is a big shift too. So what I mentioned about our students in middle school not experiencing the ninth grade cliff, we saw that with grading as well. Prior to these changes, our middle school teachers were grading on three different grading scales.

[01:53:43] A set of grading scale and expectations for sixth and seventh, a different set for eighth, and a different set for when an eighth grader or a seventh grader takes a high school credit class. It is now aligned. And so they're all on the same scale with the same expectations.

[01:54:00] And again, sixth and seventh, eighth grade, getting families and students accustomed to those scales to try to minimize that cliff in ninth grade. Teachers will post their actual assignment grades, which was not true in sixth and seventh grade.

[01:54:16] Parents will have greater visibility in if they're performing higher or lower. And those year-long grades will be calculated by the quality points averaging similar to our high school. And again, we added the weather clause. Now going on to our high school, a lot of this will get quicker 'cause I've already mentioned some of these big items.

[01:54:36] You'll see that split again for formative and summative assignments. Again, valuing the standards-based summative tests, also valuing the work along the way. You'll see that integrated

homework language, slightly longer, of course, for our high school students, but again, emphasizing coordination between teachers, particularly with large high-scale projects.

[01:54:58] That same language on late work, we are expecting our students to do work on time. That is an important habit and skill necessary for their thriving future, so we wanna make sure that they are building that muscle as well. Some additional language, we actually had a far away regulation on summer assignments and how those assignments are graded.

[01:55:20] We've added that language, again, now in this base regulation. We truly found everything throughout the regulations to create consistency around it. We also added the final exam guidance. Again, that was a different regulation.

[01:55:36] That's now embedded along with the ability to be exempt from final exams. We didn't make any changes to that practice in Prince William County. And just some clarifying language. And then again, you'll see some integrated expectations.

[01:55:53] I do wanna talk a little bit more about the next bullet on incomplete and withdrawals. Incompletes leave a student's grades while incomplete and open. And that makes it very problematic for their transcripts, athletic eligibility, teachers move and leave.

[01:56:12] And so we tightened up the language on when an incomplete should be used, when it's appropriate, and when they need to correct those grades so a student's transcript is accurate. We also adjusted the language on when students withdraw from a course to make sure they represent whether the student was passing the course or the student was failing the course.

[01:56:34] And that is a correction to some practice that was done in the past where students, even if they were passing, were receiving a failing grade for withdrawing. So we have corrected that so that they properly represent the status that the student had at the time.

[01:56:50] And then next, we're gonna talk in detail about the grading scale. So as you know, we rolled out those phase one changes with the policy. The grading scales were always a part of regulation and needed to be addressed in this second phase. And I worked extensively with many of our stakeholders, many of the teachers who had concerns about the scales.

[01:57:12] Fortunately, we have the technology now to run thousands and thousands of iterations of the impact. and actually make sure we have statistically accurate ranges and scales. So some of the things with the new grading scale, it reduces the impact of those small percentage cutoffs, which is essentially reducing volatility.

[01:57:32] I'll explain that a little bit more in a second. Creates a third band of distinction, so the combination of the new scale with our quality points is eliminating some of that standard error of measure, And the fact that our teachers are not psychometricians, we can't, on every classroom assignment, assure that it's a valid and reliable assessment.

[01:57:55] So those ranges help make sure a student is being graded fairly. We also are now aligning to nearly all post-secondary institutions in the Commonwealth, as well as our peer divisions. And so this alignment will also help our students as they're being considered across the Commonwealth.

[01:58:15] And so here you will see the new grading scale that will be in place for grades six through 12. Again, bringing that consistency across our grade bands. And I just wanna walk the audience, particularly

through the best way to utilize this scale, is you start in that percentage range.

[01:58:35] A student, let's say, had ended with a percentage of an 86 in their class. They're gonna find that range in that column. that 86 is a B. So you'll see also the addition of the .99s 'cause our previous scale did not address between whole numbers.

[01:58:54] And so we added that clarity as well. So that student has a B, that student would get a 3.0, and that 3.0 would be average with the other quarterly points. It would give them a range. And then that next column says where that falls.

[01:59:10] So imagine a B minus, a B plus, an A, take that quality points, average those together, and then you find your range. We also continue to support our students with both weighted courses and those prerequisite courses, known as our .5s, also called prerequisite, and our weighted courses at a 5.0.

[01:59:32] The big difference for our students this year is the addition of that minus band. So I do wanna address that a little bit. Again, it is consistent, and we think the appropriate next step, but I wanna call out some of those differences. So for example, if you look at the Bs, we'll start there, and the B plus, an 87 to an 89.99, and by using quality points, that's telling us an 87 and an 89 are statistically the same.

[02:00:04] And by setting those bands, we don't have a student with an 87 scrapping for that 89, we stabilize the band. The challenge we had before this change is the band underneath it was super large from an 80 to an 86, essentially stabilizing the 80 and the 86.

[02:00:24] We now created a third band. So instead of students grappling over 10 distinct points, we have three stable bands in each grading category, which is an appropriate way to identify the fact that, again, we're not psychometricians and really complex field in understanding the metrics attached to student learning.

[02:00:49] And so we're really excited about it, we have vetted it numerous ways, and we will be socializing it extensively beginning, well, tonight. And some additional process improvements. So the grade books are gonna be set up for our teachers.

[02:01:06] And again, remember I mentioned that was a takeaway from the initial rollout, is that we had to work hand in hand together, myself and our SIS team, and they have been remarkable. So the teachers will simply choose their assignment, choose the assessment type, the waiting will be automatic.

[02:01:25] And so each of the teachers will not have to set those up. Big process improvement is our co-teachers will be able to enter grades and account for their role in grading. Again, I'm thankful for our teachers who participated because I didn't know this was an issue until they joined in.

[02:01:42] And I said, I think we can solve that. And again, thankful to our SIS team, we are able to solve that. I mentioned our elementary encore teachers. That's gonna be some ongoing work to identify what types of assessments are the best to pick.

[02:01:58] They're a subject 'cause they're grading about 500 kids each. So we wanna continue to develop better processes for them. Our transcripts will clearly denote the year change in grading. So everything prior to this next school year, the transcript will clearly denote what that scale was and that the scale changed.

[02:02:21] Again, for maximum visibility for everybody who looks at transcripts. And we've developed a very comprehensive communication and professional learning plan. We've got a public website that's

about to launch and additional sessions coming for students and parents, lots of direct information from us, not just relying on school communication.

