

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE SUFFOLK CITY SCHOOL BOARD

Thursday, February 12, 2026 ~ 6:00 P.M.

Suffolk City Hall, 442 W. Washington Street, Suffolk, VA 23434

Board Members Present:

Sean McGee, *Chair*
Heather Howell, *Vice Chair*
Dr. Dawn Marie Brittingham
Valerie Fields
Karen Jenkins
Tyron Riddick
Kimberly Slingluff

Administrative Staff Present:

Dr. John B. Gordon III, *Superintendent*
Wendell M. Waller, *Esquire, School Board Attorney*
Tarshia L. Gardner, *Clerk*
Keesha Johnson, *Deputy Clerk*

OPENING OF PUBLIC MEETING/WORK SESSION

➤ Call to Order

Board Chair McGee called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

MOTION TO GO INTO A CLOSED MEETING

➤ Attorney Wendell Waller read the following motion

A motion is needed to go into a closed meeting to discuss the following items and subjects pursuant to the Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711:

1. The discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, and more specifically site selection for a new Elephants Fork Elementary School.
2. The discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, where the discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, and more specifically a discussion regarding the award of a contract to provide forensic audit services for Suffolk Public Schools pursuant to RFP 1910-F Forensic Audit.
3. The discussion or consideration of a student disciplinary matter regarding Case Number 2526-3RR that will involve the School Board's review of the student's disciplinary record and the student's placement at Turlington Woods School where the discussion in an open meeting would involve the disclosure of information contained in the student's scholastic record.

Which is authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, found at Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(2), (A)(3) and (A)(29).

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to go into the closed meeting as read by Attorney Waller.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 7 to 0.

Board Chair McGee reminded Board Members that personal devices are not allowed in the closed meeting.

RE-OPENING OF PUBLIC MEETING

- Meeting Called to Order
Board Chair McGee re-opened the public meeting at 7:03 p.m.
- Pledge of Allegiance
Vice Chair Howell led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Moment of Silence
A moment of silence was observed by all in attendance.
- The Mission of Suffolk Public Schools
Board Member Dr. Brittingham read the mission of SPS.
- Musical Selection – KFHS Jazz Band – Directed by Bernard Bradley
The KFHS Jazz Band performed two selections: “My Dinner with Ronald,” and “Jammin’ with Charlie.”

Board members enjoyed the performance and congratulated the students and Mr. Bradley for a job well done.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

- Attorney Wendell Waller read the following certification
A Resolution of Certification of the Closed Meeting of February 12, 2026 Pursuant to Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia

WHEREAS, the School Board of the City of Suffolk 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 of the Code of Virginia, requires a certification by the 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 Suffolk hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this resolution of certification applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the School Board of the City of Suffolk.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to approve the Certification of the Closed Meeting as read by Attorney Waller.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 7 to 0.

ACTION ON CLOSED MEETING ITEM

➤ Student Appeal #2025/26 – 6RR

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to uphold the decision of the Student Services Committee.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 7 to 0.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

➤ Approval of Agenda:

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Fields seconded the motion to approve the agenda as presented.

After a brief discussion, Vice Chair Howell amended her motion: Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to approve the agenda with the addition of two (Info/Action) items added to “New Business”: 1) Discussion Regarding Creating an On-Boarding Handbook for New School Board Members, and 2) Discussion Regarding Board Member Membership and Training.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 4 / Nay: 3 (Fields, Jenkins, Riddick) / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 4 to 3.

After approval of the agenda, Board Chair McGee and Vice Chair Howell recognized School Board Clerks Tarshia Gardner and Keesha Johnson for Clerk Appreciation Week. They also congratulated Dr. Gordon for being named Region II Superintendent of the Year.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS ON AGENDA TOPICS

➤ Citizen Comments on Agenda Items

The Clerk read the statement of decorum for speakers who sign up to address the Board.

1. Valerie Boykin – Re: Commendation for Superintendent, Dr. John B. Gordon III. Ms. Boykin, President of the NAACP (Suffolk Nansemond Branch), along with branch members and various citizen groups (The Suffolk Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance (SIMA), The National Council of Negro Women, and local branches of the Divine 9 Fraternities and Sororities) congratulated Dr. Gordon for being named the Region II Superintendent of the Year and asked the board to join her in supporting Dr. Gordon as he competes at the state level while working hard to move the division forward.
2. Belinda Scott Pitts – Re: Words of Appreciation to Superintendent, Dr. John B. Gordon III. Ms. Scott Pitts, President of the Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., congratulated Dr. Gordon on being named Region II Superintendent of the year and thanked him for his service, leadership, dedication, and partnership extended to their chapter through various initiatives.

