

# REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE SUFFOLK CITY SCHOOL BOARD

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ 5:00 P.M.

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

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## Board Members Present:

Karen Jenkins, *Chair*  
Heather Howell, *Vice Chair*  
Dr. Dawn Marie Brittingham  
Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck  
Phyllis Byrum  
Tyron Riddick  
Kimberly Slingluff

## Administrative Staff Present:

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

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## OPENING OF PUBLIC MEETING/WORK SESSION

### ➤ Call to Order:

Board Chair Jenkins called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

### ➤ SPS Vision 2024

Dr. Gordon, Division Superintendent presented information to the Board regarding his vision for the 2024-2025 school year. He highlighted Instructional Planning and how they will be focused on targeted professional learning, continued use of the All-In tutoring model, Saturday Academy and Instructional Technology Resource Teachers. He also shared information regarding Pdgogy.ai, a new artificial intelligence program that will be piloted in select classrooms, a revision of predictive assessment models for Science and History that will focus on cross collaboration across disciplines. Dr. Gordon clarified that PALS/VALLSS are assessment tools only and not achievement tools. He also shared that a total of 49 students who did not pass the Science SOL, directly affected schools not meeting accreditation. He added that adjustments will be made to use predictive models to determine student achievement data.

Dr. Gordon shared the following projects being done by SPS Facilities and Maintenance:

- Replacement of JFKMS,
- Finalizing site designs and begin construction on the NSES expansion,
- Installing Zero Eyes Camera Security Software which will send direct emergency notification to authorities,
- Painting EFES, replacing sinks/countertops at LH & NRH, replacing lighting at FGMS, replacing ceiling tiles at JYMS, replacing boilers at HES, repairing sinkholes, replacing cafeteria tables with branded design,
- Reviewing contracts for grounds maintenance,
- Moving a fuel tank to MBJES.

Dr. Gordon shared Destination 2028: Next Steps included expanding the S.T.A.R. Program, focusing on growth areas from the Climate and Culture Survey, supplementing new employee onboarding with additional staff support, auditing of schools' website and the role of the webmaster, developing pacing guides and curriculum maps for new English and Mathematics

Standards of Learning, and completing Old Dominion University’s Educational Leadership Cohort 1. He also shared information about the planning phase of the STEM Academy at BTWES.

Board Members thanked Dr. Gordon for his report and commended him for his transparency in reporting both the successes and challenges of Suffolk Public Schools and for offering information and steps that will facilitate success. Board Members asked various questions and shared concerns regarding communication with parents, the Superintendent’s vision’s connection to the Strategic Plan, the exclusion of the Board when composing the vision, the demographics of the 49 students who affected accreditation, the number of long-term substitutes rehired for the coming school year and quality of substitute training, teacher lesson plans, locker repairs/crosswalk at KFM/KFH schools, the fuel tank placement at MBJES, and the Pdgogy.ai software system.

Additional conversation ensued as Dr. Gordon and his team provided answers to Board Member’s questions and concerns.

➤ School Board Self Evaluation Committee Report

Board Member Riddick stated that the committee (T. Riddick, K. Slingsluff, Dr. D. Brittingham) met on June 20, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. Unfortunately, information requested from various school divisions regarding the instrument used by their board to perform a self-evaluation, was not received by our Clerk. Only one school division (Portsmouth) shared their information. Therefore, the committee scheduled a follow-up meeting for August 6, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at Elephant’s Fork Elementary School to allow the committee to reach out to various divisions and review/compare any additional information that will be helpful in composing a self-evaluation tool that can be used to inspire action.

➤ Setting the Date, Time, and Location for School Board Retreat

Board Chair Jenkins suggested August 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup>, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. for a School Board Retreat. Board Member Riddick suggested holding the retreat at a later time of the day as some Board Members have work responsibilities. She shared that suggested dates, with a later time, will be sent to Board Members via email to inquire of their availability to attend a School Board Retreat.

Dr. Gordon asked if the Board could provide staff with an estimate for the duration of the Retreat to allow administration to plan accordingly.

- Board Member Dr. Brittingham made a motion to table Setting the Date, Time, and Location for the School Board Retreat and Board Chair Jenkins explained that the motion needed to be made when the item is considered during New Business.

**MOTION TO GO INTO FIRST CLOSED MEETING**

➤ Attorney 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 Freedom of Information Act found at Virginia Code Section 2.23711:

1. The discussion and/or consideration of Student Expulsion Hearing Number 24/25-1EH, which involves a request for a student expulsion, where the discussion in an open meeting would involve disclosure of information contained in the student’s scholastic record.

2. The discussion and/or consideration of Student Expulsion Hearing Number 24/25-2EH, which involves a request for a student expulsion, where the discussion in an open meeting would involve disclosure of information contained in the student's scholastic record.
3. The discussion and/or consideration of Student Expulsion Hearing Number 24/25-3EH, which involves a request for a student expulsion, where the discussion in an open meeting would involve disclosure of information contained in the student's scholastic record.
4. Record Review 24/25-4RR regarding the assignment of a student to Turlington Woods School, where the discussion in an open meeting would involve 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).

Board Member Byrum moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve the motion to go into the first closed meeting as read by Mr. Waller.

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

Board Chair Jenkins reminded Boards Members that only SPS issued Chromebooks were allowed in the closed meeting. All other devices were to be outside of the closed meeting area.