[02:02:42] So we wanna make sure on something this important to the entire board and school division, we're sending it directly out. And so wanna, again, thank our partners in communications. And phase three, and so there's still more work to be done because again, this is an important ongoing process.

[02:03:04] Next year, we're really gonna be working on balanced assessment system with high quality assessments and really evaluating the rigor and strength and alignment of it. As I mentioned, hard for teachers to make sure every one of those assessments in the classroom are psychometrically relevant.

[02:03:24] We are going to do that with our assessments from the division, so a lot of work on that. A high priority for us as well is looking at the transparency for our families on unit assessments. This was brought to our attention a couple years ago. We built in a way for teachers to be able to share those unit assessments, but quite frankly, it's cumbersome.

[02:03:46] And so that is a priority for us, for parents to have immediate insight into how their students do on those unit assessments. We will continue our research, monitoring the grade books every quarter to make sure the data that we're expecting to see, we continue to see.

[02:04:04] We're gonna continue work on standardizing elementary grade book entry. They would like more guidance on what type of assignments, what should be graded, and how they should be entered. They've asked for that, so we're certainly going to respond. And again, some continued professional learning for our teaching fleet around assessment design, rubric design, project-based learning, the multiple ways that you can assess student mastery in non-traditional ways.

[02:04:30] Because we also think that's important because our kids learn and perform differently in different settings. And then finally here in the appendix, especially for our viewers online, you can click directly to the new regulation and read it in detail. Believe it or not, I gave you a short overview of the regulations.

[02:04:49] You can read the comprehensive regulations there as a reminder for our board and our community online. When a new regulation is complete, it leaves side by side for 30 days on board docs. And then after that 30 day period, the old one leaves.

[02:05:07] So we've just begun that cycle or we'll be beginning that cycle any day now. And those will live together, but you can go directly to this link and see it here as well. And thank you. Thank you for your time and your commitment on this journey alongside me.

[02:05:25] And I'm happy to answer any questions. - Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Dr. Sullivan. I wanna thank your team. This is a lot of work, a lot of updating. Could you define... You said psychometrics for those who may not.

[02:05:45] - Yeah, thank you. So psychometrics is our field of statistics where you are measuring like human behaviors. And so that includes things like knowledge and information. And so in terms of like data and analytics, it's a tricky field because it's trying to, with validity and reliability, assess student information.

[02:06:07] And so we understand how difficult that is. And so our teams are building their expertise in that space and working alongside professionals. - Thank you, I appreciate the explanation. - Yes, yeah. - I

don't, not a word. - No, thank you, I appreciate that. - Also, I know that you said the division is rolling out communications, not just relying on schools.

[02:06:27] Is it possible to have maybe a condensed, easier, digestible version that goes out? A lot of times, especially parents who may not have had a significant education, it's hard to help your student. - Sure. - And then if you're not able to comprehend a lot of information at one time, it's also hard to digest to then continue to help your student.

[02:06:48] And we have-- - Thank you. Our communications team is all over it. They've got short videos, segments. We're putting out an FAQ, yes. This was obviously the version for the board. All of the communications will be in much friendlier language to make sure that everybody, and they have a space for questions so that it's accessible to everybody and an option for questions.

[02:07:15] So we'll be having some additional Q&A times, some additional times for our teachers to join in, office hours, virtual office hours. So we'll be launching a lot of those different opportunities. - That's wonderful, I appreciate that. - Yeah, thank you.

[02:07:32] - Two final things. One, is it possible to have like a short statement in our back to school segments? Because that's when we have the focus of most of our school families. - That's great, yes. - And then we also get new school families. Just pick on my house. Usually the kids, in like 15 seconds, have figured out how to do what, and most of those parents are like, and it's also hard, I think, a little bit for, just speaking to myself, education in the way that we teach is different.

[02:07:56] So trying to get over that and then trying to figure out how to best help my student and then get a good grade, a simpler explanation, I think, is good for some of us. - That's a terrific idea. We will definitely do that. We are also adding slides to the open house deck. And so the comms team are gonna build those in so that they're standardized for all the open house as well.

[02:08:16] - Thank you, and my last question is, if you are a family and you do have any issues, is there a chain of command depending on what the issue is? 'Cause I think sometimes maybe a parent, you're like, do I go to the teacher if it's a unit? Should I go to the principal? What is the appropriate level to start at? - Good question, there's definitely some language on that in the reg around what the process is.

[02:08:34] Teacher's always the best first stop. School administrator is the best next stop. But we certainly wanna help anybody that hasn't found resolution in those spaces, and we can help navigate between the schools. So my office is certainly able to support.

[02:08:50] Teacher's always best. School, the people closest to the work are always, 'cause sometimes it's a simple misunderstanding, and it's something that can be clarified very easily and quickly. So we definitely want that. but we're always happy to help after that.

[02:09:07] - Thank you so much, and I'm just gonna say again, thank you so much for the grade books. I know the teachers, we've been hearing it for years about the complications, so I really appreciate that. - Beulah, you're leaving in a few weeks. What are your thoughts on the new grading policy?

[02:09:24] - I really appreciate the adding of the third band. Yeah, I really appreciate that, because other, I guess you could say peer divisions, that's a fancy term, but they have, I have friends in other counties, And they have that B minus or they have that A minus, and they're like, oh, it's such a wide range.

[02:09:46] So I really appreciate them. Thank you. Yeah, I was like, I was looking at them and I was like, oh, that's nice. I like that a lot. Thank you. I wanted to say thank you for embarking in this task and reviewing and cleaning up all our regulations and revising or proposing the changes in a number of areas when I first became

[02:10:20] a board member this was a really big concern that I heard from a lot of people and I heard it a lot and I have graduate I have students who I have a 2018 graduate a 2021 and 2023 so I lived through these changes starting somewhere in like 2016 in my recollection that's about right and you know things were changing and I felt and I saw the impact on my students my three different students of course three different students but I saw it as a parent in the quantity the quality the experience of being assessed and assigned

[02:10:58] homework and all of it I so I feel like this is a very comprehensive change in a number of very important areas and one thing that I did want to point out I I have one question, but I did want to point out I do appreciate the commitment to continuing to take a look at this through data analysis and observation and monitoring because obviously when we make a change like this and we make a number of changes all at the same time, generally that's not a great scientific experiment, but because there's too many variables, however, we don't have time to, you know, make one little change.

[02:11:35] I think all of the changes did need to be made and I think we're going to see great results And of course, in order to do that, we need to monitor it. So I just want to like highlight that aspect of what you said and your team. And I know that's going to require a lot of continuing work.

