

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE SUFFOLK CITY SCHOOL BOARD

Thursday, November 14, 2024 ~ 5:00 P.M.

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

Board Members Present:

Karen Jenkins, *Chair*
Heather Howell, *Vice Chair*
Dr. Dawn Marie Brittingham
Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck
Phyllis Byrum
Tyron Riddick¹
Kimberly Slingluff

Administrative Staff Present:

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

OPENING OF PUBLIC MEETING/WORK SESSION

➤ Call to Order:

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

➤ Advanced Instruction Update

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Okema Branch, Chief Academic Officer, and Dr. Keisha Melvin, Coordinator of Advanced Instruction, provided information regarding Advanced Instruction and World Languages.

During their presentation, the fire alarm in the City Hall building was triggered at 5:03 p.m., causing a pause in the School Board Meeting as everyone followed evacuation procedures. Shortly thereafter, we returned to Council Chamber at 5:09 p.m. and Board Chair Jenkins resumed the meeting.

Dr. Branch and Dr. Melvin proceeded to share data and information regarding various programs relative to Advanced Instruction including Gifted, Governor's School for the Arts, International Baccalaureate, Project Lead the Way Engineering & Biomedical Sciences, The Center for Performing and Production Arts, and Advanced Placement. They also highlighted areas of focus for Advanced Instruction, the College Board National Recognition Program Awards, and Dual Enrollment Data.

Board Members were appreciative of the information and asked questions. They were impressed with the number of programs available to students in Advanced Instruction.

➤ New Course Proposals

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Okema Branch, Chief Academic Officer and Dr. Angela King, Coordinator of School Counselors, provided information regarding the new and amended course proposals and explained the process for suggesting new courses. They also

¹ Board Member Riddick arrived to the meeting during the Advanced Instruction Update presentation at 5:30 p.m.

highlighted new courses recommended for the Center for Performing and Production Arts and World Languages classes.

Board Members and staff engaged in conversation regarding in-person versus virtual course offerings, potential conflicts between SPS Fine Arts programs with the Governor's School arts programs, student surveys, course selection process, and possibly a component added to inform and attract students to the programs (i.e., service learning, etc.)

➤ New Accreditation & Accountability System

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Stenette Byrd III, Chief of Schools, provided an overview of the previous accreditation system versus the new accreditation system using side-by-side comparisons. He also explained what will happen under the new regulations, the cycle of review and growth, data, scores and calculations to ascertain the "Sum Score." Dr. Byrd summarized his presentation and provided information regarding the next steps to be taken to ensure accreditation success. Those steps include monitoring changes, advocating for appropriate representation, adjusting models to reflect changes, continuing school improvement efforts, increasing pass advance scores, and focusing on advanced achievement.

Board Members were appreciative of the in-depth information. Conversation ensued between the Board and staff regarding chronic absenteeism and the role it plays in scores, parent's role in preventing chronic absenteeism, collaboration and support from the courts and law enforcement officials regarding truancy and the important role parents play in making sure that their children attend school regularly.

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 item and subject pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act found at Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711:

Record Review 2024/25-7 RR 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).

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to go into the closed meeting as read by Attorney 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 0.²

Board Chair Jenkins reminded Boards Members to turn in all non-SPS issued electronic devices to the Deputy Clerk, Keesha Johnson, as they are not permitted in the closed meeting area.

² Due to an unexpected phone call, Board Member Riddick was absent from this vote, but was present for the closed meeting discussion.

RECONVENE IN PUBLIC MEETING

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

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

- Attorney Wendell Waller read the following certification:
A Resolution of Certification of the First Closed Meeting of November 14, 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 Riddick moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve the Certification of the Closed Meeting as read by Vice Chair Howell.

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 6:56 p.m.

RE-OPENING OF PUBLIC MEETING

- Meeting Called to Order:
Board Chair Jenkins called to order the regular public meeting at 7:20 p.m.
- Pledge of Allegiance:
King's Fork High Schools NJROTC led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Moment of Silence:
A moment of silence was observed by all in attendance.
- The Mission of Suffolk Public Schools:
Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck read the mission of SPS.

ACTION ON CLOSED MEETING ITEMS

➤ Student Record Review Number 2024/25-7 RR

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to uphold the decision of the Student Services Review Committee (SSRC) for Student Record Review #2024/25-7 RR.

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

➤ Approval of Agenda:

Board Member Riddick moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to approve the agenda by moving Item 4 (HES Custodial Contract) from New Business, to be considered after “Public Speakers on Agenda Topics” (due to an early meeting exit explained by Board Member Riddick.)

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

PUBLIC SPEAKERS ON AGENDA TOPICS

➤ Citizen Comments on Agenda Items:

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

Bryan Walrath (Driver Elementary). Mr. Walrath explained that the vacant building is a safety hazard and recommended returning the building back to the city.