## **RECONVENE IN PUBLIC MEETING**

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

## **CERTIFICATION OF FIRST CLOSED MEETING**

- Attorney Waller Read the following certification:  
A Resolution of Certification of the First Closed Meeting of July 11, 2024, Pursuant to Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as Amended

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 (1950), as amended, 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.

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve the Certification of the First Closed Meeting as read by Mr. Waller.

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

## **MEETING RECESS**

- Board Chair Jenkins recessed the meeting at 8:49 p.m. for a 20-minute recess.

## **RE-OPENING OF PUBLIC MEETING**

- Meeting Called to Order:  
Board Chair Jenkins called to order the regular public meeting at 9:13 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:  
Vice Chair Howell read the mission of SPS.

## **ACTION ON FIRST CLOSED MEETING ITEMS**

- Student Expulsion Hearing Number 24/25-1 EH  
Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Riddick seconded the motion to continue Student Expulsion Hearing Number 24/25-1 EH to the next business meeting.

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

- Student Expulsion Hearing Number 24/25-2 EH  
Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to uphold the recommendation of the committee for Student Expulsion Hearing Number 24/25-2 EH.

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

- Student Expulsion Hearing Number 24/25-3 EH  
Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to uphold the recommendation of the committee for Student Expulsion Hearing Number 24/25-3 EH.

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

➤ Student Records Review Number 2024/25-4 RR

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to continue Student Records Review Number 2024/25-4 RR to the next Board meeting.

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:

Board Member Riddick moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to approve the agenda with Brandon Randleman being added to the list of public speakers regarding Agenda Topics to address matters regarding the Safety Audit Committee and School Safety Committee, in addition to Jonathan Rankin being allowed to speak on the topic of the Safety Audit Committee and school safety.

Vice Chair Howell asked for the reasoning for adding the speakers to the agenda and if they submitted their request by the deadline.

Board Member Riddick stated that Mr. Randleman received an email thread, 12 minutes after the deadline to register to speak, that the Superintendent would be addressing the Kilby Shores incident. Therefore, he did not have an opportunity to register. Board Member Riddick felt that this rationale also applied to Mr. Rankin as the item was not clearly listed in the agenda which prevented the general public from registering to speak on that topic.

Clarification/discussion ensued between Board Members regarding registration deadlines, Kilby Shores incident not being listed on the agenda, and the Chair's discretion to add items to the agenda during the meeting.

Chair Jenkins had the Clerk verify the time that speakers submitted their request to speak before the Board. Ms. Gardner indicated that both citizens were listed on the agenda and that Mr. Randleman was listed under Late Appearances as his request to speak was received after the deadline and Mr. Rankin was listed under both the Early and Late Appearances as his request was received before the deadline.

Additional conversation ensued between Board Chair Jenkins and Board Member Riddick. Attorney Waller provided clarification regarding reports from the Superintendent, which is not addressed in Board policy. He stated that when policy is absent, the Board would have to rely on Board practice and the practice has been to allow the Superintendent to discuss information as part of his Superintendent's report that are not necessarily listed on the agenda. Mr. Waller further indicated that Board policy also does not cover whether or not public comment only applies to action items versus reports from the Superintendent. Finally, he also stated that although the Kilby Shores incident was not listed on the agenda, this would not prevent someone from signing up for late appearance if they so chose to speak on the issue, but they would not be able to sign up to speak on the issue during early appearance because it was not listed on the agenda. Therefore, it is the Board's discretion as to how they would handle this current situation.

Additional conversation ensued between Board Members. Board Member Slingluff felt that the situation was larger than just the two citizens in question. She indicated that possibly more

citizens would like to be a part of the meeting in which the incident at Kilby Shores Elementary School would be a topic of discussion. Board Member Slingluff recommended that the topic be included in the August meeting to allow citizen participation.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham agreed that Mr. Randleman and Mr. Rankin should be added to the agenda to speak as an Agenda Item Speaker.

The Clerk re-read the motion:

Board Member Riddick moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to approve the agenda with the addition of Brandon Randleman and Jonathan Rankin to be allowed to speak under “Agenda Topics” instead of “Non-Agenda Topics”.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 4 / Nay: 3 (Dr. Brooks-Buck, Byrum, Jenkins) / Abstain: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 4 to 3.

## **PUBLIC SPEAKERS ON AGENDA TOPICS**

### ➤ Citizen Comments on Agenda Items:

The Clerk read the statement of decorum for the speaker who signed up to address the Board.

Travis McKinney (Re: School Safety) – Mr. McKinney expressed his concerns with the Safety Audit Committee and that it is not operating in harmony with objectives established by the Commonwealth or by Suffolk Public Schools’ policy. He felt that the committee was not allowed to address behavioral, bullying, school records or audit concerns. He suggested that Board Members vet citizens before appointing them to their committees. Mr. McKinney also felt that professionals who are situationally aware and trained to handle these types of incidents should be in the schools and those individuals are not teachers.

Jonathan Rankin (Re: Payment of Bills and Payroll/Kilby Shores Security/Safety Incident) – Mr. Rankin expressed his concern with administrators’ lack of responses regarding availability for future committee meetings. He also felt that due to the division’s lack of transparency regarding the incident at Kilby Shores Elementary School, parents are becoming extremely concerned about the safety of their children while at school.

Dr. Deborah Wahlstrom (Re: Purchase Cards, Ordinance 24/25-1, Charging Station) – Dr. Wahlstrom felt that the purchase cards report does not allow citizens to see what is being purchased and that a forensic audit is necessary. Dr. Wahlstrom also did not agree with the recommendation of the charging station and felt that the Board should vote against the item as the Pruden Center is not the ideal location for a charging station.

