



## JOINT SCHOOLS WORKING COMMITTEE AGENDA



A Joint Committee of the  
School Board of Stafford County and the  
Stafford County Board of Supervisors

Date: Thursday, February 4, 2021

Time: 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual via Web-Ex

Agenda Item		Time
1.	CALL TO ORDER	6:00 p.m.
2.	APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA	
3.	APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 9, 2020 MEETING MINUTES	
4.	<p><b>AGENDA DISCUSSION ITEMS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. HIGH SCHOOL #6 COSTS &amp; PLANNING PROCESS – DR. KIZNER</li> <li>B. DECISION CRITERIA THE SCHOOL BOARD USES TO DETERMINE VIRTUAL/HYBRID/CLOSE STATUS – MS. SHELTON</li> <li>C. DECISION CRITERIA USED FOR CIP PROJECTS AND FOR WEIGHTING CIP PROJECTS - MS. SHELTON</li> <li>D. INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER DIRECT COMMUNICATION W/ STAFF REQUESTING INFORMATION (CURRENT PRACTICE, PROCESS, AND PROCEDURE) – MS. HAZARD</li> <li>E. POLLING PLACE UPDATE – WILL SCHOOL FACILITIES BE CONSIDERED? (PROCESS AND PROCEDURE) – MS. HAZARD</li> <li>F. RACE RELATIONS UPDATE/PLANS FOR THE COMMUNITY – MS. YEUNG</li> <li>G. DIVERSITY HIRING PROCESS – MS. YEUNG</li> </ul>	
5.	SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING	
	ADJOURNMENT	7:30 p.m.



**DRAFT**



# MEETING MINUTES

## Joint Schools Working Committee

**A Joint Committee of the Stafford Co. School Board and Board of Supervisors**

**December 9, 2020 ♦ 5:30 p.m.**

**Colonial Forge High School Cafeteria\***

**550 Courthouse Road / Stafford, Virginia 22554**

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\* This meeting was held in the cafeteria at Colonial Forge High School. It was streamed live on the internet. The meeting was also open to the public; however, due to the public health threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the audience size was limited to 10 people based on guidance and executive orders from the Governor of Virginia and the Virginia Department of Health regarding social distancing and public gatherings.

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### Call to Order

The meeting was convened at 5:30 p.m. The following committee members participated:

Supervisor Meg Bohmke (Falmouth District) – Committee Chair,  
School Board Member Dr. Sarah Chase\* (Falmouth District),  
School Board Member Holly Hazard (Hartwood District) – Committee Vice-Chair,  
Supervisor Cindy Shelton (Aquia District),  
Supervisor Crystal Vanuch\* (Rock Hill District), and  
School Board Member R. Pamela Yeung (Garrisonville District).

\* Due to concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Chase and Ms. Vanuch participated electronically from their homes in Stafford.

Also present were SCPS Executive Director of Human Resources Patrick Byrnett, SCPS Assistant Superintendent of Administration and Finance Chris Fulmer, School Superintendent Dr. Scott Kizner, and County Administrator Fred Presley.

### Approval of Meeting Agenda

Dr. Chase moved, and Ms. Vanuch seconded, that the committee approve the meeting agenda with one correction: Delete item D (which was an erroneous duplicate of item G). The motion passed unanimously.

### Approval of November 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes (see Attachment 1)

Ms. Bohmke moved, and Dr. Chase seconded, that the committee approve the November 5, 2020 meeting minutes with the following revision: Correct the misspelling of the word “stated” in the third line of text on page 5. The motion passed unanimously.

Before the discussion began, Ms. Shelton reported that she conducted an informal telephone survey of five local private schools to ascertain how many of our public school students have switched to private schools during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Three of the schools doubled their number of classroom seats this year;
- All five are at full capacity and have waiting lists; and
- Three of the schools serve pre-K through seventh grades, and the other two serve pre-K through 12th grades.

Ms. Shelton stated that she also contacted six parents in her district (Aquia) to obtain a sampling of data. All six of the families are sending their students to private schools this year, and only one of the families intends to move their child(ren) back to the public school system next year. She recommended that the school board consider the private school factor in its decision-making going forward.

Dr. Chase stated that she does not think of private schools as “competition” for the public school system. On the contrary, by electing to send their children to private schools, those parents are saving the County some money. Dr. Chase added that from her perspective, she would be very surprised if the slight increase in the number of families opting to move their children into private schools has any type of significant, long-term effect on the school division’s enrollment numbers.

