



VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CHARTING THE COURSE

School Board Services

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District 9

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District 8
Sharon R. Felton
At-Large
Melinda J. Rogers
District 5

Donald E. Robertson Jr., Ph.D., Superintendent

School Board Retreat/Abridged Meeting MINUTES

Tuesday, July 8, and Wednesday, July 9, 2025

Professional Development Center

641 Carriage Hill Road

Virginia Beach, VA 23452

TUESDAY, JULY 8, 2025

Chair Brown convened the School Board Retreat at 12:33 p.m. on the 8th day of July 2025. In addition to Superintendent Robertson, the following School Board Member were present at the Plaza Annex, Professional Development Center: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohensiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Cummings (arrived at 12:34 p.m.), Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers.

The following School Board Member was not in attendance: Mr. Culpepper.

Superintendent Robertson welcomed the School Board Members and provided a brief overview of the retreat topics.

Student Achievement Results: Lisa Banicky, Ph.D., executive director, Office of Planning, Innovation and Accountability, provided the School Board with a comprehensive overview of student achievement results, focusing on core academic performance, student performance by group, and readiness beyond the Standards of Learning (SOLs). The presentation began with an overview of core academic performance, highlighting preliminary SOL passing rates for the 2024-2025 school year. Reading and mathematics showed stable performance with passing rates of 81% and 79%, respectively. Science and history saw improvements, with passing rates of 81% and 77%. Detailed passing rates for various courses and student groups were provided, highlighting areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

The presentation then emphasized the importance of readiness beyond the SOLs, focusing on college, career, and life readiness. Early indicators such as PSAT/NMSQT results and CTE credentialing assessment results were highlighted. The successful completion of advanced coursework by secondary students and the various industry certifications achieved were also highlighted.

Student performance by group was analyzed to respond more precisely to student needs and strengthen support where it mattered most. Data from SOLs, advanced coursework, and PSAT/NMSQT were used to evaluate performance across different student groups, including economically disadvantaged students, English language learners, and students with disabilities.

The presentation summarized key patterns observed in reading, math, science, history, advanced coursework, and credentialing assessments. Reading and math showed generally stable performance, while science and history saw consistent improvements across most tests and student groups. Advanced coursework completion and credentialing assessments had high and rising pass rates in most program areas.



School Board of the City of Virginia Beach
Plaza Annex/Professional Development Center
641 Carriage Hill Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Tuesday, July 8 and Wednesday, July 9, 2025
School Board Retreat and Abridged Meeting
Page 2 of 10

An estimated timeline for the release of official statewide SOL passing rates and school accountability designations was provided. Preliminary SOL passing rates were shared with the School Board in July 2025, and official statewide SOL passing rates were expected to be released by the Virginia Department of Education in late July 2025. School accountability designations were anticipated to be released in September 2025, with a public presentation of the accountability designations and results for the division scheduled for October 2025. The presentation concluded with a focus on using data to inform action, keeping students at the center of every conversation, and continuing to monitor progress and adjust supports as needed.

Following the presentation, the School Board provided comments and inquired about PSAT testing; elementary reading scores; student performance data; PSAT scores, which grades take the test; focus on student achievement and support; school support process; monitoring data; summer programs, engaging parents, use of resources (ParentVue, report cards, progress reports, deskside chats); intervention programs, Federal funding, impacts; PSAT and scholarship opportunities, how to inform parents; and student cohort data.

Compass to 2030 – A Closer Look: Lisa Banicky, Ph.D., executive director, Office of Planning, Innovation and Accountability, provided the School Board information on *Compass to 2030*. The strategic planning process involved five broad goals grounded in community input, supported by strategic, specific, and feasible strategies aligned to each goal. Key navigational markers were established to measure progress, and a revised Future-Ready Profile for K-12 students was introduced. The plan was shaped by key contributors, including the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee, select central office leaders, and the Compass Collaborative.