[02:11:51] However, I think it is important because when we do make changes, we need to determine like, did this have the effect? And do our students benefit from the changes that we made? And I believe that they will because these changes are very responsive to the concerns that I have heard over the years and that I have experienced and that parents have shared with me.

[02:12:11] So thank you for that. I had one question that had come to me that I will raise and you can address it however you wish. Sometimes teachers who teach very advanced classes who are more in a college format, I understand the whole organizational coherence goal and that's a very desirable goal.

[02:12:31] But teachers who teach very advanced content may feel like a 70/30 split isn't as desirable as maybe an 80/20 or a 90/10, which is what we were at. And so I know for some teachers that might be a, there might still be lingering questions.

[02:12:47] What would you, how would you approach that? Or what would you say to teachers who have lingering concerns? And do we have a process for where teachers could express that input? And that could still be, I'm not saying we need to change the regulation. I'm just saying like, for the process of continuous improvement, and if there are concerns for like a college level course, what might you have to share?

[02:13:10] - Yeah, that's a great question. Several of those teachers participated in our feedback sessions. And I really wanna credit our professionals 'cause this isn't easy. They all said the importance of coherence is more important than my personal opinion and this is a small change to get there.

[02:13:29] So I do wanna call out 'cause they were pretty incredible. The second thing I would say is our teachers are very frustrated at students' lack of engagement and ongoing work, meaning classwork, homework, that engagement process, and this will help that.

[02:13:47] The students even called it out when I met the students. And so it's, most of our schools were 80/20. The 70/30 is pretty small shift. 70% is still a huge amount of your overall grade based on summative tests.

[02:14:04] But giving more strength to the overall work that is happening, the students will be more successful on the exams and so I think by and large our teachers, they really wanna see a greater sense of importance 'cause they're seeing the lack of student engagement in the learning along the way.

[02:14:26] So I do think that particularly, I think it'll stabilize the concerns 'cause it's a fairly minor, it is consistent with our peer divisions and I really think sound based on the importance of that ongoing work. And our dual enrollment classes, I should call out, our dual enrollment classes will continue to follow the expectations of the governing institution.

[02:14:51] So, because they're giving the credits, if you will. But our advanced courses, this will apply to those as well. And I do think our teachers will see the benefits of that work counting more. - Thank you, I think, I appreciate that clarification and highlighting the desire for the organizational coherence, but also the engagement, because that's a really important piece, which I did see the effect of in my own household.

[02:15:14] You know, kids not doing homework. - Yeah, the kids actually told me about their complex charts and knowing how to avoid doing work along the way. And so we'd like to tackle that and really help our teachers out, yeah. - You know, kids are smart and they figure out, you know, it's human nature, right?

[02:15:31] - Yep. - To figure out what is the least amount of work that I can do to get the result that I want. - Exactly. - You know, efficiency. - Yes. I think kids get that figured out as well. - Yeah, they're crafty. - But I do appreciate this and I just wanna say thank you for addressing this big, Dr. McDade, your team, everybody addressing this, taking this on, because this is not, I know this has not been an easy lift and I am looking forward to the future and seeing the results.

[02:16:03] - Thank you. - Thank you very much. - Mr. Wilk. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of things I just wanna highlight some areas that I think are extraordinary and gonna be great for our school division. I'll start especially with some of my previous, I know it's been years, but actually I started teaching and the formative summative thing was rolled out kind of with Mr. Bigsby at Garfield High School, I'm really dating myself here.

[02:16:30] But so yes, I'm thrilled to see the formative summative, the greater consistency across all schools, standardized grading practices. you know, the 60/40, 70/30. I still remember a back to school night two years ago to my chagrin that parents were approaching me saying, is it true?

[02:16:49] Is it really 90/10 in my building? And it was. - Yes, it is, it was, yes. - And whereas the night before, I was at a different middle school and it was 70/30. - Correct. - And we talked about equity, that's not equity. Tough for school to be in one versus the other, if you think about the grading.

[02:17:05] So very happy to see that. I like the requirement of keeping the grade book updated for improved communications. I think the fact that we're cutting off a late assignment deadline time is going to help teachers.

[02:17:20] As before, they were just getting these thrown at them all the time and they were having to, you know, update them on the fly and put that in. I think it's great. I know a couple of my colleagues already

reiterated it about how it's gonna be aligning with the colleges, peer divisions, you know, reduces volatility from small percentages differently.

[02:17:40] So I think all that's great. Quick question, just why is there not an A plus? - Yeah, we actually have had lots of discussion on why there wasn't an A plus. Couple of different bits of feedback we first took into consideration. Our students actually brought up some really good points, really concerned about the student trying to fight for that 78 and the 98 over the 97.

[02:18:07] and kind of an undue pressure point there. When we looked at our peer divisions, Fairfax also does not have the A+, Loudon does. We actually did a bunch of iterations with it and without it, and we really felt that when students are performing at that level, we wanted to stabilize that whole band.

[02:18:30] - Okay, I know I've talked to Dr. Lateef extensively about how colleges reconfigure all of it anyway. - They do, that's correct. - Our two by two was Mr. Jessie and we covered this too. - Yes, we covered this fairly often. - And Dr. Sullivan brought up some great research and you know, I will say that if Fairfax went that way, I would think we should monitor them and if they go that way, that would be something that we're likely lean towards.

[02:18:56] But I think at this point, I think this is a good first move. - Last, a couple of things, sorry, I turned to Dr. Lateef, you can chime in whenever, but giving formative, I think giving it more weight is gonna be helpful for students because it's more lower stake opportunity to learn and getting continuous feedback.

[02:19:16] Yes, because a student may not be a test taker, and maybe instead of an A, they get a B on a test, but if their formative is an A, they still have the ability to get an A in the class. And that's what I like about giving them that opportunity for that, because not all students are test takers.

[02:19:35] And so I think that's nice, and it makes that formative, you know, what's the right word? I don't know, imperative to do your formative grades because now it's going to add up even at the 80-20, that 20% is going to impact your grades.

[02:19:51] So you can't just, you know, blow off homework and, you know, say I'm good 'cause I can get, you know, I mean, good for the kids who can get like a 90% and up on a test or a quiz without having to do the homework and stuff. but I think this is fair also to those other students as well.

