

Open Work Session
Board of Education- Quarterly Session
May 17, 2016

Dr. Frederickson, Dr. Townsend, Dr. Handy, Mrs. Miles and Mr. Fitzgerald, came before Council. Mr. Cannon said Ms. Mary Arshanti spoke today at the public comment period and was very concerned in trying to get things moving today as opposed tomorrow. He said he is aware that Dr. Frederickson responded to Ms. Arshanti in bullet points on what he is looking to do to address violence in schools. Mr. Cannon said the first item he would like to discuss is the violence in schools and what the school board and administration's opinion is on that topic. Mr. Cannon said it is more of a schematic on the community as a whole more so than a bad reflection on the schools. Dr. Frederickson said what happens in the community quite often flows over into the schools. They are looking at that not only in Wicomico County but also across the State of Maryland. Dr. Frederickson said, in terms of specifics in the Wicomico County School system, they have some schools that have discipline counts that are going up this year, some schools the discipline counts are about the same, and they have a couple of schools where the discipline counts went down. He said they are getting more public responses and more facebook and some of the other products in social technology. Dr. Frederickson said they are pushing back with a lot of different things. They have established a discipline task force. They have had two meetings and Ms. Arshanti is one of their valued members on that task force. They have people from secondary and elementary as well. They also have parents on the committee who are not employees. They have many employees that have kids in the school system, but they wanted pure parents on the committee. They also have representatives from the PTAs. They are working diligently in looking at and determining what are the new things that are not already being done that they can add to. He said what may have worked one year ago or ten or twenty years ago may not be working as well today. They have to do different things that means more electronic vigilance, which means watch more on what is on facebook. We know what the kids put online gets responded to and, if a kid says someone is a bad person, then they do that 10 or 20 times, and someone else passes it along, then you have several people doing that. Dr. Frederickson said at some point that kid is going to respond and quite often that kid is not going to respond in the appropriate manner. They are trying to work with the kids to establish a climate in that you do not do certain kinds of things. You treat each other with respect. Dr. Frederickson continued he said they are being more assertive by having the teachers in the halls during passing times, and they want someone out in the halls during non-passing times. They have found out that sometimes the young people decide that they are going to cruise during a particular hour. They have a pass going to the bathroom and instead of coming back right away, they may not come back for ten or fifteen minutes, and they can cause a lot of headaches in that period of time. Dr.

Frederickson said he has had interaction with a few kids that now have an alternate learning activity. He said they are putting in more cameras. They are also taking some of the cameras and looking at certain areas and saying this is a hotspot and this area is not. He said they are taking the hotspots and rolling them up and putting them on the TV in the principals and assistance principals' offices. They had previously done that with support staff and some of the principals, but now they are doing that more consistently across the system, not just in a couple of high schools. Dr. Frederickson said that seems to be helping. The challenge is that they would like to have someone watch the monitors but the reality is a person can only look at one, two or three monitors at a given moment. Dr. Frederickson said he does not know how someone can watch three dozen monitors, thirty-six, at one time. Mr. Cannon asked if the monitors are all in one room, to which Dr. Frederickson responded, no. They run feeds onto people's desktop computers, primarily office staff, and office administrators. He said they each have a different setup. In his office, he has a monitor on the wall as well as on the computer. He said it just scrolls back and forth between the key points that they are looking at. It allowed them to be proactive on one of the incidences lately. He said they have almost a 1,000 cameras to watch. He said they are convinced that they have the right things going forward and the right team on the tasks. He said right now it is a matter of gathering some additional dollars and putting in more cameras and possibly some other technological equipment. Dr. Frederickson said they are positive about this. He said he would be glad to take Council members on a tour. He said the headache is the hoodies and ear buds. The kids like to listen to their music as they are going back and forth between classes and those are causing headaches. Mr. Joe Holloway said they relaxed the rules on the cell phones a couple of year ago. He said he realizes the importance of kids having a cell phone in the schools, if they have to have one. He then asked Dr. Frederickson if they can restrict the hoodies and the ear buds. Dr. Frederickson said they stand in the halls and they have signals, which mean take your hoodie down and take your ear buds out. He said by and large the students comply. Mr. Joe Holloway said you cannot take the hoodies away from them. He then asked can you take away the ear buds, to which Dr. Frederickson responded, if they have scissors they could, but that may not go over very well. He said the kids had the cell phones before they ever allowed them to be used in the classrooms. The teachers were using them as tool in the classrooms. They have about a third or fourth of the teachers using the cell phones on a regular basis as an instructional tool, and maybe another third or fourth using them on an occasional basis, and a third that say no way they do not want it. He said it varies from school to school. Mr. Joe Holloway asked if 100% of the kids have cell phones, to which Dr. Frederickson responded, no, he thinks it is about 80%. Mr. Joe Holloway then asked what happens to the kids that do not have cell phones. Dr. Frederickson said that most of their classrooms have computers that they can use for various activities. They have about one computer for about every 1.8 or 1.9 students. They try to have computers available, so if a teacher is going to have an

