



VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CHARTING THE COURSE

School Board Services

Kathleen J. Brown, Chair
District 10

Carolyn D. Weems, Vice Chair
District 9

Mark Bohensiel
District 3

Michael Callan
District 6

David Culpepper
District 8

Matt W. Cummings
District 7

Rose M. Dwyer
District 1

Sharon R. Felton
At-Large

Dr. Alveta J. Green
District 4

Kimberly A. Melnyk
District 2

Melinda J. Rogers
District 5

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

School Board Regular Meeting MINUTES **Tuesday, November 25, 2025**

School Administration Building #6, Municipal Center
2512 George Mason Drive
P.O. Box 6038
Virginia Beach, VA 23456
(757) 263-1000

Chair Brown convened the meeting at 3:30 p.m. on the 25th day of November 2025 and announced the meeting would begin with a Closed Session. In addition to Superintendent Robertson, the following School Board Members were present in the School Administration Building #6, School Board Chamber: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers.

Note: Mr. Bohensiel was not present for the Closed Session.

Closed Session: At 3:31 p.m., Vice Chair Weems made the following motion, seconded by Ms. Melnyk, that the School Board recess into Closed Session in accordance with the exceptions to open meetings law set forth in Code of Virginia §2.2-3711, Part A, Paragraph 1, as amended, to deliberate on the following matters:

1. Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, discipline, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body; and evaluation of performance of departments or schools of public institutions of higher education where such evaluation will necessarily involve discussion of the performance of specific individuals. Any teacher shall be permitted to be present during a closed meeting in which there is a discussion or consideration of a disciplinary matter that involves the teacher and some student and the student involved in the matter is present, provided that the teacher makes a written request to be present to the presiding officer of the appropriate board. Nothing in this subdivision, however, shall be construed to authorize a closed meeting by a local governing body or an elected school board to discuss compensation matters that affect the membership of such body or board collectively.

Namely to discuss:

- A. Personnel matters – School Board Attorney's contract.

Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were ten (10) ayes in favor of the motion to recess into Closed Session: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers.
The motion passed, 10-0-0.

The School Board recessed into Closed Session at 4:05 p.m.



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Individuals present for discussion in the order in which matters were discussed:

- A. Personnel matters – School Board Attorney’s contract: School Board Members: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers; Donald E. Robertson, Ph.D., superintendent; Deborah Yeng Collins, attorney, Yeng Collins Law, PLLC; and Regina M. Toneatto, school board clerk.

The School Board reconvened at 3:40 p.m.

Certification of Closed Session: Vice Chair Weems read the Certification of Closed Session:

WHEREAS, the School Board of the City of Virginia Beach has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 (D) of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this School Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board of the City of Virginia Beach hereby certifies 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 by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered.

Ms. Dwyer made the motion, seconded by Dr. Green. Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were ten (10) ayes in favor of the motion for Certification of Closed Session: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The motion passed, 10-0-0.

Vice Chair Weems made the following motion, seconded by Ms. Dwyer, that the School Board approve Amendment #2 to the School Board Attorney’s contract and authorize legal counsel and the superintendent to take the necessary actions to finalize the amendment. 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 Amendment #2 to the School Board Attorney’s contract and authorize legal counsel and the superintendent to take the necessary actions to finalize the amendment: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The motion passed, 10-0-0.

1. ***Administrative, Informal, and Workshop:*** In addition to Superintendent Robertson, the following School Board Members were present for the Administrative, Informal, and Workshop Session: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel (arrived at 4:00 p.m.), Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers.
 - A. School Board Administrative Matters and Reports: Chair Brown mentioned the December sign-up sheets for one-to-one meetings with Superintendent Robertson and school visits with Superintendent Robertson. The Student Advisory Council is scheduled for December 4th at Landstown High School from 3:15 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Ms. Melnyk mentioned the upcoming School Board Meeting for next year and the meeting scheduled before the Thanksgiving break.

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- B. Literacy Update: Daneille Colucci, Ed.D., chief academic officer and Abigail Dougherty, acting director, Student Services, provided the School Board with an update regarding literacy in grades Kindergarten through Grade 8. The presentation outlined how the district strengthened reading through alignment with the 2024 English Standards of Learning and the implementation of evidence-based literacy instruction (EBLI). The presentation explained the district's balanced assessment approach, which integrated planning, teaching, and responding cycles.