[02:20:08] And then I think I already said, I'll reiterate it, the fact that after two weeks, the late grades are not gonna be accepted. I've heard from a multitude of high school teachers who talk about at the end of the quarter, they're just swamped with kids coming in and dropping off things last minute to try to boost their grades up because there really wasn't a firm timeline or it varied building the building and stuff like that.

[02:20:34] So, anyways, lots of great things overall, and thanks for explaining that A-plus thing. - Thank you. - This is great, thank you. - Ms. Williams. - Oh, we'll go Ms. Williams and then Mr. Chester. - Sorry, one more question, 'cause thinking about Mr. Wilk, I always hated the summative, I still do.

[02:20:54] I really do. Is that, when you were talking about assessing the rigor in our assessments, because I don't know, I'm hoping that means there won't just be tests. Like, we'll have other types of projects are not just group projects either for that for our multiple yeah different types of thinkers and learners as a student and even as a parent now like I hate this the trying to figure out the math that's why I

said my kids in five seconds they've got I can do this but it doesn't really help me as a parent and then I think to Mr. Wilkes point if you're not a good test taker you know you have an opportunity to also show and demonstrate the knowledge besides

[02:21:32] taking tests yes part of our goal and in this section around summative and formative is we are elevating the fact that summative assessments can come in multiple formats and you can measure a complete understanding of a unit in all kinds of different ways and sometimes in the sciences it's a high quality lab right that are comprehensive and developed in elevate 2030 you will also see a priority around project-based learning and so we specifically call out and remind our team that summatives do not have to be tests.

[02:22:09] Those have become a bit synonymous and we're trying to break that habit of assuming that. - Thank you, because also I went to a college program where I didn't really have any tests. It was all project work. - It could be research paper. - Right, so I just want to make sure for those who aren't aware that we also have those opportunities for students because I think if you're in the lower levels, you don't really see that as much.

[02:22:29] - Yeah, yes, thank you. - Mr. Chair. something that just occurred to me while we were discussing this. Is there a difference between an A from an advanced placement and an A from a non-Yeah, it is. The A in advanced placement course is weighted at a full point higher and so a student in a non-weighted course would get four points for an A. A student in advanced placement would actually get five points. So there is weighting for both the advanced placement courses, the IB courses, the Cambridge courses, dual

[02:23:06] enrollment courses, and then there's also a half point weight which is also substantial for our courses that might use the word honors advanced courses. Those are also weighted higher. Yes, sir. Thank you for all the work you've done on this and I know there's a lot of different people interested in how these things get changed so just just for clarity in case there is a teacher who

[02:23:42] is concerned about the quality points or whatever where should they reach out they can certainly reach out to my office if you know I have I did share with all the principals this morning and many of our principals have been involved every step of the way so again their school is a great source they can also reach out to my office. And again, keeping in mind, everybody has to shift a little for that coherence and consistency we're looking for. But I've really enjoyed all the direct outreach I've gotten from teachers. It's been very informative and helped us really get to this place. And I'm grateful that

[02:24:21] you are reaching out because even content is different from grade level and all of that. So thank you so much for really listening to our teachers and their concerns. And if they have if they have more concerns, they know where to reach. - Yeah, and I will publicize some open office hours.

[02:24:39] - Thank you. - That they can chime in and ask direct questions if they'd like. - Thank you, appreciate it. - Okay, outstanding. Thank you, Dr. Sullivan, excellent presentation. Really appreciate all the work. - Thank you, sir.

[02:24:54] - Moving on to, we have Dr. Oh, we have Bula Sarsa, student representative time. Ms. Sarsa. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. Good evening to members of the Prince William County community, members of the school board, and Superintendent McDade.

[02:25:13] Once again, it is a privilege to join the leaders of our community on the dais and give voice to the student perspective. I want to begin my remarks tonight with an update on the Student Senate, who had their last meeting this past Monday, May 18th. We had the opportunity to see one another for the last time, eat some good food, and reflect on the impact of student voices on our lives.

[02:25:34] From the members of the Student Senate to the broader community, we want to say a very big thank you. Parents, thank you for encouraging your children to join student voice committees. Students, thank you so much for providing your input and feedback. And teachers, thank you for guiding our students as they work to become better leaders and active citizens.

[02:25:53] Senators, thank you for all of your hard work over the past year, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to have met all of you. Really quick, I'd like to say thank you to Dr. Sullivan for providing the school board with an update to our division's grading assessment and reporting procedures.

[02:26:09] A quick note that I failed to mention when Dr. Lateef asked me, but we really appreciate the uniform 70/30 split. I've taken the same classes as friends in my other school and it's a math class, so kind of difficult.

[02:26:25] And my friend will be like, "Oh, it's a 90/10 split." And I'll be like, "What? That's kind of crazy." But I appreciate the uniformity. I know a lot of parents will appreciate that as well, you know, to have students in different high schools or different middle schools. On June 3rd, which is the final school board meeting for the year, Karina Grover and I will provide update on the state of student voice committees across the county if you're a parent and you've been wondering what skills your kid has learned in their svc i recommend showing up to the June 3rd meeting or tuning in online with that being said i'd like to get into the most important part of my remarks student feedback last week a feedback a feedback survey was sent to the sponsors of

[02:27:04] every high and middle school student voice committee svc members were then asked to meet and discuss their school's top three issues and provide an explanation or an illustration of what exactly is going on. To those of you who responded, thank you. Attendance, bullying, and cell phone slash device use consistently ranked in the top three out of six issues.

[02:27:26] I'll begin with the cell phone and device use. Many responses from students noted that their schools seem to be doing a lot better with enforcing the cell phone ban, but that students have become more resistant to disciplinary measures, like having their phones taken by staff.

[02:27:41] These responses also acknowledge that this lack of deference to the phone rule could be a result of students entering these last few weeks of the academic year and having less of an incentive to follow the division policy. Moving on to the issue of bullying, I've noticed that a lot of the responses in this category were from our middle school students.

[02:28:00] Believe it or not, middle school is a very trying and sometimes awkward time where students can experience a lot of personal growth, but they cannot do that if they are being bullied or in some cases are bullying others. The students who expressed their concerns about bullying were able to connect that issue to an unhealthy school climate and culture, which also ties into the next issue that I want to bring to your attention, attendance.

[02:28:24] Oftentimes, when a student feels isolated from the school community, it makes showing up to school more of an afterthought, especially when they feel as if adults are struggling to understand why

they may be late to school in the first place. In our feedback survey, students cited everything from crowded hallways, classes on the other side of their school buildings, and having a limited number of open bathrooms as reasons for being tardy to class.

