REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE SUFFOLK CITY SCHOOL BOARD
Thursday, July 23, 2026 ~ 6:00 P.M.
King's Fork Middle School, 350 King's Fork Road, Suffolk, VA 23434

Board Members Present:
Sean McGee, *Chair*
Heather Howell, *Vice Chair*
Valerie Fields
Karen Jenkins

Board Members Absent:
Dr. Dawn Marie Brittingham[1]
Tyron Riddick[2]
Kimberly Slingluff[3]

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

- Call to Order
  Board Chair McGee called the meeting to order at 6:01 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 Fields read the mission of SPS.

Board Chair McGee shared that the absence of Board Member Dr. Brittingham was due to funeralizing her father, and Board Member Slingluff's absence was due to personal medical procedure.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- Approval of Agenda:
  Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Jenkins seconded the motion to approve the agenda, as submitted.

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

[1] Dr. Brittingham was absent due to the death of her father.
[2] Mr. Riddick was absent due to a prior event.
[3] Mrs. Slingluff was absent due to a personal medical procedure.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS ON AGENDA TOPICS

- Citizen Comments on Agenda Items
  No public speakers registered to address the board.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Ordinance 26/27-2: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 4, Article 4, Section 4-4.2 entitled, "Reporting pupil costs" of the policies of the Suffolk City School Board - Second Reading
  &
- Ordinance 26/27-3: Ordinance 26/27-3: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 8, Article 42, Section 8-42.7, entitled "Non-disclosure of information" of the policies of the Suffolk City School Board - Second Reading

  Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Jenkins seconded the motion to collectively approve Ordinance 26/27-2 and Ordinance 26/27-3, as submitted.

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

NEW BUSINESS

- Department of Human Resources – Personnel Report for July 23, 2026
  Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Fields seconded the motion to approve the Personnel Report for July 23, 2026, as submitted.

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

  Upon approval of the Personnel Report, Dr. Gordon introduced the following new staff members: Robert Casteen, new Principal at Oakland Elementary, Robin Booth, new Coordinator II for Purchasing, and Timothy Kubinak, new Principal at John Yeates Middle School.

Dr. Gordon recognized Mr. John Littlefield, Director of Technology, for dedication to SPS students, staff, and the community for over 28 years. During his tenure he helped provide and set the standard for technology throughout the division and the city. Dr. Gordon highlighted major accomplishments within the entire City of Suffolk and the school division that were led by Mr. Littlefield's expertise in technology. Mr. Littlefield was a significant factor in providing internet access to students and the community, mapping out over 432 square miles, during a very challenging and difficult time. His innovation and technology prowess will definitely be a legacy for Suffolk Public Schools. Board Members congratulated Mr. Littlefield and shared words of encouragement for a long, healthy, and enjoyable retirement. Mr. Littlefield expressed his gratitude for Suffolk Public Schools and the staff.

- Budget Addendum Presentation
  Anthony Lebron, Chief Financial Officer, provided an overview of adjustments made to the budget due to the State finalizing its budget. He thanked his team and the Human Resources team for their hard work during the budget process which included many uncertainties, and changes. He then proceeded to explain that the initial budget adoption totaled $248,120,235.00 and the amended budget now totals $255,005,201.00, a net change of $6,884,966.00 being

added to the 2026-2027 budget. He also provided information regarding the budget process, the net budget impact, gave a summary of what the process has been up to the current point, and provided an overview of the amended budget. Mr. Lebron also provided information regarding state funding changes that affect or impact the school division, and student enrollment and its connection to funding. Additionally, he explained the next steps in the budget process which included: (1) the School Board approving the amended budget, (2) amending/distributing the budget book, and (3) administration implementing budget adjustments. He also explained that the packet before the board for approval incorporated both the state and local funding.

At this time, Dr. Gordon recognized Mr. Terry Napier, Director of Facilities and Planning for his many years of service to Suffolk Public Schools. Mr. Napier retired with 36 years of service to the students, staff and community of SPS. As stated by Dr. Gordon, Mr. Napier had a wealth of institutional knowledge and knew when items needed to be fixed. Dr. Gordon indicated that Mr. Napier began his career with SPS as an educational leader which empowered him to successfully lead as the Director of Facilities and Planning. Dr. Gordon highlighted Mr. Napier's ability to utilize/stretch funding to its limit as he maintained 21 buildings on a million dollar budget. Mr. Napier is well respected among his peers and all vendors who have had the privilege of working with him. Dr. Gordon and Board Members expressed their gratitude for Mr. Napier's career and service, and wished him a happy and long retirement. Mr. Napier expressed his gratitude for Suffolk Public Schools, recommended retirement to all who are able to retire, and wished the division well.

