

**UNOFFICIAL SYNOPSIS**  
**PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD**  
**PRINCE GEORGE, VIRGINIA**  
July 14, 2021

The regular meeting of the Prince George County School Board was held at the Prince George High School Commons on Wednesday, July 14, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

A closed meeting was held at 5:30 p.m.

Board Members and staff present:

Mrs. Jill A. Andrews, Board Member  
Mr. Robert E. L. Eley, III, Chairman  
Mr. Christopher A. Johnson, Vice Chairman  
Mr. Cecil M. Smith, Board Member  
Ms. Sherry D. Taylor, Board Member  
Dr. Lisa Pennycuff, Superintendent  
Mr. William Barnes, Assistant Superintendent  
Mrs. Rebecca Kirk, Clerk of the Board

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Eley, Chairman, called the Prince George County regular school board meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Roll call indicated all School Board members present:

Present: Andrews, Eley, Johnson, Smith, Taylor

**III. MOTION TO GO INTO A CLOSED MEETING TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC PERSONNEL MATTERS RELATING TO THE EMPLOYMENT, ASSIGNMENT, APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, DEMOTION, PERFORMANCE, SALARIES, OR RESIGNATION OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES AND TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC STUDENT MATTERS RELATING TO STUDENT POLICY AND RESIDENCY (pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3711)**

- A. Personnel Matters – Section 2.2-3711.A.1
1. P01/21-22
  2. P02/21-22
  3. P03/21-22
  4. **P04/21-22**

**5. P05/21-22**

**6. P06/21-22**

**B. Student Matters – Section 2.2-3711.A.2**

1. S01/21-22

2. S02/21-22

3. S03/21-22

**C. Public Safety Matters – Section 2.2-3711.A.2**

**1. PS01/21-22 [added to agenda]**

Motion to go into a closed meeting for the purpose to discuss specific personnel matters relating to non-renewals, employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, performance, salaries, or resignation of district employees, student matters relating to student policies, residency, tuition, and public safety matter relating to school projects, and public safety trends relating to student programs pursuant to the personnel, public safety, legal, and student exemptions of the VA Code §§2.2-3711.A.1, 2.2-3711.A.2, and 2.2-3711.A.19.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

**IV. CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING AND ACTIONS**

The School Board returned out of closed session at 6:35 p.m. Mr. Eley stated that the School Board would return into closed session at the end of the meeting to continue with other items that had not been discussed.

Motion and second to reconvene in open session and certification that to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

Motion and second that in Personnel Matter P01/21-22 to approve the Coordinator of Educational Technology and Innovation as recommended.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

[For the record, Chrissy Carr was approved as the Coordinator of Educational Technology and Innovation].

Motion and second that in Personnel Matter P02/21-22 to approve the recommendation for Coordinator of Testing and Accountability.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

[For the record, Wade Kliebenstein was approved at the Coordinator of Testing and Accountability].

No action was taken on Student Matter S01/21-22; information only.  
No action was taken on Public Safety PS01/21-22; information only.

The School Board will return to a closed session after the meeting to continue with other closed session items.

**V. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – led by Mrs. Jill Andrews

**VI. SCHOOL BOARD INVOCATION** - led by Mr. Chris Johnson

**VII. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion and second to approve the revised meeting agenda as presented.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

**VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. June 7, 2021 Regular School Board Meeting
- B. June 16, 2021 Special School Board Meeting

Motion and second to collectively approve the School Board minutes identified above as presented.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

**IX. SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS**

- A. New Faces in New Places
  - Burke George – Principal, Prince George Education Center
  - Abbie Martin – Principal, Prince George High School
  - Elizabeth Pell – Principal, L.L. Beazley Elementary School
  - Stephanie Thompson – Assistant Principal, J.E.J. Moore Middle School

Dr. Pennycuff introduced and welcomed each new administrator and provided a short summary on each person of their educational background, training, work experiences,

leadership roles, and accomplishment that make them a perfect fit with the Prince George School division family. Each brings a unique style and are in alignment to lead, innovate, and inspire the student body and faculty.

B. Familiar Faces in New Places – Effective July 1, 2021

- Mattie Thweatt – Associate Director of School Administration, SBO
- **Christina Pope – Student Services Coordinator, SBO**

Mrs. Thweatt currently served as the principal at Prince George Education Center for the last years. She will now be the division's Associate Director of School Administration. Dr. Pennycuff also summarized Mrs. Thweatt's educational background, training, work experience and leadership roles at the elementary and secondary levels that made her the candidate of choice for this position.

