

MINUTES
VIRTUAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
ALEXANDRIA CITY SCHOOL BOARD
January 21, 2021 (4:00 p.m.)

Meeting Held via Zoom

On March 12, 2020, Virginia Governor Ralph Northam declared a State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, in accordance with Va. Code § 2.2-3708.2(A)(3) and Acts of Assembly Chap. 1283 § 4-0.01(g), virtual School Board meetings held during the State of Emergency are limited to:

- addressing the public health emergency declared on March 12, 2020 (Va. Code § 44-146.17); and
- business that is necessary to continue school division operations and to discharge the School Board's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities.

Notice of any virtual School Board Meetings will be posted on the ACPS Calendar and on the School Board Meeting web page, where the public may link to join or watch live meetings. Virtual Special Called School Board Meetings may also be watched live in Alexandria on Comcast Channel 71. Video recordings and minutes for these meetings are posted online as soon as available after the meeting.

ROLL CALL

THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT AT THE MEETING:

BOARD MEMBERS: Meagan L. Alderton
Cindy Anderson
Ramee A. Gentry
Jacinta Greene
Margaret Lorber
Veronica R. Nolan
Michelle Rief
Christopher A. Suarez
Heather Thornton

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Susan Neilson, Shanel Hill, Kurt Huffman, Dominic Turner, Greg Bussink, Dr. Teri Mozingo, Peter Balas, Pierrette Peters, Dr. Stephen Haering, Julia Burgos

Call to Order

1. Meeting Called to Order by Chair Alderton

Chair Alderton called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. All members of the School Board were present at the start of the meeting.

Moment of Silence

2. Observe a Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed.

Adoption of Meeting Agenda

3. Adopt the Meeting Agenda for the January 21, 2021 Virtual School Board Meeting

Ms. Gentry moved to adopt the meeting agenda for the January 21, 2021 Virtual School Board Meeting. Ms. Greene seconded the motion.

Ms. Lorber moved to add the agenda item “Update on Hybrid Phased Reopening: Transition Plan” to Old Business. Ms. Gentry seconded the motion.

The vote to amend the meeting agenda was unanimous, 9-0. The motion carried. The vote was taken by roll call.

The vote to adopt the amended meeting agenda for January 21, 2021 was unanimous, 9-0. The motion carried. The vote was taken by roll call.

Communications & Addresses to the Board

4. Public Hearing on the FY 22 Combined Funds Budget

There were no public hearing speakers.

5. Public Comments

Ms. Jennifer Niccolls, ACPS parent, expressed her concern that making last minute changes to the calendar limits student’s virtual instruction time. Further, she asked the School Board to hire more staff for the next school year in order to assist students that have struggled academically during this current school year due to virtual learning.

Ms. Gina Baum, ACPS parent, spoke about vaccinating staff, and asked the Board to find the will to re-open schools for in-person learning.

One written public comment was submitted to the Board as follows:

Ms. Heather Rosner, ACPS staff member, wrote to the Board to express her views on the plans for returning to a hybrid model and how that plan would impact music instruction. Ms. Rosner further expressed that a fully virtual learning model would be more effective for instrumental music instruction.

6. Report from Student Representatives Lorraine Johnson and Ashley Sanchez-Viafara

Ms. Lorraine Johnson and Ms. Ashley Sanchez Viafara were both absent from the meeting. However, Ms. Sanchez-Viafara sent in written comments to the School Board to be shared with the community. Ms. Greene shared an update from Ms. Giselle Hughes, Jefferson-Houston Middle School Representative which included informing the Board on a poll that was sent out to middle school students in order to get a pulse on how students are feeling regarding virtual learning and to collect information on how the student body could help them. Ms. Hughes also reported that a Zoom pajama party event was held in order to socially connect students with each other.

Consent Calendar

7. Personnel Actions for the Month of December 2020

8. FY 2021 Preliminary Monthly Financial Report ending November 30, 2020

9. Community Donation to ACPS

10. Community Donation to ACPS

11. Community Use of Facilities Report – November and December 2020

12. Superintendent Evaluation Criteria Development Committee Membership

13. Reappoint Danielle Thorne to the Athletic Hall of Fame Advisory Committee

14. Appoint Lauren Golubski to the Special Education Advisory Committee

15. Minutes for the December 17, 2020 Virtual School Board Meeting, the January 7, 2021 Virtual Organizational Meeting, the January 12, 2021 Virtual School Board Retreat, the January 14, 2021 Virtual FY 2022 Combined Funds Budget Work Session, and the January 14, 2021 Virtual Special Called School Board Meeting

Chair Alderton thanked Amazon for their generous donation valued at \$44,707 of 6,680 classic edition books for ACPS middle school and high school students. Ms. Alderton also thanked the Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement and Mr. Kurt Huffman, for cultivating these relationships with community partners.

Mr. Kurt Huffman, Executive Director of Community Partnerships and Engagement, shared that there was another donation on the Consent Calendar from Amazon which would go to the continuation of child care services for ACPS families. Mr. Huffman also thanked the School Board and Leadership for creating and supporting the Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement. which helps to create these opportunities.

Ms. Gentry moved to adopt the Consent Calendar. Ms. Lorber seconded the motion.

The vote to adopt the Consent Calendar was unanimous, 9-0. The motion carried. The vote was taken by roll call.

Items Pulled from the Consent Calendar

There were no items pulled from the Consent Calendar.

