

COUNTY OF HENRICO, VIRGINIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL MEETING
April 16, 2018

The Henrico County Board of Supervisors and the Henrico County School Board convened a special joint meeting on Monday, April 16, 2018, at 5:00 p.m., in the Hungary Creek Middle School Auditorium located at 4909 Francistown Road, Glen Allen, Virginia 23060.

Members of the Board Present:

Frank J. Thornton, Chairman, Fairfield District
Tyrone E. Nelson, Vice Chairman, Varina District
Thomas M. Branin, Three Chopt District
Courtney D. Lynch, Brookland District
Patricia S. O'Bannon, Tuckahoe District

Members of the School Board Present:

Michelle F. Ogburn, Chairman, Three Chopt District
John W. Montgomery, Jr., Vice Chairman, Varina District
Beverly L. Cocks, Brookland District
Roscoe D. Cooper, III, Fairfield District
Lisa A. Marshall, Tuckahoe District

Other Officials Present:

John A. Vithoulkas, County Manager
Joseph P. Rapisarda, Jr., County Attorney
Barry R. Lawrence, CMC, Assistant to the County Manager/Clerk to the Board
Tanya B. Harding, CMC, Deputy Clerk/Administrative Assistant
W. Brandon Hinton, Deputy County Manager for Administration
Patrick C. Kinlaw, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
Wade T. Anderson, Assistant County Attorney, Schools
Nyah D. Hamlett, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Support
Chris A. Sorensen, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration
Beth N. Teigen, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Instruction
Donna Eagle, Ed.D., Chief Human Resources Officer, Schools
Andy Jenks, Director of Communications, Schools
Monica R. Manns, Director of Equity and Diversity, Schools
Deborah N. Ward, Clerk to the School Board
Cathy D. Harris, Deputy Clerk to the School Board

Mr. Thornton called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Mr. Thornton welcomed everyone and noted it was appropriate for the Board of Supervisors and School Board to have a shared conversation following a series of statements and articles that appeared in the local news media regarding funding of Henrico's school system. He noted honest conversation led Henrico voters to approve a meals tax that was supported by

all members of both elected bodies. Mr. Thornton stated the expectation for this meeting was to continue this positive dialogue because funding of the school system is the highest local priority. He mentioned the School Board's budget has been fully funded. Mr. Thornton pointed out this joint work session was not a public hearing although it was an honor to have the public present.

Mrs. Ogburn expressed the School Board's appreciation for the Board of Supervisors' willingness to have this joint meeting as part of the continued conversation regarding the proposed budget, the needs of Henrico's schools, and the dedicated teaching staff. She pointed out how Henrico teachers are supported and valued directly impacts the success of students and the community at large. Mrs. Ogburn commented that the School Board and Board of Supervisors share the same goals: increasing teacher salaries, reducing class sizes, and providing more support for teachers, specially those early in their careers and in schools with challenges. She acknowledged competitive salaries are an important factor in attracting and retaining a strong teaching force. Mrs. Ogburn voiced the School Board's pleasure with the salary raise in the proposed budget and the higher adjustment that was included for teachers who have been with the school system for more than six years. She stated the School Board looked forward to discussing the school system's current and future staffing needs, salaries, class sizes, teacher retention and turnover rates, and the costs associated with addressing these important issues.

Mrs. Ogburn opened the meeting with a discussion of the remedies for dealing with classroom size. She advised the public that the School Board and Board of Supervisors had received a letter from Dr. Kinlaw and Mr. Vithoulkas with several attachments. The information included in the letter and the attachments was in response to questions directed by a member of the Board of Supervisors to both general government and school staff. Mrs. Ogburn suggested both boards review the documentation and begin the conversation with questions or comments regarding the information contained therein. Mrs. Lynch referred to an attachment listing 2018-19 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) needs by school. Dr. Kinlaw emphasized that this and other attachments included with the letter were draft documents. Mrs. Lynch inquired about specific needs to reduce the pupil-to-teacher ratio, staffing headcount needs, and the cost of having those needs met. At Mrs. Ogburn's request, Dr. Teigen explained the elementary and secondary priority 1, 2, and 3 staffing needs identified in the attachment. Mr. Branin questioned the need for more teaching positions given the Board of Supervisors funded 50 additional positions at the request of the School Board the previous year to reduce class sizes. Dr. Teigen explained it takes 134 teachers to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio by one student across the whole school division. Mrs. Ogburn observed this issue needs to be addressed annually given the growth that continues to occur in the Three Chopt District and western Henrico.

Mr. Nelson commented that this meeting was requested not to address classes sizes but because a member of the Board of Supervisors raised concerns pertaining to teacher pay and compression issues during the previous month's legislative budget review session where the schools' budget was discussed. He stated the teachers he has heard from are more concerned with receiving classroom support than higher pay. Mr. Montgomery said there are multiple priorities and schools within different parts of Henrico have different needs. The concerns he hears generally are less about class sizes and more about turnover and retention rates for teachers who are new to the profession. He suggested the school system's priorities with respect to teachers should be support within the building, salary recognition to retain them, class size, and salary compression.