activity, they have laptops available for the kids to use. He said the older the kids, the higher percentage of them have cell phones. He said he personally does not think they need to have cell phones in the schools. They have communication systems, announcements, PA system, if a child needs to be notified of something, they can call. If they need to make a call out to the parents, then the school messengers and the principals and other staff are very adaptive in making sure they get messages out. He said they had a heater overheat some books over at Parkside High School and the principal sent out three or four school messengers that day to make sure the parents were communicated with at all times. The students also sent out text messages, which some were accurate and some were not. Dr. Frederickson said, if you drive down the highway, 10% or 15% of the drivers are talking on their cell phones at the same time they are driving and that is a ticketable offense. He said he could be off on the statistics but that is his observation the last time he was on the road. He said most schools across the nation are dealing with this issue. In general, the cell phones seem to be doing okay. Mr. Joe Holloway asked what are the policies for the Christian or private schools regarding cell phones. Dr. Frederickson said that have not looked at their policies. Mr. Cannon asked if the students are allowed to wear the hoodies and ear buds, to which Dr. Frederickson responded, no, they are not suppose to wear them. Mr. Hall said the violence has been prevalent in the media the last couple of months, and according to Dr. Fredrickson, the average is pretty much the same as it was last year. Mr. Hall then asked if the incidences that have happened more recent are more aggressive than what the violence has been in the past. Dr. Frederickson said they had a few incidences that were more severe, but if you look at referrals and closed referrals were kids are getting suspended, the numbers are up 10% to 15%, but they have schools that the numbers are actually the same or down. However, there have been severe incidences in the last three to four years. Mr. Hall asked if they have changed the criteria for discipline recently. Dr. Frederickson said the only thing they have done is that the state has said they do not want people suspended from school for nonattendance or nonviolence activity. The state has restrictions so they have codes one through five for disciplinary referrals, one is a tardy and five is an attack. If someone is attacked, you suspended them right away depending on the details of it. In the past, if someone did not identify themselves, they used to be able to suspend that student for three days. They cannot do that anymore. Mr. Hall asked if there is a special place for them, to which Dr. Frederickson said they have in-school intervention and in-school suspension. They also have an office referral room. Mrs. Miles explained that the office referral room is a location for the students to be seated while they are waiting for an administrator to do due process in regards to their discipline, rather than have them in the main office. Mr. Hall then asked if he thinks the discipline criteria should be changed, to which Dr. Frederickson responded he shares with the state his perspective that the thinks there are certain things they see differently than he does. Mr. Hall asked if it has to be a state mandate or can it be done on a local level. Dr. Frederickson