Various assessment types were discussed, including screening assessments to identify students at risk of reading difficulties, diagnostic assessments to inform targeted instruction, criterion-referenced summative assessments measuring grade-level proficiency, and norm-referenced assessments comparing student performance to peers. The team highlighted the Virginia Literacy Screening System (VALLSS) for grades K-3 and 4-8, detailing the components assessed—such as word recognition, language comprehension, and reading comprehension.

Additionally, the presentation addressed the use of NWEA MAP Reading Data as a norm-referenced measure to identify strengths and growth opportunities, enabling staff to respond to student needs and differentiate learning experiences through intervention and extension.

After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding testing and how many times testing occurs; concerns about over-testing students; required assessments; VALLSS testing; reading plan; interventions; SOL assessment; reading on grade level; small group and one-to-one instruction; Reading Specialists; and various assessment types.

- C. AI Update: Ryan Goldberg, Ph.D., Director, Office of Instructional Technology, provided the School Board with an update on artificial intelligence (AI). The presentation outlined the current timeline and emphasized ongoing professional learning and collaboration among educators. It highlighted that teachers' use of AI was guided by clear expectations and ethical standards, with required training sessions implemented to ensure responsible integration. Staff participated in ongoing professional learning focused on responsible AI use, with training tailored for high school, elementary, and middle school educators.

A practical high school example demonstrated how AI tools, such as Gemini, were used to support debate preparation and argumentative writing. Students drafted arguments, used AI to generate counterarguments, and then revised their work to strengthen their claims.

The presentation also addressed efforts to increase community awareness, including distributing a letter to parents, launching a digital literacy webpage focused on AI, and seeking parent involvement and feedback. Guardrails for AI use at school and home were discussed, and next steps included additional professional learning sessions, ongoing stakeholder feedback, expanded training for central and support staff, updates to the digital literacy site, and a community webinar.

After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding limited access; guardrails at school and home; collaboration with other departments regarding use of AI; professional learning for staff; community engagement; selective and intentional use of AI; Acceptable Use Policy; Securly and Chromebook use; and AI prompts used.

2. **Closed Session**: At 4:54 P.m., Vice Chair Weems made the following motion seconded by Mr. Culpepper, that the School Board recess into Closed Session in accordance with the exceptions to open meetings law set forth



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in Code of Virginia §2.2-3711, Part A, Paragraphs 7, 8, and 12, as amended, to deliberate on the following matters:

7. Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants about actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in an open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body. For the purposes of this subdivision, "probable litigation" means litigation that has been specifically threatened or on which the public body or its legal counsel has a reasonable basis to believe will be commenced by or against a known party. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to permit the closure of a meeting merely because an attorney representing the public body is in attendance or is consulted on a matter.
8. Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to permit the closure of a meeting merely because an attorney representing the public body is in attendance or is consulted on a matter.
12. Information relating to the negotiation and award of a specific contract where competition or bargaining is involved and where the release of such information would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. Such information shall not be withheld after the public body has decided to award or not to award the contract. In the case of procurement transactions conducted pursuant to the Virginia Public Procurement Act (§ [2.2-4300](#) et seq.), the provisions of this subdivision shall not apply, and any release of information relating to such transactions shall be governed by the Virginia Public Procurement Act.

Namely to discuss:

- A. Unsolicited PPEA offer.
- B. Status of pending litigation or administrative cases.
- C. Consultation with legal counsel regarding probable litigation and pending litigation matters.

Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were eleven (11) ayes in favor of the motion to recess into Closed Session. The motion passed unanimously, 11-0-0.

The School Board recessed into Closed Session at 4:57 p.m.

Individuals present for discussion in the order in which matters were discussed:

- A. Unsolicited PPEA offer: School Board Members: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers; Kamala H. Lannetti, school board attorney; Donald E. Robertson, Ph.D., superintendent; Dannielle Hall-McIvor, senior school board attorney; Simone S. Boothe, associate school board attorney; Jack Freeman, chief operations officer; Melisa Ingram, executive director, Office of Facilities Services; and Regina M. Toneatto, school board clerk.

The School Board reconvened at 5:27 p.m.

Certification of Closed Session: Vice Chair Weems read the Certification of Closed Session:



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WHEREAS, the School Board of the City of Virginia Beach has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 (D) of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this School Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board of the City of Virginia Beach hereby certifies 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 by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered.