NEW BUSINESS

➤ HES Custodial Contract:

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Wendy Forsman, Chief Financial Officer, and Terry Napier, Director of Facilities and Planning, provided a summary of information being presented, including statistical data regarding absenteeism by custodial workers, the inability to staff schools with necessary substitute workers per day, and the need for change. They also provided information regarding the recommended contract between SPS and HES Facilities Management, including recruitment of new staff (regular and substitute custodians), Zone Supervisors (3), training for all custodians, and the purchase of equipment and janitorial supplies (beginning 2025-2026 and/or after SPS supplies are depleted). Additionally, they explained that all current employees will have the option to continue working as an SPS employee or transition to be an employee of HES.

Lori Mounie, Principal at Southwestern Elementary School, shared her perspective after having conversations with other SPS principals and administrators from the Asheboro school division who has been using HES for their custodial staffing needs for the past three years. Mrs. Mounie expressed the opinion that the contract would be a great way to assist Human Resources in securing custodians for buildings. She also shared that a major concern from principals was finding a substitute custodian. She emphasized that the cleanliness of the building impacts student and staff health, which impacts attendance, which impacts student achievement.

Board Members stated their concerns with this partnership. Some of those concerns included: (1) who would be responsible for securing background checks on employees; (2) SPS custodians losing their jobs/being demoted; (3) salary increases for SPS staff versus HES staff; (4) SPS outsourcing custodial workers; and (5) who would be responsible for ensuring the cleanliness of buildings. Board Member Riddick recommended tabling this item to allow more time to decipher all information received and to hold a public forum to ascertain current custodian concerns and how they will be impacted by this contract. Additional conversation occurred among Board Members, Dr. Gordon and staff, and Mr. Russell LeBob, Vice President of HES Facilities Management, who provided answers to member questions regarding the contract and his company.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve SPS entering into a partnership with HES for custodial services.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 4 / Nay: 2 (Dr. Brittingham, Riddick / Abstain: 1 (Slingluff) / Absent: 0. The motion Passed by vote of 4 to 2 to 1.³

REPORTS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

- Good News Report:
Anthonette Dickens, Communications and Community Engagement Officer, shared information from the Good News Report. Latricia Russell-Wilkerson was recognized for being featured in a Frontline Case Study. Bus Drivers and Bus Aides were also recognized for receiving perfect attendance for the months of September and October.
- 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 and have Bills and Payroll under New Business.

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.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Before considering the ordinances, Vice Chair Howell asked if Board Members would like to consider any of the ordinances together and to state those they wished to address separately. Board Member Slingluff expressed her concerns indicating the difficulty for each member to isolate the ordinances they wanted to address, and that she had a lot of questions on many of the ordinances. Vice Chair Howell proceeded with the ordinances as outlined on the agenda.

- Ordinance 2024/25-51: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 2, Article 2, Section 2-2.7 entitled “School Board Standing Committees; Foundations; Special Committees” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - Second Reading

³ Board Member Riddick exited the meeting after the vote at 8:58 p.m.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-51: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 2, Article 2, Section 2-2.7 entitled “School Board Standing Committees; Foundations; Special Committees” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - Second Reading as presented.

Board Member Slingluff suggested edits to the policy citing non-essential items and potential conflict with other Board policies. She recommended that the ordinance be returned to the Policy Review Committee for revisions to the first and last sentences in Section 1. After discussion, Vice Chair Howell amended her motion.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Books-Buck seconded the motion to send Ordinance 2024/25-51 back to the Policy Review Committee to consider changes that Board Member Slingluff will communicate to the Committee in writing. Additional discussion ensued. Vice Chair Howell amended her (amended) motion.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Books-Buck seconded the motion to send Ordinance 2024/25-51 back to the Policy Review Committee to strike the last sentence in the underscored section of Section 1, as well as the mention of VSBA in the very first sentence in Section 1.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 4 / Nay: 2 (Dr. Brooks-Buck / Byrum) / Abstain: 0 / Absent: 1 (Riddick). The motion Passed by vote of 4 to 2.

➤ Ordinance 2024/25-52: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 2, Article 3, Chapter 2, Article 3, Section 2-3.2 entitled “Regular Meetings; Special Meetings; Quorum” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - Second Reading

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-52: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 2, Article 3, Chapter 2, Article 3, Section 2-3.2 entitled “Regular Meetings; Special Meetings; Quorum” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - Second Reading, as presented.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham recommended tabling the ordinance until after the new board convenes stating that wording on the second page of the policy will directly impact governance of incoming board members. Board Member Slingluff felt that the policy added additional restrictions and stipulations which continues to prevent Board Members adding items to the agenda in an efficient and timely manner. Discussion ensued.