The presentation detailed the five goals of the Compass to 2030 initiative:

- Goal 1: Challenge and Support Each Student to Excel and be Future Ready.
- Goal 2: Enhance Student Well-Being, Resilience, and Responsibility.
- Goal 3: Value and Invest in Staff.
- Goal 4: Partner with Families and the Community to Support Students.
- Goal 5: Advance Organizational Excellence.

The transition from the Graduate Profile to the Future-Ready Profile was discussed, emphasizing the need to streamline, simplify, and shift the focus from “graduates.” Student feedback on the Future-Ready Profile was gathered from more than 450 students across various schools, which helped develop the descriptors in the final profiles. The presentation also covered the action planning process, which involved defining intended outcomes, identifying key milestones, and specifying action steps, timelines, and owners. The collaborative and iterative process included strategic priorities for schools, central office strategy leads, and the Compass Collaborative.

The strategic action agenda for 2025-26 focused on supporting student success, building capacity, and engaging families and the community. The importance of relentless execution was emphasized, with annual strategic actions provided well in advance of the new school year to communicate expectations. The presentation concluded with the next steps, including the launch of *Compass to 2030* at the Leadership Conference, the start of the school year kick-off, revisiting action plans, and establishing baseline data for key navigational markers.

Following the presentation, the School Board provided comments and inquired about graduate profile for elementary, middle and high school; concept map for each school; school supports; teacher workload; vision to action to impact, relentless execution; Plan for Continuous Improvement, observation and feedback; student data and targeted supports; TalentED; reporting data; and differentiation by school level.



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Plaza Annex/Professional Development Center
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Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Tuesday, July 8 and Wednesday, July 9, 2025
School Board Retreat and Abridged Meeting
Page 3 of 10

The School Board had a break from 2:01 p.m. to 2:11 p.m.

Instructional Technology Update: Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Chromebook Usage: David Din, chief information officer, and Danielle Colucci, Ed.D., provided the School Board information on artificial intelligence and Chromebook usage. The presentation provided a comprehensive update on instructional technology, with a particular focus on the advancements and implications of AI in education. It explained that Artificial Intelligence (AI) was a collection of technologies, software, and data that made it appear that a computing device was intelligent. The presentation discussed the different types of AI, including Narrow AI, General AI, and Super AI, and mentioned Generative AI for its ability to create new content based on existing material.

The presentation also addressed AI Assistants and Agentic AI systems, which could independently plan, reason, and act with minimal human input. It emphasized the importance of balancing innovation with appropriate guardrails to safeguard data privacy and mitigate discriminatory outcomes.

The presentation highlighted the explosive growth in AI job postings, noting that AI-related job listings had skyrocketed worldwide since late 2022. Nearly one in four new tech jobs explicitly sought AI skills.

Danielle Colucci, Ed.D., continued the presentation and covered the integration of AI in the classroom and the next steps taken during the February 2025 School Board Meeting - to finalize professional learning related to AI, investigate appropriate access to AI tools for high school students, and implement digital citizenship curriculum and computer science standards. The presentation continued with a focus on resources and ongoing training expectations, emphasizing the ethical use of AI and building digital literacy in high schools. High school AI sample resources were provided to support this initiative.

Data privacy and security guardrails were highlighted, mentioning Google Gemini as a tool designed for student safety and privacy. The VDOE Model Policy concerning internet safety and the VBCPS Digital Literacy and Internet Safety Draft Regulation 6-41.1 were discussed, addressing digital literacy, digital citizenship, AI, computer science, and safety.

Digital citizenship was emphasized, focusing on maintaining balance, guarding privacy, managing stress online, and treating others with kindness and respect. The presentation also discussed the consequences of actions online, including cyberbullying. It highlighted the different types of screen time, distinguishing between social and passive activities and educational activities, with VBCPS only supporting educational screen time for intentional purposes.

The presentation concluded with a discussion on K-2 educational screen time and the integration of computer science standards in K-12 education, covering the integration of math and data analysis standards in K-8 and the social studies and science integration with algorithm standards.