Christina Pope has transferred from Assistant Principal at Prince George High School to a Student Services Coordinator at the School Board Office. Mrs. Pope's educational background and work experiences in the special educational field made her a great candidate for this transition. She made her mark at Prince George High School in just three short years and now she will work with the Student Services Department to continue to make a difference with students.

Congratulations to all our newly appointed and newly reassigned employees.

C. Retirees (individual years of service in parenthesis)

- Karen Belcher – Office Associate III, South (10)
- Vickie Elliott – Guidance Counselor, North (37)
- Willie Elliott – Director of Gifted and Title 1 (41)
- Bonnie Pendergrass – Office Associate III, Moore (42)
- Lori Poythress – ITRT, Moore (39)
- George Tucker – Head Custodian, Moore (33)

TOTAL NUMBER OF YEARS EXPERIENCE = 202

Retirees were recognized for their combined years of service, totaling 202 years in education. Retirees were applauded for their dedicated years of service. Each retiree reflected on their years of service in education, and each retiree received a clock with their names and years of service inscribed. Board members expressed their appreciation for the commitment of service provided by these wonderful people. Mrs. Belcher and Mrs. Poythress were unable to attend.

X. **PUBLIC HEARING (as advertised)**

- A. Public Hearing on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) – Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief Fund III

A Public Hearing that had previously been advertised was held during the meeting to accept public comment on the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act and Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund III allocation to Prince George County Public Schools. The purpose of ARP/ESSER is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students. The school division has been awarded \$4,988,272.08 and at least 20% of these funds must be spent to address the academic impact of lost instructional time. Mrs. Barnes provided a list of specific uses of these funds outlined on the attached PowerPoint. The division will post its spending plan by August 1, 2021. The floor was opened for public comment on the use of these funds.

Neil Jernigan, 15145 S. Crater Road, South Prince George – stated that with any federal funding of this nature has tons of bills associated with it and questioned if the Board has taken time to review each bill and asked that the board research it before they implement it.

Dr. Pennycuff stated a survey was opened to stakeholders (i.e., students, parents of students, teachers, administrators, other school staff members, residents of the county, etc.) for two weeks, with 1,422 people responding. The results showed the top responses were 1) inspection, testing, maintenance, replacement and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement (895 or 62.98%); 2) school facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards and to support student health needs (874 or 61.51%); and 3) purchasing educational technology for students (777 or 54.68%).

## **XI. PRESENTATIONS**

### **A. ESS Human Resources Update – ESS / Laura Estes**

Dr. Estes introduced Jamie Marmorale and NuNu Pasic from ESS as an extension of our Human Resources team, and she is very pleased with our relationship with ESS. Ms. Marmorale provided an overview of services provided to the division including key measures and results from August 2020-June 2021. The statistics she provided were broken down by individual positions and absences by location, (filled/unfilled), and ESS's fill rate for the year was 85%, but they feel the pandemic played a toll on the percent fill rate. Their goal rate is 95% or above, and they are actively working on recruitment strategies and incentives to increase the fill rate for the upcoming year. We currently pay more for substitutes than surrounding districts and ESS continues to add incentives to increase the fill rates.

## **XII. PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL**

Several people were in attendance to speak out on issues that related to 1) not allowing Critical Race Theory being taught in our schools and not relying on “academic research”; 2) DOE’s sexual identity mandate on all schools to comply with state regulations and how board will respond; 3) How will Board address COVID-19, masks, vaccines, and possible separation of students; 4) controversial subject matters taught at Moore Middle School and Prince George High School and how the schools handled the situations; 5) Teachers displaying controversial flags in classrooms; 6) safety and education of our children, alleged, potential secrecy and communication with citizens about issues taking place in our schools, reporting and appealing sexual harassment in the schools, and safeguards in place to protect students; 7) Comprehensive Plan draft and how it relates to recruiting and retaining staff, not spending additional funding on technology, providing elementary students with hands-on, three dimensional activities; cultural and ethnicity equity; community citizens being involved in the Comprehensive Plan survey; 8) treating all people fairly; 9) school division’s safeguards in place to protect the students.