Dr. Kizner stated that this committee received a report from his staff last month which compared the actual vs. the anticipated number of students in the school system as of September 30. As of November 30, around 53 of those lost students have already returned to our schools. Dr. Kizner further explained that the majority of the missing elementary students are five-year-olds whose parents have opted to hold back from Kindergarten until next school year. In Virginia, parents have the option to enroll their child in Kindergarten at age five or six. School division staff are concerned that there will be a significant enrollment jump for both Kindergarten and first grades next school year.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **A. Use of Common Metrics by Both Boards**

#### ***Metric – Salary Scale Comparison Communities:***

Ms. Hazard stated that the salary scale question will be discussed in more detail under Agenda Item E, below. She noted, however, that there was previously some committee discussion that the two main salary comparison communities should be Prince William and Spotsylvania counties.

Dr. Chase stated that there was also discussion during last night’s school board meeting about the number of teachers who are leaving our school division to take jobs at schools in Fairfax. It has not yet been determined whether a majority of the school board members will want to advocate for the inclusion of Fairfax as one of our comparison localities.

Ms. Bohmke stated that if we look to Fairfax as one of our comparison divisions, we must also take into consideration the Cost-of-Competing Adjustment (COCA) funds. Fairfax receives full COCA funds, while Stafford receives a much lower percentage. The only way to change this is to lobby the Virginia Assembly to move us up into the higher COCA tier. However, if we are successful in doing so, then Prince William schools will most likely also be moved up into the higher tier.

Dr. Kizner stated that COCA funding makes up a very small portion of Fairfax’s \$2 billion budget and has a small impact on their teacher salaries. Their COCA funding only amounts to around \$35 million. That’s a relatively small percentage of the overall budget so it is not a significant driver with respect to their pay scales.

Ms. Bohmke asked if the school division has data that shows the county/city of residence for those teachers who are leaving our schools to take jobs in Fairfax. She wondered if most of those individuals are relocating to Fairfax or if they are commuting daily from their current homes in the Stafford area.

Mr. Byrnett explained that in most cases, there is really no way to know whether a former employee kept their Stafford area address or relocated to Fairfax for their new position. We only know the address that the person had at the time of their separation from the school division.

#### ***Metric – Population and Student Growth (Generation Factor per Household and New Development and Housing Type Analysis):***

Mr. Presley stated that staff from both organizations (county government and school division) are largely in agreement about the way these factors are being analyzed now. It is based upon the data, and the data is being updated continuously.

**B. University of Mary Washington (UMW) Stafford Campus – Potential Uses and Availability**

Mr. Presley reported that representatives from the County met recently with UMW President Dr. Anthony Paino to discuss the UMW campus on Route 17 in south Stafford. During the meeting it was confirmed that it may be possible for the property to be purchased or leased long-term by the County for use as a school site. Mr. Presley asked if there might be any interest on the part of the school division and school board in pursuing this further. Ms. Bohmke added that Dr. Paino did state that it is typically a six- to nine-month process for a Virginia public university to sell any of its real property.

Ms. Hazard stated that the school board will need to discuss the matter with the superintendent and his staff. Dr. Chase concurred, stating that the school board needs to put this matter on a future meeting agenda to determine whether the board wants to instruct staff to prepare a potential plan for moving forward.

Ms. Shelton encouraged the school board to consider the many potential uses for the property, including as a magnet school.

Ms. Yeung stated that she and Ms. Shelton had previously discussed several different sites around the county, including the UMW Stafford campus, for a magnet school and special programs. Ms. Yeung stated that she is also interested in the possibility of using the site for an adult education center for the parents of SCPS students.

**C. Aging School Infrastructure (“3R” List) – A Way Forward**

Ms. Hazard reported that a tremendous amount of maintenance is required for the upkeep of the 30+ school properties. She stated that there needs to be a predictable and reliable source of yearly funding for these projects.

Mr. Fulmer added that in the school division’s FY22-FY31 Capital Improvement Plan, there are over \$40 million worth of 3R projects that cannot be accomplished due to the lack of funding. Those projects are repeatedly postponed from year to year due to budget shortfalls.

Mr. Presley stated that the County has a policy requiring it to set aside three percent of its annual budget for County 3R projects. He added that the County had recommend years ago that the school division set aside two percent of its own budget for the same purpose. Ms. Shelton asked if the school board has such a policy in place.

