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Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, April 8, 2026

Date Wednesday, April 8, 2026
Place Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length 1h 40m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=085WePbu2lc>
- Official School Board page (PWCS): https://www.pwcs.edu/about/school_board/

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-27. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:03] - Okay, I would like to call the meeting of the Prince William County School Board to order. 1.02, approve the agenda action. The motion is now in order for the approval of the meeting agenda. Vice Chair, Mr. Blake.

[00:00:19] - Thank you, Vice Chair. I move that the Prince William County School Board approves the meeting agenda as recommended. - I second. - Mr. Chairman, Vice Chair. - Yes. - I second. - A motion to close plan, a motion to end a closed session action.

[00:00:39] - Moving on to motion to inter-closed session. We need to vote? - We need to vote, yes. - I'm sorry. Can we vote, please?

[00:00:54] Okay. - Six yes, one not present at vote. Williams, motion passed. - Okay. The motion to inter-closed session action. Moving on to the motion to inter-closed session. The motion is in order.

[00:01:09] - Oh, thank you, Mr. Vice Chairman. I recommend that pursuant, I move that pursuant to Virginia code 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712, the Prince William County School Board inter-closed session for the following reasons.

[00:01:25] One, to discuss with staff the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees or employees of any public body

pursuant to section 2.2-3711A1 of Dakota, Virginia, and two, to discuss with division counsel and staff actual or probable litigation, and specific legal matters pertaining to collective bargaining, staff, students, and other civil litigation involving the school division under sections 2.2-3711A7 and 8 of Dakota, Virginia, [00:02:04] and three, to discuss and receive briefings by staff members related to the security of school facilities, the safety of persons using such facilities and actions taken to respond to such matters, where discussion in an open meeting would jeopardize the security of such facilities pursuant to section 2.2-3711A, 19 of Dakota, Virginia.

[00:02:27] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman, I second. - Yes. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote. - Vote is five yes, two not present at vote. Williams, Lateef, motion passed.

[00:02:44] - The Prince William County School Board will now enter closed session

[00:02:47] and return in the open session in one hour.

[00:03:53] - Prince William County School Board now re-enter open session from closed a motion is in order 7.01 for closed session certification vice chair jesse i move that pursuant to section 2.2 of the s3712 of the code of virginia the closed session of the prince william county school board meeting by april 8 2026 be certified by adopting the following resolution now therefore be resolved that the prince william county school board hereby certify that to the best of each member's knowledge one on the public business

[00:04:31] matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements were discussed in the closed meeting to which the certification resolution applies and two only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meetings were heard and discussed or so considered by the school board.

[00:04:51] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Wall. - I second. - Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:05:24] Hello? - The vote is seven, yes, unanimous, motion passed. - Okay, moving on to approval appointments and release, or no, what are we at? Yeah, appointments and releases 8.01. Vice Chair, Jesse. - I move that the Prince Rainey County School Board approves the appointment and releases that's specified, of specifying employees as presented in closed session.

[00:05:43] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarport. - I second. - Any discussion? - Vote is seven, yes, unanimous, motion passed.

[00:06:03] - Okay, moving on to the Pledge of Allegiance, we have Karina Grover, our student representative from Colgan High School to lead us in the pledge. - Pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, to the Republic, for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, liberty and justice for all.

[00:06:27] - Great, moving on to Thriving Futures Focus. As you all know, this is our opportunity to highlight the exemplary work being accomplished in our schools that fulfills our vision that every student will graduate on time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[00:06:46] We dedicate this time during our meetings to recognizing students, staff members, and schools that have earned an honor or an award at the state or national level. Tonight, the school board is honored to recognize student athletes and teams from across Prince William County Public Schools who've earned VHSL state championships during the winter season.

[00:07:03] I would like to first invite Mr. Justin Wilk of the Potomac District to introduce the first group on behalf of Mrs. Erica Trojanek of the Brentsville District. Mr. Wilk. - What a resplendent pleasure and in all seriousness, Ms. Trojanek wishes she could be here, but she is recovering from an illness.

[00:07:19] So I will speak proudly and with enthusiasm about the Brentsville District. So the Brentsville District is proud to recognize outstanding student athletes whose achievements reflect excellence, perseverance, and school pride. First, we wanna wish to recognize the Gainesville High School's boys indoor track and field team for winning the VHSL class six state championship.

[00:07:45] The Cardinals finished the meet with 51 points, two more than second place Patriot High School. Overall, five teams from Prince William County finished in the top 10 in the state. One of the more notable stats from the meet was the Cardinals managed their finish with only six competitors across all events.

[00:08:06] Awesome, guys. We also have additional congratulations, yeah. We also have additional congratulations for team and individual finishes. The boys 3,200 meter relay team of Gavin Daniels, Trent Daniels, Isaiah Foster, and Wilham Kerr for earning their team state championship.

[00:08:31] Cody Scott, congrats for winning the state title in the boys' pole vault. And Trent Daniels for winning the state title in the boys' 3,200 meter run. These honorees are supported this evening by their esteemed principal, Neil Beach, coaches, school staff, and families.

[00:08:48] I would like to invite Coach Connor Lee to share a few words about this exceptional team. - All right, members of the board, thanks for bringing us back. And I do mean us this time.

[00:09:05] This is a full team celebrating a state title and difficult one to win. You're gonna honor a bunch of guys behind us that made it really, really hard for the boys to win it. and you've already stolen half my speech. There were four teams from the Cedar Run District in the top six, five teams from Prince William.

[00:09:22] Just the level, yeah. - I think that was good. - Seeing these teams at every level of the post-season at the district, at the region meet, and then the state meet just kind of tells you what you have to do to be successful at the state meet, and it's very rare that all of your boys are on it on the same day, and all of our boys were on it on the same day, and they ran an incredible four-by-eight the Friday night and had great performances in the mile, in the two mile, in the thousand on day two, and Patriot made it very, very difficult for these boys to win it, but when you're on it, you're on it.

[00:09:57] So I cannot, for the thousandth time, congratulate these boys enough for what they did. So congratulations again, boys. - Outstanding, and the Brentsville district is not done.

[00:10:12] We also wish to recognize Henry Berg of Patriot High School who earned two VHL class six state championships in track and field for the thousand meter and the 1,600-meter run. Principal David Van Gelder, Coach James DeMarco, and Henry's family are here to support him tonight.

[00:10:31] At this time, I invite Coach DeMarco to share a few words on Henry's accomplishments. - It's been a great honor to coach Henry Burge once I got to know him, and we were looking at the kids coming into Patriot, and we were talking to them, hey, coming out for cross-country running.

[00:10:50] Didn't show up, But then on that magical day in November, he showed up for the first day of indoor track, and he asked me what events should he do, the long jump, he's very good at multiple things, and said, "You're an 800 guy," and he's just done phenomenal.

[00:11:08] Three-time state champion in the 1,000 meters, the state record holder for the state meet. He's won a mile state title this year, and he's won two 800-meter outdoor state titles. So he's got six, and he also has been a member of a team state title in 2023.

[00:11:23] So just been a super leader. He's a member of our choir at Patriot High School, so he can also sing. He's yet to do that for us at practice, but just an amazing young man. He'll be at the University of Virginia next year, Cavalier.

[00:11:41] And so he'll be competing for them. And so I'm always been a big Hokie fan, so I'll be cheering on the Cavaliers next year and also Trent at Gainesville will be there. So these two guys have been battling for years, making each other better and better, and now they're gonna be teammates.

[00:12:02] That's pretty exciting. - Thank you. And lastly, I also wanna recognize the Brentsville District High School student athletes, Kayla Smith, VHSL class three state champion in the girls 55 meter and 300 meter run, and Evan Sinati, VHSL Class III Wrestling State Champion.

[00:12:29] Unfortunately, neither Kayla nor Evan could be here tonight as they were already committed elsewhere. On behalf of Ms. Treginich and the board, congratulations to all and thank you for profoundly and proudly representing the Brentsville District.

