



MINUTES
CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Booker T. Reaves Media Center, Charlottesville High School
Thursday, December 5, 2024 (5:00 PM)

The closed Meeting of the Charlottesville City School Board was held on December 5, 2024, at 4:00 p.m., in the Division Annex Student Services Conference Room.

PRESENT: Ms. Burns, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Morse, Mr. Meyer, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Larson-Torres
ABSENT: Ms. Cooper

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Royal A. Gurley, Jr., Superintendent, and Maria Lewis, Director of Human Resources

1.1 Call to Order: Ms. Larson-Torres, School Board Chair, called the closed session meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1.2 Closed Meeting: At 4:01 p.m. Mr. Morse offered a motion to go into a Closed Session, authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Sections 2.2-3711 (A) (1), to discuss personnel matters. Ms. Dooley seconded the motion, the motion carried with Ms. Burns, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Morse, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Larson-Torres, voting aye. 6 ayes, 0 nays

1.3 Closed Meeting Certification: At 4:46 p.m. Mr. Morse offered a motion that the Board certify by recorded vote that to the best of each board member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed or considered. Ms. Burns seconded the motion, the motion carried with Ms. Burns, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Morse, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Larson-Torres, voting aye. 6 ayes, 0 nays

Action: None

The Board recessed from 4:47 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

2.1 Moment of Silence: Ms. Larson-Torres, School Board Chair, asked all those present to observe a moment of silence.

3.1 Pledge of Allegiance: The Board began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

4.1 Roll Call of Board Members:

The following Board Members were present:

Ms. Amanda Burns	Ms. Emily Dooley
Mr. Chris Meyer	Mr. Dom Morse
Ms. Lisa Larson-Torres	Ms. Nicole Richardson
Anya Hudock, Student Representative	

The following Board Members were absent: Ms. Shymora Cooper

The following Staff Members were present:

Dr. Royal A. Gurley, Jr.	Dr. Katina Otey
Ms. Maria Lewis	Ms. Carolyn Swift
Mr. Pat Cuomo	Ms. Rachel Rasnake
Ms. Beth Cheuk	Dr. T. Denise Johnson
Ms. Julia Green	Ms. Leslie Thacker

The following Staff Members were absent: Ms. Kim Powell Ms. Renee Hoover

5.1 Approval of Proposed Agenda: Ms. Dooley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Meyer , to approve the proposed agenda. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried with Ms. Burns, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Morse, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Larson-Torres, voting aye. 6 ayes, 0 nays

6.1 Comments from Students: There were none

6.2 Comments from Members of the Community:

- Derek Hartline, a Jackson-Via Teacher, raised safety concerns about Jackson-Via Elementary School. He highlighted a recent incident: a vehicle fire and a fire hazard due to excessive leaf accumulation. He suggested more frequent leaf removal, vegetation maintenance, and parking enforcement to prevent future incidents.
- David McCormick, a former CCS student and current professional violinist, addressed the school board about the proposed cuts to the 5th-grade band and orchestra program. He argued that these programs are not equivalent to general music classes, as they offer unique benefits like teamwork, discipline, and self-worth. He also emphasized the program's role in promoting diversity and equity, providing affordable access to music education, and boosting student confidence. McCormick dismissed logistical concerns, offering his expertise to assist in finding solutions. He urged the board to prioritize the program's value and avoid making a decision based on convenience.
- Harli Saxon, a former Charlottesville City Schools Orchestra student, advocated against cutting funding for the 5th-grade band and orchestra programs. She emphasized the profound impact the program had on her life, providing her with musical training, social skills, and a sense of purpose. She highlighted the program's role in supporting students from diverse backgrounds, including those facing economic hardship. Saxon urged the school board to recognize the value of these programs and prioritize their continued funding.
- Sydney Rasmussen, a CHS student, compared Charlottesville City Schools' 5th-grade band and orchestra program to similar programs in San Antonio, Portland, and Los Angeles. She highlighted the diversity of these programs and the positive impact they have on student achievement, including higher GPAs, improved academic performance, and increased college admission rates. Rasmussen emphasized the program's role in fostering a sense of community and providing opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds. She urged the school board to recognize the value of music education and maintain funding for the 5th-grade program.
- Sandra Aviles, Community Organizer with Charlottesville United for Public Education, expressed concerns regarding the Charlottesville City Schools rezoning process and the potential elimination of the 5th-grade orchestra program. She emphasized the importance of community input and the need to preserve opportunities for students, particularly in the arts. Aviles also highlighted the challenges faced by marginalized parents, such as language barriers, and called for greater efforts to engage these families. She suggested providing resources and information in multiple languages, as well as incorporating diverse perspectives into curriculum materials. Aviles concluded by thanking the school board and emphasizing the importance of creating an inclusive and welcoming school system for all students and families.
- Karen Myers echoed the comments of students who spoke earlier in the meeting, expressing strong support for the music program, particularly in fifth grade. She emphasized the unique nature of the Charlottesville school district's music program and the importance of preserving this valuable educational opportunity from its early stages.

