

MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
ALEXANDRIA CITY SCHOOL BOARD
February 24, 2022 (6:30 p.m.)

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, Dr. Julie Crawford

Call to Order

1. Meeting Called to Order by Chair Alderton

Chair Alderton called the meeting to order at 6:35 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 February 24, 2022 Special Called School Board Meeting

Abdel-Rahman Elnoubi moved to adopt the meeting agenda for the February 24, 2022 Special Called School Board Meeting.

Vice Chair Greene seconded the motion.

The vote to adopt the meeting agenda was unanimous, 9-0. The motion carried.

Communications & Addresses to the Board

4. Written Public Comments

Ms. Ellen Clark, ACPS parent, wrote to ask the School Board to continue to require universal masking in ACPS schools until the CDC advises otherwise. She noted that the layered mitigation efforts, including masks, have made the difference for children at risk for complications from COVID-19.

Mr. William Clark, community member, wrote in support of the continuation of the requiring masks in schools where students are in close quarters. He felt that others should continue to wear masks to demonstrate a level of civic responsibility and concern for others.

Ms. Kathryn Howell Dalton, ACPS parent, wrote that for the sake of students, staff and the wider community that ACPS require 100% masking during periods of high or substantial transmission. She advocated that ACPS have a clear communication plan, provide an online opt-out form as well as a format to communicate specific health concerns of students.

Ms. Cynthia Perry, ACPS parent, wrote that she was in favor of keeping the mask mandate in schools with time outdoors for students to remove their masks. She also advocated that unmasked students should not be in the same area as students who continue to wear masks.

Mr. Steve Wenderlich, ACPS parent, recommended a complete audit of finances in ACPS to ensure students are getting a quality education. He also advocated that masked parents be given access to schools again.

Old Business & Action Items

5. COVID-19 Mitigation Strategy Update

Dr. Julie Crawford, Chief of Student Services, presented an update on COVID-19 mitigating strategies. The presentation included the current level of community transmission of COVID, a review of Senate Bill 739 recently signed by the governor, and updated continuing COVID prevention measures. ACPS continues to highly recommend mask wearing during periods of high or substantial transmission in all ACPS buildings and vehicles. Additionally, ACPS continues to require masks in buildings for staff and visitors. Beginning March 1st, in compliance with the new law, parents may choose for their student to not wear a mask in school, however ACPS will continue to recommend masking for students during high transmission.

The Board asked questions about ways to reach out to unvaccinated individuals, mask wearing opt-out forms, implications of SB 739 on contact tracing and on students with disabilities or who are immunocompromised, communications to families regarding the masking change, and how this new bill will affect outdoor sporting events for students.

Chair Alderton noted that the accompanying policy GBE/JHCC: Staff Health will be revised separately as some language will be kept in the policy regarding masking, however language referring to regulation GBE-R/JHCC-R will be removed.

Mr. Bailey moved to rescind regulation GBE-R/JHCC-R regarding the use of protective face coverings to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Mr. Harris seconded the motion.

The vote to approve rescinding regulation GBE-R/JHCC-R was unanimous, 9-0. The motion carried.

Adjournment

6. Adjourn

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

The meeting ended at 7:27 p.m.



Meagan Alderton, Chair



Clerk/Deputy Clerk

These minutes were adopted at the March 10, 2022 School Board Meeting.