[00:12:44] Thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Wilk, and congratulations to all our Brentsville District honorees for continuing this strong tradition of winning. You guys are amazing. I would now like to invite Ms. Lisa Zargarpur, the Coles District, to introduce our next group.

[00:13:03] - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. I just want to say I looked out here when they moved and you guys stepped up. I just got chills looking at you. Oh my gosh, I am so proud of you guys. The Coles District is proud to recognize our exceptional student athletes and teams whose accomplishments brought state honors to PWCS.

[00:13:19] First, we recognize Osborne Park High School's girls basketball team who won their second straight VHSL class six championship. Oh my gosh, I'm so excited. They won with a 48 over 42 win over Manchester High School.

[00:13:39] This win cemented the program as the first in Prince William County Public Schools history to win back to back state titles in girls basketball. This is also a momentous occasion as we congratulate both Kiera Rainey and head coach Chrissy Kelly for being named the 2026 VHSL Class Six Girls Basketball Player of the Year and Coach of the Year.

[00:14:14] Awesome accomplishments. These honorees are supported this evening by Principal Lisa Marie Kane, school staff, coaches, and their families. So at this time, I would like to invite our Coach of the Year, Chrissy Kelly, to introduce her players and coaches and share a few words on this historic season.

[00:14:36] - Thank you for having us here tonight. It's cool to be back for a second year in a row. I have an incredible group of young women. I'm gonna start with my seniors, Samia Snead. Where are you? Samia Snead, right here.

[00:14:51] Key Rainey, Terianna Hayes, JL West. Those are my seniors and Jalyn Gorham. Then I have, gosh, Peyton Walters, Marlo Hall, Layla Twyman, and then Tierney Myers, who is not here today.

[00:15:10] I have Janie Salinas, who's not here. Kai Jones, a sophomore, Chrissy Dallas, Devorah Sampson, and Juliana Ross. But I also have an amazing staff.

[00:15:26] I have Coach DK, I have Coach Danny, and I have Coach Bird. My other assistant is not here. Two of them, Misha Jones and Maddie Scarborough. There's a lot that goes on behind the scenes, and without a great staff, we just don't have the chance to be successful.

[00:15:44] And unfortunately, two of them who are Prince William County grads and went on to play college basketball, they are heading into retirement. And it's a heartbreaking one for me. But I just wanna thank them for everything that they've given me. I gotta thank Dr. Cain and Keith Lane without great administration and support.

[00:16:03] We don't have the success that we've had over the last nine years. But I also think it's really important to understand the work that goes on in the months that aren't November to March, the amount of times they have to come in early in the morning.

[00:16:20] Unfortunately, we do have unlimited gym space, so we're working out two to three times a week at six o'clock in the morning, and then even during the season when there's wrestling and gymnastics and ROTC and softball and cheer all at once, sometimes you gotta find that quiet space to be able to coach them.

[00:16:36] And they're always willing to go the extra mile and do extra effort in order for us to be successful. 'Cause it is important that they represent not just their families themselves, but the county and the school. It's a big thing to represent Prince William County and do what we've done.

[00:16:54] And it's our 50 year anniversary and it's the first time in Prince William County that there's been a back-to-back state championship in girls basketball. So there's a lot that goes into it. So I'm extremely grateful for this group. I also got to thank my parents. I have an amazing group of parents.

[00:17:11] They're the ones who get up at four o'clock in the morning and drop them off at OP at five, but also travel to Phoenix, Arizona for us to compete on a national level to represent the county and our school. We're just really fortunate of all the support that has continued to give to us, not just that the OP base, but kids that I've coached for years that are no longer with us, but just the community itself.

[00:17:33] I think they've done a really good job at representing what strong women can do when they put their minds to it. So thank you, thank you for having us here tonight and we'll be back next year.

[00:17:54] - That's the line of the night, Coach, thank you. Zargapur. - All right, next we also congratulate Osborne Park's members of the indoor track and field boys 800 meter relay team who won their VHSL Classic state title. We wish to recognize Gabriel Simmons, Kian Kuechler, Darren, I am so apologized for names I'm pronouncing wrong here, Darren DeCua, Amadou Sese.

[00:18:22] And at this time, I would like to invite Coach Lauren Rose to share a few words. Good evening. Thank you for having us. It's just been an honor working with these four boys.

[00:18:38] I've worked with them for three years, and all the hard work and all the passion that they have has definitely paid off this year. So they are all seniors, which is sad for our team, but they have a bright future ahead of them.

[00:18:58] And then all the hard work, they definitely broke our school record. And by broke, I mean shattered our school record for the boys 4x2. It's definitely been a pleasure working with them, very coachable, very hardworking. will usually do a workout and put themselves through it a little bit, and it definitely shows, and it showed on the state meet.

[00:19:23] So I'm very proud of them and everything that they have accomplished and will continue to accomplish as they keep growing throughout their careers.

[00:19:39] - Well, congratulations, Osborne Park. I am so proud of my alma mater. Once a jacket, oh, come on, once a jacket. Yeah, they, oh, well, there you go, that was better, okay. Moving on, I'd like to say congratulations also to recognizing Charles J. Colgan Senior High School student athlete Lauren Robertson, state champion in the girls 55 meter run, and Alex Grotolsky, state champion in swimming in both the 200 individual medley and the 500 freestyle.

[00:20:12] Unfortunately, Alex could not be here tonight as he had a prior commitment. Lauren is supported this evening by the director of student activities, Marvin Wooten, coach Melissa Tyrone, school staff and families. At this time, I would like to invite our coach, Melissa Tyrone, to share a few words this evening.

[00:20:34] - Good evening, thank you for having us back again. This is Lauren's encore performance. She was recognized for her state title in the 200 meter during the outdoor season, but this is her first indoor title and we're very proud of her. In her time at Colgan, Lauren is so humble, walking through the hallways, you wouldn't know that she holds three individual school titles and a title on one of our relays in the 100 meter dash, the 200 meter dash, the 55 meter dash, and as part of our four by 100 meter relay team.

[00:21:13] It's that and her quiet confidence that really make her a leader on our team for the last four years. And I know looking at all these indoor track athletes that we have here tonight, It was quite a challenging season with the lovely weather we had this year.

[00:21:28] For anyone who does indoor track knows that it is really not indoors. So we had to get really creative and she rose to that challenge and did not let it affect her training. We are so excited to see what she's gonna do this outdoor season, as well as she continues on next year and she's gonna be competing for Baylor next year as part of their track and field program.

[00:22:00] - Lisa, thank you all for representing Prince William County Schools and the Coles District and congratulations. Thank you, Ms. Zargapur. To the Coles District honorees, I'd like to next invite Ms. Jennifer Wall of the Gainesville District to introduce our next honorees. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef.

[00:22:16] The Gainesville District is proud to recognize Battlefield High School for an outstanding winter season at the state level. All honorees are supported this evening by Principal Dolores Lucas, Director of Student Activities for Battlefield, Mr. Bill Hall, their coaches, school staff, and families.

[00:22:34] First, we recognize the Battlefield High School gymnastics team as VHSL class six state champions. Watching these girls over the last few years and after years of coming close, the Battlefield High School gymnastics team reached the top of the podium this year, winning the program's first state crown.

[00:23:00] Congratulations girls. For Prince William County, this is the first gymnastics state title locally since Osborne Park High School in 2009. So it's been a long time. You guys did it, great job. At Battlefield High overcame three consecutive years of runner-up finishes.

[00:23:19] A trophy is, this is a well-deserved trophy and well-earned, so great job girls. At this time, I would like to invite Coach Mary Henry to share a few words. - Thank you all for having us here and giving

these girls the recognition they all deserve, all the student athletes deserve.

[00:23:38] It's 10, 12, 15 plus hours every week through the season. that much less time they're in front of a device of some sort or any other things that a lot of people choose not to participate in but these girls have worked so hard for so long the average age of a competitive gymnast her the end of her career is actually 13 years old so for these girls to continue through high school what it the the toll it takes on the body at this age the

[00:24:17] conditioning they have to have the strength they have to have not to mention the social life that they give up everything they choose to do over over some of their peers and what they can or can't do so they've worked so hard and and like you said four of these ladies are seniors we're going to be losing them next year.

