

**MINUTES**  
**SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**  
**ALEXANDRIA CITY SCHOOL BOARD**  
**April 4, 2019 (6:00 p.m.)**

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**ROLL CALL**

THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT AT THE MEETING:

**BOARD MEMBERS:** Cindy Anderson  
Veronica R. Nolan  
Meagan L. Alderton  
Ramee A. Gentry  
Jacinta Greene  
Margaret Lorber  
Michelle Rief  
Christopher A. Suarez  
Heather Thornton

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Susan Neilson, Shanel Hill, Ewan Thompson, Bridget Williams, Jane Richardson, Dominic Turner, Sherri Chapman, Mignon Anthony, Charles Stone, Erika Gulick, Jennifer Abbruzzese

**Call to Order**

**1. Meeting Called to Order by Chair Anderson**

Chair Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. School Board Members present at the start of the meeting were Chair Anderson, Ms. Alderton, Ms. Greene, Ms. Lorber and Vice Chair Nolan. Mr. Suarez, Ms. Thornton, Ms. Gentry, and Dr. Rief joined the meeting during the closed session.

**Closed Meeting and Certification of Closed Meeting**

**2. Closed Meeting**

Vice Chair Nolan moved that the Board convene a closed meeting pursuant to VA 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.

Ms. Lorber seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 5-0, to convene a closed meeting.

The Board moved into a closed meeting at 6:06 p.m.

**3. Certification of Closed Meeting**

Vice Chair Nolan moved that pursuant to VA Code 2.2-3712, that the Board certify 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 are lawfully exempted by the Freedom of Information Act, were heard, discussed or considered by the Board in the Closed Meeting held on April 4, 2019.

Ms. Greene seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 9-0, to certify the closed meeting.

The Board resumed meeting in open session at 7:00 p.m.

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

### **4. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by students from James K. Polk Elementary School.

The James K. Polk Step Team performed and members of the Student Council shared why Polk is such a great place to go to school.

## **Moment of Silence**

### **5. Observe a Moment of Silence**

A moment of silence was observed.

## **Adoption of Meeting Agenda**

### **6. Adopt the Meeting Agenda for the April 4, 2019 School Board Meeting**

Ms. Gentry moved to adopt the meeting agenda for the April 4, 2019 School Board Meeting.

Ms. Greene seconded the motion.

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

## **Communications & Addresses to the Board**

### **7. Week of the Young Child**

Ms. Jane Richardson, Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator, introduced students from the Early Childhood Center who performed musical selections to celebrate the Week of the Young Child, April 8-12, 2019. This annual celebration, sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, highlights the needs of young children and their families, and recognizes early childhood programs and services that meet those needs.

### **8. Public Comments**

Mr. Ricardo Roberts, ACPS parent, spoke about Patrick Henry swing space and recommended that the Board listen to community feedback.

Mr. Kevin Miller, Chair of the Talented and Gifted (TAG) Advisory Committee, spoke about the TAG program at the elementary school level. He noted that the name of the Talented and Gifted program is consistent with state law. In addition, he discussed the importance of helping build student confidence from an early age based on what each student can achieve instead of the success of those around them, and of the need to foster an environment where students expect to be challenged every day, regardless of their ability.

Ms. Laura Rose, Vice Chair of the TAG Advisory Committee, spoke about service delivery for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade TAG English Language Arts, and noted that narrowing the discussion to concerns over this single aspect of the overall TAG program is misguided.

Ms. Angela Venier, ACPS parent, spoke about facility conditions at George Washington Middle School (GWMS), including mold in classrooms and leaking ceilings that are affecting student learning and health.

Mr. Kevin Jahns, ACPS parent, spoke about GWMS facilities issues and improving communication about repairs.

Ms. Sue Setliff, ACPS parent, spoke about GWMS facilities issues and the need for immediate action for summer repairs.

Ms. Kelly O'Dell, ACPS parent, spoke about GWMS facilities issues, the frustration felt by many parents about this, and the inaccurate communication regarding timelines and repairs.

Ms. Sarah Fanning, ACPS parent, spoke about the Minnie Howard walk zone and providing bus transportation for the Seminary Valley area. She noted significant hazardous areas that students must walk through to get to school.