[02:28:49] That is why initiatives like our student voice committees that seek to bridge the gap between students and their leaders are so important. Engaging with your school's student voice committee by joining the discussions and being a part of the solution to various problems is a wonderful way to make your school feel like a community for yourself and others.

[02:29:08] Students also noted that some punishments, like taking away another student's parking pass after a certain amount of tardies does more harm than good because that student no longer has a reliable mode of transportation. And not every specialty program stop is within a walkable distance from a student's home.

[02:29:23] Once again, thank you to all of the students who took the time to complete the survey. Finally, since this is my last meeting on the dais, I'd just like to say thank you for the opportunity to listen and learn from all of you, school board members, Dr. McDade, her staff, and of course, everyone who attended these meetings.

[02:29:41] either as an audience member or a commentator. I want to close by saying that I am leaving the dais with more insight than that I had when I arrived, and for that I am very grateful. Have a great rest of your night. - Thank you, Ms. Beulah-Sarsa.

[02:29:58] We appreciate it, and thank you for your commitment to representing the student voice all year and working very hard with us to make sure we know and hear what they all think. Thank you very much. Let's give Beulah a round of applause.

[02:30:14] All right, thank you very much. up to Dr. McDade, superintendent's time. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanna start by also thanking Beulah, as well as Karina for all of their hard work. And it has been delightful sitting next to you at every board meeting, as well as just watching you lead in the school system, whether it's in student voice or in the Senate, you have done a tremendous job and we will wish you well on your next act.

[02:30:43] and we know that you will be equally as incredible in post-secondary as you have been in K-12 education. So, as part of our continued commitment to providing a high quality and engaging learning experience for all students, Prince William County Public Schools will implement a change to student device access in the 26-27 school year.

[02:31:01] And this was after hearing directly from many of our educators. Starting next school year, students will no longer be able to access YouTube directly on their PWCS-issued devices, both in school and at home. This includes YouTube.com and the YouTube app.

[02:31:18] While online video can be a valuable instructional resource, there is not an effective, reliable way within YouTube to consistently limit students to a single video within the YouTube platform. As a result, this change is intended to better support student engagement and appropriate technology use supporting both teachers and families.

[02:31:38] The goal of PWCS is to ensure students become responsible digital citizens who use information technology to better the world around them. PWCS will continue to evaluate and refine how

instructional technology is used in the classrooms to ensure it is purposeful, age-appropriate, and supports student success.

[02:31:58] We will be providing additional information about planned changes to our technology regulation for the upcoming school year and beyond, as this will be an iterative process. As we get closer to the end of the school year, I also would like to wish a hearty congratulations to the graduating class of 2026, which we have the privilege of having one sitting, a graduate sitting right here next to us.

[02:32:21] I want you all to know how proud I am of your accomplishments and fulfillment of the PWCS vision to see every student graduate on time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[02:32:37] Graduates, the support of your families and teachers has been instrumental in helping you reach this important milestone and their unwavering encouragement, guidance, and dedication have provided the foundation for you to achieve your goals and dreams. Make sure to thank your families, teachers, and other supportive mentors and friends for the role that they have played in your success.

[02:32:59] Congratulations, class of 2026. I wish to invite all PWCS parents, caregivers, and school staff to an important Family Engagement Series webinar on preventing youth problem gaming and gambling.

[02:33:15] This webinar will take place from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 19th, live on our website. I encourage our community to join us for a session focused on the real risks of games that include elements that resemble real-world gaming, gambling, which research shows can even leave students four times more likely to experience gambling addiction later in life.

[02:33:38] Discover the difference between gaming and gambling and learn the practical strategies to help keep our students safe. As a reminder, for three important upcoming dates, Monday, May 25th, schools and offices are closed in observance of Memorial Day. Wednesday, May 27th, schools and offices are closed in observance of Eid.

[02:33:56] And Friday, June 12th, is the last day of school and it will be an early release day. As students plan for summer, I encourage our families to take advantage of the many learning opportunities available to students. PWCS summer school offerings include our academic recovery program and discovery and enrichment program for students in grades kindergarten through grade 12.

[02:34:17] And registration for our summer programs is in high demand. And selection is limited to one enrichment program per student. Registration concludes this Friday, May 22nd, for elementary, middle, and discovery programs. And for high school, registration will end on Friday, June 5th.

[02:34:35] So please visit our website, select academics and programs, and then summer programs to make your selections today. And as a reminder, our school-age childcare summer provider Alphabest Education also provides two summer programs, Specialty Enrichment and Excursion.

[02:34:53] Students can balance the relaxation of summer with the excitement of discovery, and I encourage families to take full advantage of this program. And I do wanna make a correction that we did have the webinar on the 19th, is that correct, CJ? to 28th, so I'm sorry, not the 19th.

[02:35:13] The webinar is 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, on Thursday, May 28th, so a correction to that date. Dr. Lateef, that concludes Superintendent's time. - Thank you, Dr. McDade, thank you.

[02:35:28] Moving on to board matters, we started with Mr. Wilk-- Oh, 1901, amendment to collective bargaining resolution. This is on for information. Division counsel, Mr. Anderson. - Yes, Mr. Chairman.

[02:35:43] This item's on for information only tonight. This is an update that the board is making to section 14 to ensure the resolution, which has not been amended since 2022, is internally inconsistent with, to make sure it's internally consistent with the authority in section five, which expressly gives the school board authority to hire, discipline, terminate employees.

[02:36:08] These management rights are already not subject to bargaining and change will ensure that the board retains final authority as in section five over decisions involving employment. Even with the change the process for addressing unfair labor practice claims will still be heard by a third party neutral with a hearing evidence and written recommendations which will be upheld as long as it's supported by substantial evidence. This closely mirrors the current state law process for dismissals where the board will review recommendations on the record and make a final decision anyone has any questions um sorry for yeah um mr anderson did um do we know did we

[02:36:48] meet with pwea to just to discuss this i don't know the answer to that i didn't i wouldn't have but uh i would have to get back to you on whether or not it was discussed in a labor management meeting okay thank you um anyone has any questions concerns please forward them to division council the next two weeks and we'll bring us back to vote at the next meeting board Up next is, we'll start with Mr. Blake, Mr. Blake.

[02:37:17] - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, everyone. So over the past few weeks, I've had the opportunity to attend a number of events across our division and community. And I'm just continuing to be reminded of an incredible talent, dedication, and support systems that exist throughout Prince William County Schools.