Brandon Randleman (Safety Audit Committee and School Safety) – Mr. Randleman expressed his concern with the lack of information shared with the Safety Audit Committee, and the School Board regarding the incident at Kilby Shores Elementary. He felt that division leaders reprimanded and provided him with negative feedback as he reached out to work collaboratively with administrators to ensure the safety of all students. Mr. Randleman expressed his disappointment in the handling of the situation by elected officials, suggested the Board and community should have real conversations regarding security and safety, and requested a progress report on the safety proposals submitted via the Safety Audit Committee. He highlighted his expertise in campaigns, disseminating information about actions of elected officials, and elections.

## REPORTS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

### ➤ Good News Report:

Anthonette Dickens, Communications and Community Engagement Officer, shared highlights from the Good News Report. Dr. Gordon recognized Mr. Ulysses Whitfield, retired bus driver of 70 years, with a letter from Governor Youngkin (read by Mrs. Dickens) that congratulated Mr. Whitfield for his unwavering dedication, service and commitment.

Additionally, Dr. Gordon shared a report regarding the incident that occurred at Kilby Shores Elementary School. He read the following information:

“In this report, I will provide a chronological overview of the incident at Kilby Shores Elementary School, and the joint investigation from the Suffolk Police Department and the security staff for Suffolk Public Schools.

At approximately 11:28 A.M. an individual is seen by exterior cameras running onto school property from Kilby Shores Dr. The individual runs past the front of the school and passes by a class that was coming outside for recess. While the individual is running, he is constantly looking behind him as if someone was chasing him.

Also, at approximately 11:28 A.M., the same individual can be seen running from the side of the building, and left of the playground. Another class is coming out for recess at this time, and a teacher is standing in the doorway with her back to the individual, letting the class out. Several students are moving towards the right of the doorway. The individual enters the building behind the teacher who is communicating with the students at 11:28:27 A.M.

At 11:28:33 A.M., the teacher notices that the intruder is standing in the doorway on the inside of the building. Another student walks around the intruder in the doorway to go outside to recess.

At 11:28:37, the teacher opens the door to let the student out and to address the intruder. The intruder runs from the doorway into the first door on the right, which is a female restroom. At 11:28:43 A.M. the teacher is seen pushing on the door to the restroom to address the individual. The teacher can be seen talking to the intruder, and asks for assistance from another female staff member. Several staff members arrive between 11:29:04 A.M. and 11:30 A.M. to assist with the door.

At 11:30 A.M., Kilby Shores Elementary School is put in lockdown.

At 11:30:41 A.M. the school safety monitor arrives and attempts to open the restroom door. The school safety monitor uses his cell phone to call for police assistance as staff are removing students from the playground due to the school being placed on lockdown.

At 11:33:26 the school safety monitor and another male staff member begin to force their way into the female restroom. The principal of Kilby Shores Elementary is communicating with the students in the restroom, informing them to lock the stalls and that help is here.

At 11:33:51 A.M. the school safety monitor and male staff member force the door halfway open and are communicating with the intruder. The door remains in this position until an officer from the Suffolk Police Department arrives at 11:36:19 A.M.

The Suffolk Police Officer enters the partially opened restroom door at 11:37:26 A.M. and communicates with the intruder. The Suffolk Police Officer successfully enters the restroom at 11:38:54 A.M.

The intruder is removed from the restroom by the police officer at 11:39:23 A.M.

Two female students who were in the restroom were escorted out by the principal and staff members at 11:39:47 A.M.

At 1:11 P.M., a letter was sent to the Kilby Shores School Community, summarizing the safety event that occurred that day.

At 1:15 P.M., Kilby Shores Elementary dismissed their students to end the 2023-2024 school year.

Dr. Gordon clarified that Suffolk Public Schools, supported by the School Board, will not address safety and security measures publicly. He expressed concern with the expectation to share new safety measures that have been put in place as a result of the division and Suffolk Police Department working collaboratively to change/make adjustments. He further explained that Police Chief James Buie, expert in the field of safety and security in the City of Suffolk, stated that the incident was not a breach of the security protocols of Suffolk Public Schools, the schools were not negligent, and that the teacher and staff were heroic in their actions. Dr. Gordon highlighted media coverage of parents of KSES who expressed confidence that SPS would take necessary steps to increase safety. He reiterated that safety measures and personnel matters would never be discussed publicly as a news media outlet wanted answers to questions of that nature. Dr. Gordon then thanked staff, administrators, and School Board Members for not responding to investigative reporters who contacted individuals for comments. He also thanked the parents of the Kilby Shores community who informed division administrators of solicitation that was done by a media outlet to encourage parents to talk on camera about the incident. Dr. Gordon also shared information from the policy which grants him the authority to withhold certain information from the Safety Audit Committee which he views necessary for the safety and security of students. He stated that after speaking with the families of the students involved in this incident, comments would not be made to prevent additional trauma for the students and their families. He indicated that comments were not going to be made as the investigation is ongoing and information stated could possibly be addressed in a court of law. He ended his remarks stating that he looks forward to continue working with the Safety Audit Committee, he was grateful that no one was hurt, that the gentleman involved will get the help that he needs, and that the two little girls involved can start the next school year without continued worry about the incident.

➤ Calendar of Special Events:

Dr. Gordon highlighted information from the calendar of special events.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

➤ Approval of the Consent Agenda:

Board Member Dr. Brittingham moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the removal of Bills and Payroll from the Consent Agenda and amending the minutes from last month to include comments made by Board Members Slingluff and Dr. Brittingham regarding the need for SROs during the Committee's report.