During discussion, Board Chair Jenkins called for a five minutes break at 9:47 p.m. The meeting was called back to order at 9:52 p.m. and Attorney Waller provided clarification of the policy indicating that the policy grants Board Members greater latitude when adding items to the agenda. The proposed policy revision will allow Board Members two ways to have items added to the meeting agenda, the 14-day requirement or by adding an item the night of the meeting. He also indicated that the item added on the night of the meeting cannot be voted on at that meeting if it directly impacts students or employees unless the Board through the excise of its discretion, determines that it would be in the best interest to do so. Additional conversation ensued. Vice Chair Howell amended her motion.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to send the policy (Ordinance 2024/25-52) to the Policy Review Committee to change Section E to reflect that a “majority vote” is required by the Board to add an item to the agenda, rather than 100% Board support. Additional clarification was shared.

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

Board Chair Jenkins asked the Board again if there were any ordinances that could be considered as a group as there were 20 more policies to be considered. Board Members specified the various policies they wanted to directly address. (Dr. Brittingham – Ordinances 24/25-60 and 24/25-65; Slingluff – Ordinances 24/25-73 and 24/25-75).

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to approve all ordinances listed under “Unfinished Business,” excluding Ordinances 2024/25-60, Ordinance 2024/25-65, Ordinance 2024/25-73 and Ordinance 2024/25-75.

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.

- Ordinance 2024/25-60: An Ordinance Adding Chapter 8, Article 7, Section 8-7.1:2 entitled “Reading Intervention Services” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - Second Reading.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham addressed Ordinance 2024/25-60 by asking several questions regarding determination of the reading intervention services, is there contractual underpinning that’s similar to an IEP, or if it’s more like an SOS Plan? How often will students receive the reading intervention services, are there any legal consequences for not following the plan as it is for an IEP, are the services legally mandated? Discussion began with Attorney Waller, Dr. Gordon, and Dr. Branch providing clarification/interpretation of the policy.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-60 with the Reading Intervention Services outlined.

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.

- Ordinance 2024/25-65: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 8, Article 33, Section 8-33.3:4 entitled “Virginia Program Assessment Retakes Grades kindergarten through 8; SOL end-of-course retake tests for high school students” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - Second Reading.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham questions were answered during the last item’s discussion, therefore, discussion was not required.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-65 as presented.

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.

- Ordinance 2024/25-73: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 10, Article 2, Section 10-2.1 entitled “Community to be kept informed” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - Second Reading.

Board Member Slingluff addressed Ordinance 2024/25-73. She suggested adding that information regarding school board events including Town Halls and Parent Advisory Committee Meetings, be added to information that is to be disseminated via all school media

outlets. Discussion began with Dr. Gordon providing clarification relative to Town Halls not being advertised as they are individual events and not representative of the entire division. He and Mrs. Anthonette Dickens clarified that the Citizen Advisory Committees are regularly posted on SPS media outlets, outside of the Clerk's office, and on first floor of the School Administrative Offices building. Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck indicated that Town Halls were not advertised in the division to avoid giving the public impression that each member can speak for the Board, only the Chair can speak for the Board.

Board Member Slingluff moved and Vice Chair Howell seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-73 as presented.

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.

- Ordinance 2024/25-75: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 10, Article 13, Section 10-13.1 entitled "Acceptance of Gifts generally; title vested in School Board; donor request to be honored" of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - Second Reading. Board Member Slingluff felt that new information being added to Ordinance 2024/25-75 seemed ambiguous and unclear as to its reference. Attorney Waller provided clarification of the policy.

Board Member Slingluff moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-75 as presented.

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.

NEW BUSINESS (cont.)

- School Board Self Evaluation Tool⁴

Board Chair Jenkins stated that the Board will be using the tool recommended by the VSBA. According to her research, the majority of school divisions are using the tool. Additionally, she disbanded the School Board's Self Evaluation Committee (membered by Riddick, Slingluff, and Dr. Brittingham) as they did not provide an evaluation tool they were tasked to create. Conversation took place among Board Members regarding the plan for implementation, expectations, the purpose of submitting completed evaluations, plans for discussing the data (i.e., School Board Work Sessions or Retreat) and whether the self-evaluation is for the Board as a whole or individual board members. Concerns were expressed regarding discussion of the evaluation if done during a meeting versus a School Board Retreat. Board Member Riddick returned to the meeting during this discussion. He recommended that a two-part evaluation of Board staff. Exiting board members should be given an opportunity to evaluate staff with whom they have worked for an entire year. Incoming board members, on the other hand, will be afforded the opportunity to evaluate staff with whom they have only worked for six months. He felt that staff evaluations were more pertinent than the Board evaluating itself when the makeup of the board is about to change. Additional conversation ensued.

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Byrum seconded the motion to approve the School Board Self Evaluation Tool recommended by the VSBA, as presented.