New Business and Reports to the Board

16. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for FY 2020

Mr. Dominic Turner, Chief Financial Officer, thanked Mr. Michael Covington, Director of Accounting and his team for their hard work in ensuring that ACPS has the proper internal controls, compiling the CAFR, and working collaboratively with the auditors to ensure they have all of the information needed to complete this vital work. He introduced Mr. Greg Bussink from the auditing firm of CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, that reviewed the FY 2020 ACPS Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Mr. Bussink reported that ACPS received an unmodified (or clean) opinion, which is the highest level of assurance that can be given for the financial report. He explained that the report fairly represents the financial position of ACPS as of June 30, 2020. He indicated that no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses of internal control, or instances of noncompliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts or other matters were noted.

Ms. Greene moved to accept the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for FY 2020. Mr. Suarez seconded the motion.

The vote to accept the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for FY 2020 was unanimous, 9-0. The motion carried. The vote was taken by roll call.

Old Business & Action Items

17. SY 2020-2021 Calendar Revision for T.C. Williams High School, George Washington Middle School, and Francis C. Hammond Middle School for Parent/Teacher Conference Dates in Spring 2021

Dr. Teri Mazingo, Chief of Teaching, Learning and Leadership, gave a brief overview to the Board regarding a proposed revision to the 2020-2021 Academic Calendar for T.C. Williams High School, Francis C. Hammond Middle School, and George Washington Middle School for parent/teacher conference dates in Spring, 2021.

T.C. Williams High School's parent/teacher conferences scheduled for February 4th and 5th are no longer feasible with the reformatted semester-based classes as these dates fall within a few days of the start of the new semester. The proposed revision is to move these conference dates to March 11th and 12th which would allow enough time in semester classes for teachers to get to know individual students and have information to report to parents.

Francis C. Hammond and George Washington Middle Schools are requesting to change their parent/teacher conference dates from February 11th and 12th to March 18th and 19th as the February dates coincide with the Enhanced Continuity of Learning Plan phased reentry dates for these schools.

T.C. Williams Principal Peter Balas and Francis C. Hammond Principal Ms. Pierrette Peters were present and answered questions School Board Members had regarding the schedule for secondary schools.

Ms. Gentry moved to approve the SY 2020-2021 Academic Calendar Revision for T.C. Williams High School, George Washington Middle School, and Francis C. Hammond Middle School for parent/teacher conference dates in Spring 2021. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.

The vote to approve the SY 2020-2021 Academic Calendar Revision for T.C. Williams High School, George Washington Middle School, and Francis C. Hammond Middle School for parent/teacher conference dates was unanimous, 9-0. The motion carried. The vote was taken by roll call.

18. Update on Hybrid Phased Reopening: Transition Plan

Superintendent Hutchings presented an update on the Hybrid Phased Reopening Transition Plan. The presentation addressed the new interim Virginia Department of Health (VDH) K-12 school reopening guidance and how ACPS is using that guidance to make informative decisions for safely phasing students back to in-person learning. The presentation also addressed the extent of the collaboration between ACPS and the Alexandria Health Department, considerations that are essential for transitioning between school instructional models, how the normal, strained and critical levels of school impact determine the ability to implement key safety measures, and how the decision matrix indicators impact phasing students back to a hybrid learning model.

Dr. Stephen Haering, Director of the Alexandria Health Department, shared a brief update on the current status of public health indicators and answered questions from the School Board regarding health metrics.

Board Members asked additional questions about data on staff vaccines, building capacity, use of classroom monitors, SEAL support classes, and parent notification of key decisions.

Superintendent Hutchings shared that there will be additional updates presented to the School Board at later dates.

Chair's Report

19. Report from Meagan Alderton

Chair Alderton reported that a gift and flowers were sent to Ms. Cindy Anderson in recognition of her dedicated service as School Board Chair and Vice-Chair for the Alexandria City School Board over the last four years. She thanked Ms. Anderson for her leadership and guidance.

Chair Alderton shared an update on the Identity Project in which the polls for the renaming suggestions for Matthew Maury Elementary School and T.C. Williams High School are active on the ACPS website. She also noted upcoming events beginning with a Community Meeting on the Parker-Gray Stadium Neighborhood Forum that will be held via Zoom on January 27, 2021, from 6-7 p.m. Additionally, she reported on key budget dates for the FY 2022 Combined Funds Budget, including a work session on January 28th, a public hearing on February 4th, and the

add/delete work sessions on February 10th and 16th. The adoption of the FY 2022 Combined Funds Budget will be February 18, 2021.

Superintendent's Report

20. Report from Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.

Superintendent Hutchings shared an update on the Identity Project, the renaming process for T.C. Williams High School and Matthew Maury Elementary School. The process is currently in Phase 2 where the community may vote on an already proposed name or suggest a different name for each of the schools. Dr. Hutchings shared that this was an extremely detailed process to ensure that everyone was equitably included. There were 119 student entries collected during Phase 1 representing 50 name suggestions for T.C. Williams High School and 29 for Matthew Maury Elementary School. To date, the community suggestion poll has collected numerous entries with 86 different name suggestions for T.C. Williams High School and 59 different name suggestions for Matthew Maury Elementary School. The poll to vote or suggest names will close at midnight on January 27th. Dr. Hutchings encouraged the School Board to share this information with their constituents and that the next round of polling will be open online on February 5, 2021.

Closed Meeting and Certification of Closed Meeting

21. Closed Meeting and Certification of Closed Meeting

No Closed Meeting was held.

Adjournment

22. Adjourn

On a motion by Ms. Gentry and seconded by Ms. Anderson, the Board voted unanimously, 9-0, to adjourn. The vote was taken by roll call.

The meeting ended at 5:43 p.m.



Cindy Anderson, Chair



Clerk/Deputy Clerk

These minutes were adopted at the February 4, 2021 School Board Meeting.