3. Rene Joe – Re: Congratulations/Support of Dr. Gordon’s Superintendent Award. Ms. Joe, President of the Epsilon Theta Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc., expressed their support of Dr. Gordon and congratulated him for his professional excellence and commitment to the students, families, educators and the community as they celebrate him being named Region II Superintendent of the Year.

REPORTS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

➤ Good News Report

Anthonette Dickens, Communications and Community Engagement Officer, highlighted the good news happening within the division. Dr. Gordon, Division Superintendent, and Mr. McGee, School Board Chair, recognized and congratulated the following:

- City-Wide Teachers of the Year (Justine Spina, Elementary School TOY-SWES / Sara McDonald, High School TOY-LHS / Stephanie Alston, Middle School & Division-Wide TOY-KFMS). Dr. Gordon also congratulated, soon-to-be, “Dr.” Stephanie Alston for defending her dissertation at Oxford University.
- Board Clerks, Tarshia Gardner and Keesha Hicks for School Board Clerk Appreciation Week.
- Dr. Gordon was congratulated and recognized for being named Region II Superintendent of the Year.

➤ Calendar of Special Events

Dr. Gordon, highlighted information from the calendar of special events. He thanked the school community, especially a parent, Ms. Rouse and the admin team at NPES, and Chief Buie, for their due diligence, level of awareness, calm demeanor, and swift actions which provided a quick resolution to a serious situation at Nansemond Parkway Elementary School.

CONSENT AGENDA

➤ Approval of the Consent Agenda

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 7 to 0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business

NEW BUSINESS

➤ M to M Adjustment

Using PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Gordon, Wendell Waller, School Board Attorney, and Dr. Rodney Brown, Chief of Administrative Services shared information, adjustments to, and the elimination of the Minority to Majority (M to M) program and desegregation order. On September 3, 2025, the Department of Justice and Suffolk Public Schools filed a Joint Motion of Dismissal and on February 11, 2026, the court entered an order dismissing the case with prejudice. Consequently, SPS can no longer have a race-based assignment program because the court case that allowed for this program has now been dismissed by order of the court. With the end of the program, students will be required to return to their zoned school;

however, rising 5th and 8th grade students that are impacted by the discontinuation of the M to M program may be granted permission to remain at their out of zone school. Out of zone waivers must be submitted by parents and will be considered based on the following: 1) overall building capacity, 2) total number of available seats per grade level, 3) student's attendance record, and 4) student's behavior record. Additionally, if a waiver is approved, parents will be required to provide transportation for their child, as this will positively impact the Transportation Department by allowing bus drivers to return to their regular routes. To allow parents time to prepare for a new school year outside of the M to M program, information will be distributed to impacted families on February 13, 2026, and the Out of Zone Waiver process will begin March 2, 2026. Board Members and Dr. Gordon discussed various platforms to be used for parent notifications including, all digital platforms and hard copy distribution.

➤ 2026-2027 Calendar Presentation

Board Chair McGee led the discussion regarding the 2026-2027 calendar indicating that Board Members received overwhelming support for Option 1. Board Members and Dr. Gordon discussed the following: (1) the pros and cons of having additional work days without students and its overall affect to the chronic absenteeism framework; (2) concerns with laptops going home over long breaks; (3) apprehension with removing more school days from students which will affect the 990 hours threshold required by the Virginia Department of Education; (4) the impact on the Food Services Department with having to feed families during days off in order for the VDOE to count hours; (5) potential virtual professional learning days; and (6) providing two-year calendar approvals instead of one. The Board and Dr. Gordon agreed to have further discussion regarding future calendars.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve Option 1 of the 2026-2027 Calendar.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 7 to 0.

➤ Payment of Bills and Payroll – January 2026

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Riddick seconded the motion to approve the Payment of Bills and Payroll – January 2026 as submitted.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 5 / Nay: 2 (Dr. Brittingham/Slingluff) / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 5 to 2.