Following the presentation, the School Board provided comments and inquired about keeping current with emerging technologies; AI software/programs; monitoring and protections; critical thinking; teacher training; parental involvement, acceptable use of technology form; clear expectations on use of AI, consistency; levels of AI usage; use tools effectively; digital literacy; Code of Virginia 22.1-24.2; educate and prepare students; AI use at high school level; instructional coaches; screen time usage, active and passive usage; types of screen time; teacher learning modules; cell phone use; what other school districts are doing; strategies for success; and challenges in staying ahead.

Building Usage and Redistricting: Melisa Ingram, executive director, Office of Facilities Services provided the School Board with an overview of focused on building usage and redistricting. The historical data showed an 8.9% decline over 12 years, with an average annual decline of 580 students. The more recent data indicated a 3.5% decline over 10



School Board of the City of Virginia Beach
Plaza Annex/Professional Development Center
641 Carriage Hill Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Tuesday, July 8 and Wednesday, July 9, 2025
School Board Retreat and Abridged Meeting
Page 4 of 10

years, with an average annual decline of 251 students. The Building Utilization Committee (BUC) conducted annual assessments of school attendance zones, building utilization, student membership, housing, and other demographic trends. The redistricting process involved monitoring the impact on student population and program needs, considering new housing developments and other demographic factors, and evaluating the impact after moving programs to other attendance zones.

The presentation outlined the factors to consider in the redistricting process, including optimal school space utilization, limiting multiple redistricting for areas to one time at each level, keeping neighborhoods together, and considering new housing and development. The process also aimed to unify feeder patterns, enhance transportation efficiencies, and provide long-term solutions to enhance the student educational experience.

The presentation ended with a discussion on the redistricting process. The possible timeline would include multiple meetings and workshops, public community meetings for information and input, and final actions by the School Board. Lastly, the approved redistricting for the school year 2025-26 impacted one elementary school and one middle school, affecting several zones.

Following the presentation, the School Board provided comments and inquired about rezoning and redistricting; attendance zones and transportation; reduction of portables; and monitoring population (growth/decline).

Closing Thoughts: Superintendent Robertson shared a general recap of the presentations and mentioned student achievement results, and the use, training and introduction of AI, and departments working together on AI.

The School Board recessed at 4:10 p.m. to prepare for the abridged School Board Abridged Meeting.



School Board of the City of Virginia Beach
Plaza Annex/Professional Development Center
641 Carriage Hill Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Tuesday, July 8 and Wednesday, July 9, 2025
School Board Retreat and Abridged Meeting
Page 5 of 10

Abridged School Board Meeting MINUTES
Tuesday, July 8, 2025
Plaza Annex - Professional Development Center
641 Carriage Hill Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23452
(757) 263-1000

- 1. *Call to Order and Attendance:*** Chair Brown convened the abridged meeting of the School Board at the Plaza Annex, Professional Development Center – Room B & C at 4:31 p.m. on the 9th day of July 2025. In addition to Superintendent Robertson, the following School Board Members were present in the Plaza Annex, Professional Development Center, Room B & C: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. Note: Mr. Culpepper was not in attendance.
- 2. *Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance***
- 3. *Adoption of the Abridged Meeting Agenda:*** Chair Brown called for a motion to approve the abridged meeting agenda as presented. Mr. Cummings made the motion, seconded by Mr. Callan. Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were ten (10) ayes in favor of the motion to approve the abridged meeting agenda as presented: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The motion passed, 10-0-0.
- 4. *Approval of Meeting Minutes***
 - A. June 24, 2025, Regular School Board Meeting: Chair Brown called for any modifications to the June 24, 2025, regular School Board Meeting minutes as presented. Hearing none, Chair Brown called for a motion to approve the June 24, 2025, minutes as presented. Mr. Callan made the motion, seconded by Ms. Rogers. Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were ten (10) ayes in favor of the motion to approve the June 24, 2025, minutes as presented:

Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The motion passed, 10-0-0.
- 5. *Action***
 - A. Personnel Report/Administrative Appointments: Chair Brown called for a motion to approve the July 8, 2025 personnel report and administrative appointment. Ms. Rogers made the motion, seconded by Vice Chair Weems, that the School Board approve the appointments, and the acceptance of the resignations, retirements and other employment actions as listed on July 8, 2025, personnel report along with the administrative appointment as recommended by the Superintendent. Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were ten (10) ayes in favor of the motion to approve the July 8, 2025, personnel report and administrative appointments: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The motion passed, 10-0-0.