Ms. Dwyer made the motion, seconded by Dr. Green. Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were eleven (11) ayes in favor of the motion for Certification of Closed Session. The motion passed unanimously, 11-0-0.

3. **School Board Recess:** Chair Brown adjourned the Administrative, Informal, and Workshop session at 5:28 p.m.
4. **Formal Meeting (School Administration Building #6 – School Board Room)..... 6:00 p.m.**
5. **Call to Order and Roll Call:** Chair Brown convened the meeting of the School Board at the School Administration Building #6, School Board Chamber at 6:02 p.m. on the 25th day of November 2025. In addition to Superintendent Robertson, the following School Board Members were present in the School Administration Building #6, School Board Chamber: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers.
6. **Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance**
7. **Student, Employee and Public Awards and Recognition:** There were no awards presented at the meeting.
8. **Adoption of the Agenda**
 - A. Adoption of the agenda as presented: Chair Brown called for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Dwyer made the motion, seconded by Ms. Melnyk. A discussion followed regarding the carry-over motion from November 10, 2025.
 - B. Carry-over motion from November 10, 2025 – Resolution: Chair Brown mentioned the carry-over motion from Mr. Cummings from the last School Board Meeting and read the following: a motion to amend the agenda to include the Resolution Acknowledging the Advisory Referendum Results in Support of Adopting the 10-1 District Voting System for the School Board of the City of Virginia Beach as Item #15C under Action. Mr. Cummings approved the motion and was seconded by Ms. Dwyer. Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote on the carry-over motion from November 10, 2025 as stated above. The School Board Clerk announced there were five (5) ayes in favor of the carry-over motion from November 10, 2025: Mr. Cummings, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. There were six (6) nays opposed to the carry-over motion from November 10, 2025: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, and Ms. Dwyer. The motion failed, 5-6-0.

Chair Brown called for any discussion on the initial adoption of the agenda – to approve the agenda as presented. Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were eleven (11) ayes in favor of the motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously, 11-0-0.



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9. Superintendent's Report (second monthly meeting) and recognitions (first and second monthly meetings)

Superintendent's Report: The Superintendent reported that the Third Annual Turkey Bowl raised \$6,085 for the Beach Bags program, which provides healthy meals to students in need. At Lynnhaven Middle School, National Junior Honor Society students organized a surprise appreciation lunch for cafeteria staff, expressing gratitude through homemade food, flowers, and heartfelt messages. Throughout Military Family Appreciation Month, Virginia Beach City Public Schools celebrated military-connected families with activities such as "Remember Everyone Deployed Day" and care package projects led by the Anchored4Life club at Ocean Lakes High School. The district's commitment to military families was evident, with 66 schools earning the Purple Star Designation and over 11,300 military-connected students served. The Superintendent also shared a video marking the 50th anniversary of the Beach District, highlighting teamwork and community spirit.

10. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- A. November 10, 2025 Regular School Board Meeting: Chair Brown called for a motion to approve the November 10, 2025, minutes as presented. Ms. Dwyer made the motion, seconded by Mr. Cummings. Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were eleven (11) ayes in favor of the motion to approve the November 10, 2025, minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously, 11-0-0.

11. Public Comments (until 8:00 p.m.)

There were four (4) in-person speakers. The topics included supporting staff; giving staff a voice; collective bargaining; underpaid staff; health premiums; teachers and staff struggling; Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE); and Renaissance Academy.

The Public Comments concluded at 6:23 p.m.

12. Information

- A. Interim Financial Statements – October 2025: Daniel Hopkins, director, Office of Business Services provided the School Board information on the interim financial statements. As of October 30th, the overall revenue trend remained acceptable for the fiscal year. The State introduced a new Composite Index for FY27 and FY28, which increased slightly, though it did not affect the current fiscal year. Federal revenues showed a positive trend, highlighted by the receipt of approximately \$5.0 million in Impact Aid payments year-to-date. Local revenue was acceptable, with 33% of city transfers received, representing four months of funding. Other revenue sources were acceptable but had declined by about \$400,000 compared to the previous year, primarily due to the prior year's JUUL settlement. Sales tax receipts were higher than the previous year by approximately \$1.1 million. Expenditures and encumbrances continued to follow an acceptable trend.
- B. Textbook Adoption: Nursing – Anatomy and Physiology: Sara Lockett, Ed.D., director, Office of Technical and Career Education, provided the School Board information regarding the recommended textbook for the Practical Nursing program at the Virginia Beach Technical and Career Education Center. This textbook is recommended by the Practical Nursing Program Textbook Adoption Committee for implementation in the fall of 2026.

