

**MINUTES**  
**VIRTUAL SCHOOL BOARD RETREAT**  
**ALEXANDRIA CITY SCHOOL BOARD**  
**April 13, 2021 (7:15 p.m.)**

On March 12, 2020, Virginia Governor Ralph Northam declared a state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, this meeting is being held electronically pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3708.2(A)(3), for the purpose of providing for the continuity of operations of the School Board for the discharge of its lawful purposes, duties and responsibilities. All members of the School Board are participating virtually via Zoom. Public participation remains virtual and may be accessed by the public through the live broadcast on Comcast channel 71 in Alexandria, through the livestream on the ACPS website, or via Zoom by following the link posted at the top of the published agenda.

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**ROLL CALL**

THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT AT THE RETREAT:

**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, Laurie Cromwell

**Call the Work Session to Order**

Chair Alderton called the Retreat to order at 7:40 p.m. All members of the Board were present, along with Superintendent Hutchings, and Laurie Cromwell, retreat facilitator.

**Discussion Topics**

**1. School Board Assessment: Review Priorities**

Ms. Laurie Cromwell of Foundation Innovation encouraged the Board to set goals based on their self-assessment results last discussed in January 2021. The group also discussed future topics, and a timeline for the next Board evaluation and retreat.

**2. School Board Structure: SWOT Analysis**

School Board Members discussed their thoughts regarding the School Board structure including the size of the Board (number of members), a staggered election cycle, and the length of Board Member terms. Any change to the Board structure would require approval of the City Council and the General Assembly. With the exception of the number of members, City Council would be required to change its election cycle or terms to mimic that of the School Board's in order for the School Board to make a change. Ms. Cromwell will return with a SWOT exercise on this topic at a future retreat to help determine next steps.

**3. Board/Superintendent Communication**

The Board and Superintendent discussed their communication and ways in which to improve messaging between the Board, Superintendent, staff and the public.

**4. Written Public Comments**

There were no written public comments received.

**Adjournment**

The retreat ended at 9:50 p.m.



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Meagan Alderton, Chair



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Clerk/Deputy Clerk

These minutes were adopted at the April 22, 2021 School Board Meeting.