

MINUTES
VIRTUAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
ALEXANDRIA CITY SCHOOL BOARD
January 20, 2022 (6:30 p.m.)

Meeting Held via Zoom

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. Members of the School Board and Staff are participating via Zoom. Public participation in this meeting is through Zoom and may also be accessed by the public through the live broadcast on cable channel 71 in Alexandria, through the livestream on the ACPS website, or via Zoom by following the link at the top of the posted agenda.

ROLL CALL

THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT AT THE MEETING:

BOARD MEMBERS: Meagan L. Alderton
Willie F. Bailey Sr.
Kelly Carmichael Booz
Abdel-Rahman Elnoubi
Jacinta Greene
Christopher Harris
Tammy Ignacio
Michelle Rief
Ashley Simpson Baird

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Susan Neilson, Shanel Hill, Emily Milton, Sylvia Rahim, Dr. Julie Crawford, Dr. David Rose, Dr. Melanie Kay-Wyatt, John Cafferky, Mr. Greg Bussink, Dominic Turner, Michael Covington, Jodie Peters, Dr. Terry Mozingo, Dr. Alicia Hart,

Call to Order

1. Meeting Called to Order by Chair Alderton

Chair Alderton called the meeting to order at 6:31 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 20, 2022 Virtual School Board Meeting

Mr. Bailey moved to adopt the meeting agenda for the January 20, 2022 Virtual School Board Meeting.

Ms. Ignacio seconded the motion.

The vote to adopt the meeting agenda for January 20, 2022 was unanimous, 9-0. The vote was taken by roll call. The motion carried.

Communications & Addresses to the Board

4. Public Hearing on the FY 2023 Combined Funds Budget

Ms. Mily Palma, ACPS student, spoke about how important it is to continue restorative practices, and requested additional resources for mental health resources.

Ms. Sindy Carballo Garcia, community member, spoke about concerns regarding supporting students with resources such as mental health services and restorative practices.

Mr. Sami Bourmi, ACPS parent, spoke about concerns regarding transportation, building capacity, traffic, and playground facilities. He asked that the Board consider putting more funds toward these areas.

Ms. Dawn Lucas, Education Association of Alexandria (EAA) President and ACPS staff member, spoke on behalf of EAA in support of the combined funds budget and recommended ACPS replace lost step increases for staff members.

Ms. Maureen McNulty, PTAC President, gave PTAC's position on budget priorities that included increasing salaries and benefits to hire and retain staff; prioritizing grounds, building improvements and infrastructure; providing after school tutoring for students in need of academic support, and expanding foreign language opportunities at the elementary school level.

5. Public Comments

Mr. Ricardo Roberts, ACPS parent, spoke about the combined funds budget and asked for additional transparency related to purchased services, including the request for additional two-way radios.

Ms. Ericia Johnson, ACPS parent, expressed her concerns about the Governor's mask mandate and what ACPS will do to ensure the safety of students including masks, COVID testing, and vaccines. She also expressed concerns about the use of metal detectors in schools.

Mr. Aaron Wade Norman, ACPS parent, spoke in favor of the Governor's mask mandate.

6. Report from Student Representatives Emily Milton and Sylvia Rahim

Ms. Silvia Rahim spoke about Martin Luther King Jr. Day and ways in which students could celebrate this important holiday throughout the year. She also spoke about the governor's executive order removing the mask mandate, but clarified that ACPS will continue to wear masks. Ms. Rahim showed KN95 masks that were being issued to students in ACPS and thanked Dr. Hart and the facilities team for all their hard work.

Ms. Emily Milton, spoke about the donation of \$20,000 from the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia's Giving Women Circle to start a "STEM-inists" club at Jefferson-Houston and Francis C. Hammond. She also emphasized the need for substitute teachers and monitors in schools and encouraged the community to apply for these positions. Ms. Milton remarked on a presentation about on how students can pay for college, congratulated principals on Principal Appreciation Week and thanked Dr. Wendy Gonzalez, Executive Director of School Leadership, for all that she does to support ACPS principals.