➤ Discussion Regarding Policy 1-7.4 – Programs and Services

Board Chair McGee led the discussion regarding this policy. He added this item to the agenda as board members expressed concerns to him regarding the opportunity to use other organizations for board training. Members are allotted funds for training which they would like to use for professional development with organizations outside of the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA). Attorney Waller clarified that, according to policy, a board vote is required if members wish to pursue training/professional development from organizations outside of what is set forth in the current policy. Discussion ensued between board members regarding associations and verbiage currently in the policy that is different from prior board discussion, as it relates to training, and a board vote. Attorney Waller explained that although a vote was taken to remove National School Boards Association (NSBA) and replace it with the Consortium of State School Boards Association (COSSBA), there was never a motion to send the policy back to the Policy Review Committee to update the policy. A referral to PRC

should have taken place so that the policy would in line with the will of the Board. Additional conversation was held regarding amending the policy.

Board Member Slingluff moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to send Policy 1-7.4, Section D-1 to the Policy Review Committee to remove the NSBA and replace it with COSSBA, and add language to read "...conducted by organizations such as the Virginia School Board Association and COSSBA." The policy is to be effective immediately upon vote.

Board Members discussed this policy further expressing their views regarding participating in creditable, uniform, and consistent school board member training, and sharing information with board members that was gleaned from attending various conferences/training that are outside of VSBA training. Attorney Waller reminded board members that verbiage regarding the sharing of information is not a part of the policy. He also added that according to the State Code Standards of Quality (SOQ), board members are required to participate annually in high-quality professional development activities at the state, local, and national levels on governance, including but not limited to personnel policies and practices, evaluation of personnel, curriculum, and instruction, use of data in planning and decision making and current issues in education, as part of their service on the local board. Additional conversation ensued regarding the following questions: 1) What defines high-quality? 2) Does State Code or VDOE address what organizations meet that criteria? 3) Would it be possible for the PRC to discuss adding to the policy a training summary requirement when a member returns from training/conference, and a minimum number of hours per training a members must participate in annually, if the aforementioned motion is approved? It was also suggested that the Board Chair create a committee of members, possibly Howell and Jenkins, who have had extensive board training and can provide a more broadened viewpoint, to assist with developing an amendment(s) to the policy which would come back to the board for a vote. Board Chair McGee explained that due to board members' requests to attend training with the School Board Member Alliance (SBMA), that was the reason for the policy to be "effective immediately." Attorney Waller expressed hesitancy with the creation of a committee to develop a policy to be considered by the board when this is currently the designated responsibility of the PRC. He suggested that board members share their information/concerns with the PRC for consideration.

Board Member Slingluff moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to send Policy 1-7.4 to the Policy Review Committee to remove NSBA and replace it with COSSBA, and add language that reads "organizations such as," and the policy be adopted effective immediately.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 / Nay: 1 (Riddick) / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 6 to 1.

➤ Suffolk School Board Code of Conduct

Board Chair McGee led this discussion as the Clerk read the following suggested Code of Conduct:

Code of Conduct and Standards of Governance
Suffolk Public Schools School Board

As an elected School Board member, I recognize that public service is a position of trust. I serve students, families, educators, and taxpayers with integrity, accountability, and respect.

My responsibility is to govern effectively, safeguard public resources, and ensure every decision supports student success.

1. Students First – Place the safety, well-being, and academic success of students above all other interests.
2. Integrity, Ethics, and Professional Conduct – Uphold the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and accountability. Avoid conflicts of interest, self-dealing, preferential treatment, or the appearance of impropriety. Do not use the position for personal or financial benefit or misuse authority for private interests. Act respectfully and professionally at all times.
3. Prepared and Independent Leadership – Attend meetings prepared, review materials in advance, ask informed questions, and make decisions based on facts, law, data, and community input.
4. Governance, Oversight, and Stewardship – Set policy, provide fiscal stewardship, and hold the division accountable for results. Exercise diligent oversight of budgets, contracts, programs, and the responsible use of taxpayer funds.
5. Superintendent Accountability – Delegate day-to-day operations while establishing clear expectations, measurable goals, regular performance evaluation, and transparent accountability. The Superintendent is accountable to the Board. Delegation does not diminish the Board’s authority or oversight responsibility.
6. Transparency and Public Trust – Promote open communication, lawful transparency, and clear decision-making to maintain public confidence.
7. Parents’ Rights and Family Partnership – Recognize parents and guardians as the primary decision-makers and advocates for their children. Protect their right to transparency, timely information, meaningful involvement, and direct access to their elected representatives.
8. Community Accessibility and Respectful Dialogue – Remain accessible and responsive to parents, staff, and citizens while encouraging civil, constructive, and respectful discourse.
9. Safety and Continuous Improvement – Prioritize safe schools and pursue ongoing learning to strengthen governance and leadership effectiveness.