Mr. Elliott Waters, community member, voiced concerns about the proposed action to outsource custodial staff.

Mr. Justin Keating, former School Board Member and ACPS parent, spoke in favor of keeping the school custodians and the need to come up with a better attrition plan.

Ms. Joyce Rawlings, community member, spoke about the importance of developing students into scholar athletes who can achieve success not only in sports, but in academics as well.

Ms. Shanelle Gayden, ACPS parent, spoke about the importance of providing consistent academic support in elementary and middle school to developing scholar athletes in high school and beyond.

Mr. Dwight Dunton, Joint Facilities Task Force Committee Member, noted that the use of the old Patrick Henry building as swing space was a good solution to a difficult problem.

Mr. William Pfister, Douglas MacArthur PTA President, spoke in support of the Patrick Henry swing space proposal.

Ms. Mary Sanders, speaking on behalf of the Patrick Henry PTA, spoke against using the old Patrick Henry building as swing space for Douglas MacArthur Elementary, as it will delay the completion of the current Patrick Henry Project.

Mr. Chris Lee, community member, spoke against using the old Patrick Henry building as swing space and recommended that the School Board delay its vote on the matter.

Ms. Dartangia Robinson, ACPS parent, spoke against the use of Patrick Henry as swing space and cited concerns for staff and students.

Ms. Lauren Finkelstein, ACPS parent, spoke against the use of Patrick Henry as swing space and stated that the solution is short sighted.

Ms. Nicole Radshaw, ACPS parent, spoke against using the old Patrick Henry building as swing space because it will create additional challenges for a school that is already struggling.

Ms. Christine Rider, ACPS parent, asserted that the plan to use the old Patrick Henry building as swing space is a hastily formed plan that is not supported by details or studies.

Ms. Carolyn Meza, ACPS parent and James K. Polk PTA member, spoke against using the old Patrick Henry building as swing space. Ms. Meza discussed her concerns that there would be various construction hazards and safety issues as a result.

Mr. Keith Kruse, ACPS parent, spoke in opposition to using Patrick Henry as swing space for Douglas MacArthur and pointed out that the plan does not meet long term needs.

Ms. Karen Dixon, ACPS parent, spoke against using Patrick Henry as swing space, and reported on current pedestrian and bicycle accident rates and the student vision zero initiative. Ms. Dixon advocated for safe routes near schools.

Mr. Joel Finkelstein, ACPS parent, spoke against using Patrick Henry as swing space.

Ms. Crystall Merlino, ACPS parent, spoke against using Patrick Henry as swing space and commented that savings should not be a focal point for the decision.

Ms. Megumi Kito, ACPS parent, spoke against using Patrick Henry as swing space, citing safety concerns.

Mr. Paul Friedman, community member, spoke in support of maintaining the 30 custodial positions as ACPS employees. He also spoke about an upcoming Chiquapin Park event on April 28<sup>th</sup> honoring the victims of Virginia Tech.

Mr. Kenneth Warren, ACPS student and Community United for Renewable Energy (CURE) co-founder, spoke about the CURE-U program, which aims to educate ACPS elementary students on the environment and sustainability.

**9. Report from Student Representatives Ewan Thompson and Bridget Williams**

Mr. Thompson noted that the Middle School Student Representatives policy is on the agenda for adoption. He will be contacting middle schools regarding the process for submitting applications and selecting their representatives.

Ms. Williams reported on the new Virginia SOL requirements, which will decrease the number of required assessments for students. She also gave an update on the posters that have been hung throughout the middle and high schools on the Connected High School Network. Ms. Williams also clarified that the current Student Representatives to the School Board policy requires students to reapply for a second year if they are interested.

**Consent Calendar**

**10. FY 2019 Monthly Financial Report Ending February 28, 2019**

**11. Local Plan for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Federal Perkins Funds**

**12. Policy BBBB: Student Representatives to the School Board**

**13. Accept Resignation of Connie Johnson from the School Health Advisory Board**

**14. Minutes for the March 7 and March 21, 2019 School Board Meetings and the March 28, 2019 Special Called School Board Meeting**

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

The vote to adopt the Consent Calendar was unanimous, 9-0. The motion carried.