explained that there are certain things that the state has control over either through their rule making procedures or through COMAR. He thinks we need to have a more strict environment, but he is not interested in having a battle here that he wins, and then loses at the state level. If he is going to lose, he rather lose now and get it over with. He does not want to spend a lot of time and money on fighting if he knows he is going to lose. Mr. Fitzgerald said the Board has heard and seen from the community, and they are concerned. The Board has challenged Dr. Frederickson to do whatever they need to do to get the schools back in order. He knows that changes have been made with Mrs. Miles coming on, but they did not get this way overnight and it is not going to be fixed over night. The Board is committed for the teachers, students and administrators to have a safe place to go to school. It might be that they will need to come back and ask for more money. If they need something that they do not have, they need to find it and fix it because they have 15,000 students and a handful is causing all the problems. He said when they hear about the students, all the students get painted with the same brush. They have a ton of good students out there. It upsets them that the knuckleheads are causing all the problems. When he was in school, it was done differently, but they cannot go back. They have to do whatever they can to get the schools back to where they are manageable and the teachers are not scared to do their jobs. They do not want those kids to rule the schools; they want to run the schools. Mr. Matt Holloway asked how many of the "bad apples" are in the school system. He then asked is it 100 or 50 students, to which Dr. Frederickson said he thinks it is less than that. There is about 1 to 10 per building that you spend about 90% to 95% of your time on, and you have a few followers. They have been very assertive in moving some of them in other settings of learning and that has been pretty successful. The challenge is that there is always someone who says now that they are gone, it is their turn. Dr. Frederickson said when he walks the hallways and peeks in the classrooms, the kids are doing their school work, but there are occasional moments when people are jerks. Mr. Fitzgerald said there is a solution, but everyone in the community has to come together to resolve it because whatever happens in the school rotates into the community and whatever happens in the community rotates into the school. We all have to be in this thing together to come up with a solution. Mr. Joe Holloway asked if the school resource officers (SROs) are being used to their potential. He then asked are they as effective as they were five years ago? Could that arrangement be used differently? Dr. Frederickson said the SROs are doing an excellent job. He supports them. Having them in the schools lends a feeling of security for everyone, and a feeling that we are going to stand up for what is right in terms of schools. The other 29 kids in that classroom deserve a good education. Dr. Frederickson said having said that they have dialed back the amount of involvement they have with the SROs because of state law in terms of who has the right to certain kinds of information. The SROs are primarily working on the very egregious acts (attack or assault) and working on relations with the students such as how to get along with police and knowing how to behave.

The SROs do not work on the lower level offenses, and they do not have the same information as they did five years ago. Mr. Joe Holloway asked if they are restricted because they are not employees of the school, to which Dr. Frederickson responded, it is because they are not employees, and the state says that law enforcement cannot have the information unless the kid breaks the law. For example, if a student breaks the law for having drugs, law enforcement can only have the information applicable to that case, so they can have the kid's name, parent's contact information, but they cannot have the kids special conditions such as his or her family's financial situation unless it is germane to the act of having drugs. Dr. Frederickson said he thinks he supports that. He would like to have law enforcement engage in some settings, but by the SROs doing what they are doing today, he thinks they are getting better results because they are not involved in everything, just the specialty types of things. Mr. Joe Holloway asked if it would be advantages for the SROs to be employees. He said he knows that at one time they thought about hiring retired law enforcement officers as employees of the school. He understands that they would not have the same arrest powers. He then asked Dr. Frederickson if he thought that situation would be better, the same, or worse. Dr. Frederickson said they did a workup this past winter in thinking strategically about it. The first thing they talked about is do they want the same arrest powers, weapons, tools of that nature as the Sheriff's SROs if they hired their own SROs, and it was determined that they did want the SROs to be armed. They want them to have the same arrest powers with handcuffs, mace, tasers, radios, etc. The radios would be little bit easier because they would be on the schools radio system. The Sheriff's Office has worked really hard for everyone to have communication back and forth with each other. He said that has improved greatly and the Sheriff's Office or Emergency Services is looking at a new radio system. He said, at the end of the day, it was going to cost them more money because they would have to establish more tools. They would save money on the cars because they do not believe a car is needed most of the time. A car, however, would have to be available. For example, if they have an emergency petition for a student, under state law, they have to go down in a law enforcement vehicle and there are certain rules and regulations that go along with that. They think they can work around that, but to become an organization that can manage SROs, they felt for the amount of money it was going to cost them, it would create headaches elsewhere. They have not made a final decision yet, but he does not think they are going to go away from the Sheriff's Office SROs. Mr. Joe Holloway said he was not questioning how good of a job they are doing. He is asking if there was something that was not being done that they could be doing. Dr. Frederickson said if the SROs were their employees, they would have a little bit more flexibility, but they would give up some other things. Mr. Cannon said by them not being employees does not restrict them from doing their jobs. Mr. Cannon then asked if the SROs are on the countywide task force as well as parents and teachers. Mrs. Miles said when the task force came to be about, it was comprised of parents, students, staff, and community persons. Mr.

