

BOARD MEMO

Date: September 17, 2020

For ACTION ___

For INFORMATION ___

Board Agenda: Yes ___

No ___

FROM: Jennifer Abbruzzese, Director of Policy and Board Initiatives
Susan Neilson, Clerk of the Board

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Request to Rename Matthew Maury Elementary School

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Goal 1: Systemic Alignment

Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation

Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

SY 2020-2021 FOCUS AREA:

Focus Area 4: Renaming of Schools

FY 2021 BUDGET PRIORITY:

Outreach to Underserved Communities to Increase Engagement

Cultural Competency for all Staff

Improving Customer Relationship Services and Management

SUMMARY:

On August 6, 2020, the School Board received a request to rename Matthew Maury Elementary School that was accompanied by at least 100 signatures of Alexandria residents as required by Regulation FF-R. The newly proposed name is "The Parker-Gray Rosemont School."

The rationale for the request is:

"Matthew Fontaine Maury was a confederate soldier who fought in support of slavery...[His] actions surrounding the Civil War and slavery were indefensible...While [the] name Parker-Gray Rosemont School is just a placeholder, it represents the significance of engaging both parts of our school community in this decision. [We are] hoping that this change...can be an effective way to start to bridge the gap and ignite the process to ensure equity for all our students."

BACKGROUND:

[Policy FF](#) and [Regulation FF-R](#) outline the School Board's authority to name and rename new and existing schools and other school division facilities. Renaming requests must be accompanied by supporting documentation, including 100 signatures of Alexandria residents.

Specifically, Section III. of Regulation FF-R provides that "the School Board may, at its discretion, consider requests to rename an existing school. The following procedure shall be followed

BOARD MEMO

when renaming an existing school to honor individuals or to recognize places or historical events for their contribution to the community or their impact on it.” Upon receipt of a valid request, Section III.B. directs the Board to determine whether it will vote “to pursue a request to rename an existing school.”

A vote to consider the request is not a vote to rescind the current name and does not commit the Board to any future renaming. It is a vote that directs “the Superintendent [to] follow the naming process as outlined in Section I.” This includes initiating a robust public engagement process to solicit community nominations and/or voting, development of a timetable, cost estimates, a list of tasks required and a summary report by the Superintendent with recommendations to the Board (Reg. FF-R, Section I.). Once the Superintendent’s recommendations have been presented at a Board Meeting for information, a public hearing is required prior to any Board action to rename the school or facility.

In lieu of voting to consider a request, other alternatives available to the Board include taking no action on a renaming request or voting to deny the request.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the attached petition and officially consider the request to rename Matthew Maury Elementary School.

IMPACT: Considering the attached renaming request aligns Board operations with Policy FF and Regulation FF-R and promotes equity and community engagement.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. School Renaming Request (8/6/20) with Supporting Petition/Signatures of Alexandria Residents (Regulation FF-R, Appendix A)
2. School Board Policy FF: Non-Sponsored Naming and Renaming of Schools and School Division Facilities
3. Regulation FF-R: Regulations for Non-Sponsored Naming and Renaming of Schools and School Division Facilities

CONTACT:

Jennifer Abbruzzese, Director of Policy and Board Initiatives
policy@acps.k12.va.us