7.1 Student Representative Report: Ms. Larson-Torres welcomed the Student Representative to the School Board Anya Hudock. Ms. Hudock expressed gratitude for the board's prompt response to the water filter issue. She then conveyed several student concerns: the insufficient 45-minute break time for visiting teachers, the strict phone collection policy, the potential for future device confiscations, the preference for the previous traffic control system, and the need for a more differentiated curriculum in 9th and 10th grade to accommodate different learning levels. Hudock concluded by thanking the board for their time and support, and for providing the opportunity to voice student concerns.

Ms. Larson-Torres thanked Ms. Hudock for her feedback and encouraged Ms. Hudock to continue communicating with CHS Principal Dr. Malone to address specific concerns. Ms. Hudock confirmed that students have opportunities to meet with administrators, such as lunch talks and email communication.

CONSENT AGENDA

8.1-5 Adoption of Consent Agenda: The following items were included in the consent agenda; [Personnel Recommendations](#), [October 19, 2024 School Board Advance Minutes](#), [November 7, 2024 School Board Meeting Minutes](#), and [Business, Financial, and Routine Reports](#). Ms. Dooley made a motion, seconded by Ms. Richardson, to approve the adoption of the proposed consent agenda. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried with Ms. Burns, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Morse, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Larson-Torres, voting aye. 6 ayes, 0 nays

ACTION ITEMS

9.1 Action - School Board Salary Increase: Renee Hoover, Director of Finance, prepared a compensation analysis for the School Board's discussion on a potential salary increase during their October 19, 2024, advance meeting. At the meeting, the Board requested the analysis be updated with a \$10,000 salary for the Chair and \$8,500 for the Board members, to be presented on November 7, 2024, for first reading and public input. The School Board Salary Increase item was presented for action.

Ms. Richardson noted that the increase will become effective January 1, 2026.

Mr. Morse shared his stance against public officials, including school board members, granting themselves raises. He expressed his belief that such decisions should be made by the public through a ballot measure. While acknowledging the constraints of Virginia's current code, he emphasized the need for legislative change. As a result, he voted against the proposed raise.

Ms. Larson-Torres expressed gratitude for Mr. Morse's perspective and acknowledged the value of the time and effort board members invest. She recognized the merit of a raise but indicated discomfort with the proposed 89% increase, favoring a more moderate adjustment, potentially around 50%. While not proposing a formal amendment at this time, she publicly stated her support for a raise.

Mr. Meyer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Burns, to approve the proposed School Board Salary Increase of \$10,000 for the Board Chair and \$8,500 for Board Members, effective January 1, 2026. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried with Ms. Burns, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Meyer, Ms. Richardson and Ms. Larson-Torres, voting aye. 5 ayes, 1 nay. Mr. Morse voted nay.

9.2 Action - 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 School Year Calendars: Dr. Katina Otey, Chief Academic Officer, presented 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 School Calendars for Board consideration upon first reading on November 7, 2024. The Board was asked to take action. Annually, the Charlottesville City School Board is charged with the development and approval of a calendar that must incorporate 180 days or 990 hours of instruction for students served in the school division. Draft copies of the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 School Calendars were posted on the Charlottesville City Schools website for review and comment. All comments received were taken into consideration when developing the proposed calendar.

Ms. Dooley made a motion, seconded by Ms. Burns, to approve the proposed 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 School Year Calendars as presented. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried with Ms. Burns, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Morse, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Larson-Torres, voting aye. 5 ayes, 1 nay. Mr. Meyer voted nay.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

10.1 Fine Arts Presentation (Orchestra and Band): Aaron Eichorst, the Coordinator of Fine/Performing Arts, presented a detailed overview of the current situation regarding band and orchestra programs. Information presented included:

Continuing Excellence in Band and Orchestra After Reconfiguration:

- Today's Presentation
 - Our commitment to excellence
 - Reconfiguration committee's question: Could we keep 5th-grade instrumental music?
 - Solutions:
 - Elective band and orchestra beginning in 6th grade
 - Robust 5th grade music program serving ALL students
 - Ongoing work to support the band and orchestra program
 - Continuous collaboration with band and orchestra teachers
- Strategic Plan
 - Priority 1: Increase Academic Access
 - Priority 2: Provide a culture of Safety, Wellness and Belonging
 - Priority 4: Ensure Effective and Efficient Operations
- Our Values:
 - Charlottesville City Schools views the arts as essential for the complete education of every child Arts are an indispensable part of culture and history Philosophy embraced by the school board, administration, and community Intentional choices made to follow best practices for beginning instrumental music CCS has become the model for the region and has set the standard for the other divisions.
- Excellence in Action
 - Charlottesville High School has earned the VMEA's blue ribbon 13 times
 - Our ensembles regularly earn top ratings at domestic musical festivals International travel performances: Florence, Besancon, Paris, Austria, London, Rome, and more
- Community Concerns
 - Loss of a year of instrumental music instruction
 - Ensemble participation provides a safe space for students to belong
 - Ensembles teach listening, teamwork, and disciplined practice
 - CCS provided 5th-grade instrument instruction in the past
 - 5th-grade participation hooks students before adolescent challenges
 - Music instruction supports other academic learning
- Working Groups for Reconfiguration
 - Fall 2023 meetings of band and orchestra directors Identified best practices for beginning instrumental programs
 - Used research studies on the influence of beginning instructional grade
- Best Practices for Learning Instruments
 - Begin instruction early
 - Classes meet frequently - every day / at least 3 times a week
 - Classes meet for a full year as opposed to one semester
 - Smaller class sizes or staffing for small specialized instruction
 - Grouping instruction according to similar instruments
 - Dedicated time during the school day to play as a whole group ensemble
 - A dedicated classroom where instructional materials are easily accessible

- Retention is best when a student has 2 or more years of instruction at one location before the transition
- Could we keep 5th grade instrumental ed?
 - Initial 4th & 5th Grade Plan for Instrumental Education?
 - 4th grade: 30 minutes of general music and 30 minutes of music choice (band or orchestra) once a week
 - 5th grade: students choose either band, orchestra or choir/general music 60 minutes once a week
 - Limited instrumentation: (Band: flute, clarinet, trumpet, or baritone; Strings: violin or cello)
 - Weekly ensemble rehearsals held after school at CMS for 5th-grade performances
 - End-of-year ensemble rehearsals/performances held after school at CMS for 4th grade
 - Dedicated space at the elementary schools for classes and instrument storage
 - Concerns with Initial Plan
 - Requires increasing school day by 30 minutes daily
 - Requires removing the Library from the "specials" rotation
 - Requires hiring 4 additional FTE's over current staffing
 - Inadequate space for classes and instrument storage
 - Instrumental education "drives" the master schedule
- Exploring Other Options
 - After-school programming (raised concerns about equity and accessibility)
 - Reviewed how other divisions introduce elementary instruments
 - Sometimes rely on a pull-out model
 - Do not serve all students
 - Acknowledge logistical challenges that strain school schedules
 - Conviction of CCS Music Teachers:
 - If excellence can't be recreated under the elementary model, the focus should be on high-quality programming at the 6th-grade level
- Recommended: Strong 6th Grade Start
 - Reconfiguration is essential to serving tweens and teens well across the curriculum
 - Charlottesville Middle School will be the launch point for specialized instrumental music education
 - NO CUTS TO FUNDING OR STAFFING: Current Walker music staff will join Buford staff at CMS
- 6th Grade Start Plan
 - Students meet regularly 3 times a week for a full year (not by semester)
 - Retain current band and orchestra staffing at the middle school level
 - Ensure dedicated time during the school day for the whole ensemble to play
 - Ensure dedicated time for after-school rehearsals with transportation
 - Provide 2 elective options for 6th grade
- Enhanced 5th Grade General Music Serving ALL!
 - Develop elementary General Music curriculum with band and orchestra directors
 - Refine the use of recorder, ukulele, and Orff instruments
 - Field trips featuring professional instrumental music
 - Arrange special in-school visits by instrumentalists
 - Schedule face-to-face sessions with rising 6th graders during elective selection
 - Schedule CMS and CHS ensembles to perform for 4th and 5th-grade students
 - EXTENDS music education to ALL 5th graders
- Final Thoughts
 - Under the new model, all 5th-grade students are exposed to instrumental music through general music class
 - No funding or staff cuts in this model
 - Can learn from divisions maintaining excellence while starting band/orchestra in 6th grade
 - Continuous collaboration with band and orchestra teachers
 - Commitment to the best for this program
- Questions

Discussion/comments:

- Mr. Meyer expressed appreciation for the presentation, noting the thoughtful process, criteria, and analysis used to arrive at the proposed changes. He acknowledged public concerns about potential cuts to programs but emphasized that this proposal is different, as it aims to enhance the educational experience for all students, particularly in fifth grade. He expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity for all fifth graders to have a deeper musical experience and concluded by thanking the presenters for their work and recognizing the potential benefits of this reconfiguration for the entire community.
- Ms. Burns shared appreciation for the collaborative approach taken, particularly in working with existing staff to address concerns. She emphasized the importance of the whole-school approach, which avoids significant scheduling changes and focuses on cultivating and caring for all students, rather than just one specific group. She also highlighted the fact that the board is not cutting funding to any program or group of students and expressed excitement about the potential for revitalized programming. Ms. Burns encouraged community members to remain engaged and participate in new opportunities, such as learning from professionals and sharing their expertise with students. She concluded by thanking the presenters and inviting continued community involvement.
- Ms. Dooley expressed gratitude for the presentation and the proposed programming. She particularly appreciated the focus on a broad-based education, which allows students to explore a wide range of subjects before specializing.
- Ms. Richardson expressed her gratitude to the presenters and attendees. She shared her excitement about the new program, as she has a rising fifth-grader who aspires to be a music producer. She indicated her intention to monitor the program's development closely.
- Ms. Hudock, a graduate of the string ensemble program, shared comments of support for the proposed plan. She noted that it is a positive accommodation that will continue to excite and motivate students.

10.2 School Name Review Update: Dr. T. Denise Johnson, Supervisor of Equity and Inclusion, and Beth Cheuk, Supervisor of Community Relations, presented an update on the Elementary School renaming process including an update from the four school name review committees who resumed the process of reviewing the names of Charlottesville City elementary schools to make sure they reflect the current values of our community.

At **Burnley-Moran and Johnson**, the committee's task was to recommend a new name for these schools, building off the previous school naming committee's work in 2022-23.

At **Jackson-Via and Greenbrier**, the committees' work was to begin and complete the process of reviewing the school's name (and if any name changes are indicated, make a recommendation about a new name).

The superintendent endorsed the committee's recommendations:

- Burnley-Moran: The committee recommends the name Sunrise.
- Greenbrier: Keep the name Greenbrier.
- Jackson-Via: Keep the name Jackson-Via.
- Johnson: The committee recommends the name Tall Oaks.

Dr. Gurley expressed gratitude to the past and present committee members, specifically acknowledging Dr. Baptist, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Otey, and Ms. Cheuk for their significant contributions to the school renaming process. He highlighted the impactful work of the committees and their thoughtful recommendations, which resonated deeply with him.

Dr. Gurley plans to formally propose the recommended names to the school board in January, expressing confidence in their unanimous approval. He emphasized the extensive effort and dedication invested in reaching this stage of the process.

Discussion/comments:

- Ms. Dooley inquired about the timeline for implementing the new school names. Dr. Gurley confirmed that the changes would take effect in the fall of 2025. Ms. Dooley expressed initial skepticism about the renaming process but now supports it, citing positive student impact. While she questioned the deeper meaning of "Greenbrier," she affirmed her support for the overall process and the recommended names. She also clarified that mascot changes are not necessarily tied to school renaming.
- Ms. Cheuk added that schools have the flexibility to choose whether or not to change their mascots during the renaming process. She cited examples of schools like Trailblazer that chose to adopt a new mascot, while Summit Elementary opted to retain its existing mascot. She emphasized that the decision ultimately rests with each individual school community.
- Mr. Morse expressed his satisfaction with the school renaming process, highlighting the positive difference compared to previous efforts. He emphasized the significance of the stories behind the new names, which he believes elevates the process.
- Ms. Burns expressed appreciation for the collaborative approach taken by the school division, particularly Dr. Gurley, Dr. Johnson, and Ms. Cheuk, in considering community feedback and elevating voices. She noted the positive impact of the renaming process, as evidenced by the successful ribbon-cutting ceremonies at Trailblazer and Summit Elementary Schools. She highlighted the renewed sense of community and excitement generated by these events.
- Mr. Meyer expressed support for the recommendations as presented.
- Ms. Larson-Torres expressed her gratitude for the collaborative work of the committee members. She highlighted the thoughtful process, the open dialogue, and the individual efforts of committee members. She commended the quality of the work done and expressed her appreciation for the dedication and time invested in the process.