Stauffer came before Council. Mr. Stauffer said the co-chairs are himself, director of secondary education, and Ms. Susan Jones, director of elementary education. In addition, they have a number of individuals that represent both primary, intermediate, middle and high schools, administration, teachers, and organizations that are represented, WCEA, which is the teacher's association as well as ABSAS, which is the administrator's association. They also have community organizations that are represented, such as the NAACP and Health Department. Mr. Cannon asked when is the next meeting, to which Mr. Stauffer responded, June 6th, the first Monday in June. Mr. Cannon then asked if council members can attend the meeting, to which Mr. Stauffer responded, yes. Mr. Cannon asked what time and where do they meet. Mr. Stauffer said they meet at the Central Office from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. He said they have had two meetings so far. Mr. Cannon said he is glad they are meeting, as people are looking for some specific direction and targeted action. Mr. Cannon said people are so concerned about being politically correct that we are compromising our own integrity and safety. Mr. Joe Holloway said he hears that a lot of the incidences go unreported. He then asked if there is anything that can be tracked as far as incidences go. Do you put the incidences on the website? Mrs. Miles clarified that Mr. Joe Holloway is speaking of incidences not getting reported in a public format, to which Mr. Joe Holloway responded, yes, a cover up. Mrs. Miles said she does not believe that to be happening. They have worked very hard on the practices that may have been in place in the past, more so with elementary than secondary. Some manners of writing referrals that may not have gotten into the system have been addressed, so they are accountable for conduct that is occurring that is outside what is acceptable. Mr. Joe Holloway asked how does the general public find out about those referrals. Mrs. Miles said they do not publish the monthly disciplinary reports and things of that nature. In terms of the schools general community, she encourages anyone who has an interest to make sure they are staying in touch with their school administrators. They have parent and community advisory groups that meet on a regular basis and often times the agenda is a review of what is happening in the schools inclusive of discipline and concerns. Mrs. Miles said nothing was being done as a cover up. In practice of operation, they want to be consistent to make sure that an incidence that occurred in School A with a third grader and it was shared with administration was also shared with School B. They want to look at this individually by the student, individually by the school, and trends in behavior, as well as concerns coming in from the community and going out into the community. If they can look at the trend data, they can address the issue almost immediately, so that is why they want to make sure they are being accountable. Dr. Frederickson said he does not think there are things the teachers are covering up, but he is positive that there are things that happen that do not get reported, just as they do in the community. He thinks they have been effective in terms of encouraging people to report. Over the years, he has bumped into people who say certain things happened when they were a junior in high school and now they are in the community

