

MINUTES
VIRTUAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
ALEXANDRIA CITY SCHOOL BOARD
March 4, 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 (absent)
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, Lorraine Johnson, Ashley Sanchez-Viafara, Peter Balas, Julia Burgos, Dawud Abdur-Rahman, Erika Gulick, Dr. Terri Mazingo, Dr. Stephen Haering, Marya Runkle, Pierrette Peters, Dr. Alicia Hart, John Finnigan, Mark Carlson, Dr. Julie Crawford, Rene Paschal, Terry Werner, Dr. Stephen Wilkins, Clinton Page, Dr. Amber Eby, Dominic Turner, and Scott Merriman.

Call to Order

1. Meeting Called to Order by Chair Alderton

Chair Alderton called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. All members of the School Board were present at the start of the meeting except for Mr. Suarez who joined during the adoption of the meeting agenda and Vice Chair Nolan who joined during the Public Comments. Ms. Anderson was absent for the duration 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 March 4, 2021 Virtual School Board Meeting

Ms. Lorber moved to adopt the meeting agenda for the March 4, 2021 Virtual School Board Meeting.

Ms. Greene seconded the motion.

Ms. Gentry moved to add the agenda item “SY 2020-2021 Academic Calendar Revision for Parent-Teacher Conferences Date Change for T.C. Williams High School, Francis C. Hammond Middle School, and George Washington Middle School” to New Business.

Mr. Suarez seconded the motion.

The vote to amend the meeting agenda for March 4, 2021 was unanimous, 7-0. The motion carried.

The vote to adopt the meeting agenda as amended, was unanimous, 7-0. The motion carried.

The votes were taken by roll call.

Communications & Addresses to the Board

4. Public Comments

Ms. Emily Turner, ACPS parent, thanked the administration for returning students to school. She further commented on disease transmission statistics in schools and the community. She encouraged the Board to open for in-person instructions for 5 days per week.

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

Ms. Lorraine Johnson shared that due to the COVID-19 pandemic students have had to be more creative in the traditional senior celebrations such as pep rallies, prom and graduation. She thanked the leadership team for helping to make some of these celebrations memorable by thinking outside the box.

Ms. Ashley Sanchez-Viafara shared that she has been meeting with the Middle School Representatives to show support for them through mentoring, and ensure that their voices are heard and shared with the Board and community.

Superintendent Hutchings introduced T.C. Williams High School Principal Peter Balas, who announced that Ms. Sanchez-Viafara will be receiving the Harry F. Byrd, Jr. Leadership Award on April 14, 2021, in Richmond. This leadership award seeks to reward applicants who consistently display excellence of character, qualities of leadership, devotion to duty, and academic accomplishment.

Mr. Balas congratulated Ms. Sanchez-Viafara and shared that it has been almost 20 years since a T.C. Williams student has won this prestigious award which selects one recipient from each of Virginia’s 11 districts. He added that the award comes with a \$15,000 scholarship.

Dr. Hutchings shared that both Ms. Johnson, and Ms. Sanchez-Viafara, have been nominated for Alexandria’s 40 under 40. This program is the cornerstone event of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce’s Young Leader’s Network, whose goal is to identify young leaders in the city and highlight each individual’s impact on the Alexandria community. Ms. Johnson and Ms. Sanchez-Viafara are the first students to be nominated for this honor.

Consent Calendar

- 6. FY 2021 Monthly Financial Report Ending January 31, 2021**
- 7. Personnel Actions for the Month of February 2021**
- 8. 2020 ACPS Athletic Hall of Fame Recommendations**
- 9. 2019-2020 Budget Advisory Committee End of Year Report**
- 10. 2020-2021 Budget Advisory Committee Scope of Work**
- 11. Minutes for the February 16, 2021 Virtual Work Session and the February 18, 2021 Virtual School Board Meeting**

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

The vote to adopt the Consent Calendar was unanimous, 8-0. 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.

Old Business & Action Items

12. Superintendent's Recommendations for Renaming Matthew Maury Elementary School and T.C. Williams High School

Superintendent Hutchings and Ms. Julia Burgos, Chief of School and Community Relations, gave a presentation on the final results from the polls in Phase II of the Identity Project for renaming Matthew Maury Elementary School and T.C. Williams High School. Ms. Julia Burgos reviewed the polling data and results for each school's poll.