School Board of the City of Virginia Beach
Plaza Annex/Professional Development Center
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Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Tuesday, July 8 and Wednesday, July 9, 2025
School Board Retreat and Abridged Meeting
Page 6 of 10

Superintendent Robertson mentioned the following appointments: Megan D. Davis, teacher, Woodstock Elementary, as assistant principal of Bettie F. Williams Elementary School; Erin M. Lucas, administrative assistant, Woodstock Elementary School, as assistant principal of Parkway Elementary School;

Melinda C. Pezzella, specialist professional learning, Office of Professional Growth and Innovation, as assistant principal of Windsor Woods Elementary School; Leticia W. Swift-Newsome, assistant principal, Parkway Elementary School, as principal of Centerville Elementary School; Brian D. Bevan, Jr., administrative assistant, Frank W. Cox High School, as assistant principal of Landstown Middle School; Jennifer C. Warren, administrative assistant, Bayside Middle School, as dean of students at Bayside Middle School;

Sammi L. Bethan, administrative assistant, First Colonial High School, as assistant principal of Landstown High School; Ebony S. Cherry, assistant principal, Independence Middle School, as assistant principal of Bayside High School; Rebecca L. Carter, instructional specialist, as coordinator, Title I, Department of Teaching and Learning; and Tiffany L. Mack, innovation and curriculum coordinator, Carlucci American International School of Lisbon, as coordinator, language arts, Department of Teaching and Learning.

6. **Closed Session:** There was no Closed Session.
7. **Adjournment:** Chair Brown adjourned the abridged meeting at 4:37 p.m.



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WEDNESDAY, JULY 9, 2025

Chair Brown convened the School Board Retreat at 9:01 a.m. on the 9th day of July 2025. In addition to Superintendent Robertson, the following School Board Member were present at the Plaza Annex, Professional Development Center: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers.

The following School Board Member was not in attendance: Mr. Culpepper.

Superintendent Robertson mentioned the feedback from the first day of the retreat was beneficial. He reviewed the retreat topics for the day.

Gifted Education Plan Update: Crystal Wilkerson, Ed.D., director, K-12 and Gifted Programs provided the School Board with an update on the gifted programs and services offered by the Office of Gifted Programs. The presentation highlighted several key aspects of the gifted programs in Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS). It detailed the signature offerings, including the staffing of Gifted Resource Teachers (GRTs) in every comprehensive home school, the use of division-level testing assessment specialists, and the presence of central office gifted administrators. Additionally, it was noted that VBCPS is one of the few Virginia school divisions with a school dedicated solely to gifted elementary and middle school students, as well as a visual arts and dance education program for gifted students.

The presentation also reviewed the various gifted and advanced academic models used in VBCPS, such as the push-in model, pull-out model, honors or advanced courses, differentiated and enriched instruction, cluster grouping, and grade or subject acceleration. It provided a retrospective look at the amendments made to the 2020-25 Local Plan of the Education of the Gifted, which included gathering feedback from multiple stakeholders and receiving School Board approval for the 2024-2029 Local Plan.

Recent changes to the gifted programs were discussed, including the removal of the Cognitive Abilities Test (CoGAT) as a 1st-grade screener, the removal of the 5th-grade interview, and the shift of identification to begin in 2nd grade. The initiatives undertaken during the 2024-2025 school year were also highlighted, such as increased communication with stakeholders, implementation of Gifted Learner Updates, and professional learning opportunities for Resource-Cluster Teachers and GRTs.

The presentation concluded with a look ahead to the 2025-2026 school year and beyond, focusing on the enhancement of the Resource-Cluster Model, the implementation of the K-2 Gifted Talent Development initiative, and the revised selection process at ODS. The strategic alignment of the gifted programs with the *Compass to 2030*

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Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Tuesday, July 8 and Wednesday, July 9, 2025
School Board Retreat and Abridged Meeting
Page 8 of 10

goals was also emphasized, highlighting the importance of communication, staff development, student well-being, and differentiated instruction.