[00:24:42] Their first year, second on the podium. Their second year, second on the podium. Third year, second on the podium. But this year, they finally pushed through. It's their leadership of the seniors that really put them over the top, plus the super talent we have coming up in our freshmen, sophomores, and juniors.

[00:25:05] So we're not done yet. We like being up there. So girls, if you will, please salute. Thank you all very much.

[00:25:21] Coach Henry, would you mind introducing each of the girls that you've got here with you tonight? Absolutely, our super seniors. So we have Addison Fitzer. Wait. Ryan Grothoff, who's been here.

[00:25:37] This is our third time here, by the way. So two state titles in addition to this one, although I think they'll all say this is the most important one. We have Giselle Foreman and I'm going to introduce Marissa Parilla, all our super seniors, and our super new sophomore, Samantha Takam.

[00:26:01] Thank you so much. We also congratulate the boys' indoor track and field 1600 meter relay team of Gabriel Akam-Dafo, Alvin Chapital, Sean Hadley, and Maddox Mann for earning their state championship. Congratulations, boys.

[00:26:23] - Thank you very much, members of the board. First, I'd like to say thank you for putting together probably what is arguably the best county in the nation for track and field. I give you guys credit for that. In a season of ups and downs and lefts and rights and successes and failures and championships and near misses, I am happy to say that we ended on a fantastic note, one of the highest notes we possibly can.

[00:26:47] Four members of the five that represented our four by four are here today, Alvin Chapitl, Maddox Mann, Sean Hadley, Gabe Apgen-Doffo. Our fifth member, Brandon Murray, is not here. And the relevance of that is this. There's actually two accolades for this 4x4 team. Back in early January with Brandon Murray as the anchor of our 4x4, Battlefield High School set the indoor state record in the 4x400 meter relay.

[00:27:12] After which, arguably one of the best track athletes in the county in the state, Brandon Murray, we lost him to Rutgers football. And instead of throwing in the towel, maybe our greatest accomplishment of the season is the fact that these four gentlemen right here rallied and put together and determined, made a pack and said, we are still gonna win this four by four championship.

[00:27:36] And they did just that. So a shout out to you guys for being hardworking athletes, dedicated athletes and phenomenal role models for Battlefield High School. I would like to thank the culture that has been created here. Mrs. Lucas, our principal, Mr. Hall, our DSA, our coaching staff at Battlefield High School, including our four by four coach right here, Coach Hadley, who deserves a ton of the credit for this win right here.

[00:27:59] I wanna make sure that we recognize the parents of the athletes. I think that the parents of the athletes are absolutely, they're instrumental in the success of the athletes, and they have the most influence on the athletes. So I wanna give a shout out to the parents of each of these athletes right here, and a final thank you to the athletes for being the athletes that you are.

[00:28:21] Please remember, always respect the sport, honor the school, and appreciate your opportunities. Ladies and gentlemen, class six, state four by four, and literally the fastest indoor four by four team in the history of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[00:28:45] - That was great. - We need a highlight video for just this event. - Thank you so much. An additional congratulations go to our individual state champions. Sorry, let's see. Individual state champions for swimming. This looks like swimming and wrestling.

[00:29:00] So Alyssa Sagle, VHSL class six, state champion in swimming in the 50 free and 100 backstroke and Matthew Arndt VHSL class six wrestling state champion at 157 pounds.

[00:29:17] Unfortunately, Alyssa and Matthew could not attend tonight due to prior commitments, but I want to say congratulations to all of our Gainesville district champions and for representing PWCS so well. Thank you. - Thank you, Ms. Wall.

[00:29:34] Congratulations again to all of those from the Gainesville district, but we're not done yet. To introduce our next honoree, I'd like to call on Vice Chair Richard Jesse of the Occoquan district. Mr. Jesse. - Well, the Woodbridge district is proud to recognize Woodbridge, it should be the Occoquan district, is proud to recognize Woodbridge High School student athlete Sarah Glutton, is that right?

[00:30:01] Okay. - Close enough. - For winning the VHSL class six the wrestling state championship. Okay, that means a lot to me. I was a wrestler in high school and I made it to regionals, so at 145.

[00:30:22] Sarah is supported tonight by the Director of Students Activity, Mr. Kyle Schaik, Sarah's coach and brother Sammy and family members. At this time, I would like to invite the coach to share a few words.

[00:30:39] - All right, thank you. First, I would like to say just how grateful it's been to be able to coach Sarah all these years, just witnessing her from just beating up little boys in elementary and middle school, making them cry, to now just winning states just a year after tearing her ACL, all while maintaining a 4.2 GPA.

[00:31:03] It's just been amazing. Her resilience, work ethic, and willingness to learn will provide success in all her future endeavors on and off the mat.

[00:31:18] And it's just been an awesome experience just to win with my sister, it's been so cool. Thank you and congratulations to Sarah for becoming the first officially sanctioned VHSL girls wrestling from Prince William County.

[00:31:40] - Thank you, Mr. Jesse, and congratulations, Sarah Conglinton, for doing such a tremendous job this year and making us very proud. All right, to introduce our final honoree group, I'd like to call on Mr. Tracy Blake of the Neabsco district, Mr. Blake. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef.

[00:31:56] The Neabsco district is proud to recognize from the School of Champions, and you know we saved the best for last, E. Garfield High School student athlete and future Florida Gator, Joshua Kai Smith, for winning the VHSL class six state championship in the 55 meter hurdles, marking a personal best of 7.05, as well as a national championship in the 60 meter hurdles at the Nike Indoor Nationals, marking a personal best of 7.59.

[00:32:31] Joshua Kai is supported tonight by DSA, our Director of Student Activity, Michael Payne, school staff, coaches, and family members. At this time, I would like to invite Mr. Payne to share a few words on behalf of Joshua Kai.

[00:32:48] - Thank you, and good evening, Dr. McDade, Dr. Lateef, members of the school board. Mr. Blake, always great to see you. I'm honored to represent Garfield tonight and I'm joined by our track and field coaches who I'd like to introduce at this time, head coach Jarmal Latney, head coach Tyler Dickerson, and assistant coach Walter Harley and Jasmine Garcia.

[00:33:08] And of course, our elite student athlete, Joshua Kai Smith and his family. Tonight we celebrate something truly special, excellence at the highest level, and a student athlete has put our entire community on the national map. This season, Joshua Kai didn't just compete, he dominated.

[00:33:25] He captured the Cardinal District, to Region 6B, the VHSL class six state championship in the 55 meter hurdles, blazing to a personal best of 7.05 in the process and elevating his status to US number three all time.

[00:33:45] And if that wasn't impressive enough, he took that momentum to the national stage, rose above the best in the country, winning the national championship in the 60 meter hurdles at the Nike indoor nationals with another personal best of 7.59, which was good enough for US number seven all time.

[00:34:08] So that's not just winning, that's elite performance under pressure. Joshua Kai's success is a testament to relentless work ethic, focus, and the courage to push beyond his limits. He represents what's possible when preparation meets opportunity and when talent is matched with determination.

[00:34:27] Joshua Kai, you have inspired our peers, you've made our school proud and brought incredible recognition to our community. And much like Coach Kelly said with Osborne Park girls basketball, we eagerly anticipate our visit back after the spring sports season.

[00:34:43] As he specifically stated in his communications with Prince William County Schools, very short, very sweet, there's more to come. Congratulations to our state champion, our national champion, our all-around elite athlete, Joshua Kai Smith, and a huge congratulations to all the state champions here in Prince William County Schools.

[00:35:03] Thank you. - Congratulations, congratulations, Joshua Kai, Mr. Payne, and all the coaches. Thank you for making us proud. I just, and also Joshua Kye, thank you for just doing it, you know, with such grace and humility.