Mr. Fulmer reported that the school division does have a reserve capital fund, into which any year-end savings can be placed. However, this fund is seen more as an emergency fund than a 3R fund.

County Budget Director Andrea Light stated that all meals tax funding (above budget) and school debt service savings are set aside by the County for school infrastructure projects. Those monies, as with year-end savings, have to be appropriated to the school division by the board of supervisors.

**D. Legislative Initiatives (duplicate item deleted)****E. Preview of SCPS Teacher Salary Initiative**

Ms. Hazard reported that the school board received a presentation last night of the superintendent’s proposed teacher salary initiative. At her invitation, Mr. Fulmer and Mr. Byrnett shared that same presentation with this committee (*see Attachment 2*).

Ms. Shelton requested information about the different types of teacher recruitment and retention incentives that currently exist.

**F. Joint Wellness Initiatives for All County & SCPS Staff**

Ms. Hazard stated that the members of the school board’s Finance and Budget Committee would like to begin a dialogue between the two agencies regarding potential joint wellness initiatives and programs for employees. The thinking behind this request is that there may be ways in which the two organizations can join forces or combine programs to save money and/or improve outcomes and efficiencies.

Mr. Byrnett described some of the wellness initiatives currently in place within the school system.

Ms. Bohmke suggested inviting interested high school students to organize and lead fitness and wellness activities for staff (for example, a yoga class). Dr. Kizner stated that he loves this idea.

#### **G. Legislative Initiatives**

Ms. Hazard reported that the school division is currently having difficulty recruiting new bus drivers. Although this is a problem every year, the situation is greatly exacerbated this year because the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offices are open by appointment only due to the pandemic, with the soonest appointment not being available until March 2021. This means that school bus drivers are unable to obtain or renew their commercial licenses in a timely manner. Ms. Hazard stated that we need a legislative initiative to get the DMV to “fast-track” school bus driver testing and licensure.

Ms. Bohmke stated that she will speak with the county treasurer, who runs the local DMV Select program.

#### **H. Report from Ms. Shelton re: Private Schools**

Ms. Shelton reported that she conducted an informal telephone survey of five local private schools to ascertain how many of our public school students have switched to private schools during the COVID-19 pandemic:

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#### **Scheduling of Next Meeting**

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, January 21, 2021, at 5:30 p.m., in the board of supervisors’ chamber at the county government center.

Ms. Yeung requested that future agendas clearly show who requested each discussion item.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

**BOARD-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

**PURPOSE: To encourage open communication between the board and its employees**

The board supports and encourages both formal and informal communication between the board and the employees of Stafford County Public Schools. The board welcomes opinions, viewpoints, ideas, and suggestions from employees.

The board designates the superintendent/designee as its official representative regarding all formal communications with employees, employee groups, organizations, and associations.

It is the policy of the board not to discriminate against any employee by reason of membership in an employee organization, or participation in any lawful activities of the organization.

06/24/08 Adopted  
04/27/09 Reviewed  
12/12/13 Readopted  
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Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-253.13:7

**BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS**

**PURPOSE: To establish parameters for communication between the board and the superintendent concerning division operations**

It is the board as a whole that may act to exercise the authority of the board. Individual members of the board have no authority to act except as may be assigned by the board as a whole.

The board appoints the superintendent to serve as the chief administrative officer of the division. Accordingly, the board and its members shall communicate only through the superintendent with respect to any matter for which the superintendent is responsible, including the daily operation of the division and its schools. All board actions requiring or authorizing the performance of a duty or function by any division employee shall be directed through the superintendent. The superintendent may appoint a designee to facilitate the operation of this process and communication with the board.

Requests for information by individual board members concerning any subject matter which require staff research, analysis, or collection of data, are to be routed through the Office of the Superintendent. The superintendent shall assign an appropriate staff member to respond. The response of staff shall be made through the superintendent to the member and shall also be provided to all other board members. Should the superintendent conclude that the request necessitates excessive employment of staff time and resources, the superintendent may decline to fulfill the request and shall so inform the member. The member may ask that the board as a whole take up the matter and request the information. Members are cautioned not to intervene in individual personnel or student matters as that may undermine procedural process.

All board members shall request approval for school visits, in writing, two school days in advance to the office of the associate superintendent of instructional services. The associate superintendent shall respond in a timely manner.

12/12/13 Adopted  
 09/09/14 Amended by School Board  
 12/12/17 Amended by School Board  
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Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-78, 22.1-253.13:7.C.1.

**SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEES**

VSBA Cross Ref.: BG  
GBD