The following citizens spoke during the Public Comment period:

Marty Baird, 11643 Red Cedar Drive, Disputanta  
Scott Whittle, 1045 Drayton Court, South Prince George  
Mary Jo Tison, 15303 Arwood Road, Disputanta  
Neil Jernigan, 15145 S. Crater Road, South Prince George  
Leyla Myers, 8711 Second Court, Disputanta  
William Steele, 9921 County Line, Disputanta  
Cindy Hasley, 12707 Chester Drive, Disputanta  
Jennifer Matthews, 10006 Easy Street, Disputanta  
Jason Chimera, 22150 Rowanty Road, Carson  
Isis Costa, 9740 Robin Court, Disputanta

**XIII. CLOSED SESSION (pursuant to Va. Code §2.2-3711.A.2 and A.19) [added to agenda]**

Motion and second to go into closed session to specifically discuss public safety and specific student matter pursuant to Va. Code §2.2-3711.A.2 and A.19.

VOTE: AYES: Unanimous

**XIV. CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING AND ACTIONS [added to agenda]**

Motion and second to return to an open meeting and certified nothing was disclosed other than what was stated in the original motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

**XV. ACTION ITEM [added to agenda]**

Motion and second to add an action item on Critical Race Theory.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

Motion and second that Prince George County not implement Critical Race Theory.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

Board members made additional comments:

Mr. Johnson stated that there are things within legislation that have been passed that requires teachers to be trained, requirements for SOLs and he requested that Dr. Pennycuff bring back to the Board in two week all the options for the Board to oppose the hidden agenda from legislation.

Mr. Smith stated it was important to stay on top of this matter. Who would have thought we would be addressing conflicts like this in a school board meeting? Certainly, as a teacher years ago, he never would have.

Ms. Taylor opposed CRT and stated, "We are all one people" and we should use our God-given talents to achieve as much as we can, no matter the color of your skin. We should be focused on reading, writing, and arithmetic and bringing our scores up to be competitive in the world like we should.

Mr. Eley stated that this is a hot topic in Prince George and all over the state. This Board is committed to the children of Prince George and what is best for children. Things coming down from legislation is not what is best for our school division. He thanked the Board for their stance on this issue, and he thanked the parents for coming out to speak and advocating for their children. This Board is committed to doing what is right for children, and children are treated the way they deserve to be treated regardless of their skin color, their background, or where they are from. Thank you for coming out and we appreciate your input.

Mrs. Andrews reiterated that she also agrees with the Board. She grew up here and the color of one's skin did not matter then, and it should not matter now.

Dr. Pennycuff stated that our efforts in the school division are focused on personalized learning through the Tiered System of Supports to ensure that all our children are getting the very best educational foundation they can have for their futures. Our district operates on a belief that a strong educational foundation where the children learn to become effective communicators, critical thinkers, contributing members of collaborative work groups, and positive citizens of their school and local community is the best preparation we can provide our children with, so they have many choices available to choose from as they transition out of K-12 education and into the world.

Prince George County Public Schools has not adopted Critical Race Theory as part of the school division's educational curriculum, nor does the district plan to do so.

### **XIII. INFORMATION ITEMS/SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

- A. Current enrollment as of July 2, 2021
- B. Facility Use Requests for June/July 2021
- C. VSBA Conference on Education – July 20, 2021 (Virtual)
- D. Back to School Fair, Drive-thru event @ PGHS – August 7, 2021  
9:00 a.m. - noon
- E. VSBA Title IX: Best Practices in Training & Compliance – Charlottesville – September 14, 2021
- F. VSBA Legislative Advocacy Conference – Richmond Hilton – September 23, 2021
- G. PGCPS Superintendent Messages
  1. Media Release: 2021-22 Student Registration Appointments – June 8, 2021
  2. Back to School Fair – Drive Thru event at PGHS, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. August 7, 2021
  3. In Pictures: PGHS Grads Celebrate Accomplishments During Commencement Exercises
  4. American Rescue Plan Act Funding Survey of School Community

Dr. Pennycuff spoke about the upcoming Back-to-School Fair on August 7 at Prince George High School. She also stated that Board Members were registered for various VSBA training to earn the School Board Distinction Award. The VSBA Legislative Advocacy Conference is an important conference that board members do not want to miss, and she is glad our Board has a voice at the state. She spoke about the summer academy and thankful that we had teachers and paraprofessionals willing to extend themselves into the summer. We are blessed to have these wonderful people working with our children.