Affirmation: I pledge to uphold this Code of Conduct and serve with dedication, accountability, and principled leadership.

Conversation ensued between board members regarding the following: (1) the creation of the code of conduct by the Board Chair versus all working collaboratively to create a code of ethics; (2) what necessitated the creation of the document; and (3) what qualified the chair alone to create the document. Board Members expressed their support of and concerns with the Code of Ethics recommended by the VSBA which was signed in previous years by board members until recently. It was stated that the verbiage in the VSBA document restricted board members from performing their duties and tied them to norms and protocols that mired them down into the weeds instead of policy. On the other hand, it was stated that Board Chair McGee’s version presented a document that was more aligned with the Code of Virginia. Another member expressed that the Code of Ethics was no longer an effective tool therefore, board members should no longer be required to sign the document. Board Members also discussed the overlapping of the Code of Conduct/Ethics and the Norms and Protocols and suggested eliminating the latter. Additional conversation ensued as board members discussed: (1) reasons for refusal to sign the Code of Ethics; (2) the consideration of topics that are not directly related to students and staff; (3) members’ behavior when acting outside of their scope of duties; (4) non-enforcement of Norms and Protocols, powers of the Board Chair; and (5) approval of policies without proper vetting from the PRC.

Board Member Slingluff moved to approve and adopt the Code of Conduct and Standards of Governance, as presented.

Before the motion could be seconded, Board Chair McGee allowed for further discussion by board members who did not have an opportunity to weigh in on the matter. He stated that he would allow Board Member Slingluff to finish her motion before any other motion is made.

Additional dialogue ensued.

Board Member Riddick moved and Board Member Fields seconded the motion to send the Code of Ethics to the PRC for further discussion.

Board Member Slingluff reminded Board Chair McGee of the pause placed on her motion and the opportunity to revisit it before any other motion is made. Additional conversation was had due to Board Member Riddick's Point of Order as his motion was dually made. Attorney Waller clarified that once a motion is on the floor and properly seconded, the motion must be acted on or additional discussion had on the pending motion. Board Member Riddick's motion was considered.

Board Member Riddick moved and Board Member Fields seconded the motion to send the Code of Ethics to the PRC for further discussion.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 3 / Nay: 3 (Brittingham, Slingluff, McGee) / Abstain: 1 (Howell). The motion Tied by vote of 3 to 3 to 1.

Vice Chair Howell explained that she saw no point for any additional paperwork, therefore she abstained.

Board Member Riddick moved and Board Member Jenkins seconded the motion to table this item without creating additional paperwork and moving forward.

Board Member Slingluff revisited the idea regarding the creation of a committee to address a Code of Conduct, but withdrew her statement as she recalled previous information from Attorney Waller.

Board Member Riddick restated his motion to halt the document and not create any new paperwork for the board to follow. The motion was seconded by Board Member Jenkins.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 3 / Nay: 3 (Brittingham, Slingluff, McGee) / Abstain: 1 (Howell). The motion Tied by vote of 3 to 3 to 1.

Vice Chair Howell again explained her abstention due to circular conversation.

Board Member Slingluff moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to table the Code of Ethics to the March agenda for further discussion and for board members to consider the contents that are contained within it due to failure of two motions.

Conversation was had regarding PRC discussing possible elimination of the Protocols, and concerns with a non-working document being edited by whom, tabling it to the next meeting, and it being considered by the PRC.

Board Member Slingluff withdrew her previous motion to table the item to the March meeting.

Board Member Slingluff moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to send the Code of Ethics to the Policy Review Committee for review and consideration in conjunction with the Norms and Protocols, with a recommendation to the full board.

Additional conversation ensued regarding potential bias of the PRC, consideration of the item lacks fairness, and frustration of the board not operating as a team and the Board not being considered in the beginning stages of the creation of said document.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 4 / Nay: 3 (Fields, Jenkins, Riddick) / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 4 to 3.