[00:35:23] And you're just a real good kid too. So, good job, man. Seriously. - Wow. - No, seriously. - Yeah, yeah, yeah, wow. What an evening. - He is fast. He's fast, he's that good too, so. - You know, Dr. McDade

knows as well as the board, wherever I go, I introduce myself as chairman at large of the greatest school division on planet Earth.

[00:35:43] And you all are the receipts of that claim that I make everywhere I go. So I can't thank you enough. It is an honor for us here at the board, an honor for everyone in this room to be in the presence of you all who are such hardworking, such amazing athletes, great students, and great people.

[00:36:01] And so it is truly an honor. I wanna first, I wanna make sure we thank all of those here who are supporting you all, and that is their parents, your teachers, and anyone who came to attend this evening. Please rise in the back so we can give you a round of applause.

[00:36:27] You all make this really possible, As you heard from our coaches, without you, this would not be possible, and so we're truly appreciative. I'll make a call out 'cause there is a attendee in the audience, Sean Brand, who is a former member of this board, whose son was on that Gainesville track team, Tyler, so we didn't call out all the names of the students on the track teams.

[00:36:45] I'd request that communications, when we put out the pictures and the names of everyone on the team, if we can put out the names of everyone on each team in our release when we put it out this week. But to recognize Sean Brand, who is a former member this board, Jen Wall, who's very modest, her daughter was a state champion as well.

[00:37:03] So all of us here as parents care deeply about the school division in every aspect of what we do, whether it's the academics and whether it's the athletics, we all share your experiences and we're so proud to be here with you. Dr. McDade.

[00:37:19] - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanna start with our teams, our Yellow Jackets. Congratulations on your historic state championship, Your skills, tenacity and grit continue to amaze me and we are so proud of you as back-to-back state champions for Prince William County.

[00:37:38] And our Battlefield Bobcats, your perseverance paid off. Congratulations on earning the top spot on the podium and the first state crown for your school. And to our Gainesville High School Cardinals boys indoor track and field team as well on securing the state title with a boost from individual state titles in pole vault and three 200 meter races.

[00:38:03] Yes, let's give them another round of applause. And then to each of our individual student athlete champions in track, wrestling, swimming, you have represented your schools, your families, and Prince William County Public Schools with excellence.

[00:38:20] You've shown what it means to pursue a goal with discipline and to rise to the moment when it matters most. So congratulations to each and every one of you. I also want to thank our principals, our coaches, our teaching staff, and families. We know that success like this is never achieved alone.

[00:38:39] It is nurtured through encouragement, guided through high expectations, and sustained by people who believe in our students every step of the way. So I want to thank each of you. Round of applause to all of you. We are PWCS proud.

[00:39:01] - All right, thank you, Dr. McDade. At this time, we're gonna request our honorees come forward for a photo. Diana Gulotta up front will sort of direct you and it will take us a few minutes to get through this crowd, but it'll be a fantastic few minutes.

[00:39:12] Thank you very much.

[00:51:27] Okay, thank you everyone for that. That was outstanding. Up next is the adoption of the consent agenda on 11.01, Vice Chair Jesse. - I move that the Prince William County School Board approve the public meeting consent agenda as recommended.

[00:51:45] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - I second. - Please vote. - Mr. Jessie votes yes.

[00:52:09] - The vote is seven yes unanimous, motion passed. - Next up, acknowledgements and recognitions. Motions in order, Vice Chair, Jessie. - I move that Prince William County School Board approve the adoption of the recognition is recommended. - Do I have a second?

[00:52:25] - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Williams. - I second. - Any discussion? - Mr. Chairman. - Ms. Zargarpur. - Yeah, so in this, if you take a look, we've got Better Hearing and Speech Month, Mental Health Awareness Month coming up, National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month, teacher appreciation coming up.

[00:52:43] Please appreciate your teachers. We've got Bike to School Earth Week Resolution, National School Nurse Day, another super important group of people. Lunch, School Lunch Hero Day, we need lunches, right?

[00:52:58] And Transportation Employees Week, another super important one. So let's make sure we honor our employees during that time. Thanks. - Please vote.

[00:53:23] - Vote a seven yes, unanimous, motion passed. - Thank you. Next up is citizen comment time. Those citizens who've signed up in advance with clerk may address the school board this evening when they are called to the podium. The citizen comment period for regular school board meetings is one hour. Citizens may speak on the agenda items or other topics germane to the operations and policies of PWCS.

[00:53:39] Please use proper decorum and manners while at the podium or you'll be asked to step aside. We ask that the audience please be respectful of each speaker and refrain from any clapping, cheering or cheering to avoid disruption of the meeting. If you do not do so, the board will recess and I'll ask the room to be cleared as to restore public order. Tonight, we have four citizens signed up to speak.

[00:53:56] When I call your name, please come up to the podium and state your name and address for the record. I will go ahead and read those, I don't have the names. The four names, Blake Harrah, Hina Ansari, Troy Harris, and Jen Donnelly.

[00:54:14] Blake Harrah.

[00:54:30] - Good morning, board members, chair, Dr. McDade. My name is Blake Harrah, my address is on file. Before I begin, I'd like to read a brief statement. School counselors in this division are licensed professionals who advocate daily for our students long-term academic success. When it is suggested from this dais, as it was in the March 4th meeting, that our counselors do not know or provide the full gamut of our options PWCS has to offer, the message is clear.

[00:54:53] The board does not believe our counselors know their duties. This statement was after the PWCS counselors earned a record number of recognized ASCA model program designations with the national level validation of counselor excellence. The board's advocacy for placing students who not meet established guidelines constitutes a violation of its own code of ethics, which requires members to uphold and enforce rules, policies, and regulation of PWCS.

[00:55:17] The professional judgment of our counselors deserves respect from this dais. I respectfully ask that the board during their time, their board matters time, publicly affirm the professional expertise and critical role of our school counselors. With that being said, is there any particular reason why the hours for the teachers haven't been released for next year?

[00:55:35] That vote was four months ago. You're now three months away from the teacher signing of the contracts and less than six months before the next school year. Now, Ms. Wall, on November 18th, you asked for Ms. Williams what the schedule would look like. Would it be 30 on the beginning, 30 on the end?

[00:55:51] Would it be 15 and 15? You got no answer. December 3rd, you voted to increase the hours and you had no plan as to what you were gonna do. You also failed to publicly recognize that PBCS has some of the lowest salaries in Northern Virginia.

[00:56:08] Fairfax and Loudon make almost \$10,000 more than the Northern Virginia area in Arlington makes almost \$30,000. And another thing too, how are we going to guarantee an uninterrupted lunch? I mean, you've got this initiative to put as many kids in AP classes as possible.

[00:56:26] Well, and during counseling, how are the counseling, are they supposed to close the office? Are the teachers supposed to close the doors? I mean, how are you going to do this? I don't understand how you're going to do it. I don't know if you're deliberately trying to do this or trying to release it, because they're going to sign their contracts.

[00:56:41] And then when they sign their contracts, can't leave so they can't leave and if they choose to leave they can't teach for five years and they can't transfer unless they're going to be promoted and then if they try and then they can't transfer under extenuating circumstances but it's rarely approved by HR so so PWS has already gone through two unfair labor practices decided arbitration so one during bad faith negotiation in CBA and one with discrimination rehiring the former PWA president so which was done just a couple months ago.

[00:57:16] So, I mean, if you guys are, if this is gonna continue this way, it's, you're gonna make yourselves potentially subject to legal action. So, I suggest you take one of the three actions. First, direct the superintendent and Dr. Eagle to post the hours. Second, vote to decrease down to seven.

[00:57:33] Or third, delay the implementation-- - Thank you, Mr. Herrera. - Seven and a half hours until the fall 20th, 27th year. - Thank you. - Next up, Hina Ansari.

[00:57:50] - All right, long time no see, everybody. I know I saw a lot of you last night, good to see you. Lisa, can you believe it? We've had this many championships in Osmond Park history. I never thought I would see it in my lifetime. I thought I would be dead in the ground before I saw Osmond Park win that many championships. I know I shouldn't say it like that, but having graduated there myself too, I'm like, really?