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

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### ➤ Professional Organizational Affiliation for 2024-2025 School Year

Board Member Dr. Brittingham expressed her concerns with being affiliated with both the NSBA and COSSBA organizations. Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck shared a brief history of the National School Boards Association (NSBA) and indicated that there is limited information on COSSBA as it is a new national organization. She recommended affiliation with NSBA due to its history and services offered to members. Vice Chair Howell asked if an organization had to be selected and Attorney Waller said no. She expressed her concern regarding conflict with other organizations that are not affiliated with VSBA. Additional conversation ensued between Board Members. A question was asked about the verbiage in policy regarding affiliations and Attorney Waller stated that the policy was written for VSBA/NSBA membership and if the Board wanted a different affiliation, the policy would need to be revised. Board Member Riddick offered information he learned regarding why VSBA separated from NSBA. He also shared information regarding COSSBA as he attended national conference last year and continually receives updates and information from the organization. He recommended additional research in order to make an informed decision regarding affiliation and or a committee to be formed to research various national organizations and report back the information to the Board at the next meeting.

Discussion ensued between Board Members resulting in Chair Jenkins forming a committee (Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck and Vice Chair Howell) to research and report back to the Board information regarding national affiliations.

Attorney Waller stated that a motion would be needed to table voting on the affiliation because it was listed as an action item on the agenda but a motion was not needed to establish a committee.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to table professional organizational affiliations to the August meeting.

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

During this time, Dr. Gordon introduced new administrators that were approved on the Consent Agenda. He introduced Dr. Janet Wright-Davis, new Principal at Col. Fred Cherry Middle School and Leticia Rouse, new Principal at Nansemond Parkway Elementary School. The new principals were thankful for their new position and were excited to get started.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### ➤ Setting the Date, Time, and Location for School Board Retreat

Board Member Slingluff moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to table setting the date, time, and location for a School Board Retreat.

Board Member Riddick asked for clarification regarding the item being on the next meeting agenda because retreats are usually held before the start of school. Board Chair Jenkins agreed that the item would be decided at the next Board Meeting in August and restated this information for the Clerk as she asked to clarify the motion. Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck asked if the retreat was going to be held in August or September. Board Chair Jenkins indicated that it would be held on an evening in August.

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

➤ 2024-2025 Foundation Boards Appointments

Board Chair Jenkins reminded the Board of their decision made in January of 2024, to appoint members to the Foundation Boards so that they can begin with the school year. Board Chair Jenkins read the following recommendations:

- **ACCESS College Foundation Board of Directors**  
Board Member Slingluff, Alternate: Vice Chair Howell
- **The Governor's School for the Arts**  
Board Chair Jenkins, Alternate: Board Member Riddick (Board Member Riddick requested to be removed from all Foundation Boards due to his work schedule which prevented him from being flexible during the day.) Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck was selected to serve as the alternate.
- **SECEP Board**  
Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck, Alternate: Board Chair Jenkins
- **Suffolk Education Foundation**  
Board Chair Jenkins, Alternate: Vice Chair Howell
- **Virginia School Board Association**  
Board Chair Jenkins and Vice Chair Howell
- **WHRO/HRETA Educational Advisors Board**  
Board Member Slingluff, Alternate: Board Dr. Brooks-Buck (Board Chair Jenkins provided a correction, Vice Chair Howell will be the Member and Board Member Slingluff will be the Alternate)

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve the new appointments to the Foundation Boards.

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

➤ Adjustment to School Board Meeting Date: January 9, 2025 move to January 16, 2025, 5 p.m. at King's Fork Middle School

Board Member Dr. Brittingham questioned the early timing for the request to amend the meeting date. Dr. Gordon stated that the adjustment in the date would allow the newly elected chair and vice chair to set and revise the agenda. The Clerk added that early adjustments aided in securing venues and informing administration of changes which will allow ample time for meeting preparation. Board Member Riddick inquired of the protocol in the event of situation(s) requiring the Chair's attention before one is selected at the Organizational

Meeting. Attorney Waller provided information from the Board's policy which permits two members of the Board to call for a special meeting and once there, a chair can be appointed to serve as chair of that meeting. Board Member Riddick asked if the January 7<sup>th</sup> date is the earliest date the Organizational Meeting could be held. Dr. Gordon reminded Mr. Riddick that school would not resume until January 6<sup>th</sup> due to winter break. Additionally, Board Member Riddick suggested that the Policy Review Committee create parameters to ensure that an interim Chair would be appointed to serve during the time between January 1<sup>st</sup> until the Organizational Meeting is held and the new Chair is appointed. Additional conversation ensued between Board Members. The Clerk clarified that the information that was being discussed was in reference to the next item of business and to ensure that the motion offered would reflect the current item being considered.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve moving the January 9, 2025 monthly meeting to January 16, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. at King's Fork Middle School.

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

➤ Scheduling of the 2025 School Board Organizational Meeting for 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 7, 2025 at King's Fork Middle School

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Riddick seconded the motion to schedule the 2025 School Board Organizational for Tuesday, January 7, 2025 at 6 p.m. at King's Fork Middle School.

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

Before proceeding to the various ordinances, Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck shared the reasoning for items being considered for first read and adoption. She explained that it was because of changes in the law and some of the policies have been reviewed by the Board multiple times. Board Member Slingluff also stated that additional reasoning could also be to have the policy in place for the beginning of the new school year so that Dr. Gordon could instruct staff accordingly.