Following the presentation, the School Board provided comments and inquired about cluster-model; ODS and home schools; research on gifted models; twice-exceptional students; percentage of students identified as gifted; meeting the needs of gifted students; number of gifted students in home schools; resources for gifted education; budget impacts; identification process for gifted; academies; spectrum of giftedness; cluster models at schools; and cluster classrooms and non-cluster classrooms.

CIP Update: Donald E. Robertson, Jr., Ph.D., superintendent, and Jack Freeman, chief operations officer, provided the School Board with a CIP Committee Update which covered the committee's purpose, members, summary of meetings, findings, and next steps. The CIP Committee aimed to explore new funding pathways for the CIP, investigate options for building a new PAHS (Princess Anne High School), share findings with the School Board, and incorporate these findings into the next CIP (Capital Improvement Program).

The committee held three meetings where they discussed protocols, conducted SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analyses for PAHS and CIP, and documented the minutes. Dr. Robertson reviewed and highlighted various items from the three meetings. Mr. Freeman continued the presentation and shared early findings highlighted challenges such as rising maintenance and construction costs, limited flexibility within the CIP, and the need for public/private partnerships. Specific considerations for PAHS included reviewing educational and space specifications, the impact of construction costs over time, and opportunities for private/public partnerships. The next steps involved upcoming meetings in July and August, with a School Board workshop scheduled for September.

Following the presentation, the School Board provided comments and inquired about collaboration with city; need to find a way to build new schools; seniors graduating early; partnerships with colleges; public-private partnerships; having a model for high school buildings; Princess Anne High School; construction costs and available funding; public education in the future; partnership with city; CTE paths for students; and all working together to solve challenges.

The School Board had a break from 11:05 a.m. to 11:16 p.m.

Jericho Road Update: School Board Members, Vice Chair Weems and Dr. Alveta Green provided the School Board with an overview of the existing property, which included three parcels of land with a total area of approximately 31.84 acres, a brief history of the property and outcomes from the Ad Hoc Committee.

The committee considered seven options for the use of the property, ranging from retaining the site and building to selling the property with various conditions. The committee recommended two primary options: transferring or selling the property to the City for open space or park use and selling the property with a Request for Information (RFI) with general parameters for reuse and a portion dedicated to open space or park.

The presentation outlined the steps and timelines for both recommended options, including securing funding, signing agreements, and completing necessary legal and construction work. The next opportunity for School Board action was scheduled for August 12, 2025.

Following the presentation, the School Board provided comments and inquired about supporting open space idea; size of space available; community park; underserved district area; support from City Council Members; maintenance

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Plaza Annex/Professional Development Center
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Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Tuesday, July 8 and Wednesday, July 9, 2025
School Board Retreat and Abridged Meeting
Page 9 of 10

of property would be a cost to VBCPS; intended use of property; community input, wanting open space/park; CIP and financial challenges; and support of options to transfer or sell property to the City.

Review of FERPA and Discipline Committee Best Practices: Kamala Lannetti, school board attorney and Leeane Turnbull, director, Office of Student Leadership provided the School Board with an overview of FERPA, a federal law enforced by the U.S. Department of Education, and its implications for educational records. It defined what constitutes an education record and highlighted the types of records that should not be released, such as grades, testing results, and health records.

The presentation also outlined who may access these records, including parents, legal guardians, and eligible students, and specified situations where consent is not required for record access. Additionally, it discussed the concept of directory information, which can be made available without consent, and the rights granted under FERPA, such as the right to see and request changes to records.

Other confidentiality laws relevant to education records were mentioned, including the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and the Virginia Public Records Retention Act. The presentation emphasized the importance of protecting confidential student records and provided guidelines for School Board Members on accessing and sharing these records.