[02:37:36] To start off, I attended the SPARK 2026 Business Partnership of the Year Reception at the Hilton Performing Arts Center, where we celebrated partnerships that continue creating opportunities and pathways for our students. I also had the opportunity to attend the fourth annual parent university held here at the Keller Leadership Center, which was facilitated by our gifted education and talent development department.

[02:38:05] And the focus was on twice exceptional students, neurodivergent learners, and family support was incredibly important. It was encouraging to see families gaining tools, strategies, and resources to better support students with unique learning needs and strengths.

[02:38:24] Events like this remind us that student success is not one size fits all. I also enjoyed attending the Dale City Elementary Multicultural Block Party that they held alongside with Bel Air Elementary School.

[02:38:41] And these events also remind us that diversity makes our community strong, and the importance of creating spaces where every family feels welcome and represented. Then I had, I went to Hilton High School for their auto tech reception.

[02:39:00] I saw firsthand the incredible talent within Mr. Stevens' long standing program, an engine team that continues to rank among the best in the nation. And it's clear these students are developing real world skills that will prepare them for future careers and leadership opportunities.

[02:39:20] I got to attend the VSBA Northeastern Spring Forum with my colleagues hosted down in Spotsylvania. We got a couple second places for our artwork and honorable mention for our, was it our mental health program?

[02:39:40] Yeah, anyways, but that was a good time down there. Also, I went to Garfield High School. I was able to attend the orchestra's craft show, a change of command ceremony for our JRTC there.

[02:39:57] And I also got to go to their prom. I thought I was going to another event, but I ended up going there. And whether through the arts leadership programs or student activities, it's always encouraging to see students building community competence and memories that will stay with them long after graduation.

[02:40:17] And this past weekend, I had the opportunity to attend the first Lego League event and held at Osborne Park High School. And robotics is absolutely a sport, just in case anybody needed to know these students demonstrated teamwork, communication, discipline, problem solving and innovation at an incredibly high level.

[02:40:37] I'm excited that we here at Prince William County Schools continue to invest in robotics and STEM opportunities through our Elevate 2030 strategic plan. I was also honored to attend the Governor's School at Innovation Park graduation, where we had 66 graduates this year.

[02:40:58] We were able to celebrate their hard work and academic achievement. I had the opportunity also, this was a good one, me and Ms. Wald were able to go tour the Child Find Center at Woodbine, which I didn't even know was there.

[02:41:14] So I mean, I knew about the Child Find, but I didn't know that building was there. That was very good where we got to meet with the specialists, the school psychologist, the speech pathologist, the coordinators who do this daily work to support some of our youngest and most vulnerable learners.

[02:41:32] And their work has truly changed their lives through early intervention. And then I would just lastly like to, I just want to touch on something I've been reflecting regarding Title I schools. And while Title I funding serves as an important purpose in helping schools with higher percentages of economically disadvantaged students receive additional support and resources, I think we also need to be mindful of how labels can unattendedly create stigma.

[02:42:05] We don't, I know my time, but this is important. We don't commonly refer to schools as the IDA schools or Title II schools or Title IV schools, even though they receive different forms of funding and support. So I think it's worth asking ourselves why we say Title I schools has become such a defining label in conversations about certain schools and communities.

[02:42:28] Our schools are more than just funding categories. They're filled with talented students, dedicated staff, supportive families, and communities with tremendous strength. I believe we should continue focusing on equity and providing resources where they are needed while also being intentional about how we talk about and identify our schools, thank you.

[02:42:51] - Ms. Williams. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Blake, for saying that, 'cause it is a comment that I hear a lot, especially in our middle schools, from students as to why they're described that way first. So I appreciate that, 'cause they don't think of themselves like that, and neither do our teachers in the building.

[02:43:11] I also attended a lot of events as well. It's been nice to get out see other board members especially at the VSBA spring forum that's an opportunity for our local or the school boards in our region which is designated by VSBA to get together to have the ability to network and converse and also learn and improve our skills they had a wonderful two wonderful speakers and we also got a book and just a reminder from my experience on the board how well our county works and our division works together and just another reminder of how amazing our superintendent and staff is just based

[02:43:50] upon the speakers and how they perceived leadership strategy. It was very interesting. Also attended Prince William the fifth annual Prince William Equality Day. It was wonderful to see students and adults and vendors and everyone out there. It's a nice opportunity for a community. Again we have summer programs I think for me the most impactful thing is that they are reduced cost. When you go to sign your student up it doesn't initially say that right there on the form so don't get dissuade if you need assistance and camps for your student please continue through the form and ask questions also the county does a sliding scale too I think with parks and rec as well so there's plenty of opportunity

[02:44:30] for summer learning for our students outside of summer camp I'm excuse me a summer school and summer school is also new this year so new expectations with that I also attended the spark business awards dinner and I just want to remind those who listening who are business owners businesses small large community based there's a way to get involved in the school division and I hope that you have seen or have the opportunity to look at elevate 2030 it is an advantage to us and our students when we have students interacting with business owners most students only do what they see in their family so it's an opportunity to expand their horizons and it's also an opportunity to pull

[02:45:10] community and businesses in so that we know that we're in alignment with what the future needs from our employers and one of my favorite things in addition to that the last thing that we attended was last night the retirement ceremony and I'm just gonna use the rest of my time for that for me it was very special I'm trying not to cry because dr. Healy who was the principal at Colgan high school retired and it's personal to me because it's an impact on how one person and especially a teacher can change your life.

[02:45:37] Dr. Healy I credit immensely for one of the people that enabled me to sit in this seat. He was my 10th grade English teacher, but he is the type of teacher and the type of human being that no matter what student walks in the classroom, everyone is equal and treated the same.

[02:45:53] And that's impactful. It stayed with me my entire life, and his love of English literature also enabled me to continue to read, and once again love Shakespeare, I still do, bother my kids about it. But that's the type of teacher, and now he's a, for me, teacher, for many students, now, excuse me, principal, it's just so impactful.

[02:46:16] You never know how one person can change a life. I spoke to him last night, and it was funny, because I tell this story all the time about how one person can keep you in school and encourage you to be a great citizen and a great human being. And last night, I had the opportunity to share how, from a teacher perspective, you never know who your students are gonna be, which I thought was funny, but it is true.

[02:46:35] You only need that one person to encourage you and to treat you as a human who can learn and a bright individual. And it inspired me to come back and give to my school division and to stay here. For me, being younger, it wasn't always a positive experience.