raising a family. He would ask what happened and they would respond that they did not report it for whatever reason. Dr. Frederickson said they encourage people to report what is happening. Similar to the national campaign on safety, "if you see something, say something"; they are saying that to the kids. They are telling them if they see something, say something. Part of bullying is there is the bully, the victim and often times a bystander. What does the bystander do? Mr. Dodd said they video tape. Dr. Frederickson said at the end of the day the other 29 students deserve an education that is free from interruption from that one person that is being a jerk. Mrs. Miles said she would encourage development on Council's end in determining whether it would be relevant to the intervention laws they have in the schools, so that goes back to ensuring consistency. She said their staff are to be commended for the number of interventions that they put in place for children to perhaps have the behavior be less of an influence and let the student be more readily accessible to learning before that student gets to the administrator. They have intervention laws that an administrator can access whenever a student is before them on a disciplinary referral to see what are things the staff members have done to support the student in trying to change his or her behavior in the appropriate manner. She gives credit to the administrators, teachers, staff members, instructional assistants and others who are trying to intervene with that behavior before it becomes a major issue that will make its way to the public and possibly not be represented accurately. Mr. Dodd said they should be commended as they are doing the best job they can. It sounds like the Board of Education wants to do something, but its hands are tied. Mr. Dodd said Dr. Frederickson talked about restrictions and being stricter, but he is not going to be here next month. He then asked who is going to carry that torch and talk to the state. Dr. Frederickson responded Dr. Handlin is just as aggressive on those issue as he is. Mr. Dodd said the parents are getting more involved on social media, and they are not happy. He said this is a situation that cannot wait. He said there was a passionate speech today, but there is nothing Council can do. Mr. Dodd said Council wants this to stop and the 29 kids to learn. It is the ones that are slipping through the cracks that are causing the problems. He is getting a lot of employees, not just teachers, saying they are not allowed to stop a kid from interacting in a bad behavior. For instance, he heard a lot of complaints that the kids may go out in the hall and not come back. The teacher may say something and the kid will throw the F bomb on them and there is nothing they can do. He then asked if the teachers are allowed to discipline the kids, to which Dr. Frederickson responded, yes, they are. Mr. Dodd said the teachers are saying they are not. Mrs. Miles said there is an expectation for them to maintain the standards and would encourage any employee who feels that is not the case to speak directly to administration. Mr. Dodd said it sounds like they are afraid to do their job. Mr. Cannon said they may be afraid of the individual who walks out in the hall and drops the F bomb as he probably would be. Mr. Joe Holloway asked what is an example of a discipline a teacher can give to someone who dropped the F bomb on them. Mrs.

Miles said it is at the teacher's discretion. For example, a student in the hall cannot get his or her locker open and says a curse word. The teacher may choose to say that is inappropriate get it together. Maybe the teacher thinks that is the best intervention or maybe that is not the case. If the student looks at the teacher and says I am going to F . . . hit you, then that is not a detention. That is more than likely going to result in a referral to administration and administration is going to have to take action. There were concerns that action was not being taken on those certain types of incidences, but she has been able to gather data that indicates the contrary. Perception is a very powerful thing, and it is very much of a reality as someone else reality truly is. She encourages people to tell them what their concerns are, so they can address them. If there are concerns over the task force that has been formed that someone does not know about it, then they need to get more information out there and invite more people to join them. This is going to take more than just one or two people in the Central Office or a single administrator in a building. She appreciates the comment that Mr. Cannon made that this is a community issue. She is not putting it off on the community, but they have to work with the community to address this issue. They are working very hard to engage community entities, whether it is the Health Department or, if it reaches the point of DJS or other mental health and social support, to engage people because, if they address something outside of the school system, and it has a positive influence then it is a win-win situation, and they want to partner in that. They have a lot of those actions taking place, but they would like to expand. Mr. Dodd said he heard that on one of the incidents that happened recently other students told the teachers that something was going to happen. The word got out that it was ignored, and the student was attacked. Dr. Frederickson said it would be inappropriate for them to talk about a specific incidence at this time. Mr. Dodd said he is just letting them know what people are saying out there because Council members get bombarded everywhere they go. Mr. Hall said a comment was made during the retirement event that confused him in that Dr. Frederickson said we were up a hundred points for graduation, and we had been up for the last eight years. Dr. Frederickson clarified that they have increased the graduation rate by a hundred basis points every year for the last five years. They were not on the bottom when they started, but they are slightly above average for the state, and they are on track for doing it again this year. He said they have a few more weeks to go before everyone gets their papers in and tests taken, but they are on track to do that again. Mr. Kilmer said there have been some concerns regarding the Magnet Program. Some parents have concerns about the future of the program in that it is not serving all the high performing kids that could be in the program. Dr. Handy said they still have the same criteria, and they will continue to use the same criteria that they have used for the past two years. Two years ago they did change one of the major standardize assessments from Naglieri to InView. One of the questions that has come about from having to make some necessary shifts is the current class size. Currently they have some classes with a class size of 15 students and sometimes it is lower than that.