Course Titles	Textbook	Publisher	Copyright
Practical Nursing I & II • Anatomy & Physiology	<i>Human Anatomy and Physiology</i> , 3rd Edition	Pearson	2025



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The recommended text, "Human Anatomy and Physiology, 3rd Edition," was chosen for its alignment with nursing standards and instructional support. Implementation costs for the first-choice text were outlined, with an initial investment of \$6,599.60 and annual replacement costs of \$395.98, totaling \$6,995.58 over three years. The proposal aimed to ensure that students were well-prepared for practical nursing pathways and licensure, while maintaining fiscal responsibility in textbook selection.

After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding the textbook choices; textbook committee; increase cost of textbooks; students in the program; teacher resources; and student pass rate in the program.

- C. Renaissance Academy Alternative Education Program: Year 3 Outcome Evaluation: Noel Williams, Ph.D., program evaluation specialist, Office of Research and Evaluation, provided the School Board with the Renaissance Academy Alternative Education Program: Year-Three Outcome Evaluation Report and the administration's recommendations. The review encompassed program components, student and staff characteristics, referral and transition processes, family involvement, progress toward student outcome goals, stakeholder perceptions, actions on prior recommendations, and program costs.

The review found that the Academy provided academic and social-emotional support, with most students attending for the first time and for short durations. Staff were experienced and engaged in professional learning. Referral and transition processes were improved, though communication with families and home schools remained a focus. Positive staff-student relationships and expanded support services were noted but gains in academic performance and behavior were mixed. The program's total cost for the year was \$15.8 million, with staffing and transportation as the largest expenses.

The evaluation concluded with seven recommendations, including continuing the program with modifications, strengthening communication systems, enhancing transition processes, improving instructional practices, and providing additional graduation supports. The administration concurred with these recommendations and began implementing new structures, communication protocols, and expanded academic and support opportunities.

After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding transition to Renaissance Academy (RA); gaining strategies for success while attending RA; demographics; working with comprehensive schools; graduation rates; CTE opportunities; parents and communication; motivation to attend school; referral and transition process; recommendations; measures of student success; student characteristics; building relationships with local colleges/universities; enrollment-employment-enlistment; welding program; academic performance; behavioral issues; enhance academic outcomes; student supports; and data provided in presentation.

13. **Return to public comments if needed:** As noted under Agenda Item #11, the Public Comments concluded at 6:23 p.m.
14. **Consent Agenda:** Chair Brown read the following items on the Consent Agenda:
- A. Policy Review Committee (PRC) Recommendations: Recommended that the School Board approve the recommendations regarding the amendment of certain policies as recommended by the Policy Review Committee at its October 29, 2025 meeting.
1. Policy 3-23/Sale/Exchange/Lease/Disposal of Property: The PRC recommends increasing the threshold in Section B from \$5000 to \$10,000.



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2. Policy 5-31/Scholastic Records: The PRC recommends adding language directly from the Virginia Code to allow for the use of "Other" as an ethnicity designation when authorized and to update the legal references.
3. Policy 7-59/Relations with Employment/Career Agencies: Employment Counseling and Placement Services: There are no recommended changes to this policy; it is being reviewed in accordance with the 5-year review requirement.
- B. Textbook Adoption: Elementary Math: Recommended that the School Board approve the elementary mathematics textbook for grades kindergarten through fifth as recommended by the Elementary Mathematics Textbook Adoption Committee for implementation in the fall of 2026.

Course Title	Textbook	Publisher	Copyright
Elementary Mathematics K-5	Kiddom Virginia Math	Kiddom	2024

- C. Green Run ES HVAC & Scratch Cooking Improvements: Recommended that the School Board approve a motion authorizing the Superintendent to execute a contract with Spacemakers, Inc. for the Green Run ES HVAC & Scratch Cooking Improvements in the amount of \$1,905,000.
- D. Independence MS Roof Replacement, Kitchen HVAC & Scratch Cooking Improvements: Recommended that the School Board approve a motion authorizing the Superintendent to execute a contract with Virtexco for the Independence MS Roof Replacement, Kitchen HVAC & Scratch Cooking Improvements in the amount of \$5,327,000.
- E. Religious Exemption(s): Recommended that the School Board approve RE-26-10.