⁴ Board Member Riddick reentered the meeting at 10:39 p.m.

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

- Citizen Advisory Committee Members Update - Parent Advisory Committee (Title I)
Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Byrum seconded the motion to approve the Citizen Advisory Committee Members Update – Parent Advisory Committee (Title I), as presented.⁵

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.

- New Course Proposals
Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve the new course proposals as outlined in the work session.

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.

- Resolution 24/25-10: A Resolution Supporting Military Children and Families Adopted by the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia
Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Resolution 24/25-10.

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.

- Resolution 24/25-11: A Resolution Approving The Terms And Conditions Of A Right Of Way Agreement Between The Suffolk City School Board And Virginia Electric And Power Company, d/b/a Dominion Energy Virginia
Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Resolution 24/25-11.

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.

- Resolution 24/25-12: A Resolution Of The School Board For The City Of Suffolk, Virginia Authorizing The Conveyance Of Land Not Needed For School Purposes Located At 4270 Driver Lane Formerly Known As Driver Elementary School
Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Resolution 24/25-12.

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.

- Ordinance 2024/25-76: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 2, Article 2, Section 2-2.7:1 entitled “Citizen Advisory Committees; Open Meetings Required; Attendance by School Board Members” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption

⁵ Board Member Riddick exited the meeting at 10:51 p.m.

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-76.

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.

Ordinance 2024/25-79: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 9, Article 18, Section 9-18.2 entitled “Suspension for ten days or less; Principal or Assistant Principal to Report the Facts; appeal procedure; notice requirement” of the Policies of the Suffolk City School Board - First Reading and Adoption⁶

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Byrum seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 2024/25-79.

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

- Ordinance 2024/25-80: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 9, Article 18, Section 9-18.8 entitled “Hearing before student services review committee; procedure to be followed; appeal before the School Board; superintendent to establish student services review committee” 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 2024/25-80.

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

- Ordinance 2024/25-77 and Ordinance 2024/25-78
Information items only. No vote required at the time.

- Payment of Bills and Payroll October 2024

Vice Chair Howell moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve Payment of Bills and Payroll October 2024.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 5 / Nay: 2 (Dr. Brittingham, Slingsluff) / 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.

1. Jonathan Powell (Contracts, Day-to-Day Operations, Accountability) Mr. Powell expressed concern with contracts that Dr. Gordon oversees on the day-to-day operational level.

BUSINESS BY BOARD MEMBERS

- Comments and Reports by School Board Members:

Board Members congratulated and welcomed newly elected board members Sean McGee and Valerie Fields, and congratulated Mrs. Howell on her re-election win. They also congratulated

⁶ Board Member Riddick returned to the meeting at 10:59 p.m.

Dr. Gordon, Dr. Branch, Dr. Byrd, Mrs. Forsman, and Mr. Napier for the information presented during the work session. Board Members congratulated the KFHS cheerleaders, NRHS cheerleaders, field hockey and football teams for advancing to the next level of success and encouraged all to support students by attending the games throughout the division. They also congratulated football player, Tavion Douglass for his athletic accomplishments. Board Members thanked the speakers Mr. Walrath and Mr. Powell, who addressed the Board, for sharing their comments and concerns. They also congratulated students, faculty and staff for their achievements which were recognized during the meeting and the Good News Report. Board Members congratulated LHS and OES Principals for receiving awards from the Department of Education, and thanked Board Members for their time, discussion and input in the meetings. They congratulated Dr. Gordon for his induction into the Network of Distinguished Educators, and encouraged him to keep up the good work and for displaying great discipline in the face of insults and disrespect. They thanked the Board for their communication and cooperation during the meeting, for sharing concerns regarding certain policies, and information regarding upcoming Town Halls being held (November 22nd, 6 p.m. at Chuckatuck's Fire Department on King's Highway). They also thanked the Chargers and Gators for their accomplishments.

Board Members attended the following events: HBCU College Fair, Advance Instruction Night, Trunk or Treat, the Tidewater Education Consortium, Take Your Legislator to School Day and a SECEP meeting. They also attended several plays at Lakeland High School. Board Member suggested professional development for the Board in the new year, and encouraged tax payers to write to their legislators regarding challenging rules being created for schools to follow. They also encouraged students to continue reading the book *The World According to Humphrey*.

Board Members wished all a blessed evening and safe holiday.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- Accident Report – October 2024
- Attendance Report – October 31, 2024
- Capital Projects Financial Statement
- Financial Report October 2024
- SPS Condolences (Andrea Saunders, Aimee Debusk)

ADJOURNMENT

➤ Adjournment of Meeting:

There being no further business, Board Chair Jenkins adjourned the November 14, 2024 School Board Meeting at 11:40 p.m.

Karen Jenkins, *School Board Chair*

Tarshia L. Gardner, *Board Clerk*