Consent Calendar

7. FY 2022 Monthly Financial Report ending December 31, 2021

8. Monthly Facilities Use Report for December 2021

9. FY 2022 Budget Transfer Report Q2

10. VADEQ Electric Bus Grant Resolution

11. Personnel Actions through January 14, 2022

12. Appoint Andrew Corso to the Talented and Gifted (TAG) Advisory Committee

13. Appoint Tiffany Pache to the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Committee

- 14. Accept Resignation of Melissa Kuhn from the Talented and Gifted (TAG) Advisory Committee**
- 15. Minutes for the January 10, 2022 School Board Retreat, the January 13, 2022 Special Called School Board Meeting, and the January 13, 2022 Combined Funds Budget Work Session #1**

Dr. Rief moved to adopt the Consent Calendar. Ms. Greene seconded the motion.

Ms. Ignacio asked to pull item “Superintendent Contract Provision: Other Work Activities” from the Consent Calendar.

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

Items Pulled from the Consent Calendar

- 16. Superintendent Contract Provision: Other Work Activities**

Ms. Ignacio pulled this item due to questions regarding Dr. Hutchings’ book that will be coming out in May and the additional institutions being added where Dr. Hutchings will teach as an adjunct professor.

Dr. Hutchings clarified that the book, which was approved by a previous Board, is an educational resource for principals, superintendents and educators. The approval is for allowing speaking engagements and royalties received will be placed in Dr. Hutchings’ educational LLC account. He further clarified that he will no longer be teaching at Howard University but will teach at Georgetown University instead.

Mr. Harris moved to approve the Superintendent Contract Provision: Other Work Activities. Mr. Elnoubi seconded the motion.

The vote to approve the Superintendent Contract Provision: Other Work Activities was unanimous, 9-0. The vote was taken by roll call. The motion carried.

Old Business & Action Items

- 17. COVID-19 Update**

Dr. Julie Crawford, Chief of Student Services and Equity, led the update on COVID-19 to the Board and community. Dr. David Rose, Director of the Alexandria Health Department, provided data on recent COVID-19 transmission and cases, and while cases are slightly reduced, Alexandria is still in an area of high transmission. Dr. Crawford reported on the new ACPS COVID dashboard on the ACPS website, the VDH “Test to Stay” pilot, the ViSSTA program, and Day 6 testing for asymptomatic individuals returning after a positive COVID test. Dr. Alicia Hart gave an update on the KN95 and surgical masks being provided to staff and students in ACPS. Dr. Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Acting Chief of Human Resources, provided an update on the number of vaccinated staff members in ACPS. Lastly, John Cafferky, School Board attorney, spoke about the governor’s executive order rescinding mask mandates in schools, and whether he has the authority over School Boards who have been given authority in the Code of Virginia to make decisions for their own divisions.

Board Members asked questions about masking, mitigation strategies during lunches, the Day 6 and Test to Stay programs, and about providing retroactive sick leave for staff for reasons of COVID,

New Business and Reports to the Board

- 18. FY 2021 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report**

Mr. Dominic Turner, Chief Financial Officer, introduced Mr. Greg Bussink, Principal at CliftonLarsonAllen LLP (CLA) the City and Schools’ external auditors. Mr. Bussink reported

that CLA audited the Financial Report and issued an unmodified (or “clean”) opinion indicating that the financial statements fairly represented the financial position of ACPS as of June 30, 2021. Additionally, CLA has issued their letter to the School Board as required by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) for all financial statement audits and their report on the Division’s internal control over financial reporting and on compliance and other matters. No significant deficiencies or material weaknesses of internal control or instances of noncompliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts or grant agreements or other matters were noted that could have a direct and material effect on the financial statement amounts.

Mr. Michael Covington, Director of Accounting, thanked Mr. Bussink for CLA’s work with ACPS for the last 10 years and thanked ACPS’ Financial Services staff for keeping the division’s financial affairs in order.

Ms. Ignacio moved to accept the FY 2021 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Mr. Harris seconded the motion.