After reading the items on the Consent Agenda, Chair Brown asked if there were any objections to voting on the Consent Agenda as presented. Hearing none, Chair Brown called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Ms. Dwyer made the motion, seconded by Vice Chair Weems. Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were eleven (11) ayes in favor of the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously, 11-0-0.

15. Action

- A. Personnel Report / Administrative Appointments: Chair Brown called for a motion to approve the November 25, 2025, personnel report and administrative appointments. Ms. Dwyer made the motion, seconded by Ms. Melnyk, that the School Board approve the appointments, and the acceptance of the resignations, retirements and other employment actions as listed on the November 25, 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 eleven (11) ayes in favor of the motion to approve the November 25, 2025 personnel report and administrative appointments. The motion passed unanimously, 11-0-0.
Note: There were no administrative appointments this evening.

- B. Legislative Agenda: Chair Brown called for a motion to approve the 2026 Legislative Agenda as proposed by the School Board Legislative Committee. Ms. Dwyer made the motion, seconded by Dr. Green.

Vice Chair Weems made the following substitute motion regarding the Legislative Agenda, and seconded by Mr. Bohenstiel – see italicized, bolded, and underlined words for Vice Chair Weems' substitutions:



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WEEMS SUB MOTION
Virginia Beach City Public Schools
2026 Legislative Agenda

BUDGET AND FUNDING

Support Full Funding of Biennial Re-Benchmarking

In each odd year, the Department of Education (DOE) provides the Governor and the General Assembly with an estimate of the “rebenchmarked” cost of continuing the existing Direct Aid to Public Education programs for the next biennium. This rebenchmarking is part of the biennial budget development process and includes updates in the input data to determine the current cost of the programs. The cost projections should not reflect any changes in policy or technical methodology. The Standards of Quality (SOQ) provide 60% of the state funds for public schools in Virginia.

Since rebenchmarking is a process to update the state funding formulas to reflect the current costs facing Local Education Agencies (LEA) (e.g. increases in fuel costs, health care costs, teacher salaries, etc.), failure to fully fund rebenchmarking would signify a decrease in the state’s commitment to funding K-12 education. VBCPS supports full funding of the biennial rebenchmarking of the Standards of Quality funding formulas. VBCPS opposes any formula changes to the rebenchmarking methodology that would artificially decrease the actual costs to fund K-12 education. Finally, VBCPS opposes any measure that would shift SOQ and other recurring cost programs into the Lottery Fund.

Teacher Salary Increase and Recruitment and Retention

Nearly every school division across Virginia is experiencing extensive teacher shortages. While filling all positions has at times always been challenging for school divisions, the last several years have proven to be particularly difficult for school divisions. The current teacher shortage problem is at a crisis point, as schools are not able to fill needed positions.

While Virginia has provided resources for teacher salaries in recent years, earnings for Virginia teachers continue to lag the national average. Virginia teacher salaries have one of the widest gaps between their pay levels and those of comparable professionals in the country and with continued pressure on wages from persistent inflation this disparity has become increasingly acute. To bring Virginia’s average teacher salary up to the national average, Virginia must continue to take significant steps to invest in its teacher workforce.

The General Assembly should also consider additional pathways for retired teachers to return to the profession, including allowing fully licensed retired teachers to return to the profession without having to go through the licensure process again, as long as they are able to demonstrate competency in the subject they are teaching.

Increase behavior and mental health staff available to students to aid in early identification and support of students exhibiting mental health needs.

VBCPS requests the General Assembly continue to provide additional resources for mental health clinicians, attendance interventionists, and behavior specialists. These staff members should have specialized training to target students’ complex behavioral needs and have the experience to assess the mental health status of students, recommend an appropriate level of care, implement/assist with implementing appropriate interventions, and respond to crisis situations.



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However, VBCPS support retaining local authority and flexibility to best determine the resources and programs required to meet the student health and school health. VBCPS requests that any state-mandated program designed to increase mental health services available to students be fully funded by the state and not result in an additional unfunded mandate.

Delivering Quality Special Education Services

VBCPS has approximately 9,023 students who qualify for special education services. VBCPS spends in excess of \$141,507,281.61 per year, or approximately \$15,670.80 per qualified student, on special education programs and services, of which approximately 67% is funded locally. VBCPS is opposed to any change in the delivery of special education services or special education funding that would shift even a larger portion of the funding responsibility to the locality. This includes changes to the regional special education programs that either reduce the overall state allotment or reduce the funding to an individual regional program. Such reductions in funding will not reduce VBCPS's obligations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) but rather shift a larger portion to the locality.