10.3 [Capital Improvement Update](#): Michael Goddard, City Facilities Development Manager, provided an overview of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process and an update regarding projects recently completed and currently in progress. Information presented included:

Capital Improvement Update:

- Agenda:
 - FD Projects Underway and Completed
 - FY26-30 Upcoming Work
 - Priority Improvement Program Discussion
 - General Discussion
- Projects in Construction and Completed:
 - Middle School Reconfiguration
 - Johnson Modernization (Roof Terrace)
 - CHS Electrical Equipment Replacement (phase 3)
 - CHS Roof (Phase 2)
 - CHS Restroom Renovation
 - CHS Softball Fields Access and Batting Cage
 - Johnson Sidewalk Access Project
- Middle School Reconfiguration:
 - Project Budget: ~\$91M
 - Scope: Major Addition and Renovation to the existing Buford campus
 - Background: Responding to a need for modernization and reconfiguration of middle years school buildings
 - Status: Construction underway, scheduled for Summer 2026 completion
- Johnson Modernization:
 - Project Budget: \$1.25M
 - Scope: Modernize Johnson classrooms (furniture and tech) and Learning Terrace
 - Background: Fifth school modernization project

- Status: Project Complete
- CHS Electrical Switchgear Replacement- Phase 3:
 - Project Budget: \$1.5M
 - Scope: Replace switchgear and electrical distribution panels school-wide
 - Background: Original switchgear is considered a fire risk, replacing in 3 phases
 - Status: Phase 3 complete, generators set for replacement
- CHS Roof Replacement:
 - Project Budget: \$6M over 3 years
 - Scope: Replace failing roof on CHS
 - Background: Roof past due for replacement, project occurring in three phases
 - Status: Phase 2 complete
- CHS Restroom Renovation:
 - Project Budget: \$1.25M
 - Scope: Create safe, modern, gender-agnostic restrooms at CHS
 - Background: Part of the modernization projects, focused on CHS restrooms
 - Status: Project Complete
- CHS Softball Field Access:
 - Project Budget: \$425K
 - Scope: Improve access to the CHS softball field, replace aging pathways, add hardscape
 - Background: Improve accessibility, replace rotting timber retaining walls
 - Status: Landscape work substantially complete, batting cage to be completed by spring 2025
- Johnson Sidewalk Access:
 - Project Budget: \$30K
 - Scope: Repair sidewalk which was eroded and holding water
 - Background: Sidewalk damaged due to repair vehicles
 - Status: Work Complete
- FY26-30 Planned Work:
 - Venable Modernization
 - Walker Pre-K Adjustments (play area mostly)
 - CHS Track Lighting
 - CHS MLK PAC Lighting
 - Summit Window Replacements
 - Burnley Moran Roof Replacement FY27- \$1.5M
 - Pre-K Center at Walker campus \$25M-\$30M FY27
 - Jackson Via Roof Replacement FY28- \$1.5M
 - CHS Generator Upgrades - \$550K
- Priority Improvement Program Discussion:
 - 2018: Clark Classrooms
 - 2019: Jackson Via Classrooms
 - 2020: Burnley Moran Media Center
 - 2021: Greenbrier Library
 - 2022: Johnson Roof Terrace
 - 2023: CHS Restrooms Phase 1
 - 2024: Venable
 - 2025: Walker Temporary Condition
 - 2026: CHS Turf Field Replacement
 - 2027: CHS Interior ceilings/ restroom Ph2?

Discussion/comments:

- Ms. Burns inquired about the status of Wi-Fi access at the football field. Dr. Gurley acknowledged the issue, particularly during a tournament when internet connectivity was compromised. Mr. Cuomo explained that while the project has been discussed and explored, no concrete action has been taken yet. The primary

challenge is obtaining permits to run fiber and cabling underneath the railroad. The absence of Wi-Fi limits potential uses of the field, such as student homework or recording games. While temporary solutions like portable hotspots exist, a permanent Wi-Fi connection is necessary for optimal utilization of the space.

- Mr. Meyer expressed appreciation for Mr. Goddard's team and their increased capacity to address facility needs. He highlighted the significant funding disparity between Charlottesville City Schools and Albemarle County Public Schools, emphasizing the need for increased investment in CCS facilities. Mr. Meyer called for a more robust capital improvement program, suggesting an increase in the annual allocation. He also mentioned the potential for energy performance contracts to fund additional projects. He advocated for the development of a long-term facilities master plan and suggested that a CCS representative be included on the Planning Commission to better advocate for school needs.