➤ Ordinance 2024/25-1: An Ordinance Adding Chapter 2, Article 2, Section 2-2.1:1 entitled "School superintendent responsible for day-to-day school operations; quarterly school visits for full School Board; visits prearranged by school superintendent and purpose stated; no transaction of public business allowed; individual visits allowed" of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-1: An Ordinance Adding Chapter 2, Article 2, Section 2-2.1:1 entitled "School superintendent responsible for day-to-day school operations; quarterly school visits for full School Board; visits prearranged by school superintendent and purpose stated; no transaction of public business allowed; individual visits allowed" of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board.

Board Member Riddick did not agree with this policy. He felt that the policy added more work on the Superintendent. He felt that the Board should be able to work together to select dates to walk through school properties. He stated that the Board was weakening its authority by delegating another task to the Superintendent and that only the week for the visit should be

coordinated with the Superintendent. He also indicated that it was stipulated that visiting during testing was discouraged, but it was not reflected in the policy as it should have been. Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck provided clarification of the policy, the verbiage, and the number of visits required schedule coordination. She suggested this policy to become a part of a work session to work out better ideas/logistics.

Vice Chair Howell amending her motion for the Board to consider Ordinance 2024-25-1 as an “Information Item Only” at the current meeting and to make it a topic for discussion after the School Board Retreat and at the next Board Work Session to collaborate. Board Member Dr. Brooks Buck seconded the motion.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham felt that the policy was a violation of Virginia State Code and the policy should not be considered. She suggested reviewing the Board Norms and Protocols and adjust the information listed there instead of the Board trying to marry the policy to what’s in the Norms and Protocols. Board Member Riddick provided additional comments and suggested adding to the motion for the item to be discussed during a School Board Work Session. He clarified for the discussion to occur at the School Board Retreat which would allow time for discussion versus the August regular meeting.

Vice Chair Howell amended her amended motion for the Board to consider Ordinance 2024-25-1 as an “Information Item Only” at the current meeting and to make the item a topic for discussion at the School Board Retreat once the date is scheduled. Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion.

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

➤ Ordinance 2024/25-2 & Ordinance 2024/25-3

Ordinance 2024/25-2 and Ordinance 2024/25-3 were first read items only. No action was required at this time.

➤ Ordinance 2024/25-4: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 3, Article 1, Section 3-1.6 entitled “The responsibilities of the building principal; budget preparation; implementation of severe weather plans; make up days; waivers by Board of Education” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-4: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 3, Article 1, Section 3-1.6 entitled “The responsibilities of the building principal; budget preparation; implementation of severe weather plans; make up days; waivers by Board of Education” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham expressed her concerns that implementing foundations during a time when school safety and student achievement are a priority then retracted her statement as she was referencing to the incorrect item.

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

➤ Ordinance 2024/25-5: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 5, Article 2, Section 5-2.3 entitled “Reporting of hazardous conditions; labeling of toxic materials” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-5: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 5, Article 2, Section 5-2.3 entitled “Reporting of hazardous conditions; labeling of toxic materials” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption.

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

- Ordinance 2024/25-6: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 5, Article 2, Section 5-2.6 entitled “Emergency closings; notification thereof; parental involvement” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-6: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 5, Article 2, Section 5-2.6 entitled “Emergency closings; notification thereof; parental involvement” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption

Board Member Slingluff asked a question regarding information being removed from the policy. Attorney Waller provided that the change was being recommended by the VSBA, but the Board could choose to allow the language to remain in the policy. Board Member Slingluff recommended keeping the sentence in the policy. Dr. Gordon was concerned with the suggestion to retain the language as the policy is the practice of all school divisions. He shared the sensitivity of a 90-minute window which allowed notification to the school community and to make sure bus drivers can return to schools to start routes. He explained the process of collaboration with city officials, administrators and staff for adverse weather. Board Member Riddick agreed that keeping the language gives the Board the ability to review the guidelines. Additional conversation ensued between Board Members and Dr. Gordon.

Vice Chair Howell amended her motion and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to send Ordinance 2024/25-6: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 5, Article 2, Section 5-2.6 entitled “Emergency closings; notification thereof; parental involvement” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board back to the Policy Review Committee for an adjustment in Section A.

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

- Ordinance 2024/25-7: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 5, Article 2, Section 5-2.9 entitled “Staff certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the Heimlich and first aid required” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-7: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 5, Article 2, Section 5-2.9 entitled “Staff certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the Heimlich and first aid required” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board.

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

- Ordinance 2024/25-8: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 5, Article 6, Section 5-6.2 entitled “Educational technology; definitions; establishment of foundation permitted; purchases of educational technology” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading  
Ordinance 2024/25-8 was a first read item only. No action was required at this time.

- Ordinance 2024/25-9: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 6, Article 3, Section 6-3.3 entitled “Inspection requirement” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-9: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 6, Article 3, Section 6-3.3 entitled “Inspection requirement” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board.

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

- Ordinance 2024/25-10 & Ordinance 2024/25-11

Ordinance 2024/25-10 and Ordinance 2024/25-11 were first read items only. No action was required at this time.

- Ordinance 2024/25-12: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 9, Article 12, Section 9-12.2 entitled “Weapons and children with disability” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-12: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 9, Article 12, Section 9-12.2 entitled “Weapons and children with disability” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham questioned the use of US code versus staying with Virginia statute on the policy. Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck clarified the change to the policy was not about the code as it was a reference to the recommended change. Attorney Waller added clarification of the Federal code and its application to weapons and children with disabilities. He stated that there is no change in the policy but a change in legal authority. He reminded all that federal law supersedes state law.

