



VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CHARTING THE COURSE

School Board Services

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District 10

Carolyn D. Weems, Vice Chair
District 9

Mark Bohensiel
District 3
Matt W. Cummings
District 7
Dr. Alveta J. Green
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District 2

David Culpepper
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 14, and Wednesday, July 15, 2026

Professional Development Center

641 Carriage Hill Road

Virginia Beach, VA 23452

TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2026

Chair Brown convened the School Board Retreat at 9:05 a.m. on the 14th day of July 2026. In addition to Superintendent Robertson, the following School Board Members were present at the Plaza Annex, Professional Development Center: Chair Brown, Mr. Bohensiel, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer (arrived at 9:08 a.m.), Ms. Felton, Dr. Green (arrived at 9:08 a.m.), Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The following School Board Member attended the retreat via Zoom: Vice Chair Weems (medical reasons). The following School Board Member was not in attendance: Mr. Callan.

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

AI Update: Ryan Goldberg, Ph.D., director, Office of Instructional Technology, provided the School Board with an update on the district's first full year of moving AI from exploration into implementation across Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS). The presentation reflected on a June high school AI simulation, reported on the 2025–2026 rollout, broke down AI use by grade level, and laid out the direction for 2026–2027. High school students used AI within clear boundaries — teacher-set usage levels, restricted access, and classroom monitoring — with roughly 88% of 19,249 students using Gemini for tutoring, writing, and coding. Elementary and middle school students did not engage with



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generative AI in 2025–2026. Elementary and middle school teachers completed three professional learning sessions on guidelines, efficiency, and responsible use.

Looking to 2026–2027, the plan called for maintaining high school access under the same guardrails with required educator training, building middle school teacher capacity and AI-resistant assignment design, expanding community outreach through a partnership with FACE and a new digital literacy website, and streamlining teacher resources via a new AI Hub and Canvas courses.

After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding the use of AI in schools; student guardrails; staff training/professional development; parent awareness; supervised student access; AI tools to be used selectively to support instruction; and implementation would continue slowly and deliberately.

Addressing Screen Time: David Din, chief information officer, and Ryan Goldberg, Ph.D., director, Office of Instructional Technology, provided the School Board with an update on student screen-time data, explaining that screen time was an imperfect measure of learning because monitoring tools tracked active applications rather than actual engagement. The presentation reviewed grade-level usage trends, instructional applications, and outlined ongoing strategies including restricted YouTube access, quarterly data reviews, application analysis, training, and targeted supports. The approach to educational technology was purposeful, monitored, and continuously optimized.

After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding use of classroom technology; balancing future-ready instruction with concerns about screen time; student engagement; appropriate device use; hands-on learning; peer collaboration; teacher training; middle school usage; various applications used; after-hours use of school-issued devices; screen time data; and policy regarding kindergarten and first-grade classroom devices.

School Calendar – Parts I & II: Matthew Delaney, chief schools officer, and James Smith, Ed.D., senior executive director – middle schools, presented a three-part presentation, to review the approved 2026-2027 calendar and to provide a foundation for the next calendar development. In Part I, the staff reviewed how the approved 2026-2027 calendar had been built — grounded in Board Policies 6-12 and



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6-13 and Virginia regulations, shaped by the parameters set at the July 2024 retreat, and by survey respondents before a workgroup drafted the calendar. The 2026-2027 calendar was approved by the School Board in November 2024. The 2026-2027 school calendar was briefly reviewed.

After the Part I presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding graduation week; religious holidays; inclement weather and make-up days; and considerations when developing the calendar (staffing, SOL testing, course requirements, etc.)

During Part II, the parameters needed to develop the 2027-2028 and 2028-2029 calendars were reviewed. Staff revisited the relevant policy and regulatory language and shared a statewide comparison of school divisions with an 180-school-day calendar. Some reflection questions were shared with the School Board Members regarding Policy 6-13, number of instructional days or hours, developing two-year calendars (2027-2028 and 2028-2029), continuing with pre-Labor Day start, and which parameters will remain for developing the calendar.

A discussion followed with questions and comments regarding Policy 6-13; hours vs. days; inclement weather days; staff days for teachers; calendar parameters; use of staff days; graduation; and start and end date of school.

The School Board had a lunch break from 12:36 p.m. to 1:35 p.m.