10.4 2025-2026 Program of Studies: Dr. Katina Otey, Chief Academic Officer, introduced Dr. Justin Malone, CHS Principal; Rodney Jordan, Buford Principal; Summerlyn Thompson, Walker Principal; Lamont Trotter, Program Administrator for Lugo-McGinness Academy; and Dr. Stacey Heltz, Principal of CATEC and CTE Coordinator; and Dr. Tonya Coffey, Coordinator of STEM, who presented the 2025-2026 Program of Studies for Board information. The Board will be asked to approve the 2025-2026 Program of Studies at the January 9, 2025 meeting. Information presented included:

Program of Studies 2025-2026:

- Strategic Plan 2023-2028
 - Priority 1: Increase Academic Achievement: All CCS learners will have access to rigorous, inclusive, and relevant learning experiences
 - Target 2: 100% of graduating students will have a post-secondary plan
 - Target 4: AP/Dual Enrollment course enrollment and completion rates to match racial demographic percentages
 - Target 7: Annually increase students' access to rigor and offer relevant professional support for staff
 - Target 8: 85%+ of graduating seniors will meet College, Career, and Civic Readiness Index (CCCRI) standards
 - Strategy 4: Use unlevelled courses to create scaffolded rigor and diverse Dual Enrollment and AP classes
 - Strategy 6: Develop a division policy on equitable K-12 grading and assessment practices
- Sum and Substance
 - Purpose of the Program of Studies
 - General updates
 - CCS Secondary Courses
 - Specific school changes
 - Next steps
- Purpose of the Program of Studies
 - Planning sequence of academic, career technical, or other elective courses
 - Complete list of electives offered within the CCS 6-12 program
 - Each school's elective offerings are based on student interest and staffing availability
- General Updates
 - Aligned course descriptions with VDOE Standards
 - Updated prerequisites for more inclusive pathways
 - Updated language throughout the document
 - Consolidated some courses
- CCS Secondary Courses
 - Quick access document to courses and pathways
 - Embedded in the Program of Studies
- School-Specific Changes:
 - Walker: No changes for 2025-2026
 - Charlottesville Middle School:

- World Languages: Prerequisite removed for all Level 1 courses
 - Charlottesville High School:
 - World Languages: Prerequisite removed for all Level 1 courses
 - Science: Level change to Honors for Bio II: Anatomy and Physiology
 - Recommendation to add Health and Physical Education 09 and 10 as 1 credit options
 - Recommendation to update Fine/Performing Arts:
 - Renaming Intro to Theatre to Theatre I
 - Renaming Cville Players I to Acting Performance
 - Combining Cville Players II and III Honors into one course called Cville Players Honors
 - Courses recommended for removal (not taken in recent years)
 - Band Manager – not taken since 2014-2015
 - Chorus Manager – not taken since 2013-2014
 - Counseling Department Assistant I and II – not taken since 2021-2022
 - ESL American Studies taken since 2019-2020 (no longer a social studies course)
 - Geology – last taken in 2013-2014
 - Media Assistant I and II – not taken since 2017-2018 (0.5 Credit Course)
 - Office Assistant I and II – not taken since 2021-2022
 - Orchestra Manager – not taken since 2016-2017
 - Personal Living and Finance
 - Science Lab Assistant I and II – not taken since 2016-2017
 - Senior Off-Campus Lunch – not taken since 2019-2020
 - Tech Help Desk Assistant I and II – not taken since 2016-2017
 - Recommendations to add:
 - English Language Development III
 - Reading Foundations II
 - Technology Foundations
 - Technology Robotic Design
 - Introduction to Health & Medical Sciences (Requires 0.5 FTE)
 - Planned additions for future years:
 - 26/27: Electronic Systems I, Medical Terminology, Practical Nursing
 - 27/28: Electronic Systems II
 - • CATEC
 - Recommendation to add Practical Nursing program (2026-2027)
 - Pathway starting in 10th grade
 - Multiple credential opportunities
 - Potential for expedited RN program at community college level
 - Credit Adjustments:
 - The state sets the number of credits for each course based on the number of hours
 - CATEC will align the number of credits awarded based on the state requirements
 - 140 hour course = 1 credit
 - 280 hour course = 2 credits
 - CATEC will offset the difference with Career Strategies
 - Students engage in career exploration, career-, & workforce-development
 - • Lugo-McGinness Academy
 - No changes for 2025-2026
- Next Steps
 - Questions / Comments
 - Board review
 - Board approval of changes at the January School Board meeting

Discussion/comments:

- Ms. Larson-Torres asked Dr. Heltz about the staffing for the new Introduction to Health and Medical Science course. Dr. Heltz explained that the plan is to start with a 0.5 FTE position for the course next year and then increase it to a full-time position in the following year to accommodate the addition of the Medical Terminology course. Both courses will be offered at the high school, and the Introduction course is a recommended but not required prerequisite for the nursing program. This flexibility allows students to explore the health and medical science fields before committing to the nursing pathway.
- Ms. Dooley inquired about the possibility of implementing a "physics first" approach, which would involve teaching physics in ninth grade, followed by chemistry and biology. This sequencing change is often proposed to leverage students' foundational algebra knowledge, which is believed to be beneficial for understanding physics concepts.
- Dr. Coffey acknowledged that some districts nationally have adopted this approach, but noted that different sequencing options are possible, such as physics followed by biology and then chemistry.
- Mr. Meyer asked about the staffing implications of the proposed changes to the engineering and technology pathways. He specifically inquired whether the new courses would require additional FTE positions, given the challenges the district has faced in filling existing engineering positions.
- Dr. Otey clarified that the two new courses, Technology Foundations and Technology Robotics Design, would not necessitate additional FTEs. However, the district is still actively working to fill an existing engineering position.
- Dr. Coffey added that one of the reasons for proposing these changes is to make it easier to staff the engineering positions. The new courses require a tech endorsement rather than a Master's degree in engineering, which could potentially attract a wider pool of qualified candidates.