Dedicated State Funding for Capital Improvements

VBCPS supports the reinstatement of dedicated state funds for capital improvements. Since 2010, local governments and school boards have carried the full burden of capital improvements for public schools. VBCPS requests the General Assembly include funding to support any accessibility findings and recommendations from HB2278 (2025).

Continued Authorization AND FUNDING for Regional Recovery School

Unlike other recovery schools in Virginia, VBCPS adopted a fully regional approach to leverage access to resources in Region 2. While VBCPS remains the fiscal agent and program developer, the recovery school is housed in Chesapeake, and each participating school division has a signed MOU and is an active participant in the program's governance and success.

As recovery schools are not specifically enumerated as an option under the "Joint and regional schools" statute, VBCPS requests that regional recovery schools be added to the list of authorized regional schools. Currently, VBCPS is using startup funds and authorization through the appropriations act to develop the regional recovery school. Until such legislation is passed, VBCPS requests continuing authorization to operate the recovery school. **VBCPS also supports ongoing, sustained operational state funding for the Hampton Roads Regional Recovery School.**

OTHER LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

School Bus Driver Shortage

VBCPS, like many school divisions across the state and country, is experiencing an extreme shortage of school bus drivers, resulting in delays in getting students to and from school, field trips and after-school activities. Virginia needs to take immediate steps to increase the number of qualified school bus drivers on a statewide basis. As initial steps, Virginia should provide designated funding sources for the training of potential new school bus drivers, as well as address the licensing requirements and expediting the licensure timeline. Additionally, Virginia should work closely with our federal delegation to create a



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specific school bus commercial driver's license for those individuals who are exclusively interested in becoming bus drivers.

Eliminate or Fund Currently Unfunded Mandates

The total impact of state and federal unfunded mandates to VBCPS was \$44 million in 2023. Of the \$44 million, approximately \$16 million are mandates that originated from either the General Assembly or the Virginia Department of Education. These mandates range from new reporting requirements, to new policies and procedures, to unfunded equipment requirements. VBCPS is opposed to any state mandates requiring local school divisions to assume additional responsibilities or provide additional services without the state's share of funding for such mandates. VBCPS supports the elimination of funding for existing unfunded mandates. **VBCPS opposes any legislation that would remove local school board authority to negotiate employment contracts between the school district and its employees. VBCPS believes local School Boards are best positioned to manage employee agreements that reflect community needs, uphold fiscal responsibility and support a stable, high-quality educational workforce. Legislation, including but not limited to collective bargaining that would remove or reduce local authority often leads to an unfunded fiscal impact.**

Assessment Reform

VBCPS supports recent efforts to update the SOL assessments to be more performance-based, mimic real-life situations, and better prepare students for success in higher education and in the workplace. While VBCPS also supports recent legislation to update and modernize the assessment process, VBCPS requests several changes to the recently passed legislation prior to the legislation going into effect, including additional flexibility for end-of-course testing windows (specifically for students who require additional accommodations under an IEP or 504 plan), clarifying how many assessments can be administered throughout the year, and delaying counting the mandatory end-of-course assessment until a new SOL assessment contract is awarded and implemented.

VBCPS supported recent efforts to expand the use of growth measures by the General Assembly; however, the implementation of those efforts did not achieve the objectives of the original intent. Given the staff resources required to implement the assessments as required by VDOE, the data garnered from the reports was not as impactful as the student data VBCPS was already acquiring through previous assessments. VBCPS continues to support the use of growth measures and through year assessments, but requests continued local flexibility and control over how the assessments are implemented.

Chair Brown noted the substitute motion will be voted on before the original. A discussion followed regarding the substitute motion; funding for Recovery School; grant funding for Recovery School; staff support; maintaining funding for Recovery School; maintaining authority at the city level; local government; collective bargaining; pending legislation; and the number of students at Recovery School. Chair Brown commented that the vote would be on Vice Chair Weems' substitute motion and if it passes there will be no more discussion on the topic. Vice Chair Weems clarified the vote on the substitute motion to include the data numbers (see highlighted portion). Chair Brown called for a vote on Vice Chair Weems' substitute motion. The School Board Clerk announced there were six (6) ayes in favor of the substitute motion:

Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, and Ms. Dwyer.