- Resolution 25/26-12: A Resolution Approving the Terms and Conditions of a Deed of Gift and Donation from the Suffolk City School Board to the City of Suffolk, Virginia
Board Member Dr. Brittingham moved and Vice Chair Howell seconded the motion to approve Resolution 25/26-12 as submitted.

Attorney Waller indicated that the resolution would officially convey the Driver property back to the City. Conversation ensued regarding concerns with the demolition of the Driver property versus demolition to the Freeney Avenue property. All properties should be demolished fairly.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 7 to 0.

- Resolution 25/26-13: A Resolution Approving the Terms and Conditions of An Agreement to Provide Policy Services for Suffolk City Schools Between the Suffolk City School Board and The Virginia School Boards Association
Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve Resolution 25/26-13 as submitted.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 / Nay: 1 (Brittingham) / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 6 to 1.

- Resolution 25/26-14: A Resolution of the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia Ratifying School Board Policy Sections 2-4.2 And 2-4.2:1
Board Member Slingluff moved and Vice Chair Howell seconded the motion to approve Resolution 25/26-14 as submitted.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 7 to 0.

- Resolution 25/26-15: A Resolution of the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia Approving an Award to EPlus Technology Inc., Pursuant to a Written Request for Proposals Issued by Suffolk Public Schools and Authorizing Suffolk Public Schools to Contract with EPlus Technology Inc. for Services and Equipment Found on the Cisco Product List
Vice Chair Howell moved to approve Resolution 25/26-15.

Board Member Slingluff requested clarification regarding the resolution being presented to the Board. John Littlefield, Director of Technology, provided background information on the resolution. He indicated that the contract was part of federal funding under the Federal Use Act Program that covers internet services and equipment. Suffolk Schools receives an 80% discount from the federal government and the process requires a contract for equipment and services. Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve Resolution 25/26-15 as submitted.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 7 to 0.

- Ordinance 25/26-80: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 8, Article 37, Section 8-37.1 entitled “Standardized testing permitted; Disclosure of Race etc. not required; Limited exception” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption
Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Jenkins seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 25/26-80 as submitted.

Conversation was held regarding current regulations regarding students testing while wearing Meta glasses, testing irregularities, and possible adjustments to our regulations.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 7 to 0.

- Ordinance 25/26-75 thru Ordinance 25/26-79
First reading only, no action required at this time nor was there any discussion.
- Creating an Onboarding Handbook for New School Board Members
Board Member Slingluff led the conversation regarding the creation of a handbook for new board members that will help new members acclimate easier to their new role on the board. The book would include practices of the board, informal rules, and expectations. It was suggested that a committee be selected to create this onboarding handbook. The handbook would only be updated if policies change and would be given to new members during election cycles. It was also suggested for the board to hold a citizens academy to help citizens/potential board members understand the functions of the school division, roles and responsibilities within the division, what day-to-day operations consist of and look like, what governance is, what respect is and is not at school board meetings, and new board member training with the VSBA. Board Chair McGee will poll board members and discuss committee membership at the March board meeting.

Board Member Slingluff moved and Vice Chair Howell seconded the motion to move the discussion of creating an onboarding handbook for new school board members to the March 12, 2026 first school board meeting.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 7 to 0.

- Discussion About School Board Member Membership and Training
Board Chair McGee referred to the lengthy discussion previously had during consideration of Policy 1-7.4 – Programs and Services. Board Member Slingluff agreed that with the previous

discussion, and the policy being amended and effective immediately thereby allowing board members to receive training from other organizations, no further discussion regarding this matter was needed. Attorney Waller clarified that “immediately” cannot take place until the policy with the amended verbiage comes back to the board for a vote. He explained that the policy cannot be effective as it has not yet been written. The board voted to send it to the PRC for amending and once that is done, it can contain an earlier effective date, but it must still come back to the board for a vote. Board Member Slingluff indicated her desire to add this item to the agenda so that she could submit a request for membership to the School Board Member Alliance using school board funds for \$350 for resources and training. Attorney Waller explained that Board Member Slingluff could have made a motion requesting training from SBMA and paid for by the board. She did not have to go the policy route as previously discussed.

Board Member Slingluff moved and Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion that the Board approve invoices submitted by school board members for membership in the School Board Member Alliance of Virginia (SBMA).