### **XIV. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER COMMENT**

Mr. Smith restated he never thought he would be facing anything like this and that a school's decision of what kids would be taught other than reading, writing, and arithmetic, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Who would have thought we would be discussing critical race theory and transgender items? It was very simple when we were kids. How have we allowed people to be so diverse in thinking and debating skin color and other cultural issues?

Ms. Taylor reiterated that it is challenging for our students to contend with such contentious topics such as critical race theory and transgender. There are so many things going on and these topics should not be something children should have to worry



about. She does not care about other's sexual orientation; she just wants the children to be safe and have privacy in the bathrooms and locker rooms. The world is scary, and they will deal with these issues soon enough. Kids grow up so fast and we need to train them now to be understanding, cautious, and compassionate for others. We should hold onto and protect our children.

Mrs. Andrews congratulated all the retirees and stated they would be missed. She also welcomed new staff members. She agrees with Mr. Smith's and Ms. Taylor's comments and appreciates the parents for coming out tonight and voicing their concerns about issues. She has lived in the county most of her life and Prince George Schools matter to her. If the public gives the Board a chance, we will do what is right for the students and we are not hiding things. There is a perception that is what some think, but the board is gathering all the information to make the right decision for our students.

Mr. Johnson congratulated the retirees and thanked the new people in new places for joining our team. As he reflected about tonight's comments, he thought about his time in Prince George and his many friends. He has never thought about shade of one's skin. One of the things he likes about the county is the diversity it offers and hearing about other's experiences and cultures through soldiers from Fort Lee. He searched the Bible and only found one race, the human race. Our skin color may be different, but our blood is the same and unites all of us. The only policies the Board will approve are the policies that unite our county. We are all in agreement and our Board opposes what is going on. Some decisions are being held until after the election, which is unacceptable, but we will review the options to oppose. There is no substitute what you can teach your children at home, and he is encouraged we have people that will give those children hope.

Mr. Eley congratulated all the retirees and thanked Mr. Elliott for his dedicated years of service. He welcomed the new faces to the Prince George family. He reflected on three great graduation ceremonies and comparisons of the 2020 and 2021 events. Now our children have an uphill battle to something they have no control over again. Our children have suffered enough, and it is time to let our children be children, it is time to learn life lessons the right way. Dr. Pennycuff will be presenting on August 2 options from legislation. Legislators should be listening to the people of the state, and he encouraged all people to send their comments to their state legislators and let their voices be heard like was displayed here tonight. These decisions are being made from the top level and trickle down to the local localities. On November 2 think about these people who are making these laws and let your voice be heard. Each board member has looked at these issues all have spoken about tonight. If you have a problem, please contact our senior staff members. "We care, we have big hearts, we have kids in the school system!" He also mentioned the Girls Dixie World Series would take place in the county with opening ceremonies on July 23 and games July 24-27. He also thanked the audience for being refrained and dignified for the public comment period.

## **XV. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. *Personnel Report***
- B. Board Requests
- C. Warrants
  - 1. General
  - 2. Title 1
  - 3. Food and Nutrition Services
- D. Project Updates
  - 1. Support Services
  - 2. Technology

Motion and second to approve the Consent Agenda as amended.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

## **XVI. ACTION ITEMS**

- A. Uniform Service & Related Supplies Renewal – Ron Rhodes

Motion and second to approve uniform service and related supplies to Cintas for July 1, 2021- June 30, 2022.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

- B. Request for Approval for Supplemental Appropriation to the 2021-22 Grant Fund (0510) Budget – Monique Barnes

Motion and second to make a request to the Board of Supervisors for a Supplemental Appropriation of \$676,163.66 to be included in the FY22 Grant Fund Budget for the division in Fund 0510.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

- C. Appointment of Superintendent as Special Agent for Public Law 89-10 and Other Federal Projects – Lisa Pennycuff

Motion and second to appoint and authorize Dr. Pennycuff as special agent for Public 89-10 and other federal projects.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

- D. VSBA Policy Services Agreement – Lisa Pennycuff

Motion and second to approve the VSBA Policy Services subscription contract for one year, August 1, 2021 – July 31, 2022).