School Calendar – Part III: James Smith, Ed.D., senior executive director – middle schools, facilitated a group exercise for the School Board Members to draft a sample calendar using current policy, state regulations, and the parameters agreed upon earlier in the session. After the exercise, the School Board Members shared their outcomes. A discussion followed regarding the calendar development; challenges developing a calendar; working with parameters; expectation and salary; the calendar committee; number of contract days for teachers; hours vs. days; and input from School Board on calendar priorities.

Policy 3-74: Naming of School Buildings: Melisa Ingram, executive director, Office of Facilities Services, presented an overview of the proposed renaming process for the Tri-Campus elementary



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schools and related attendance zone in connection with the CIP 1-028 Tri-Campus additions project.

The project added capacity across two neighboring schools: Diamond Springs Elementary, serving grades PK-1, and Newtown Elementary, serving grades 2-5, with a target move-in of August 2028 for school year 2028/29. The attendance zone boundaries were not expected to change, but the zone name would align with any new campus name selected by the School Board. Several naming options honoring Betty F. Williams were identified for consideration, and a potential timeline was outlined.

After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding community input on the renaming process; timeline and history of Policy 3-74; proposed ad hoc committee; and establishing the committee under School Board bylaws.

The School Board recessed at 3:26 p.m. to prepare for the abridged School Board Abridged Meeting.



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Abridged School Board Meeting MINUTES - DRAFT

Tuesday, July 14, 2026

Plaza Annex - Professional Development Center

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(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 4:00 p.m. on the 14th day of July 2026. In addition to Superintendent Robertson, the following School Board Members were present in the Plaza Annex, Professional Development Center, Room B & C: Chair Brown, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The following School Board Member attended the abridged meeting via Zoom: Vice Chair Weems (medical reasons). Note: Mr. Callan 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 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 abridged meeting agenda as presented: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Culpepper, 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 23, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes:*** Chair Brown called for any modifications to the June 23, 2026 regular meeting minutes as presented. Hearing none, Chair Brown called for a motion to approve the June 23, 2026 minutes as presented. Ms. Rogers made the motion, seconded by Mr. Cummings. Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School



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Board Clerk announced there were ten (10) ayes in favor of the motion to approve the June 23, 2026 minutes as presented: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The motion passed, 10-0-0.

5. **Information**

- A. **FY 2026-27 Amended Budget Update:** Crystal Pate, chief financial officer, presented an amended FY 2026/27 budget update to the School Board, allocating an available balance of \$13,942,359 down to zero. The largest commitments were a \$4.8 million Unified Pay Scale adjustment (1.25% for years 0–14), a \$3 million PAYGO increase, and \$3 million to replace All In grant funding – high-impact tutoring. Further recommendations covered BASE revitalization, employee professional development (tuition reimbursement), the shift of positions from Title VI-B and grant funding to local, and grant-related security staffing changes. The presentation outlined the next steps, which included action on the FY 2026/27 Amended Budget Resolution scheduled for August 11, 2026, followed by presentation of the amended budget to City Council in August or September.

After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding state funding for raises; addressing student needs - BASE Program, special education, STEP program; and special education temporary teacher assistant positions to full-time positions.

6. **Action**

- A. **Personnel Report/Administrative Appointments:** Chair Brown called for a motion to approve the July 14, 2026 personnel report and administrative appointments. Ms. Rogers made the motion, seconded by Dr. Green, that the School Board approve the appointments, and the acceptance of the resignations, retirements and other employment actions as listed on July 14, 2026, personnel report along with the administrative appointments 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



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approve the July 14, 2026, personnel report and administrative appointments: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohensiel, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The motion passed, 10-0-0.

Superintendent Robertson mentioned the following appointments: **Latoya S. Gregg**, assistant principal, Samuel P. Morton Elementary School, Franklin City Public Schools, as assistant principal, Pembroke Elementary School; **Ursula Y. Hill, Ed.D.**, principal, Samuel P. Morton Elementary School, Franklin City Public Schools, as assistant principal, Luxford Elementary School; **Katharine A. B. Fessel**, administrative assistant, Plaza Middle School, as assistant principal, Lynnhaven Middle School; and **Sheena M. Smith**, assistant principal, College Park Elementary School, as assistant principal, Old Donation School.

- B. **Revenue Sharing Formula:** Chair Brown called for a motion to approve the revenue sharing formula. Ms. Rogers made the motion, seconded by Ms. Dwyer. 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 revenue sharing formula: Chair Brown, Vice Chair Weems, Mr. Bohensiel, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The motion passed, 10-0-0.

7. **Closed Session:** At 4:22 p.m., Chair Brown 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, Paragraphs 3, 7, and 8 as amended, to deliberate on the following matters:

3. 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.

7. Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body. For the purposes of this subdivision,



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"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.

Namely to discuss:

- A. Jericho Road Terms Sheet.
- 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 nine (9) ayes in favor of the motion to recess into Closed Session: Chair Brown, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The motion passed, 9-0-0.

Note: Vice Chair Weems stopped attending the meeting via Zoom prior to the Closed Session vote.

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

- A. ***Jericho Road Terms Sheet***: School Board Members: Chair Brown, Mr. Bohenstiel, 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; Benjamin Oakes, chief operations officer; Melisa Ingram, executive director, Office of Facilities Services; Dannielle Hall-McIvor, senior school board attorney; and Regina M. Toneatto, school board clerk.



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- 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, Mr. Bohenstiel, 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; Benjamin Oakes, chief operations officer; Melisa Ingram, executive director, Office of Facilities Services; Dannielle Hall-McIvor, senior school board attorney; and Regina M. Toneatto, school board clerk.

School Board Member, Ms. Rogers left the Closed Session at 4:41 p.m.

Certification of Closed Session: Chair Brown read the following:

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.

Mr. Cummings made the motion, seconded by Ms. Dwyer. Without discussion, Chair Brown called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there were eight (8) ayes in favor of the motion for Certification of Closed Session: Chair Brown, Mr. Bohenstiel, Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer, Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, and Ms. Melnyk. The motion passed, 8-0-0.

8. ***Adjournment:*** Chair Brown adjourned the abridged meeting at 4:44 p.m.



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WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2026

Chair Brown convened the School Board Retreat at 9:01 a.m. on the 15th day of July 2026. In addition to Superintendent Robertson, the following School Board Members were present at the Plaza Annex, Professional Development Center: Chair Brown, Mr. Bohensiel (arrived at 9:34 a.m.), Mr. Culpepper, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Dwyer (arrived at 9:05 a.m.), Ms. Felton, Dr. Green, Ms. Melnyk, and Ms. Rogers. The following School Board Member attended the retreat via Zoom: Vice Chair Weems (medical reasons). The following School Board Member was not in attendance: Mr. Callan.

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

Compass to 2030 Update: Lisa Banicky, Ph.D., executive director, Office of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability, provided the School Board an update on its Compass to 2030 framework, reviewing 2025-2026 and the year ahead. Under Goal 1, the division expanded access to rigorous coursework, reaching record Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment participation, launched new healthcare and law-enforcement career pathways, and integrated AI across secondary classrooms, as seniors reporting a solid post-graduation plan edged up to 92%. Goal 2 saw a third consecutive year of reduced suicide risk assessments and stronger absenteeism intervention, with student belonging rising to 82%. Goal 3 highlighted new support for early-career teachers and an expanded talent pipeline, alongside an improved 3% vacancy rate. Goal 4 noted family awareness of programs and resources jumped eight



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points to 85%, the largest single-year gain — driven by multilingual outreach and community partnerships. Goal 5 advanced operational efficiency and budget transparency, though staff-reported resource adequacy slipped to 83%, the report's largest single dip.

For the 2026-2027 school year, the division set four priorities: maximizing the impact of Tier 1 instruction, strengthening the systems and conditions that ready students to learn, investing in a professional culture of learning and belonging for staff, and engaging families as partners in their student's learning and success. After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding support services; Office of Family and Community Engagement (FACE); absenteeism; future-ready students; real-world learning experiences; meeting needs of all students; parental engagement; safe workplace, sense of security; mental health resources; and data-driven outcomes.

Data for our Community: A Reporting Calendar and Public Dashboard: Lisa Banicky, Ph.D., executive director, Office of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability, presented a plan to make the division's existing data easier for families and the community to find. The proposal had three parts: a reporting calendar, a public dashboard, and a working prototype. The calendar outlined existing releases – SOL results, graduation rates, and the Key Navigational Markers – to a quarterly schedule. The dashboard, guided by principles of plain language, strong visuals, accessibility, and dual purpose, separated the metrics families reach for from *Compass to 2030* strategic progress. In closing, the presentation had questions for consideration, which included how many years of data to show, whether to break out results by student group, whether to set benchmarks, and how to best present the reporting.

After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding viewing of data, possible drop-out menu for data, more user-friendly; feedback from School Board on questions for consideration; and accessibility of data.