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

- Ordinance 2024/25-13 & Ordinance 2024/25-14

Ordinance 2024/25-13 and Ordinance 2024/25-14 were first read items only. No action was required at this time.

- Resolution 2024/25-1: A Resolution Approving the Terms and Conditions of A Memorandum of Understanding Between eCamion USA, Inc. and the Suffolk City School Board for the Suffolk City School Board to Participate in Jule’s Network of Charging Stations for Electric Vehicles Funded by the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program (“Nevi”)

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2024/25-1: A Resolution Approving the Terms and Conditions of A Memorandum of Understanding Between eCamion USA, Inc. and the Suffolk City School Board for the Suffolk City School Board to Participate in Jule’s Network of Charging Stations for Electric Vehicles Funded by the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program (“Nevi”).

Attorney Waller informed the Board that the company reached out to SPS because their grant application required a location for the charging stations to be placed on the grant application before the grant could be submitted. Upon looking at property in the area, they determined

that CCAP would be a good location for the charging stations. It has not yet been determined if the grant will be approved, this is all a part of a grant process. If the grant is not awarded, no charging stations will be placed at CCAP. Board Member Dr. Brittingham asked why Dr. Gordon's name was listed as the property owner instead of the School Board. Attorney Waller stated that the Memorandum of Understanding indicates that the owner is the School Board at the very beginning of the document. Dr. Gordon is simply serving as the representative of the School Board for contact purposes only. Dr. Gordon stated that if the grant is approved, it would provide opportunity for our computer diagnostic program at CCAP. He added that a caveat to the program if approved, would be that it would allow our Automotive classes the opportunity to dissect and figure out how the equipment work. Additional conversation ensued between the Board, Dr. Gordon, and Attorney Waller. Board Member Riddick was concerned that enough time was not given for sufficient review of the document being considered. He also questioned if conversations were held with nearby property owners that could be affected. He indicated that during the day, school children are on the site, and persons who are vulnerable are on the site during the night and it would not be a good decision to invite strangers to that area. He also stated that he would not support the ordinance. Dr. Gordon provided additional information regarding receipt of the information and deadline dates as there was no delay in sharing the information with the Board. Mr. Riddick was concerned with the obligation this project placed on the division and that the information was not properly vetted. He expressed that the reason for his "No" vote is based on consideration and dealings with a vulnerable population. Vice Chair Howell questioned how situations would be handled for those coming to charge their cars and have weapons in their vehicles on school property. Dr. Gordon shared that if the grant is approved, a second MOU with parameters will address those situations. He added that anyone using the charging station on school property should not have weapons in their cars and if so, they would face the consequences of violating the law. Additional conversation ensued.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2024/25-1: A Resolution Approving the Terms and Conditions of A Memorandum of Understanding Between eCamion USA, Inc. and the Suffolk City School Board for the Suffolk City School Board to Participate in Jule's Network of Charging Stations for Electric Vehicles Funded by the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program ("Nevi").

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

- Resolution 24/25-2: A Resolution of the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia Placing in Nomination the Name of James Robinson, Staff Reporter for the Suffolk News Herald, for the Statewide VSBA Media Honor Roll

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to approve Resolution 24/25-2: A Resolution of the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia Placing in Nomination the Name of James Robinson, Staff Reporter for the Suffolk News Herald, for the Statewide VSBA Media Honor Roll.

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

- Resolution 24/25-3: A Resolution of the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia Authorizing the School Superintendent to Expend the Sum of \$217,678.50 for High Quality Instructional Materials Approved by the State

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Resolution 24/25-3: A Resolution of the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia Authorizing the School Superintendent to Expend the Sum of \$217,678.50 for High Quality Instructional Materials Approved by the State.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham was concerned that materials previously purchased did not meet the phonics needs required by the Literacy Act and she questioned why adopting a curriculum that meets the needs of the Literacy Act. She felt that this purchase would not be good use of funds. Dr. Okema Branch explained information received from the state and the reasons why these purchases are being made. She stated that according to the Virginia Literacy Act, which was previously presented to the Board, and the requirement of the school division's literacy plan, divisions had to supplement with materials to ensure that the content which is missing from what we already have, is included and that there is a continuation for the completion of the English standards. This is a requirement according to the law passed by the General Assembly and this is how local schools supplement their reading materials. This is currently an evolving process. Additional conversation was held between Board Member Dr. Brittingham, Dr. Branch and Dr. Gordon.

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

- Resolution 24/25-4: A Resolution of the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia Approving an Award to HES Facilities, LLC. for Groundskeeping and Landscaping Services for the Suffolk Public Schools Pursuant to a Cooperative Agreement

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Resolution 24/25-4: A Resolution of the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia Approving an Award to HES Facilities, LLC. for Groundskeeping and Landscaping Services for the Suffolk Public Schools Pursuant to a Cooperative Agreement.

Board Member Riddick ask for clarification for contracting grounds maintenance versus increasing current staff. Dr. Gordon provided reasoning for the contract and provided a cost analysis supporting the contract. Mr. Riddick did not agree with the resolution and outsourcing work. He felt that that there could have been better options. Dr. Gordon and Mr. Napier provided specific details regarding duties that will be carried out by HES Facilities. Mr. Napier clarified that the contract is not a matter of outsourcing, but is considered resourcing as no SPS employees will lose their job, benefits, unless they choose to leave and contract through HES. Additional questions and concerns were expressed by Board Member Riddick and information was provided by Dr. Gordon in response to those concerns.