The vote to accept the FY 2021 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report was unanimous, 9-0. The vote was taken by roll call. The motion carried.

19. Early College Update

Ms. Jodie Peters, AVID District Director/College Readiness Support, provided information about the development of an Early College High School Model with the local community college and two area universities. This model would allow ACPS students to complete their high school diploma while simultaneously earning an associate’s degree. The model would include a four-year framework where a student would enter as a rising ninth grader and complete a designated pathway of courses in four years. Given the local workforce needs and current student career interests, high-demand career occupations such as information technology (IT), education, computer science (CS), and business are among the few pathways being explored, along with a general course of studies through the Universal Certificate of General Studies. Current partnerships and pathways are under development with the intent to target a fall 2024 opening for the first cohort to be on-site at a college or university campus.

Board Members asked questions regarding how this model is different than dual enrollment, student selection, what is the targeted population of students, and what happens if a student decides to leave the program,

Chair’s Report

20. Report from Meagan Alderton

Chair Alderton reported on upcoming Combined Funds Budget work sessions and deadlines, the Joint City Council/School Board Subcommittee Meeting scheduled for January 24th at 5:00 p.m. and orientation and training for School Board Members in Richmond the following week.

Superintendent’s Report

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

Superintendent Hutchings congratulated ACHS Librarian Laurel Taylor who is being sponsored by the American Association of School Librarians and the American Library Association in the 2022 Emerging Leaders Program which enables librarians to problem solve, network and serve in leadership positions. Dr. Hutchings also commented on the lack of snow on the declared snow day and why synchronous learning was chosen.

22. Announcements

There were no announcements by Board Members.

Closed Meeting and Certification of Closed Meeting

23. Closed Meeting

Vice Chair Greene 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. She further moved that the Board convene a Closed Meeting pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3711(A)(8) for consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

Dr. Rief seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 9-0, to convene a Closed Meeting. The vote was taken by roll call. The motion carried.

The Board moved into a Closed Meeting at 9:42 p.m.

24. Certification of Closed Meeting

Vice Chair Greene 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 January 20, 2022.

Dr. Rief seconded the motion.

The vote was 8-0, to certify the Closed Meeting. The vote was taken by roll call. The motion carried. Ms. Ignacio was not present for the vote.

The Board returned to open session at 11:12 p.m.

Vice Chair Greene moved to amend the agenda to add item "Motion to Reaffirm Commitment to Ensuring Safe and Secure Schools."

Mr. Bailey seconded the motion to amend the agenda.

The vote to amend the agenda to add "Motion to Reaffirm Commitment to Ensuring Safe and Efficient Schools," was 8-0. The vote was taken by roll call. The motion carried. Ms. Ignacio was absent for the vote.

25. Motion to Reaffirm Commitment to Ensuring Safe and Efficient Schools

Vice Chair Greene made the following motion:

"I move that the School Board reaffirm its commitment to ensuring the safe and efficient operation of the schools and the provision of in-person instruction by employing the COVID-19 mitigation measures recommended by the federal Centers for Disease Control, including specifically masking of students, staff and visitors as approved by the Board on August 3, 2021, and in accordance with Regulation GBE-R/JHCC-R adopted by the Board on December 16, 2021 and other policies and regulations, and authorize the actions recommended by the School Board attorney, as presented in closed session, including the participation in legal action if and as needed."

Mr. Harris seconded the motion.

The vote to reaffirm commitment to Ensuring Safe and Efficient Schools was 8-0. The vote was taken by roll call. The motion carried. Ms. Ignacio was not present for the vote.

Adjournment

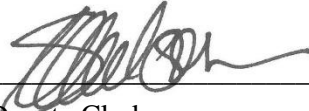
26. Adjourn

On a motion by Dr. Simpson Baird and seconded by Ms. Booz, the Board voted unanimously, 9-0, to adjourn. The vote was taken by roll call. The motion carried.

The meeting ended at 11:19 p.m.



Meagan Alderton, Chair



Clerk/Deputy Clerk

These minutes were adopted at the February 3, 2022 School Board Meeting.