[02:46:50] Our community looked very different. And I know I had a lot of my friends struggle with that. I can't say I've had the same experience, even as an adult in a corporate world, to be around others who just simply treat you as a human being. And so I just wanna thank Dr. Haley for all of his years of service.

[02:47:08] a lot of my friends called and was like, oh my goodness, Dr. Healy's retiring. It's worth it to me. And thank you for all the lives that you changed and will continue to change to being not only a teacher, a coach, administrator, and a principal. So thank you.

[02:47:26] - Ms. Wall. - Thank you. First, congratulations to class of 2026 and to Beulah. Best wishes for you for your next chapter. It's been wonderful serving with you on the school board. In the next few weeks, we will honor our graduates at graduation ceremonies It will cheer for you.

[02:47:43] It will mark this significant achievement and milestone in your young lives. So I have a few thoughts on the ritual of graduation. Rituals are especially important for life transitions. Rituals help the mind accept change. They create psychological closure.

[02:47:59] They tell the brain something important has ended. Something new has begun. You are no longer who you were. Graduation signifies a moment when we say, this chapter mattered, and now it is complete. Rituals transform achievement into meaning. Achievement is witnessed.

[02:48:15] It is no longer private and transactional. Graduation with its robes, names, speeches, applause, it's a symbolic act that elevates the achievement beyond academics. It communicates your work matter to this community. Rituals prepare our youth for responsibility.

[02:48:30] Like a rite of passage, graduates are now entering a wider world accountable for what they know and expected to contribute to help shape others and the future. Rituals give courage for uncertainty. Transitions can be disorienting, But a graduation ceremony creates a distinct pause between worlds, a threshold where you can acknowledge what you are leaving, what you are becoming, and what you do not yet know.

[02:48:53] Rituals anchor memory. They compress meaning into a memorable experience that can later be remembered. The music, the clothing, the professionals, the hats, the audience, the feeling of crossing a stage and having everybody cheer for you, hearing your name.

[02:49:09] Those memories will later become a source of resilience, proof that you crossed the threshold before you can do it again. And lastly, rituals create community. The Class of 2026 is part of a larger story. You are part of the great work we are all doing, every single one of us.

[02:49:24] So congratulations, Class of 2026. I wanna highlight some events that I've attended since we last met. I've been busy. May 7th, Sparks Business Partnership of the Year. May 8th, I went to Reagan Middle School's musical SpongeBob.

[02:49:40] I didn't think I'd like it, I absolutely loved it. Not totally my genre, but it was amazing. Virginia School Board Association Spring Network Forum with my colleagues, learned a lot. I've been thinking a lot about something that was shared there. That's a topic for another day.

[02:49:55] I visited the Child Find Center with Mr. Blake at Woodbine, Dr. Shelley LeGalbricky and her wonderful team. Thank you for welcoming us and teaching us so much about what you do. I went to sixth grade information night at Reagan. I went to Bull Run Metal School's unified basketball game. Wow, I think their pep band is the best in Prince William County Schools.

[02:50:14] It was really awesome. I went to Battlefield Choir Concerts, Mountain View's Musical Seussical, so much fun. And the Senior Awards, I'm sorry, Lego Fun Day and Governor's School and Innovation Park Graduation. Those kids are so amazing and so impressive.

[02:50:31] It's just amazing. Battlefield Senior Awards Ceremony, that was really neat to see and hear students recognized by name for their accomplishments and their academic awards. Congratulations to the Battlefield Class of 2026. The annual seal of biliteracy ceremony, Mr. Blake and I were there.

[02:50:50] That was 513 seniors, sorry, that earned the seal of biliteracy. Something like well over 1,500 students who have now earned this distinction. I believe I'm correct in that. That is an amazing credential that will help our graduates in college and their career pursuits.

[02:51:09] The retirement ceremony last night, I just wanna say thank you to your service for young people across the years. it's truly remarkable and appreciated. A lifetime of service is meaningful, it is refining, it is elevating, it is rewarding.

[02:51:25] Albert Schweitzer, a physician, philosopher, and Nobel Peace Prize winner said this, "I don't know what your destiny will be, "but one thing I do know, the only ones among you "who will really be happy are those who have sought "and found how to serve.

[02:51:41] "It was a pleasure to be among such a happy bunch "last evening who have given their lives to service, "and I wish you all the best for retirement." with that, good night. - Thank you, Ms. Arger. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef Beulah. Thank you so much for serving as one of our student reps.

[02:51:58] I wish you much luck. I don't think you're gonna need it though, but we will miss you here and please come back and let us know how things are going. I did a lot of things too. And we did the parent university where we learned about two e-learners. The Colgan choral concert was amazing.

[02:52:17] They did a Disney theme show. I hosted my niece, she's a Colgan student, a senior this year, in my classroom for their externship. She was amazing. She helped run my class. She showed students how to properly hold the ukulele.

[02:52:36] She was just amazing. So I can't wait to see what she does in her life. She's getting ready to go off to college and study musical theater. And I think she's going to be amazing. And if she ever wants to come back in my classroom, I'm happy to have her.

[02:52:53] Went to the auto tech awards ceremony at Hilton, and like Mr. Blake said, it is one of my favorite things because students come back, and they just line the back of the room, and he starts with his first year that he ever taught there, and he ends with the kids who are graduating.

[02:53:11] And it's such a testament to his commitment to education. not all of these students are going off and doing careers in auto tech some of them own dealerships some of them do other things in this world but the the lessons that he imparts are very important and outlast years and years of students i went to the retiring educators event last night and just it was amazing to hear about our one who had been teaching over what 43 years something like

[02:53:47] that i went to the lego uh event on um on saturday at osborne park ran into some kids from yorkshire ran into some kids from coles elementary so it was really fun to see them went to the gov school graduation and um just wish those kids just the best in whatever it is they're choosing to do i want to um i did not get to go to hilton uh hilton's concert tonight obviously because we're here but Dennis Brown is a

longtime educator here in Prince William County he has been here 53 years and he I think tonight was his last concert he he was around when I was a student in this in this

[02:54:26] county and I've learned so much from him talking learning from him as a student learning from him as an educator myself so I wish him the best in whatever endeavors he is doing next I hope it is he's more orchestra because he's an amazing educator.

[02:54:43] And with that, I bid the farewell. - Thank you, Ms. Zagrapoor. Just real quick, I don't think I'll use the full four minutes. I did obviously visit events, I did an orchestra concert at Potomac Middle School, a band concert at Potomac High School, strings at Henderson, the musical Madagascar, Potomac Shores, award ceremonies for both Potomac seniors, and then this morning was Forest Park seniors.