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

E. VSBA Media Honor Roll – Lisa Pennycuff

Motion and second to approve Michael Campbell as the school division's 2021 VSBA Media Honor Roll submission.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

F. VPSA Technology Funds Reimbursement Resolution – Monique Barnes

Motion and second to approve the Reimbursement Resolution as presented.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

**G. Request for Approval for Supplemental Appropriation to the 2021-22 Grant Fund (0510) Budget for IDEA Flow-Through Grants – Monique Barnes**

Motion and second to request the Board of Supervisors for a Supplemental Appropriation of \$325,133.04 to be included in the FY22 Grant Fund Budget for the division in Fund 0510.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

**H. FY22 Supplemental Appropriation – “Rolled” Purchase Orders – Monique Barnes**

Motion and second to approve the re-appropriation of funds from the FY21 Regular/Operating Fund to the FY 22 Regular/Operating Fund budget in the amount of \$354,367.32 into the Facilities Category.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

## **XVII. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. 2022-2027 Comprehensive Plan – Betsy Overkamp-Smith (moved from action)**

The Steering Committee met and made suggestions for changes to objectives and strategies. The committee and leadership developed tasks and measures for each objective. As a result, several changes were made to the draft that was presented at the June 14, 2021 meeting, and we felt the 2022-2027 Comprehensive Plan needed to be re-visited by the School Board with the changes before final approval. Mrs. Overkamp-

Smith reviewed the goals again with the Board. Next steps include making additional revisions based on School Board discussions, present the Comprehensive Plan to the School Board for a vote on August 2, and release the final plan after School Board approval. The Plan has been posted to the division's website throughout the entire process for review by the community. We had three town hall meetings, meetings were made available to all employees at different times, a survey was sent to community members, employees, and parents for input. The 2022-27 Comprehensive Plan is the divisions guide over the next five years, and it will be reviewed annually as we measure our efforts.

B. VSBA May 2021 Policy Revisions (Part 1) – Lisa Pennycuff

VSBA May policy revisions were made available to the Board for review. These policies will be presented at the August 2, 2021 meeting for approval.

C. 2021-22 Student Conduct and Safety Handbook – William Barnes

A copy of the 2021-22 Student Conduct and Safety Handbook was provided to Board members for review. The Handbook has been updated with policy changes as presented by new laws. Approval will be requested at the August 2, 2021 meeting.

D. Online Payment for Schools – Monique Barnes

To reduce the amount of cash flowing through the school buildings and to provide a contactless means for parents, students, and faculty to purchase tickets, pay for fund raising activities field trips, activity fees, etc., we recently viewed a web demonstration provided by Edlio, the division's website provider. She explained security of the site, bookkeeper's role, processing of payments and fees associated with this that are passed onto the purchaser.

E. Financial Report for June 2021 – Monique Barnes

Mrs. Barnes provided an overview of the June 2021 Financial Report to the School Board.

**XVII. MOTION TO GO INTO A CLOSED MEETING TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC PERSONNEL MATTERS RELATING TO THE EMPLOYMENT, ASSIGNMENT, APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, DEMOTION, PERFORMANCE, SALARIES, OR RESIGNATION OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES AND TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC STUDENT MATTERS RELATING TO STUDENT POLICY AND RESIDENCY (pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3711)**

- A. Personnel Matters – Section 2.2-3711.A.1
  - 3. 03/21-22
  - 4. **P04/21-22**

- 5. P05/21-22**
- 6. P06/21-22**
- B. Student Matters – Section 2.2-3711.A.2
  - 2. S02/21-22
  - 3. S03/21-22
- C. Public Safety Matters – Section 2.2-3711.A.19**
  - 1. PS01/21-22 [added to agenda]**

Motion and second to go back into a closed meeting for the purpose to discuss specific personnel matters relating to non-renewals, employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, performance, salaries, or resignation of district employees, and to discuss specific student matters relating to student policy and residency to the personnel and student exemptions of the VA Code §§2.2-3711.A.1 and 2.2-3711.A.2.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

#### **XVIII. CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING AND ACTIONS**

Motion and second to return to an open meeting and certified nothing was disclosed other than what was stated in the original motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

No action was taken on Personnel Matter P03/21-22; information only.

Motion and second in Personnel Matter P04/21-22 to approve a Student Services Coordinator position with the support of the IDEA Funds.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

No action was taken on Personnel Matters P05/21-22 or P06/21-22; information only.  
No action was taken on Student Matters S02/21-22 or S03/21-22; information only.  
No action was taken on Public Safety Matter PS01/21-22; information only.

#### **XIX. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion and second to adjourn the meeting at 11:23 p.m.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

The meeting adjourned at 11:23 p.m.

Clerk of the Board