10.5 [FY 2026 Budget Development Update \(Budget Priorities\)](#): Dr. Royal A. Gurley, Jr., Superintendent, presented the FY 2025-2026 Budget Priorities that the school division will use to guide the budget development process. Information presented included:

- Agenda Items
 - Budget Themes
 - Budget Priorities
 - Enhance student achievement and equity
 - Improve student outcomes in core subjects through targeted support and resources
 - Improve student attendance
 - Ensure small class sizes
 - Ensure competitive pay and benefits
 - Attract and retain high-quality teachers and staff
 - Sustain fine arts funding
 - Modernize school facilities, including safety recommendations
 - Invest in sustainability and energy efficiency
 - Aligning Budget Priorities to Strategic Plan
 - Increase Academic Achievement
 - Improve student outcomes in core subjects through targeted support and resources
 - Ensure small class sizes
 - Sustain fine arts funding
 - Provide A Culture of Safety, Wellness, and Belonging
 - Enhance student achievement and equity
 - Improve student attendance
 - Support Our Staff
 - Ensure competitive pay and benefits
 - Attract and retain high-quality teachers and staff
 - Ensure Effective and Efficient Operations
 - Modernize school facilities, including safety recommendations
 - Invest in sustainability and energy efficiency
 - Budget Key Dates

- City Council and School Board: Joint Budget Work Session on December 19, 2024
- Regular School Board Meeting: Budget Update on January 9, 2025
- Budget Work Session: School Board on January 30, 2025

Discussion/comments:

- Mr. Meyer inquired about the upcoming City Council meeting on December 19th, specifically asking if the district would provide estimates of collective bargaining costs. Dr. Gurley confirmed that high-level estimates would be presented to the City Council to ensure transparency and secure their support for the collective bargaining agreement. Additionally, Dr. Gurley expressed optimism about the City Council's willingness to support the school district's budget and anticipated the active involvement of the Charlottesville Education Association (CEA) in the budget process.
- Ms. Dooley inquired about the availability of high-level budget information before the joint work session with the City Council on December 19th. Dr. Gurley responded that the presentation would be shared with the school board the week before the meeting. However, due to ongoing number crunching, the final version might be shared closer to the 19th.
- Ms. Larson-Torres acknowledged the unique challenge of navigating the budget process concurrently with collective bargaining negotiations. She emphasized the importance of community involvement and encouraged residents to attend meetings and voice their concerns and requests. Additionally, she highlighted the significance of monitoring the City Council's budget process to stay informed about the city's financial priorities.
- Dr. Gurley responded the budget process is flexible and inclusive, and that the division is committed to representing the needs of all stakeholders. He emphasized the importance of transparency in the budget process and the district's efforts to ensure that all groups, including students, staff, and families, are represented in the budget. Dr. Gurley also noted that the collective bargaining process has been highly engaging and that the hard work of both staff and the CEA will have a lasting positive impact on the community.

10.6 [Special Education Preliminary December 1 Child Count](#): Rachel Rasnake, Director of Exceptional Education, provided a Special Education Update for Board information. Information presented included:

Based on the information provided in the uploaded file, I can create a detailed bulleted summary for meeting minutes related to Special Education. Here's a comprehensive outline:

- Preliminary Child Count Overview:
 - Total count for December 1, 2024: 568 students
 - Breakdown:
 - 140 students receiving $\geq 50\%$ Special Ed Service
 - 428 students receiving $< 50\%$ Special Ed Service
- Child Count Trends:
 - Comparison of data from December 1, 2022, 2023, and 2024 presented
- Child Count by Designation:
 - Detailed breakdown for various disabilities provided
 - Notable changes:
 - Increase in Intellectual Disability cases (42 in 2024)
 - Decrease in Specific Learning Disabilities (106 in 2024)
 - Increase in Autism cases (106 in 2024)
- Child Count by Placement (K-12):
 - Total K-12 placements for 2024: 515
 - Majority in Public Day School: 471
 - A slight decrease in Private Day School placements: 32
- Least Restrictive Environment (K-12):
 - 71.28% of students included in regular classroom 80% or more of the day (Target Not Met)