[02:55:13] I was able to deliver the opening remarks and choral last night, the choral concert at GPMS and then Grand Park, I mean, and then tomorrow's Forest Park. And then of course, we'll be wrapping up with graduation ceremonies and such and fifth grade promotion ceremonies and eighth grade nights and stuff like that.

[02:55:33] So excited as the year wraps up. I do wanna say, I wanna affirm and state what people were saying about the paper issue, and it's come up in a number of conversations when I'm visiting schools and such like that, with parents asking how they can get their kids off the iPad, with parents asking, can there be more paper copies of things in class?

[02:56:02] And even students clamoring for books. I think we are moving in a positive direction. I've never seen more paper in, I know I keep, it's crazy saying paper. I feel like, you know, Dunder Mifflin is back. But the reality is, you know, the pendulum has swung.

[02:56:20] I would have never thought, you know, six, seven years ago when people were applauding me back during singing in the rain days, the Walt regime, when I was at markup sessions trying to cut textbooks.

[02:56:36] And people were like, yeah, woo, million dollars. And now, now people want those textbooks back. And so it's very interesting the way the pendulum has swung. And so I think taking the step, eliminating YouTube from students, I think now it's just, again, I know I reiterate this with the Virginia Literacy Act, we've done a great job bringing more workbooks.

[02:57:02] We brought manipulatives into the rooms and stuff like that. I just think we need to do more focusing on the paper physical goods um as well and so with that that is my comments for the night mr jess yeah i want to start off by saying some of the events i went to which also indicate that mrs jesse is getting better uh i went to sparks our partnership event and that was very good dr mcdade you did a wonderful

[02:57:37] job going over that i went to the first lego event over at ozum park also i went to the girls 5k fun thing thinking 5k is a race three miles for in the marine corps if you can do it under 18 minutes you get a perfect score for that and i used to be able to do that so i always think i was going to a race not a whole bunch of people i mean that that place was crowded so it was still fun to watch that uh also went to the retirement thing uh yesterday and then went to uh woodbridge

[02:58:16] senior high school uh awards ceremony and that was good uh also just found out that lake ridge middle school the their drone team has done very well i think at the national level so i'm going to be

talking about that and and uh in my monthly reports uh i do want to say something about title one schools uh mr blake i think you are correct you know it's it's it's a it's a label but i can

[02:58:50] assure you that the label does not define the school and the reason i can assure you of that is because my wife had 90 percent pass rate in all their sals for several years so that's this shows you it talks about the belief that all kids can learn and that they can learn in a regardless of the circumstances and when you look at some of the movies about black schools like

[02:59:24] in debate clubs and so forth how they took that and they took that challenge down so again And, you know, it is what it is and probably is not going to change, but it doesn't mean it has to define you. And I think I'd like to see that again.

[02:59:42] Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Jesse. Congratulations to all of our retirees. We had a great retiree reception last night and, you know, we're certainly losing a lot of great folks and a lot of great knowledge.

[02:59:59] we wish them the best on their retirement and best of luck. You know, it's been a tough time to be on a school board the last eight years. I mean, we have seen everything from the pandemic to shift in the way we learn and more computers and less phones in the classrooms and more this and more that.

[03:00:21] And I'm not sure there's ever been a time there's been seen as much change in public education, probably since integration. And it is an incredible challenge to be on a school board and to keep up with everything that is changing, whether it's artificial intelligence and how we deal with that in the classroom and from a teaching standpoint, whether it's access to computers, technology, the internet, how best do we use that?

[03:00:50] There is no good sort of solid answer on this. and it is something that we are constantly evolving in our practice, and you saw that last night with the school division's removal of YouTube, and I think the school division, in their statement last night, the school board and the school division support the idea we wanna continue to hear from our folks and the public on what they think is going on, what's working, what's not working.

[03:01:21] We wanna hear from our teachers and our students and our faculty, and I truly appreciate that. but it is not easy to run a school division in this last decade. What I do wanna finish off on is number one, congratulations to our graduating seniors.

[03:01:36] Commencements will be starting soon and our seniors are heading off and I continue to be incredibly proud of them. I know we're looking probably at more record scholarship dollars won, more record graduation rates broken. And it reminds me of a story I wanted to tell you about, you know, there was a grandfather who passed away and he left a silver, a beautiful silver vase, it was a couple hundred years old, to his grandchildren.

[03:02:07] And the grandchildren's father said to the grandchildren, you know, why don't you take it out and see what it's worth, you know? Take a look around. So the kids went out to a recycling area, recycling spot where they take scrap metal and things like that and they showed him the vase and the guy weighed it and he examined it and he said, "Well, there's probably this much silver in it and based on that we'll give you," you know, we weighed it and looked at it and said, "A hundred dollars, we'll give it to you, we'll give for that vase."

[03:02:46] So the kids went back to their father and said, "Dad, they want to give us a hundred bucks. And he said, well, why don't you take it over to the antique store, the jewelry shop over there and see what they think. So he takes it over there and they look at it and they go, well, you know, this has some great, you know, it's older, it's got some great work in it. You know, I can use this. I can maybe clean it up, polish it and probably sell it again. You know, I'll give you a thousand dollars for the vase. Kids were like, wow, that's fantastic. And they went back to dad and he said daddy said the guy would give us thousand and dad said well why don't you take

[03:03:23] it over to the museum down the road and see what they think of the vase so the kids trudged down the road and took it in the museum and the museum curator took a look at the vase examined it said wow this is really interesting and looked at it examined it brought some more folks in the room said huh have you seen this in a while we you know we haven't seen this they went back to the kids He said, "Look, we think it's worth \$10,000."

[03:03:49] And the kids were like, "Wow." They went back to their dad and their dad said, "You know, the importance of this story "for each of the grandkids is you should know your worth. "You should know your value. "And when you graduate Prince William County Schools, "you should know your value.

[03:04:05] "You should know that you are a critical thinker. "We have prepared you to be a responsible digital citizen. "We have prepared you to be an innovator, a visionary, Someone who's resilient and someone who's willing to collaborate in a global way.

[03:04:20] That is your value. When you take that job, when you ask for that first paycheck, when you go to your college, do not underestimate who you are, where you came from, and what this degree means. It has enormous value. We're very proud of you and we're excited for your future and we wish you all the very best.

[03:04:39] Congratulations and have a great night everyone. Thank you. - Good story.



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com