Gifted Update: Crystal Wilkerson, Ed.D., director, K-12 and Gifted Programs provided the School Board with an update on the division's gifted programs under the Local Plan 2024-2029, launched in fall 2024. Since then, the office revamped identification—retiring the CogAT screener, moving to universal

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second-grade screening, and adding Talent Development lessons in grades K-2. During the 2025-2026 year, the office delivered division-wide professional learning, offered focused and personalized support to Gifted Resource Teachers, strengthened cross-collaborative partnerships and the resource-cluster model, deepened its use of qualitative and quantitative data, refined math and science extension lessons, and broadened learning-walk opportunities.

An After-Action Review Committee reflected on the cycle, discussed trends and strengths, and offered recommendations for future planning. Looking ahead to 2026-2027, the office committed to enhancing and expanding Talent Development lessons, continuing work with teachers and GRTs on strengths-based anecdotal notetaking, and monitoring identification outcomes.

After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding gifted screening, identification process; cluster models; Gifted Resource Teachers (GRT); resources for gifted programs in schools; ODS; meeting the needs of gifted students; academy programs; increasing awareness of gifted process and programs; selection process for ODS; gifted budget; number of students in gifted clusters; and improving communication to parents.

The School Board had a break from 11:50 a.m. to 12:05 p.m.

DLI Update: Crystal Wilkerson, Ed.D., director, K-12 and Gifted Programs provided the School Board with an update on efforts to sustain the Dual Language Immersion program and reaffirmed the November 2025 decision to consolidate the middle school program at Virginia Beach Middle School in 2027–2028, with no change for current fifth- through seventh-grade students. The Ad Hoc Parent Group DLI Advisory Committee recommended a local donation grant, teacher stipends and sign-on bonuses, division-funded licensure tied to three-year contracts, a seven-year delay on model changes, and a homegrown teacher pipeline. Staff reported seven DLI vacancies and outlined new recruitment efforts such as Virginia's Dual Language endorsement, the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact, translation stipends, and an ODU partnership. For next steps, the department committed to assessing family interest in the VBMS location, supporting the program's transition, and continuing to monitor recruitment and program enhancements.



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After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding cost for licensure for eligible DLI staff; number of eligible staff; addressing vacancies; dual language; access to program; and resources for program.

School Board Budget Process & Calendar Review: Crystal Pate, chief financial officer, provided the School Board with a review of the school division's budget process and mentioned the budget as the primary means of advancing strategic priorities and grounding it in principles of strategic alignment, fiscal responsibility, and transparency. Staff summarized the revenue and expenditure structure, reviewed the annual budget calendar, and clarified roles: the School Board sets directions while administration executes. Major budget drivers, current challenges, and opportunities were mentioned. The next steps were outlined, in which staff would incorporate School Board feedback into the FY2027-28 budget calendar and present a proposed calendar in September.

After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding the budget process; budget drivers; student success; grants; capital improvement; and a line-item budget.

Addressing Unified Scale STEP Inconsistencies: Darnita L. Trotman, Ed.D., chief human resources officer, Judith R. Wood, classification and compensation coordinator, and Crystal Pate, chief financial officer provided the School Board with information to correct structural inconsistencies in the Unified Experienced-Base Step Pay Scale framing the work within *Compass to 2030*'s commitment to value and invest in staff through fair, consistent compensation. Steps 1–14 granted only a 1.0 percent raise per year of service while steps 15 and above granted 1.5 percent.

Two paths were offered, each payable October 1 or February 1. Strategy I raised the steps 1–14 to 1.50 percent — at a first-year cost of \$14.6M (October) or \$8.1M (February) and \$19.5M annually. Strategy II raised it to 1.25 percent, costing \$8.6M (October) or \$4.8M (February) \$11.5M annually.

Administration recommended the 1.25 percent bridge correction effective February 1 as the most fiscally responsible choice at \$4.8M this year. The presentation concluded by tying the corrections to ongoing recruiting and retention efforts and by asking the Board for feedback.



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After the presentation, a discussion followed with questions and comments regarding appreciation for the work by HR; pay scales for 2027-28; funding for options; staff retention; impact on unified scale; valuing employees; and staff positions in the Step 1-14 unified scale.

Retreat Summary: Superintendent Robertson recapped highlights from the retreat including continued updates on artificial intelligence, educational technology, screen time, Policy 6-18, the school calendar process, Policy 3-74, *Compass to 2030*, the gifted five-year plan, dual language immersion, and budget refinements.

Chair Brown shared her appreciation for the discussions, perspectives, and continued focus on student progress. Chair Brown adjourned the School Board Retreat at 1:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Regina M. Toneatto, Clerk of the School Board

Approved:

Kathleen J. Brown, School Board Chair