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

- Payment of Bills and Payroll - June 30, 2024

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Byrum seconded the motion to approve the Payment of Bills and Payroll - June 30, 2024.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham expressed concerns with the Bills and Payroll. She indicated that she would send her questions to Dr. Gordon for clarification.

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.



## **PUBLIC SPEAKERS ON NON-AGENDA TOPICS**

### ➤ Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda Items:

The Clerk read the statement of decorum for the speaker who signed up to address the Board.

Travis McKinney (Re: School Safety and Other Concerns) – Mr. McKinney recommended adding a “Safety” line to the budget. He also recommended that teachers receive training, by a civilian or police officer, regarding the safe handling of firearms. Additionally, he discussed the Trusted Adult policy. He felt that the program encourages children to have open conversations with an adult without the permission or consent of a parent, thereby endangering children. Mr. McKinney referenced a rumor that between \$30,000 to \$40,000 was missing from Lakeland High Schools’ athletic funds; and that he was going to FOIA information to find out if the rumor was true.

During this time, a conversation was held between Board Member Riddick and Board Chair Jenkins regarding whether or not Brandon Randleman and Jonathan Rankin would also be allowed to address the Board under Non-Agenda Topics as they were previously listed if they chose to because they may not have had the opportunity to address their non-agenda topic when they were permitted to address the Board during Early Appearances. The Clerk clarified that the topics of discussion for both citizens were moved to the Early Appearances. Dr. Gordon verified that Mr. Randleman successfully addressed the Board regarding his topics however, Mr. Rankin did not have the opportunity to address the Board regarding the Bills and Payroll, as he requested.

Jonathan Rankin (Re: Payment of Bills and Payroll) – Mr. Rankin expressed his concern with the payment of bills reports. He felt that the report lacked transparency as he highlighted transportation services with LPR Airport Express, overdue invoices, and reimbursements. He also discussed tutoring services fees, why teachers must use funds from “Go Fund Me” pages to secure supplies for their classrooms. He suggested implementing a more detailed and standardized expense reporting system, conducting regular audits or reviews of contracts, transparency regarding reimbursements, and establishing a citizen committee to oversee monthly expenditures.

## **BUSINESS BY BOARD MEMBERS**

### ➤ Comments and Reports by School Board Members:

- Thanked Dr. Gordon for his transparent report regarding KSES incident; the Suffolk Police Department for their swift response and for reporting the facts that SPS successfully handled this incident without breaches in protocol, also thanked teachers for their heroic actions; students, parents, and the community for their continued support of KSES and SPS as the entire incident was resolved in 11 minutes which took teamwork from everyone.
- Expressed concern with the delay in disseminating information to the Board and public regarding the incident. They also expressed their commitment in ensuring that all students are and remain safe.
- Thanked Board Members for productive discussions, and the speakers for staying late in the evening/early morning to share their thoughts with the Board.
- Congratulated the graduating class for their scholarship accomplishments. Scholarships totaled over \$46 million.

- Looked forward to summer school graduation, and expressed gratitude with the S.T.A.R. program.
- Suggested adding cursive writing back into the curriculum.
- Thanked citizens of the Suffolk borough for their support; indicated that they are a group of people who have a need and the right to information.
- Discussed staff concerns regarding false narratives; explained that communication is key and silence is not the answer.
- Expressed tiredness with condescending actions and bullying when sharing differing opinions.
- Requested a timeline and quarterly status reports regarding safety measures.
- Recognized Mr. Robinson for his fair and unbiased reporting.
- Wished everyone a good night and thank you.

Due to the lateness of the hour, Board Member Riddick suggested having a special meeting to consider staff evaluations to afford Board Members the opportunity to be refreshed, alert, and better equipped to discuss evaluations and contracts. Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck shared that the constant dialogue and talking throughout the meeting used much of the meeting's time. She recommended finishing the business of the board before going home. Board Member Riddick explained certain risks to his job and health if he was to work without adequate rest. He again reiterated his request for an additional meeting, as originally suggested nine days ago. Board Chair Jenkins explained that meetings discussing evaluations, contracts and hearings are long, as they were last year as well. Board Member Riddick stated that the Board was being forced to make decisions while judgments were impaired. Again, he recommended a special meeting to consider evaluations as it was not in the interest of all parties to continue with the current meeting. He asked Board Members to err on the side of caution and make a sound decision.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham moved and Board Member Riddick seconded the motion to table the evaluations, and for the Board to call a Special Meeting to allow time to refresh and be alert to consider staff evaluations.

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck expressed her understanding of work obligations however, she felt that a couple of Board Member were determined to do what they wanted and that their antics should not stop the business of the Board. She again stated that extended discussions were held by some Board Members and if they were so worried about time, they would have limited their discussions. She also emphasized that the evaluation process would not take long as evaluations were completed over a month ago. Board Member Riddick began speaking while Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck was still speaking. She then indicated that she had been recognized to speak by Board Chair Jenkins. Board Chair Jenkins attempted to gain control of the meeting while both Members (Riddick/Dr. Brooks-Buck) were still talking. Board Member Riddick stated that he was tired of this behavior and continued speaking while Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck was addressing Chair Jenkins. Board Members Riddick and Dr. Brooks-Buck had a heated exchange which culminated in Board Member Riddick calling Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck a "mean, nasty woman." Board Chair Jenkins admonished both Members for their poor behavior as they were not modeling proper, and professional behavior. Board Member Riddick then began packing his belonging to exit the meeting. Board Chair Jenkins discussed appropriate conduct of Board Members and encouraged both Members to act accordingly. Board Member Riddick continue speaking while packing his belongings to exit the meeting.