Ms. Leeane Turnbull continued the presentation and covered data regarding the School Board Student Discipline Appeal Hearings for the 2024-2025 school year. She detailed the number of appeals for the 2024-2025 school year, which included 61 School Board (SB) appeals. The schedule for the 2025-2026 SB Appeal Hearings was outlined along with information on the packet access and review window, the duration of the hearings, the facilitation of the hearings, and the feedback process.

Following the presentation, the School Board provided comments and inquired about discipline hearings; family members attending; schedule of discipline hearings; and FERPA.

The School Board had a lunch break from 12:21 p.m. to 1:03 p.m.

Budget Process (Reconciliation and Plan for Board Input): Before the presentation, Superintendent Robertson shared information with the School Board regarding freezing of federal funds and the impact on grant funding (Title I, Title IV, Title III, and Title II) for VBCPS.

Crystal Pate, chief financial officer, provided the School Board with an overview of the budget reconciliation process, a detailed reconciling exercise, and a comparison of the city and school budget processes. The budget reconciliation process was explained as a method to align the proposed or adopted budget with actual revenues, expenditures, and priorities, ensuring that the budget remained balanced and resources were aligned with strategic goals. The reconciling exercise provided a fictional scenario to illustrate the process, including assumptions and further considerations.

Tiffany Jacobs, director, Office of Budget development lead the School Board Members in the reconciling exercise followed by a group discussion on budget priorities. Ms. Pate continued the presentation and compared the city and school budget processes, highlighting the differences in budget targets, classification of budget requests, and the timing of budget hearings and adoption. Additionally, considerations for school board engagement in the budget process were discussed, including the timing of state revenue information and potential changes to the SEON presentation schedule. The presentation concluded with the identification of



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Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Tuesday, July 8 and Wednesday, July 9, 2025
School Board Retreat and Abridged Meeting
Page 10 of 10

school board budget priorities, followed by the next steps in the budget process, including the budget kick-off with departments and the adoption of the budget calendar.

Budget Process (Pay Scale Considerations): Darnita L. Trotman, Ed.D., chief human resources officer, and Judith R. Wood, human resources specialist, provided the School Board with a presentation which evaluated the benefits and implications of three key initiatives: reassigning non-instructional staff remaining on the instructional scale, eliminating Pay Grade 7 on the Unified Pay Scale, and developing a new salary scale for senior leadership positions (Grades 26-28).

The reassignment of non-instructional staff aimed to align their licensure and professional identity with their actual scope of practice, fostering better collaboration and integrated student support. However, challenges included potential recruitment issues and the need to hold harmless a total of 46 employees. Eliminating Pay Grade 7 was proposed to improve recruitment, retention, and market competitiveness by upgrading roles and aligning pay with market rates. Challenges included pay compression, morale issues, and potential retention and recruitment challenges for higher-grade positions.

The development of a new salary scale for executive-level positions aimed to provide greater flexibility in managing salaries, support adjustments to keep pace with external market conditions, and enable targeted salary increases for senior leadership. However, it also posed challenges related to perception, morale, and potential turnover among senior leadership administrators. The presentation concluded with considerations for the School Board, emphasizing the strategic purpose and alignment of the proposed changes, their organizational and cultural impact, and the importance of clear communication and transparency.

Following the presentation, the School Board provided comments and inquired about compression and the effects on the division, impact of moving grade positions; compensation is high on the list of priorities; concerned about compensation; competitive market; every position is important; need to review the market to remain competitive; recruitment, retention, and morale; employee exit surveys; merit based compensation; turn-over, critical shortage areas, and hard to fill positions; reviewing budget and making reductions; importance of resources; and challenges in recruiting and retaining employees.

Retreat Summary: Superintendent Robertson recapped highlights from the retreat including AI, Gifted Plan, and budget and thanked the School Board for their input and feedback. The following priorities were shared from the outcome of budget exercise: compensation/benefit packages, CIP, student achievement/academic outcomes, and workforce development.

Chair Brown thanked the School Board for their insights and collaboration. Chair Brown adjourned the School Board Retreat at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Regina M. Toneatto, Clerk of the School Board

Approved:

Kathleen J. Brown, School Board Chair