Dr. Hutchings shared the top three choices for the renaming of T.C. Williams High School which were Alexandria High School, Titan Community High School, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg High School. Superintendent Hutchings reviewed each name choice individually and gave a history into why those suggestions were chosen. His final recommendation to the School Board was to rename T.C. Williams High School to Alexandria High School.

Dr. Hutchings also shared the top three choices for the renaming of Matthew Maury Elementary School which were Naomi Brooks Elementary School, Rosemont Park Elementary School, and Jean Reid Elementary School. Superintendent Hutchings reviewed each name choice individually and gave a history into why those suggestions were chosen. His final recommendation to the School Board was to rename Matthew Maury Elementary School to Naomi Brooks Elementary School.

School Board Members asked questions about the name Alexandria High School versus Alexandria City High School. Vice Chair Nolan gave remarks about Ms. Jean Reid and what she represents to her community.

Dr. Hutchings complimented the School Board Student Representatives who provided valuable assistance on this project. He indicated this is the kind of work that can be accomplished when the next generation is able to lead.

The School Board will vote on the final name selections at the April 8, 2021 School Board Meeting.

13. The High School Project: Site Specific Educational Specifications

Ms. Erika Gulick, Director of Capital Programs, Planning and Design, gave a brief overview on the Comprehensive Educational Specifications for the Minnie Howard Campus that details a plan based on providing flexible spaces for a Connected High School Network. The site-specific recommendations consider both the King Street and Minnie Howard campuses and how they will

be organized and function as a connected network. The document includes proposed capacity, an associated list of spaces and budget requirements.

On February 4, 2021 the School Board voted unanimously to exclude affordable housing as a colocation option on the Minnie Howard campus. Other potential colocation opportunities are still being explored. The Ed Specs were further discussed at a work session on March 3, 2021.

Ms. Gentry moved that the School Board approve the Comprehensive Program/Educational Specifications for the High School Project. Ms. Lorber seconded the motion.

The vote to approve the Comprehensive Program/Educational Specification for the High School Project was unanimous, 8-0. The motion carried. The vote was taken by roll call.

14. Hybrid Reopening 5.0 Update: Building Blocks for a Successful and Safe Return

Superintendent Hutchings thanked the staff for all of their hard work and dedication as schools have officially started to re-open for in-person learning and it has been an impactful time for everyone.

Dr. Hutchings, Dr. Terri Mazingo, Chief of Teaching Learning and Leadership, and various staff members presented an update on the Hybrid Reopening 5.0 Plan, which highlighted the foundational priorities for reopening school buildings, explained new supports for transitioning into the school buildings and what some of the future planning efforts for the upcoming school year are.

Dr. Stephen Haering, Director of the Alexandria Health Department, discussed the current health guidance from the Centers for Disease and Control (CDC), Virginia Department of Health (VDH), and the Alexandria Health Department (AHD).

School Board Members asked questions about staff childcare barriers, ventilation, opening windows, indoor air quality, outdoor dining and recess, procedures for COVID infections and concurrent teaching.

New Business and Reports to the Board

15. Equity for All Formative KPI Reporting and Implementation Timelines

Mr. Clinton Page, Chief Accountability Officer, shared a presentation on the ACPS 2025 Equity for All Strategic Plan which addressed how ACPS will monitor and report progress under the Equity for All 2025 Strategic Plan. Additionally, the presentation showed where ACPS is seeing disproportionality on formative key performance indicators (KPIs), and highlighted the overall timeline and next steps for strategy implementation. Mr. Page and Dr. Amber Eby, Evaluation and Assessment Analyst, reviewed the Equity for All 2025 dashboard which recently became active on the Strategic Plan webpage. This dashboard gives easy access to data about disparities based on ethnicity, economic group, gender, and programs based on specific academic outcomes, behavioral outcomes and program access.

Board Members asked questions about ADA compliance for the dashboard, data use, alignment with the strategic plan, professional learning, and stakeholder and climate surveys.

16. Easement Agreement between ACPS and Virginia Electric and Power Company dba Dominion Energy Virginia

Mr. Dominic Turner, Chief Finance Officer shared a brief overview that ACPS has been selected as one of sixteen school divisions accepted into the Dominion Energy Electric School Bus Pilot Program. Dominion Energy Virginia will pay for and install the necessary charging stations for the five electric buses which operate emission-free, use no fossil fuels, reduce noise levels, and save money in operating and maintenance costs.