[00:58:06] And they're so polite and they're so nice. Anyway, I'm wasting a lot of my time, okay? So anyway, I'm gonna start with a rhetorical question. Do we have an emergency preparedness plan or a binder for easy access if the electronics aren't available? And I promise this is gonna be relevant a little bit. So the day before, and these are just anecdotes, so take away what you will from this, but as somebody who prepared emergency preparedness in the county, there were some red flags that went off from here.

[00:58:29] I was like, hmm, that's concerning. That's not safe. Legal might wanna know about that or liability issues. But anyway, okay, so the day before spring break, we had a little bit of a test for whether or not we would be able to be prepared for an emergency. And while I enjoy fire drills, earthquake drills, and zombie drills, I'm not sure that we're seeing the outcome we want.

[00:58:46] And I don't mean to cast dispersions on anyone. And for those of you watching at home, check my SAT words. I promise I'm putting them in there just for you or impugn anyone for what happened, but my observations might prove instructive. So at 9:30 that morning, I was asked or voluntold to do bathroom duty and count your lucky stars if you don't know what bathroom duty is.

[00:59:03] So I went over there and you're supposed to monitor how many kids are coming in and out of the bathroom because they might do something that rhymes with hugs or rhymes with, I don't know what rhymes with vaping. So figure it out on your own. So about 10 minutes in, the lights started to flicker and then the lights just went out like that. And so then the emergency lights kicked on about two minutes later, but what's interesting is the emergency lights only were in the main thoroughfare.

[00:59:22] There weren't any inside the bathroom, which is sort of relevant later, but I'm not sure I'm gonna get to that part of the story. So the security staff came by and they started to lock the bathrooms and I could have left my post and been like, yay, no more bathroom duty for me. But I ended up staying because I was like, you know what, they can't legally close the bathrooms because we don't know how long the power outage is gonna be.

[00:59:37] So I just stayed there and I watched and I was observing what was going on. And they ended up coming back like 15 minutes later and reopening the bathrooms, but there was no light in the bathroom. So then the kids needed to use the bathroom. They were like, well, what am I gonna do? And one kid was like, I'm afraid of the dark. I was like, I can't help you. I don't have a flashlight with me. and I told them to use their phone. But anyway, the real issue happened when there are two English classrooms that face the cafeteria, and they're landlocked.

[00:59:58] So they don't have any light, they don't have any natural light, and the poor teachers in there couldn't figure out what to do with their students. And there was nobody to tell them. They were calling people, they were asking, and of course, because of the way the schools are designed, if you make a phone call out, you don't know if it's gonna make it back to wherever it's supposed to go because the schools are built like cinder blocks and there's no communication.

[01:00:15] Anyway, so this teacher ended up moving their classroom to the gymnasium, but it seemed like everybody was kind of running around they weren't sure what was going on and I'm not sure I really messed up messed up with this what I even type all this down anyway so yeah emergency preparedness I think we need to refocus on maybe what to do if there's a zombie apocalypse or any other apocalypse thank you excellent thank

[01:00:36] you Troy Harris good evening school board my name is Troy Harris I stood before you on March 4th of that this last month explaining how the head coach of the basketball team at Osborne Park High School had retaliated against my

[01:01:10] son. I'm here today to tell you another incident that has happened. Standing here that evening and speaking, the coach unfollowed my child on Instagram. Now unfollowing may seem simple to you but to a child it speaks values of I don't want to be involved with you no longer. I don't want to be your friend.

This was a direct action of us as myself as a parent coming and talking to you guys expressing my free will of speech and doing so i went to the principal of the school and explained to her what happened

[01:01:46] and the timing that it happened then right after we i spoke to you guys she acknowledged that the timing of that was not ideal and said that she would talk to the actual coach of the program When speaking to the coach, he told her, I want to separate myself from that child.

[01:02:07] Separate myself from the child. This is a coach who runs the program of that school, who explicitly determines who participates in that program. The coach, in turn, has returned to the school, seeing my child, who he used to high-five, say hello to, no longer speaking to my child in retaliation of me being here. This is against Prince William County's policies and procedures and I want something done about it. I have been here just as a parent and as a member of the of the society coming to you guys explaining these things

[01:02:45] that have been done to these children from this program and they continue to go and happen unacknowledged i am here today to tell you that we went to the principal to speak about instagram posts that are from the school school's logo under the osborne parks basketball names with the teacher and the explicit lyrics that are on this post with the children dancing around and party-like fashion with lyrics such as i'm going to kill you in front of your mother with

[01:03:17] lyrics as such as i'm going to f word her until her explicit bleeds and while she's on her knees lyrics such as i'm going to i'm having fantasies of her in the bathroom with her explicit up in the air and nothing has been done about it he has contacted my child on social media privately through private text that my son has not it just came to our attention on and we are here to tell tell you about it today.

[01:03:48] With words as such as my son lost eight pounds when he was sick severely from the flu. Contacted the coach. - Thank you, Mr. Harris. - Thank you. - Jen Donnelly.

[01:04:17] - Good evening, my name is Jen Donnelly and my address is on file. I'm here tonight to talk about the future of education in Prince William County. Artificial intelligence isn't something that's coming down the road. It's already here in our classrooms.

[01:04:33] It has the potential to enhance learning, improve efficiency and expand access in ways that we could have never imagined just a few years ago. When it's used the right way, AI can be a valuable tool. But with that kind of opportunity comes real responsibility.

[01:04:50] We've seen what happens when technology moves faster than the guardrails. Smartphones and social media were rolled out without fully understanding the long-term impacts on kids. And now we're dealing with increased anxiety, depression, and addiction. With AI, the stakes are even higher.

[01:05:07] That's why I'm asking you to consider adopting the Moms for Liberty AI proclamation. I provided each of you a copy. This isn't about rejecting innovation, it's about setting clear boundaries. It affirms that parents have the fundamental right to guide their children's upbringing and education.

[01:05:26] It ensures transparency about what data is being collected and how algorithms are being used. It protects student data from being commercialized or used for profiting. And it requires meaningful parental consent and oversight.

[01:05:42] At its core, this is about keeping AI in its proper place as a tool to support learning and making sure that parents hold the keys. No algorithm should ever replace a teacher's judgment. No platform

should be shaping a child's worldview.

[01:05:57] An AI should not be used to deliver or monitor social emotional learning or provide mental health services to students. And no AI system should be operating without clear safeguards and accountability. This is about balance, innovation with responsibility, and progress with protection.

[01:06:17] By adopting this proclamation, you're sending a clear message. Technology will serve families in this district, not the other way around. You're affirming that transparency, student safety, and parental rights are non-negotiable. Our kids deserve opportunity, but they also deserve protection.

[01:06:35] AI can absolutely strengthen education, but only if we put the right guardrails in this place now. I respectfully urge you to adopt this proclamation and lead with clarity, courage, and a strong commitment to the families you serve. Moms for Liberty will be hosting an educational seminar on the future of AI in the classroom.

[01:06:55] If you're interested in attending, please reach out to me and I'll be happy to send you an invitation. Thank you for your time. - Okay, thank you. This concludes citizen comment time for this evening. Up next is student representative time. We have Karina Grover from Charles J. Colgan Senior High School.

[01:07:11] Ms. Grover. - Thank you so much, and welcome back from spring break. We are officially in the final stretch of the school year, and I know many students agree that third quarter is one of the most challenging, but we made it through alive.

[01:07:32] As we return to our routines, I encourage everyone to take a moment to reset, breathe, and prepare for the upcoming exam season. One of those exams is the SAT. I've never said that happily, so okay. Juniors, next Wednesday, April 15th, you will be taking the SAT.

[01:07:50] I was asking my friends if they were ready to take the SAT and they responded saying, "It's next Wednesday?" Oh gosh. With many colleges starting to require test scores in the next following years, this scared me. With more, oh, I hope teachers and administrators continue to promote helpful SAT resources, such as Khan Academy, and remind students where to begin, since guidance from adults can make such a big difference in motivation for students.

