

# Joint Education Committee

February 6, 2020

3:00 p.m.

## Minutes

### Attendees:

#### Committee Members:

Angela Kelly-Wiecek, Board of Supervisors  
Sue Dibble, Board of Supervisors  
Faye Prichard, Board of Supervisors  
John F. Axelle III, Chairman, School Board

#### Other Board Members:

Sean Davis, Board of Supervisors  
W. Canova Peterson, Board of Supervisors  
Kelly Evko, School Board

#### Staff:

Dr. Michael Gill, School Superintendent  
Cecil R. Harris, County Administrator  
Kathy Seay, Deputy County Administrator  
Jim Taylor, Deputy County Administrator  
Terry Stone, Assistant Superintendent  
Chris Whitley, Schools Public Information Officer  
Jen Greif, Assistant Superintendent  
Mandy Baker, Assistant Superintendent  
Lisa Seward, Deputy County Attorney

#### Presenters:

Terri Hechler, Director of Information Technology – Schools  
Dr. Stephen G. Castle, Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Michael Mudd, Director of Elementary Education  
Diane Brown, Director of Special Education  
Brian Maltby, Disciplinary Hearing and Review Officer

#### Guests:

Peggy Lavinder  
June Bohrer  
Patti Davis

### Agenda

Opening Remarks

Digital Learning Initiative Update

Elementary Student Behaviors

## **Digital Learning Initiative Update**

Dr. Gill remarked that the School Technology project continues to be ontime and under budget. His focus was also on school hours available for connectivity. Mr. Davis spoke to the relevance of the Broadband committee to education and the connection with Digital Learning Initiative.

Ms. Hechler made a presentation on the Roadmap, Stonewall Jackson Middle School Pilot, Classroom Benefits, Reliability and Moving Forward. The project is in year 3.5. The second set of elementary schools has already started. Chromebooks were selected as the device of choice.

120 students in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade at Stonewall Jackson Middle School along with five teachers were selected for a pilot. 150 Chromebooks were distributed at the middle school level for the pilot. The focus of the pilot was on blended learning not devices. The classroom benefits identified were reclaimed time, safety, reliability, enhancing instruction and engagement.

The devices are both safe with a filtered internet and virus protection in school and at home and reliable with minimal repair tickets so far. 95% of students are satisfied with having increased access to technology according to a recent survey. Moving forward more devices will be delivered in summer and the High School pilot will start with the Health Sciences Academy students from all four High Schools.

Board members discussed specialized software compatibility and student accountability for wear and tear. Dr. Gill discussed modules for onboarding to assist student understanding of computer care and online behavior.

## **Elementary Student Behaviors**

Dr. Gill remarked that the schools are a reflection of community we serve. Ms. Greif added that as a part of a team concept schools now have to teach appropriate behavior rebuild relationships. The progressive discipline model is used so the student is not immediately removed from attending school. She remarked on being cognizant of legal boundaries. State legislation is introduced every year for student discipline. Proposed legislation in the General Assembly gives less discretion to teachers and staff.

Board members asked about issues and safety concerns in Mechanicsville schools that prompted this topic. Staff discussed that consequences are matched to special needs and alternatives are age specific. The number of behavioral specialist and the FY21 budget request for resources was shared by Dr. Gill.

The School Division has taken steps toward building capacity and de-escalation. Tiered Interventions to include classroom lessons, small group lessons and individualized supports through special education services were discussed. Through data collection and professional development, the goal for Schools is staying ahead of changes. School counselors provide social-emotional learning classroom lessons and small group counseling. Examples of other initiatives are the Code of Student Conduct, partnering with CSB and the Mental Health Initiatives Task Force.

Chairman Axelle had closing remarks on the diversity of skills demanded of teachers. Dr. Gill, Ms. Greif and their team was commended by other Board members.

## **Future Meetings**

Thursday, October 22 – 3:00 p.m. (*location - tbd*)