Board Chair Jenkins continued with the meeting by voting on the motion made prior to the exchange.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham restated her motion to table the evaluations and for the Board set a special meeting to come back with a fresh perspective, not tired and irritated, to consider evaluations and contract negotiations.

The Clerk asked if a date should be included in the motion for the special meeting. Board Member Riddick explained that the date was not necessary at that time, but it could be ascertained by polling the Board. Attorney Waller agreed that a date was not needed, however he suggested that it be included in the motion.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham amended her motion to table the evaluations to a time and date that the Board will agree upon to return. Board Member Riddick agreed with the amended motion and seconded the motion.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 3 / Nay: 4 (Dr. Brooks-Buck, Byrum, Howell, Jenkins) / Abstain: 0. The motion failed by vote of 4 to 3.

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Vice Chair Howell seconded the motion for a Second Closed Meeting as read by Attorney Waller.

Board Member Riddick requested a point of privilege to explain to his constituents, his exclusion from the coming votes. He requested the following comments to be included in the official record:

“I asked to table it because I have to get up and go to work in about two hours. I have a very busy day tomorrow. I suggested, nine (9) days ago, that we, after looking at the agenda, that the meeting be split into two meetings because I knew it was going to be a long-winded meeting and it was too much on the agenda. I don’t think it’s wise to do contract negotiations, evaluations, and discussion when staff is tired. I just want that to go on the record. Madam Clerk, I ask that you quote my words exactly please, so they won’t get misconstrued and other misinformation that’s going to go out from here tonight. Thank you so much. Take care.”<sup>1</sup>

## **MOTION TO GO INTO SECOND CLOSED MEETING**

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

1. The discussion and/or consideration of the job performance of a specific teacher employed by Suffolk Public Schools; and
2. The discussion and/or consideration regarding the performance evaluation of the School Superintendent and any revisions to terms of his employment; and
3. 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
4. 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.

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<sup>1</sup>Board Member Riddick left the meeting at 1:21 a.m. after his comments.

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

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 5 / Nay: 1 (Dr. Brittingham) / Abstain: 0 / Absent: 1 (Riddick). The motion passed by vote of 5 to 1.

### **RECONVENE IN PUBLIC MEETING**

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

### **CERTIFICATION OF SECOND CLOSED MEETING**

- Attorney Waller Read the following certification:  
A Resolution of Certification of the Second Closed Meeting of July 11, 2024, Pursuant to Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as Amended

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 (1950), as amended, 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.

Board Member Byrum moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve the Certification of the First Closed Meeting as read by Mr. Waller.

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

### **ACTION ON SECOND CLOSED MEETING ITEMS**

- Superintendent's Contract  
Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to increase the Superintendent's salary with a five (5) percent raise.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion passed by vote of 6 to 0.

- Superintendent's Contract  
Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Vice Chair Howell seconded the motion to permit the Superintendent to cash out unused vacation days for the fiscal year.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 5 / Nay: 1 (Slingluff) / Abstain: 0 / Absent: 1 (Riddick). The motion passed by vote of 5 to 1.

➤ Superintendent's Contract

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Byrum seconded the motion to give the Superintendent a two (2) year payout of his contract if he is terminated as the Superintendent of Suffolk Public Schools without cause.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 4 / Nay: 2 (Dr. Brittingham, Slingluff) / Abstain: 0 / Absent: 1 (Riddick). The motion passed by vote of 4 to 2.

➤ Superintendent's Contract

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Byrum seconded the motion to renew the Superintendent's Contract for four (4) years.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 4 / Nay: 2 (Dr. Brittingham, Slingluff) / Abstain: 0 / Absent: 1 (Riddick). The motion passed by vote of 4 to 2.

➤ Superintendent's Contract

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Byrum seconded the motion to amend the Superintendent's Contract to include the verbiage that if the Superintendent seeks alternative employment, the Chair of the School Board only must be informed.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 5 / Nay: 1 (Dr. Brittingham) / Abstain: 0 / Absent: 1 (Riddick). The motion passed by vote of 5 to 1.

➤ School Board Attorney's Contract

Board Chair Jenkins read a resolution approving the terms and conditions of an addendum to the contract of employment between the Suffolk City School Board and Wendell M. Waller.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve the Resolution approving the terms and conditions of an addendum to the contract of employment between the Suffolk City School Board and Wendell M. Waller as read.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 5 / Nay: 1 (Dr. Brittingham) / Abstain: 0 / Absent: 1 (Riddick). The motion passed by vote of 5 to 1.

➤ School Board Clerk Compensation

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to give the School Board Clerk a \$2,000 bonus for performance in her role of Clerk.

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

## INFORMATION ITEMS

- Accident Report – June 2024
- Attendance Report – June 2024
- Capital Projects Financial Statement

- Due to finalization of year end processes, the Financial Report for June 2024 (Information Item) is currently unavailable and will be included in the September 12, 2024 meeting agenda.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

➤ Adjournment of Meeting:

There being no further business, Board Chair Jenkins adjourned the July 11, 2024 School Board Meeting at 5:01 a.m., July 12, 2024.

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Karen Jenkins, *School Board Chair*

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Tarshia L. Gardner, *Board Clerk*