[01:08:18] And speaking of adults, you know, I wanted to share a little story about, you know, kind of what to do if there's not an adult or a trusted adult you can talk to. So, you know, last year I was really struggling with my mental health, as I've mentioned many times, and, you know, I'm a complete advocate for mental health.

[01:08:39] So I didn't really know what to do. I was home alone, and I was just really in my head. I started to have a panic attack. And I didn't know what to do with myself. This was my first ever panic attack. No one was home. My sister wasn't home.

[01:08:55] I couldn't even function. So all I had was my phone. I went on my phone. I asked ChatGPT, what do I do? I'm struggling. I have a panic attack. And I don't know what to do. I feel like I can't breathe.

[01:09:10] And obviously, AI usage can be used for good and bad. but I think especially for mental health, especially in a time when an adult wasn't available or someone wasn't available to help me, it was so valuable and it gave me like step-by-step instructions and really calmed, it calmed me down, it worked.

[01:09:31] And I just wanted to share that story because there's very different perspectives and I know that it's out there, but it's just one example of something, how AI has really helped me and I know it's helped many other students as well. So I just wanted to share that. Anyways, if you missed the employment and summer job fair yesterday, don't worry.

[01:09:50] Whether you're a high school student looking for summer jobs or a senior who wants to enter the workforce, the military or post-secondary training programs, PWCS is here to help you. The PWCS website lists all participating organizations from the fair and I strongly encourage students to take advantage of these opportunities and follow up while positions are still available.

[01:10:13] Do not waste the opportunity to make some money! Speaking of money, seniors, are you confused about how to decipher your financial aid packages from colleges? I know I am. On April 15th, PWCS will be hosting a virtual webinar to help students and families better understand college costs.

[01:10:31] With decision day approaching on May 1st, I highly encourage seniors to attend. As always, thank you for listening, and remember, your voice matters. Thank you. - Thank you, Karina Grover. Up next, Superintendent Dr. LaTonya McDade.

[01:10:46] - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to invite our community members to a few upcoming events, highlighting the amazing talents of our students and their teachers. Our annual PWCS All-County Arts Festivals celebrate our vibrant and creative visual arts programs.

[01:11:04] These festivals highlight the artistic achievements of our exceptional artists with a diverse array of exhibits, including paintings, sculptures, digital art, mixed media, and more. Artwork is selected by each individual visual arts teacher through a formal process culminating with a juried process at the arts festivals.

[01:11:24] This year, we are proud to present three art shows for our Central, Western, and Eastern schools being held from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for the next three Saturdays here at the Kelly Leadership Center. The PWCS All-County Arts Festival for Central Schools will be held this Saturday, April 11th.

[01:11:43] The Arts Festival for Western Schools will be held on Saturday, April 18th. And the Arts Festival for Eastern Schools will be held on Saturday, April 25th. We hope you will join us in this spirited competition and celebration.

[01:11:58] As we begin the month of April, I want to take a moment to recognize a few important observances and reminders happening across our school division. First, April is Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month, a time to celebrate neurodiversity and reaffirm our commitment to inclusive practices that support all students in reaching their full potential.

[01:12:17] Let us continue working together to create learning environments where every child feels seen, supported, and valued. April is also the month of the military child. We are proud to serve many military-connected students and families in PWCS, and we honor their strength, resilience, and sacrifice.

[01:12:35] In April, we also celebrate School Library Month. During the week of April 19th through the 25th, I encourage our students and families to take time to visit your local library, whether in your school or in the community, because libraries are not only places for books, but for exploration, imagination, and lifelong learning.

[01:12:56] For students and families planning for summer, I invite you to join us from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. tomorrow, Thursday 9th, April 9th, for an informative webinar all about the PWCS summer 2026 opportunities. We will share what families need to know about summer school and our exciting discovery enrichment programs, including important dates, who can participate and how to sign up.

[01:13:21] It is the perfect way to get ready for a summer of learning and adventure. For our seniors, and I guess you read my script, and their families reviewing financial aid letters, I encourage you to join us from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

[01:13:38] either Wednesday April 15th or Thursday April 16th now you've heard it twice so you should be there for an easy to understand webinar that will walk families through the important parts of a financial aid award letter we will highlight what to look for especially the net price and the total cost of attendance so students and families can better understand what college may really cost come find out more about the options that are available to you and as a reminder, Tuesday, April 21st, has been designated as a non-attendance day for students.

[01:14:10] This adjustment was made to accommodate the statewide election, as several of our schools will be used as polling sites. This will help to minimize disruption and maintain our safe, orderly school environments. Thank you to our students, families, staff, and surrounding partners for everything that you do to support our vision.

[01:14:30] We are two short months away from graduation. Wow. So let's work together to see every student graduate on time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[01:14:45] Mr. Chairman, that concludes my time. - Up next, board matters. We'll start with Mr. Wilk today. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for everyone who's still in the audience tonight.

[01:15:01] I wanted to comment on a couple events I've done in the past couple weeks and some highlights of those events. Student voice has always been important to me and every year I've hosted a town hall with Potomac students and Forest Park students. The Potomac student one was a couple weeks ago, Mr. Blake. I invited him to join me and he was gracious enough and he did attend it with me and I'm doing a Forest Park one at the end of April but I love these they give me firsthand feedback from the students and their perspective and the feedback ranging from things like digital

[01:15:37] instruction AI the Cambridge program specialty programs that is great information for me to have to hear the student voice so I would encourage more town halls my colleagues good stuff to do I know it's harder when it's during the day but great events I was happy to have. Let's see Eastern End I do want to mention there was the battle of the books for those of you it's a competition basically elementary middle there but this was an elementary they read a set of books all the schools do I think there were 10 books during a duration of like 10 something weeks and then they all compete like in a quiz

[01:16:17] bowl tournament with their schools. The Eastern End one that I went to I'm proud to say 75% of teams were potomac schools and so i was very happy to be there again and you know i valin told my son that he had to be in it and he actually said he was okay happy with it so it was a great way to get him to competitively read some books so i was happy that he did that you know i also try to regularly host office hours on Sunday evenings at Panera where I fill my

[01:16:52] evening up usually with back-to-back meetings with parents, counselors, teachers and I just you know want to say it's great again to hear the feedback and my appreciation shows for these groups by again my votes and by giving my time up on Sunday night to meet with them to hear their concerns regularly so So I'm happy to do that, this has been the last couple weeks, good listening events and taking that feedback and sharing that.

[01:17:23] So yeah, overall, and then of course there was spring break, so I don't have as many events to talk about. But yeah, thank you for, I cede my time to whoever, Lori, she can talk for five minutes now. - Okay, Ms. Daggerfall.

[01:17:38] - Thank you. that the now that spring break is over it feels like it's just this mad rush to the end of the year so need students to take your time with your SOL test those who are working on figuring out what their plans are for the summer if you're doing summer school or camps just you know make sure that you're making thoughtful choices about it I'm looking forward to going to the art shows when I can I've got things with my own school that I've got to also do but looking forward to art shows as the concerts that are coming up to close out the school year looking forward to hearing about you know where some of our seniors

[01:18:18] are going and what they're gonna do and we're gonna miss you all so much so I'm gonna keep it short tonight because we just got off the spring break and I'm I'm sure with all the things I'll be going to see this weekend I will have lots to say but I'm looking forward to those events and I hope you all have a Great evening, Mr. Miss wall, right?

[01:18:41] Good evening, everybody. I hope everybody had a great spring break and Easter holiday for those who celebrate I visited my college kids and Interrupted their preparations for their finals successfully. I successfully interrupted them Um, I attended a niece's wedding and I took to the ski slope. So it's just great to be back, but it was fun to be gone This is the time of year when as the kids say it's time to lock in And we are in that final fourth quarter where we begin to see the results of the hard work and the effort put in by educators, support staff, and students. And one thing I know is the leaders here in this room love effort. We love your effort.

[01:19:21] It really speaks volumes. I'm going to highlight just a few events because of all the other fun things I've been doing. Haven't been as well because of spring break. I did attend a Pyramid Strings concert at Ronald Reagan Middle School on March 19th. And that involved Buckland, Haymarket, LV, and Gravelly Elementary schools.

