



VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CHARTING THE COURSE

School Board Services

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At-Large

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District 2 – Kempsville

Sharon R. Felton
District 6 – Beach

Dorothy M. Holtz
At-Large

Laura K. Hughes
At-Large

Victoria C. Manning
At-Large

Jessica L. Owens
District 3 – Rose Hall

Trenace B. Riggs
District 1 – Centerville

Carolyn D. Weems
District 4 - Bayside

Aaron C. Spence, Ed.D., Superintendent

School Board SPECIAL Meeting MINUTES

Tuesday, January 5, 2021

School Administration Building #6, Municipal Center
2512 George Mason Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

SPECIAL MEETING

- 1. Call to Order and Verbal Roll Call:** Chairwoman Rye called the special meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. on the 5th day of January 2021 and announced pursuant to School Board Bylaw 1-46, a Special Meeting of the School Board has been called by the Superintendent with the concurrence of the School Board Chair for Tuesday, January 5, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. in the School Administration Building. The purpose of the Special Meeting is for the Superintendent, staff, and advisors to discuss with the School Board proposed adjustments to the adopted Fall 2020 Plan.

Pursuant to the State of Emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor’s Executive Orders, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act as amended by the Virginia General Assembly and the School Board’s April 7, 2020 Emergency Resolution, the School Board and selected staff members will meet in person at the School Administration Building however, at this this time it is impractical and unsafe to allow other persons to attend the School Board Meeting due to physical distancing and safety precautions related to the pandemic. Members of the public will be able to observe the School Board Meeting through livestreaming on www.vbschools.com, broadcast on VBTV Channel 47, and on Zoom.

The following School Board members were present in the School Board chambers: Chairwoman Rye, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Felton, Ms. Franklin, Ms. Hughes, Ms. Manning, Ms. Owens, and Ms. Riggs. The following School Board members were attending the meeting via Zoom: Ms. Holtz and Ms. Melnyk. The following School Board member was not in attendance due to illness: Ms. Weems.

- 2. Adoption of the Agenda:** Without any modifications, Chairwoman Rye called for a motion for the adoption of the agenda. Ms. Riggs made a motion, seconded by Ms. Anderson. Without any discussion, Chairwoman Rye called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced the motion passed with ten (10) ayes from School Board members: Chairwoman Rye, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Felton, Ms. Franklin, Ms. Hughes, Ms. Manning, Ms. Owens, Ms. Riggs, Ms. Holtz, and Ms. Melnyk. The following School Board member did not vote because they were not in attendance due to illness: Ms. Weems.

3. **Discussion on Proposed Adjustments to Adopted Fall 2020-21 Plan:** The presenters were Marc A. Bergin, Ed.D., Chief of Staff; Kipp Rogers, Ph.D., Chief Academic Officer; Jack Freeman, Chief Operations Officer; Superintendent Spence; and Donald E. Robertson, Ph.D., Chief Schools Officer.

Dr. Bergin provided an overview of the presentation; discussed the recommendation of the advising physicians and consultation with Virginia Beach Department of Health to propose beginning to use school-level transmission data; evidence that transmission with the school setting is not occurring in the way thought back in the spring and summer of 2020; progression of the science and data – schools are not significant spreaders of COVID-19; new question: how to stay open safely and minimize closures/burden to schools: mitigation (i.e. mask, physical distance, cohorts, etc.) to safely operate schools, virtual option should continue to be available, closure of individual classrooms or schools may be necessary, in consultation with the Virginia Beach Department of Public Health (VBDPH); impacts on mental health; impacts on academic achievement; Dr. Bergin introduced Dr. Rogers.