- Resolution 2026/27-3: A Resolution of the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia Accepting an Additional Appropriation From the City of Suffolk, Virginia in the Sum of $4,230,104 in State Funding, $688,000 in Local Funding, Reappropriating Unspent Encumbered Funds From Fiscal Year 2025-2026 in the Sum of $1,500,780.88, and Reappropriating Unspent Surplus Funds From the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year in the Sum of $466,080.75 to be Applied to Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Making the School Board's total Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 $255,005,200.63

  Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Members Fields seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2026/27-3, as presented.

  Board Chair McGee thanked Mayor Duman, City Council, and the City Manager for working with Suffolk Public Schools and providing additional funding.

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

PUBLIC SPEAKERS ON NON-AGENDA TOPICS

- Citizen Comments on Agenda Items

  No public speakers registered to address the board.

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 Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia (1950) as amended:

1. The discussion and/or consideration regarding the performance evaluation of the School Superintendent and any revisions to terms of his employment; and

2. The discussion and/or consideration regarding the performance evaluation of the Attorney for the School Board and any revisions to terms of his employment; and

3. The discussion and/or consideration regarding the performance evaluation of the Clerk of the School Board and any revisions to the terms of her employment.

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

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

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

Board Chair McGee reminded Board Members that only approved, school issued electronics are allowed in the closed session meeting room.

RECONVENE IN OPEN MEETING

- Meeting Called to Order:
  Board Chair McGee reconvened the public meeting.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

- Certification of Closed Meeting
  Attorney Wendell Waller read the following certification:

A Resolution of Certification of the Closed Meeting of July 23, 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 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 Fields seconded the motion to approve the Certification of the Closed Meeting as read by Attorney Waller.

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

ACTION ON CLOSED MEETING ITEM

- Action On A Closed Meeting Item #1 (Superintendent) – Resolution 26/27-4: A Resolution Approving The Terms And Conditions Of An Addendum To A Contract Of Employment Between The Suffolk City School Board And Dr. John B. Gordon III

  Vice Chair Howell motioned that the following Resolution be adopted:

  *"**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AN ADDENDUM TO A CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT BETWEEN THE SUFFOLK CITY SCHOOL BOARD AND DR. JOHN B. GORDON III.***

  ***BE IT RESOLVED** by the Suffolk City School Board as follows:*

  ***Section 1:** That all terms and conditions of an Addendum dated July 23, 2026 to the Superintendent's Term Contract between the Suffolk City School Board and Dr. John B. Gordon III, be, and the same are hereby approved.*

  ***Section 2:** That the Chair of the School Board is hereby authorized and directed to execute the said Addendum on behalf of the Suffolk City School Board, and the Clerk of the School Board is directed to duly attest the same."*

  Board Member Fields seconded the motion to approve Resolution 26/27-4 as read by Vice Chair Howell.

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

- Action On A Closed Meeting Item #2 (School Board Attorney) – Resolution 26/27-5: A Resolution Approving The Terms And Conditions Of An Addendum To A Contract Of Employment Between The Suffolk City School Board And Wendell M. Waller

  Vice Chair Howell motioned that the following Resolution be adopted:

  *"**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AN ADDENDUM TO A CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT BETWEEN THE SUFFOLK CITY SCHOOL BOARD AND WENDELL M. WALLER.***

  ***BE IT RESOLVED** by the Suffolk City School Board as follows:*

  ***Section 1:** That all terms and conditions of an Addendum dated July 23, 2026 to a Contract of Employment between the Suffolk City School Board and Wendell M. Waller be, and the same are hereby approved.*

  ***Section 2:** That the Chair of the School Board is hereby authorized and directed to execute the said Addendum on behalf of the Suffolk City School Board, and the Clerk of the School Board is directed to duly attest the same."*

  Board Member Fields seconded the motion to approve Resolution 26/27-5 as read by Vice Chair Howell.

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

ADJOURNMENT

- Adjournment of Meeting:
  There being no further discussion, Board Chair McGee adjourned the July 23, 2026 School Board Meeting at 8:47 p.m.

Sean McGee, *School Board Chair*

Tarshia L. Gardner, *Clerk*