[01:19:39] And one thing that was notable about that was the performances were very high quality, and there were so many kids. Like every school just had a ton of kids who were interested in learning violin, viola, cello, and bass. So I love it.

[01:19:55] I love the state of the arts in our schools. On March 25th, I went to Unity Braxton Middle School's Advisory Council meeting, and that was really enlightening. There were a number of parents who attended, and there was a really great dialogue between leaders of the school and the parent community, just problem solving and talking about the things that they maybe could put in place to help the kids.

[01:20:17] And I just thought it was an effective meeting. It wasn't like a big fancy meeting. It was just really effective. So thank you, parents who take the time to serve on advisory committees. I'm looking

forward to attending some of the theater arts performances over the next month. Later this week, I'm going to go see Phantom at Colgan High School, so very excited about that.

[01:20:38] I'm also, I know a lot of, I know the kids have been working on this for months and months. There's just so much talent. It's fun to celebrate that. I'm also looking forward to the All-County Western Schools Arts Festival on April 18th. I will be there. I'm looking forward to talking to parents and congratulating the artists. Let's see. I also want to provide feedback that I love the significant changes and improvements made to the division's webpage.

[01:21:02] Very nice, excellent, whoever was involved in that, or all of you. And I encourage the public to take a look and check out the newly configured and redesigned site at pwcs.edu. Some final thoughts, as members of a school community, we are not only stewards of academic achievement, but we are also stewards of the constitutional principles that shape our nation.

[01:21:24] The First Amendment protects the freedom to speak, to question, and to express differing viewpoints. that freedom is not reserved only for ideas we agree with. It protects the full exchange of perspectives that allow truth to emerge. In our schools, students learn so much about the world, and they learn how to engage respectfully with the ideas that challenge them.

[01:21:47] As Justice Brandeis wisely noted, the remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence. Our responsibility is to foster environments where students can learn, explore, and develop their understanding of the world. They should also learn how to engage in dialogue that is thoughtful, respectful, and rooted in learning.

[01:22:08] Teaching children about their constitutional rights does not mean the absence of standards. It means upholding both freedom and responsibility. In doing so, we prepare students not just for graduation, but for citizenship, which is one of our core principles in our strategic plan.

[01:22:25] In all, we should encourage students to pursue truth. As stated by Alexander Shultzenitsyn, a critic of Soviet-style thought oppression, live not by lies, for one word of truth shall outweigh the whole world. As we move solidly into the fourth quarter, here is a key truth.

[01:22:43] It will be the end of May before we know it. To the class of 2026, you are so close to graduation. We have just under two months to go, and parents, if you are out there listening, all four of you, it really does fly by. Graduates, I'm looking forward to seeing you walk across that stage.

[01:23:02] It's the reason behind everything we do. And next meeting, I may or may not be here, my college graduate. I have a graduate from college who will be walking across that stage. So I will be there with her, but it's not the exact same time, but I'll probably be here by Zoom.

[01:23:18] Anyway, none of this happens without the dedication of parents, families, teachers, coaches, school leaders, counselors, social workers, nurses, all of you. Thank you to everyone who shows up every day for our students. I look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming events and I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve as your representative on the Prince William County School Board.

[01:23:38] Thank you and have a good night. - Ms. William. - Thank you, I'll try to keep it brief. No, it's fine, usually it's me. I just pick up on a continuing message this evening of it is standardized testing time. My annual encouragement is to try to practice in an environment as close as possible to which you will be taking the test in school.

[01:24:00] And the more practice you get, the better you will be at the test. Eat a good breakfast, get good sleep, or in my house, do the thing that makes you the most comfortable. For me, it used to be 30 second dance parties. My son has his own thing. But try to do that to make yourself comfortable because the goal is to do the best that you can.

[01:24:19] And it is not the end of the world, one test. So please don't go in there thinking it. Use whatever motivation you need, but you can do it. Just get enough rest and get some food in your belly and take a deep breath. I say that 'cause this is the time of year where it is so stressful at every level, not just high school, elementary on up.

[01:24:36] I also wanna take a moment in saying that and welcome everybody back from spring break and from whatever holiday or religious observation you may or may not have celebrated over that time. But to say that while we're all back and everyone's focused on hitting the ground running, I just wanna take a moment and say thank you to all of our staff.

[01:24:54] Those are, as the coach here earlier tonight said, there's so much that goes on behind the scenes. And I thought about that last night as we, the school division made its presentation to the BOCS. It's just one of those things. So I just wanna take a moment and say thank you to all of our staff, the ones who are there after five o'clock, after the bell rings, the ones who come to the board meetings, the ones who are there to make sure science fairs are set up and plays and all the afterschool activities and all of the things that we just don't stop and appreciate on a day-to-day basis.

[01:25:24] You show up and it's just magic. the event is already ready to go or whatever the case may be. And this is a time of year where in education, everyone gets really stressed. So I just wanted to take a moment and say thank you and take a deep breath. Don't get stressed out right on the first week back.

[01:25:39] It'll be fine 'cause it always is. We have an amazing school division. And just I think one of our speakers said earlier and like I'm sure Lisa, if you've grown up here for a long time, the change that we've seen in this division is amazing. And sometimes you really just need to take a moment out and step back and look and appreciate all the hard work that has been put in from everybody that is involved in our division.

[01:26:01] And I think now's a good time, isn't it? It's a nice day, and before we get all stressed out, and students get all stressed out, just take a moment to appreciate and look around. If you're a long-term resident, you can see the difference in our school. Just as Ms. Wall said about our website. I mean, even I'm surprised. I had to go and look, I was like, wait, this is ours?

[01:26:17] This is all work that's done by people. We rarely see their face in public. So I just wanted to say thank you to all of the unseen phases. We haven't done that in a while, 'cause it's a good time here to do it. Moving on from that, my favorite topic, of course, is robotics.

[01:26:33] I just wanna send a special shout out for robotics and our Unified. We have our next tournament on the 14th of April at Lake Ridge from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. And this is a pilot program for Unified Robotics. It's for our special needs students. It is just hands down amazing.

[01:26:49] I get very choked up about it 'cause those are my kids. I missed the first one, I apologize. but I can't wait to be there on the 18th. And moving on from that, we are having the naming ceremony. We're advertising now for input for names for the new Woodbridge Elementary.

[01:27:04] We had a meeting this week at Fred Lynn. There's another upcoming meeting on the 14th at TOTOS at 6:00 p.m. If you cannot make it to TOTOS, but you can make it to Potomac View, there will be transportation provided and interpreters. It is extremely important to me, personally as the school board representative, that every voice that wants to be heard is captured.

[01:27:24] and I mean students and adults and whether you're gonna have a child who goes to that elementary school, if you have an opinion on what the school should be named, please go online, submit your opinion on the online web form. You have until the 15th of April. I'm personally excited about hearing from students.

[01:27:40] I lied, I'm still on time. But I've had some students sign up for library cards after reading the policy on what the naming convention should be. And with that, I'm just gonna say Comic-Con, Fred Lynn, Saturday, very exciting. Hope you can make it. It's awesome, open to the public and have a good night.

[01:27:56] - Mr. Blake. - Mr. Chairman. Good evening and welcome back everybody from spring break. Over these past few weeks, I've had an opportunity to spend some time across our schools and community and what continues to stand out to me is that the level of engagement from our students, family and staff is just outstanding.

[01:28:18] And I had the opportunity, like Ms. Williams just said, I'm also on that naming committee with her and Dr. Lateef and I had the opportunity to attend the first two. We actually had two Woodbridge Area Elementary School community input sessions, one at Freedom and then last yesterday evening at Fred Lynn.

[01:28:38] And I just appreciate hearing directly from the community. They're thoughtful, meaningful, and suggestions that reflect both pride in their history. Although a lot of the names we can't use, but they're good names, but we can't use 'em 'cause it just doesn't work.