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There were five (5) nays opposed to the substitute motion: Mr. Cummings, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The substitute motion passed, 6-5-0.

- 16. Committee, Organization or Board Reports:** Mr. Bohenstiel shared information regarding Green Run Collegiate which included student enrollment, absenteeism rate, incoming applications, promotion of the program, and the upcoming Gala event. Dr. Green mentioned the upcoming Legislative Breakfast on December 4 at 8:30 a.m. at Bayside High School. Ms. Rogers mentioned a letter sent regarding support for the 10-1 resolution. Vice Chair Weems mentioned the Gifted Advisory Committee will be meeting on December 1 at 6:00 p.m. at the Plaza Annex. Mr. Bohenstiel mentioned the regional playoff game between Green Run and Indian River.

Mr. Cummings had a question regarding Roberts' Rules of Order; Ms. Lannetti, school board attorney, mentioned our Bylaws and Appendix A; and it was noted that the Chair did mention the substitute motion and outcome of the vote if it passed.

- 17. Return to Administrative, Informal, Workshop or Closed Session matters:**

Note: Ms. Melnyk left the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

At 8:05 p.m., Vice Chair Weems made the following motion, seconded by Ms. Dwyer, that the School Board recessed into Closed Session in accordance with the exceptions to open meetings law set forth in Code of Virginia §2.2-3711, Part A, Paragraphs 7, 8, and 12, as amended, to deliberate on the following matters:

7. Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants about actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in an open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body. For the purposes of this subdivision, "probable litigation" means litigation that has been specifically threatened or on which the public body or its legal counsel has a reasonable basis to believe will be commenced by or against a known party. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to permit the closure of a meeting merely because an attorney representing the public body is in attendance or is consulted on a matter.
8. Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to permit the closure of a meeting merely because an attorney representing the public body is in attendance or is consulted on a matter.
12. Information relating to the negotiation and award of a specific contract where competition or bargaining is involved and where the release of such information would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. Such information shall not be withheld after the public body has decided to award or not to award the contract. In the case of procurement transactions conducted pursuant to the Virginia Public Procurement Act (§ 2.2-4300 et seq.), the provisions of this subdivision shall not apply, and any release of information relating to such transactions shall be governed by the Virginia Public Procurement Act.

Namely to discuss:

- A. Unsolicited PPEA offer.
- B. Status of pending litigation or administrative cases.
- C. Consultation with legal counsel regarding probable litigation and pending litigation matters.



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Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were ten (10) ayes in favor of the motion to recess into Closed Session: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, and Ms. Rogers. The motion passed 10-0-0.

The School Board recessed into Closed Session at 8:08 p.m.

Individuals present for discussion in the order in which matters were discussed:

- A. Unsolicited PPEA offer: School Board Members: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, and Ms. Rogers; Kamala H. Lannetti, school board attorney; Donald E. Robertson, Ph.D., superintendent; Dannielle Hall-McIvor, senior school board attorney; Simone S. Boothe, associate school board attorney; Jack Freeman, chief operations officer; Melisa Ingram, executive director, Office of Facilities Services; and Regina M. Toneatto, school board clerk.

Jack Freeman, chief operations officer and Melisa Ingram, executive director, Office of Facilities Services, left the Closed Session at 8:24 p.m.

- B. Status of pending litigation or administrative cases; and
C. Consultation with legal counsel regarding probable litigation and pending litigation matters:
School Board Members: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, and Ms. Rogers; Kamala H. Lannetti, school board attorney; Donald E. Robertson, Ph.D., superintendent; Dannielle Hall-McIvor, senior school board attorney; Simone S. Boothe, associate school board attorney; and Regina M. Toneatto, school board clerk.

The School Board reconvened at 8:29 p.m.

Certification of Closed Session: Vice Chair Weems read the Certification of Closed Session:

WHEREAS, the School Board of the City of Virginia Beach has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 (D) of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this School Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board of the City of Virginia Beach hereby certifies 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 by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered.



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Ms. Dwyer made the motion, seconded by Mr. Culpepper. Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were ten (10) ayes in favor of the motion for Certification of Closed Session: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Callan, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, and Ms. Rogers. The motion passed, 10-0-0.

18. Adjournment: Chair Brown adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Regina M. Toneatto, Clerk of the School Board

Approved:

Kathleen J. Brown, School Board Chair