Mr. Turner shared that the City of Alexandria, Dominion Energy Virginia and ACPS will finalize a right-of-way agreement, or easement, for the installation of charging stations totaling 140 feet in

length, at 3540 Wheeler Avenue in Alexandria. Virginia Code expressly provides that school property located within the boundaries of the school division is under the “official care and authority of the School Board” even if the property itself is titled in the city. For this reason, both the City of Alexandria and Dominion Energy Virginia agreed that the School Board could grant the easement.

Mr. E Scott Merriman, Director of Pupil Transportation and Fleet Management, was present to answer questions by the School Board.

Ms. Gentry moved to approve the easement agreement between ACPS and Dominion Energy Virginia. Ms. Lorber seconded the motion.

The vote to approve the easement agreement was unanimous, 8-0. The motion carried. A roll call vote was taken.

17. SY 2020-2021 Academic Calendar Revision for Parent Teacher Conferences Date Change for T.C. Williams High School, Francis C. Hammond Middle School and George Washington Middle School.

Mr. Peter Balas, Principal of T.C. Williams High School, and Ms. Pierrette Peters, Principal of Francis C. Hammond Middle School, presented information about the SY 2020-2021 Academic Calendar Revision. Due to the hybrid reopening schedule, each of these secondary schools is requesting a date change for parent conferences. This calendar revision will maximize hybrid reopening instructional time by eliminating the half day schedules on March 11, 12, 18 and 19, 2021, and moving secondary Parent-Teacher Conferences to April 5, 2021. This new date is currently a professional learning day for staff in which there is no school for students. Conferences will be held virtually.

School Board Members asked questions about the communications outreach regarding the calendar revision, how schools are communicating to parents/guardians on their student’s progress, and other professional learning options open to teachers.

Ms. Greene motioned to approve the SY 2020-2021 Academic Calendar Revision for Parent-Teacher Conferences Date Change for T.C. Williams High School, Francis C. Hammond Middle School, and George Washington Middle School.

Ms. Gentry seconded the motion.

The vote to approve the calendar revisions for secondary parent conferences at T.C. Williams, George Washington, and Francis. C. Hammond was unanimous, 7-0. The motion carried. The vote was taken by roll call.

Mr. Suarez was not present for the vote and was absent for the remainder of the meeting.

Chair’s Report

18. Report from Meagan Alderton

Chair Alderton invited the community to speak at the March 18, 2021 Public Hearing on the renaming of T.C. Williams High School and Matthew Maury Elementary School. The deadline to sign up to speak at the public hearing is noon on March 17th.

Superintendent’s Report

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

Superintendent Hutchings reported that March 5, 2021 is National Employee Appreciation Day. He emphasized the importance of celebrating this day and showing appreciation for all of the hard work from staff during these unprecedented times.

Announcement by Board Members

20. Announcements

There were no announcements.

Closed Meeting and Certification of Closed Meeting

21. Closed Meeting

Ms. Gentry moved that the Board convene a Closed Meeting pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3711(A)(6) for discussion or consideration of the investment of public funds where competition or bargaining is involved and, where if made public, would adversely affect the financial interest of the Board, specifically a contract related to the Douglas MacArthur project.

Ms. Lorber seconded the motion.

The vote was 7-0, to convene a Closed Meeting. The motion carried. The vote was taken by roll call.

The Board moved into a Closed Meeting at 7:38 p.m.

22. Certification of Closed Meeting

Ms. Gentry moved that pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3712, that the Board certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened, and which are lawfully exempted by the Freedom of Information Act, were heard, discussed or considered by the Board in the Closed Meeting held on March 4, 2021.

Ms. Lorber seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0, to certify the Closed Meeting. The motion carried. The vote was taken by roll call.

The Board returned to open session at 7:55 p.m.

Adjournment

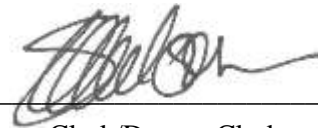
23. Adjourn

On a motion by Ms. Gentry and seconded by Ms. Lorber, the Board voted unanimously, 7-0, to adjourn. The vote was taken by roll call.

The meeting ended at 7:55 p.m.



Meagan L. Alderton, Chair



Clerk/Deputy Clerk

These minutes were adopted at the March 18, 2021 School Board Meeting.