[01:28:58] and that kind of that kind of engagement matters but but because when um communities are part of the process they take ownership and in the outcome and that's good i also want to thank mr wilk like he said earlier for inviting me um right before spring break to join him at his annual student town hall at potomac high school it was uh it was very valuable for me and these are very valuable conversations for the students I mean the students spoke candidly about what like AI the courses we were offering like AP Cambridge they were talking about digital learning and just their overall school experience and they were

[01:29:38] you know really telling us how they felt just I mean when we create spaces you know for students to speak and we listen and we get better so and then at - At Neopso Elementary, I was able to attend the Parent Advisory Council, where we welcomed the new principal, Ms. Pierce.

[01:29:58] Thank you, Ms. Wall. I think she came from your district, from Berlins. But family and staff, we had meaningful conversations around bullying, what it is, how it's addressed, and how the school is working proactively to create a safe and supportive environment for our students.

[01:30:16] And those conversations are necessary, appreciate, and I appreciate the transparency. I also spent quite a bit of time at Beville Middle School recently. I attended the Title One Spring Family Camp. Mr. Powell, Victor Powell, they did a good job, him and his staff, they did a really good job there that night at the Title One Family Camp, and then I also was able to spend the multicultural night for Beville Middle School there, and Dr. Thomas and her staff did a really good job. The culture

[01:30:48] bevel is really turned around different from when i was just there a couple years ago um and so the families were engaged the students were participating cultures were being celebrated the food was provided from garfield by the culinary program so thanks chef fernan for that you know we also had the step team performed so it was a it was really showed what berlong it looks like and then i was at minneville elementary i had a chance to attend multiple events there including the nest celebration where i was the popsicle man i wouldn't like handed out popsicles to the entire school i feel

[01:31:28] like yeah popsicle man and then um i also attended the celebrating celebration of arts i learned about monet alongside the students also one of the highlights there was i was got to see uh the The Garfield Trouble Choir came in and performed for the kindergarten and first graders, and watching our high school students pour into our younger learners and seeing that excitement go both ways, it was powerful.

[01:31:56] And that kind of connection builds pride across our entire system. And last night, I was joined by my colleagues as Dr. Lateef and Dr. McDade presented our FY27 budget to the Board of County Supervisors.

[01:32:12] They did a great job that we should call them the closers and it was a strong clear presentation that reflects both our priorities and the needs of our students, staff, and community. So when we step back and look at all of these experiences over the past few weeks, student voice, family engagement, community partnership, it reinforces something simple.

[01:32:37] Our schools are strongest when people feel seen, heard, and connected. schools equals strong communities and i'll close with this quote never look down on anybody else unless you're helping them up that's reverend jesse jackson so that that's the work that's the responsibility and that's the standard thank you mr jess good evening uh mrs jesse and i went over to ocaquine elementary school and honored five of the teachers there that got above uh 85

[01:33:14] percent in their S.O.L.s last year. Occoquan Elementary is a Title I school and we hear a lot of time that it's very difficult for students to do well. But that's not the case all the time and Occoquan Elementary proves that a lot. I also like to say I thought we We did a very good job last night at the Board of Supervisors, and you guys presented the budget.

[01:33:48] And I'd like to yield my time to all those who went over time. Thank you. - That gives me a lot of time then. Well, folks, again, you know, this is, it's always great to be here.

[01:34:07] It's always great to represent the greatest school division in the United States of America, and frankly, in the planet. You know, I say that, and I truly do mean that. Last night we went to the Board of County Supervisors to present our budget and, you know, I got a question last night during the budget presentation saying, you know, Dr. Lateef, why do you harp on, he didn't say it like this, but let's just say, per pupil spending and why do you compare yourself to the districts that are wealthier than ours, Fairfax, Loud, and Arlington, Alexandria, who also happen to be our regional neighbors in our competition?

[01:34:47] and was asked, you know, our per pupil spending is higher than the national average, and why aren't you just satisfied with that, and why do you want more, and I've taken this job and been proud to have been elected three times because I believe I represent the dreams and the views of the parents and the students in this community, and their dreams and views are to be better, to continue to get better, to be the best school district in America.

[01:35:17] I compare myself to our regional neighbors who, you know, I get, you know, it's not an easy job. I'm under a lot of pressure. You know, I'm under pressure from parents who want to see success in sports, families who want to see success in academics, people who want to see safer schools with less bullying, less racism.

[01:35:36] There is enormous pressure on board members. There's enormous pressure on the superintendent. These are not easy jobs. There's enormous pressure on the school division to be constantly better. and that requires being demanding and striving for something that may not be fully achievable, but if your dreams don't scare you, then they're probably not big enough, as stated by Muhammad Ali, who said that quite often.

[01:36:04] And so the reason I push for more funding for our schools is because with the funding we've received, we've been able to show tremendous success. We are winning more championships than we ever have. Our students are achieving at higher levels than they ever have.

[01:36:21] Our graduation rate is the highest it's been in a long time. Our scores are improving. I have the receipts to show that we have done a good job with the money that the taxpayers in this county have generously invested in our school division.

[01:36:38] So I continue to ask the Board of County Supervisors, 'cause they represent the community and our school board members to support the school, to continue to fund the school. We do have to catch up with our other divisions. It does cost money to compete for talent, to hire the best and brightest teachers to keep them here.

[01:36:57] You know, I make no apologies about the demands that we put on our students, the demands that we put on our faculty to have great outcomes. I mean, that's why I got elected. I'm under enormous pressure to do that. And so that is the work that I do not apologize to have done and the work that I will continue to do.

[01:37:18] And I think that is why folks have elected me to do this job and I'm very proud to represent, I believe the greatest school district in America, run by one of the greatest superintendent in the planet, Dr. LaTanya McDade, who's put together a strong effort on Vision 2025 with tremendous receipts of our success.

[01:37:38] And we look forward to, you know, and I encourage everyone to study Elevate 2030. That is our next four year plan that was created not by this group, not by the people in this room, not by the people in the school division, but by the people in our community, our elected officials, our business partners, everyone had a say in this on all sides of every aisle.

[01:37:58] It is pan-partisan and it is a representative of the dreams and desires of our community. And so I'm very proud of that. I have two sort of other notes. Phantom of the Opera will be playing at Colgan this Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

[01:38:13] Go see it, it will be their entry into the Cappies. I encourage, maybe I'll ask the clerk to find out all the other theater programs and musicals for the spring. We can announce for the other schools as well. And I have a shout out for Dr. Timothy Healy, who is the current principal at Charles J. Colgan High School.

[01:38:33] He has announced publicly his retirement at the end of this year. He has served in our school division, I think 39 years. 39 years in our school division. And he was, there's a lot of chatter over here on this side.

[01:38:50] Can we settle down? Just a lot of chatter. Laurie Williams, English teacher was, Dr. Healy was Laurie Williams, English teacher. He was a principal at Osborne Park High School for many years. I moved to this county because, frankly, the house we selected was in the Osborne Park district because, you know, he had done a terrific job there and that was sort of known to be one of the great high schools in the region.

[01:39:15] and I said, "Well, I wanna be a part of that," and then he left to come to the central office to work here, and then he went back to be the principal, the first founding principal of Colgan High School, and he served 10 years as the principal there, and he's done a terrific job, and he's been a value add to the school division.

[01:39:32] He has taught me a lot personally. I go to him regularly for advice and counsel on all things, whether it's being a school board member, whether it's being a parent, whether it's being a, you know, he even coached my son in first grade when he was on the baseball team, long before I got in this job.

[01:39:51] And so I truly appreciate the work he does for our community. He's truly a citizen of our county, an advocate for our children, and fully all in himself as a volunteer for so many things, whether it's summer swimming, coaching Little League Baseball, being at every event as a principal.

[01:40:10] I've not met, you know, he represents everything in our community and everything I think a great principal should represent. So I look forward to congratulating Dr. Healy and his family on his retirement and I wish him the very best and he'll always be a friend of this board.

[01:40:25] Thank you very much. Have a good night, everyone.



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