**Items Pulled from the Consent Calendar**

No items were pulled from the Consent Calendar.

**Old Business & Action Items**

**15. High School Project Update**

Although no new information was provided, the public is encouraged to visit the ACPS website, where progress on the High School Project is reported. Updates will be provided at future Board Meetings as appropriate.

**New Business and Reports to the Board**

**16. Patrick Henry Swing Space**

Ms. Mignon Anthony, Chief Operating Officer, reviewed the process for determining the feasibility of using the old Patrick Henry building as a temporary swing space, in an effort to accelerate the design and construction of Douglas MacArthur Elementary School. She then answered School Board questions regarding the swing space study and other elements of the proposal.

Mr. Suarez moved that the Board pursue the option of utilizing the old Patrick Henry building as a swing space for the Douglas MacArthur modernization project. In addition, he moved that the Board empower the Superintendent to modify existing contracts and pursue new contracts where necessary to postpone the balance of the old Patrick Henry Phase III work, and to pursue work associated with the interim phase.

He further moved that:

- ACPS commits to work with the City of Alexandria to further examine the plan's impact on traffic and student drop-off, and to make needed adjustments to alleviate traffic concerns;
- ACPS commits to work with the City of Alexandria to further examine the plan's impact on parking, and to identify, in advance of the Douglas MacArthur move-in, both on-site and off-site options that will ensure adequate parking for school staff and parents of both schools, and members of the community;
- ACPS commits to demolish the old Patrick Henry School upon completion of the new Douglas MacArthur Elementary School;
- ACPS commits to immediately explore the feasibility of renovating/replacing George Mason and Cora Kelly while the existing school sites remain in operation, and to identify alternative (non-Patrick Henry) swing space options for those sites in the event swing space is needed; and
- ACPS commits to working with the City of Alexandria, including its Parks and Recreation Department, to identify possibilities for enhancement of neighborhood open spaces and playgrounds that could be used by students and community members.

Ms. Lorber seconded the motion.

The vote to approve the use of the old Patrick Henry building as swing space for Douglas MacArthur Elementary School with the conditions listed above was 8-1. Ms. Thornton opposed the motion. The motion carried.

#### **17. Transportation Update**

Mr. Charles Stone, Director of Pupil Transportation, gave an update on practices and future improvements that will improve the overall operation of ACPS transportation. These include modernization of the bus fleet and transportation center, and improving communications to families and schools. The Department of Transportation will also be proposing walk zone policy revisions to the School Board in late April.

Ms. Gentry asked for City of Alexandria and ACPS collaboration on expanding the school bus stop-arm camera pilot program.

Additional transportation updates will be provided at future meetings.

#### **18. Policy Revisions: DA-3, IGAE/IGAF, IGAH**

Ms. Jennifer Abbruzzese, Director of Policy and Board Initiatives, presented policy revisions that reflect current ACPS practice and statutory changes. They include:

- Regulation DA-3: Telecommunications Use (proposed for reclassification as Regulation GAB-R2/IIBEA-R2);
- IGAE/IGAF: Health/Physical Education
- Policy IGAH, Family Life Education (FLE)

The proposed policy and regulatory revisions will return for adoption at a future Board Meeting.

#### **Chair's Report**

##### **19. Report from Cindy Anderson**

Chair Anderson did not give a report.

## Superintendent's Report

### 20. Report from Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.

Superintendent Hutchings addressed the proposed custodial outsourcing plan and discussed the ramifications of returning the custodial positions to the proposed budget.

## Announcements

### 21. Announcements

Vice Chair Nolan discussed the George Washington Middle School facilities issues and requested further information on the matter from Dr. Hutchings. She also recognized the upcoming retirement of CTE Coordinator Sherri Chapman and spoke about her outstanding work, noting that she has been an asset to ACPS for many years.

## Closed Meeting and Certification of Closed Meeting

## Adjournment

### 22. Adjourn

On a motion by Ms. Gentry and seconded by Ms. Lorber, the Board voted unanimously, 9-0, to adjourn. The meeting ended at 11:46 p.m.



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Cindy Anderson, Chair



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Clerk/Deputy Clerk

These minutes were adopted at the May 23, 2019 School Board Meeting.