Dr. Rogers continued the presentation; overview of beginning of the year formative assessment data; use of low-stakes, formative assessments regularly to modify teaching and learning activities to meet student's needs and to improve student achievement; Ms. Danielle Colucci, Executive Director of Elementary Teaching and Learning presented formative literacy data collected and analyzed from the beginning of the school year; Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) – this past Fall 26%, nearly twice as many students as compared to the previous two years, at 14%, have been identified to be at risk and requiring additional intervention; reviewed data from grades K-3 Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) – increases compared to last year – 11% more Caucasian students, 16% more African American students, 12% more Student with Disabilities, and 15% more Economically Disadvantaged students – requiring additional literacy support; reviewed the formative assessment – Reading Inventory (RI); this year showed a 4.9% decrease in student performance as compared to the 2019-2020 beginning of the year RI data; Dr. Rogers continued the presentation.

Dr. Rogers reviewed classroom-based, formative Math benchmarks; elementary level use locally-created formative assessments in math for grades 3-5; seen a 13%-17% decrease across grade levels in students meeting our locally-created math benchmarks from last year; African-American student performance in grades 3-5 range 14%-21% less than in the previous year; secondary level uses locally-created formative assessments (pre-assessments, benchmark assessments, and common unit assessments); noted data is not for all students for the entire school year only half of students are taking math due to schedule; middle school level on unit assessments 1 and 2 – identified a 4%-6% decline in student performance as compared to the same unit assessments last year; African American students show a 6% point increase on Unit 2 8th grade math assessment but decreases of 6%-10% on other unit assessments from previous school year; Students with Disabilities show a 2% point increase on the Unit 2 6th grade math assessment but decreases of 4%-6% on other unit assessments from the previous year.

High School Math formative pre-assessment: In Algebra – students underperformed on 3 of 28 standards compared to students in Algebra last year; students in Geometry underperformed on 5 of 32 standards compared to students in Geometry last year; students in Algebra II underperformed on 4 of 24 standards compared to students in Algebra II last year; reviewed secondary marking period 3 academic summary; Dr. Rogers introduced Mr. Freeman.

Mr. Freeman discussed health and safety mitigations; layering of mitigations (cloth masks, social distancing, cleaning & disinfecting, handwashing); PPE; cohorts; ventilation/HVAC; mitigations are

working, need to be consistently implemented; contact tracing; buses – masks, assigned seating; COVID safety assessment teams; vaccination planning.

Superintendent Spence continued the presentation; how to open schools safely and mitigate risk; recapped health and safety mitigations – mask wearing, social distancing, safety teams, contact tracers; school level data such as outbreaks, quarantining, absenteeism and ability to staff; continue to partner with health department; proposal for phasing students back to school: no in-person instruction for next two weeks (1/4-1/8 and 1/11-1/15); January 19 – Elementary (PK-5), Grade 6, and self-contained special education (PK-12) return for in-person instruction; monitoring effectiveness of health and safety mitigations for 3 weeks (1/18-1/22, 1/25-1/29, and 2/1-2/5); February 8 – Middle (7-8) and High (9-12) return for in-person instruction on hybrid model; Dr. Robertson continued the presentation.

Dr. Robertson discussed winter sports; decision to allow winter varsity sports to begin as early as January 6; additional health and safety protocols: daily, individual health screenings (completed by athletic trainers), team size limitations and practice restrictions/guidelines, reduced number of contests, no travel or plan outside the Beach District (except for teams, individuals who qualify for post-season play), no spectators; provide the School Board with recommendations at January 26 meeting; Dr. Bergin thanked the following physicians for advice and counsel: Dr. Leah Rowland, Dr. Doug Mitchell, Dr. Heidi Best, and Dr. Ben Fickenscher.

The discussion continued regarding Dr. Lindsay’s availability to answer questions; new COVID strand; indications to close down schools - consultation with health department, school impact measures; athletics; vaccination for staff/schools – working with city/health department; ability to change option – if parent has concerns contact school principal; safety mitigations as strain changes; Standards of Learning testing; socialization; academic performance; recruiting; air quality; safety teams; data and risk of transmission; connecting with lost students; pass rates between Option 1 and Option 2 students; mitigation strategies in the schools; core beliefs as an educator.

4. **Adjournment:** The special meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Regina M. Toneatto, Clerk of the School Board

Approved:

Carolyn T. Rye, School Board Chair