Mrs. Lynch asked whether everyone agreed that teachers were not seeking higher compensation. Mr. Nelson responded that he wants to see Henrico teachers paid the highest in the region, but it was likely not possible to do so all at one time. Mrs. Ogburn suggested the teachers she has spoken with see improved working conditions, lower student-teacher ratios, and administrative support as a higher priority than a pay raise. Mrs. Lynch agreed that a multi-pronged approach is necessary. She stated that the \$4.3 million increase for teacher salaries she has previously proposed is only the beginning and the unified pay plan that has been in effect for school and general government employees since 1986 should be revisited. She characterized the shortage of teachers as a national crisis. Mrs. O'Bannon pointed out the County created a career development program for police personnel in 2007 that addressed pay compression and a similar program for teachers could be considered by the School Board. Mrs. Ogburn responded that the School Board would welcome having the Human Resources and Finance Department staffs from the school division and general government come together to look at changing the unified pay plan and pay steps for teachers. She suggested, however, this review not be limited to teaching positions. Mrs. Lynch maintained that teacher scarcity is a distinct issue and a free market strategy should be used to address employee compensation rather than giving all employees the same annual pay raises. Mr. Nelson replied that the Board of Supervisors has a responsibility to care for all of its employees and he believes there are ways to address salary compression within a unified pay plan. Mrs. Cocke expressed an interest in exploring career development steps for teachers. Mrs. Marshall commented on how the Commonwealth of Virginia has addressed pay compression for state employees. She noted her main focus within the Tuckahoe District has been class sizes for teachers and she would like to have a comprehensive study done of what teachers feel will make a difference in attracting and retaining teachers. Mrs. Ogburn agreed it would be appropriate to hear from teachers. She pointed out the School Board focused this year on adding 22 teaching positions to assist elementary school teachers with planning time and has targeted the compression issue as one of its priority concerns.

Mrs. Ogburn suggested the Superintendent, school division staff, County Manager, and general government staff work together collaboratively to come up with a plan. She also suggested the Board of Supervisors identify the funds that can be allocated so the School Board can prioritize how these funds will be used. Mr. Thornton reiterated the purpose of this meeting was to have dialogue. He acknowledged some changes will be necessary to rectify issues that were being discussed and referred to the four school system priorities mentioned by Mr. Montgomery. Mr. Thornton agreed the County must listen to ideas from teachers and staff. Mr. Montgomery said it would be meaningful to bring in an outside consultant to look at the unified pay plan and listen to the teachers' perspectives. He clarified for Mr. Nelson that what the School Board is trying to accomplish is improved retention. Mr. Montgomery explained the issue in his district is less about pay compression and more about the differentiation in teacher workloads. Mr. Nelson stated he does not believe it is necessary to have a consultant study class sizes or chronic teacher turnover at certain schools and pointed out the School board can make any necessary changes to teacher pay scales. Mrs. Ogburn suggested giving the Superintendent, County Manager, and both Finance Departments a limited time to come up with a plan and bring the information back to both elected bodies.

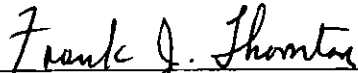
Mr. Nelson recommended a plan be brought forward by June 15 that speaks to reducing class sizes, the cost of improving supports and providing incentives for teachers at selected schools, and salary compression for employees who are in the first several steps of their pay scale under the unified pay plan. He remarked he does think teacher pay can be looked at in a

vacuum. Mr. Branin commented he is looking for the thoughts and needs of teachers more than statistical information and pointed out amendments can be made to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19 budget if a plan is not in place by June 30. Mrs. O'Bannon pointed out available funding is not limitless and fiscal responsibility should be kept in mind in allocating or reallocating resources. Mr. Branin stated he was not opposed to moving forward with an outside consultant but expressed confidence in the School Board and school division staff in getting the job done with the assistance of general government staff if necessary.

Mr. Thornton suggested that both short-term and long-term goals should be identified as well as specific steps to move forward. Mrs. O'Bannon reiterated the idea of exploring a career development track for teachers and assisting them with recertification costs. Mr. Cooper stressed the importance of being cognizant of the time frame for the school division's annual cycle for hiring and recruiting teachers. He expressed concern about not impeding the school division's ability to recruit for specific positions. Mrs. Ogburn said the three areas of focus should be salaries, class sizes, and retention. She suggested obtaining feedback from teachers at challenged schools before developing a specific plan. Mrs. Lynch pointed out the annual cost for Henrico to lead the region in teacher pay compared with the hiring scales in neighboring localities would be \$6 million. Mr. Nelson responded he cannot commit to this level of additional funding without also looking more comprehensively at class sizes and school support. Mrs. Marshall voiced support for increased teacher pay but said she would like to hear directly from teachers before deciding how best to allocate any additional funding. Mrs. Lynch framed the question as follows: how can the County bring about transformative change to move the needle on teacher salaries, class sizes, and retention?

Mr. Thornton thanked the audience for listening to the dialogue. He remarked it will take time for the Board of Supervisors and School Board to review this topic, solicit input from teachers and the incoming school superintendent, and act responsibly in meeting citizen expectations. Mrs. Ogburn thanked the Board of Supervisors for having this conversation and commented that although this was a good starting point to move the school division forward there is still much work to be done.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.



Chairman, Board of Supervisors
Henrico County, Virginia