- 11.52% of students included in regular classroom less than 40% of the day (Target Not Met)
- 9.40% of students served in separate facilities (Target Not Met)
- **Preschool Placements:**
 - Increase in Regular Early Childhood Program placements: 43 in 2024
 - Slight increase in Special Education Separate Class: 9 in 2024
- **Preschool Least Restrictive Environment:**
 - 47.22% of children in regular early childhood programs (Target Met)
 - 16.67% in separate special education classes (Target Met)
 - 2.78% receiving services at home (Target Met)
- **Students with Intensive Support Needs:**
 - 44 students for 2024-25
 - Designations include Autism, ED, Deaf-Blind, Hearing Impairment, Multiple Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injury
 - Served 85% of the Instructional Day
- **Special Education Caseloads:**
 - Average caseloads provided for different roles:
 - Special Education Teacher: 10.45
 - Intensive Special Education Teacher: 7.14
 - Early Childhood Special Education Teacher: 6
 - Speech Language Pathologist: 33.4
 - Occupational Therapist: 35 (direct)
 - Physical Therapist: 27 (direct)

Discussion/comments:

- Ms. Dooley inquired about the increase in preschool student identification and whether it was related to early identification efforts. Ms. Rasnake explained that the increase is due to several factors, including a higher number of referrals from teachers within the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) program. Additionally, she noted that the district is recovering from a post-COVID dip in identifications, as referrals from pediatricians and early intervention services were less frequent during that time. She also mentioned that similar fluctuations in identification rates have occurred in the past, such as when an additional ECSE teacher was added.

Board Response to Written Reports

11.1 School Board Member Committee Reports: Board members shared updates on recent activities in this written report.

12.1 Comments from Members of the Community:

- Jacob Beckham, a Charlottesville resident, parent, and CHS teacher, shared his perspective on the school reconfiguration project. He encouraged the school board to think creatively and challenge traditional approaches to education. He proposed eliminating school zoning and implementing a lottery system to allow families to choose schools based on individual needs and preferences. He also suggested creating one central elementary school and multiple high schools with specialized focuses, arguing that this would better meet the needs of all students. Beckham emphasized the importance of avoiding the sunk cost fallacy and embracing innovative solutions to improve the district's educational offerings.

13.1 Board Member Comments:

- Mr. Meyer expressed concern about the recent fire at Jackson-Via Elementary School, specifically regarding the response of city facilities staff who were seen collecting leaves in the area during the emergency. He emphasized the importance of addressing the root causes of such incidents and preventing future occurrences.

- Mr. Meyer also discussed the budget process, noting that while the school district controls its line items, it does not control the overall budget. He encouraged community members to attend City Council meetings and advocate for the school district's priorities.
- Finally, Mr. Meyer inquired about changes to the school's cell phone policy and the effectiveness of its enforcement. He expressed interest in learning more about the implementation of the new policy and the impact it has had on student behavior.
- Ms. Richardson thanked the presenters for their updates and feedback, particularly regarding the fine arts program and the agreement on the name change. She expressed support for the pay increase for future board members in 2026. She also offered condolences to the Glover family on the loss of their daughter.
- Ms. Larson-Torres thanked everyone for their comments and hard work, and wished everyone a happy holiday season.

14.1 Superintendent's Comments:

- Dr. Gurley acknowledged Mr. Hartline's concerns about the recent fire at Jackson-Via Elementary School and the maintenance of the school grounds. He also addressed the issue of the orchestra program, emphasizing the district's commitment to the arts and its efforts to create a strong sixth-grade program. Dr. Gurley clarified that the decision to prioritize the sixth-grade program was made in collaboration with band and orchestra teachers to ensure the continuation of excellence in these programs. He also addressed concerns about equity and diversity in the orchestra program, highlighting the need for increased outreach to marginalized communities. Dr. Gurley concluded by emphasizing the importance of instructional time, acknowledging the significant impact that adding an elementary instrumental program could have on schools with limited space for additional programming, especially due to time constraints. He expressed his commitment to listening to the voices of elementary teachers and addressing their concerns about the challenges of meeting the needs of all students.

15.1 Work Session Wrap-Up: There were none.

16.1 Upcoming Meetings: Ms. Larson-Torres read the list of upcoming meetings.

17.1 Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

A video recording of the December 5, 2024 meeting can be located at:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EpYzOqVS1GbrUc_k4i1idRLaDg2BQmYP/view?usp=drive_link

Lisa Torres, School Board Chair

Leslie Thacker, School Board Clerk