It was discussed that membership is individual, not for the board as a whole. Individual members receive training for free or at reduced costs with membership. The Board as a whole has membership under the VSBA.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 4 / Nay: 3 (Fields, Jenkins, Riddick) / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 4 to 3.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS ON NON-AGENDA TOPICS

➤ Citizen Comments on Agenda Items

The Clerk read the statement of decorum for speakers who sign up to address the Board.

Dr. Deborah Wahlstrom – Re: Second Closed Meeting / Censure Motion. Dr. Wahlstrom stated that there should never be a censure of a board member. She felt censures were not legal advice but is a public legislative act and must stand on publicly stated facts and standards, not what is discussed behind closed doors.

BUSINESS BY BOARD MEMBERS

➤ Comments and Reports by School Board Members

Board members shared expressed congratulatory remarks to Dr. Gordon for being named Region II Superintendent of the Year, as well as to Teachers of the Year, KFHS’ Jazz Band for a wonderful performance, and all faculty and staff for always assisting students, families and the entire community. They were excited about the various celebrations, conferences, athletic games, and events attended for the month, including the Snowflake Ball. Honor was paid to former African American School Board members whose legacy paved the way for others to serve. Those members were Lorraine Skeeter, John Riddick, Thelma Hinton, Enoch Copeland, Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, Lorita Mayo, Dr. Mark Croston. Board Members also discussed the correction of misinformation shared by constituents, and shared information regarding December’s closed session accusation that was filed against a board member regarding the violation of the superintendent’s contract. Board Members wished everyone a Happy Valentines Day, and asked all to treat each other kindly and respectfully. Vice Chair Howell wished her husband a Happy 20th Anniversary.

MOTION TO GO INTO A SECOND CLOSED MEETING

➤ Attorney Wendell Waller read the following motion

A motion is needed to go into a second closed meeting to discuss the following items and subjects pursuant to the Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711:

1. Consultation with legal counsel employed by the public body regarding specific legal matters regarding the provision of legal advice by such counsel, to-wit:
 - A. The waiver of attorney client privilege relative to an opinion issued by the attorney for the public body; and
 - B. Whether Board Member Slingluff acted in violation of the school superintendent's contract of employment and policies of the school board when she requested information regarding the Hillpoint incident.
2. The discussion and/or consideration of the performance of the school superintendent relative to his interactions with and responses given to Board Member Slingluff regarding the Hillpoint incident.

Which is authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, found at Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1), (A)(8).

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to go into a second closed meeting as read by Attorney Waller.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 1 (Slingluff). The motion Passed by vote of 6 to 0 to 1.

Board Chair McGee reminded Board Members that personal devices are not allowed in the closed meeting.

Board Member Slingluff explained her abstention vote citing that the closed session meeting was not necessitated or going to be productive.

RECONVENE IN OPEN MEETING

➤ Meeting Called to Order:

Board Chair McGee reconvened the public meeting.

CERTIFICATION OF SECOND CLOSED MEETING

➤ Attorney Wendell Waller read the following certification

A Resolution of Certification of the Closed Meeting of February 12, 2026 Pursuant to Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia

WHEREAS, the School Board of the City of Suffolk ("School Board") convened a second 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 of the Code of Virginia, requires a certification by the School Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this resolution of certification applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the School Board of the City of Suffolk.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to approve the Certification of the Second Closed Meeting as read by Attorney Waller.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 1 (Slingluff). The motion Passed by vote of 6 to 0 to 1.

Board Member Slingluff explained her abstention vote citing her absence from the meeting for the last hour plus.

ACTION ON A SECOND CLOSED MEETING

- There was no action taken on the second closed meeting.

NEW BUSINESS CONT.

- Discussion on the Possible Censure of Board Member Kimberly Slingluff
Board Member Jenkins requested to withdraw the item from the current meeting.

Attorney Waller clarified that the item needed to be seconded.

Board Member Jenkins moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to withdraw this item from the February 12, 2026 meeting agenda.

Attorney Waller explained that the item was simply being removed from the agenda at tonight's meeting and could possibly be revisited at another time.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 7 to 0.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- Board Chair McGee encourage board members to review the items listed in the information section of the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

- Adjournment of Meeting:
There being no further discussion, Board Chair McGee adjourned the February 12, 2026 School Board Meeting at 11:54 p.m.

Sean McGee, *School Board Chair*

Tarshia L. Gardner, *Clerk*