They know that is a much lower class size than what they have in their traditional classes. As a result in looking at next year and looking at the students in terms of their needs, they know that across the county they need to be sure that they are equitable when it comes to ensuring that their class sizes are the same in all of their programs. It is unfair to have magnet class sizes with only 15 students and, in the general population, some class sizes are as high as 27 to 28 students. Looking forward to next year, looking at the students who will qualify, they do not know the numbers yet because they have not taken the last benchmark, so they have no idea how many students will actually qualify for the Magnet Program, but, if they look at tradition, the first time they used the InView, there were 32 kids who accepted the invitation to the program. Last year there were about 60 kids who accepted the invitation. When they look at that and the anticipation for this coming year, they still do not know how many students, but they know that they will need to have fewer classes because the class sizes are relatively small. With that said, some community members thought that the Magnet Program was being reduced. They are not reducing the Magnet Program at all. If a student qualifies, the student is accepted in the program. However, there may not be as many classes because there will be more than 15 kids in a class, so you may not need three, four or five classes on one grade level. It may go down to four or two. She said they have had meetings with parents who have been concerned regarding the high performers learners program. They will be having a meeting towards the end of May or first of June to talk about their high performing learning programs in middle and high school. Those concerns will be addressed and will continue to be addressed. Mr. Kilmer asked when will you know the numbers. Dr. Handy said the last test they give, which is the math benchmark, is given later this month, they will know come next month those students who met the criteria for the program. Parents are notified at the end of the school year if their son or daughter met the criteria. They will receive a letter to invite them to the program. If a student does not make it in the program and the parent feels that there was something that went wrong with the actual test, administration, or the calculation was wrong, the parent has the right to appeal. They have appeals in the month of July to talk to parents on why they think their child should be in the program. Parents are usually given until July 15th to let them know if they are going to have their child in the program. Mr. Kilmer clarified that there will be enough room in the program for every child that qualifies. Dr. Handy responded, yes, and there always will be enough room. If they meet the criteria, they are in the program, and they will make room. Mr. Fitzgerald said they have heard the question of what is the process after elementary school. They are trying to have the program work right on through middle school and when they get to high school, they have the option to take AP classes. He said nothing has changed as far as getting into the program. When West Salisbury had to use some of North Salisbury for room space that is when people got bent out of shape. Mr. Kilmer said he is getting questions about the Magnet Program, so he is concerned. Mrs. Townsend said there are people here to address the other topics

shown in the packet if Council would like to ask them any questions. Mr. Cannon said, in light of time, Council will have to pass as it is getting late. Mr. Dodd said the other night at the budget meeting he was pleased to hear board member Ollinger speak up and talk about how good our schools are. We do have some good schools. Mr. Ollinger went to the podium. He said the U.S. News and World Report rated high schools. He said thirty thousand high schools across the country were part of the study. They eliminated ten thousand of the high schools because they were not big enough and Mardela fell into that ten thousand. He said we all know that Mardela is one of the best high schools. Bennett, Parkside and Wi-Hi went into the study of the twenty thousand high schools that were evaluated by U.S. News and World Report. Only 31% of the twenty thousand received medals. All three of our high schools received medals from U.S. News and World Report. Bennett received a silver medal and Parkside and Wi-Hi received bronze medals. Mr. Ollinger said when we get an outside source doing the evaluation, you get a very objective view of where we stand with the rest of the high schools across the nation. Mr. Dodd said you have to have good members and good staff to believe in the schools to have success. He said last night he attended a baseball game at Parkside High School, and it was mentioned that several of the seniors are going to colleges such as Towson and Maryland. Mr. Dodd said that speaks volumes for the athletes. At one time, the athletes did not have the highest grade point averages (GPAs). He said our athletes have high GPAs, and they are getting scholarships because of their academics, not necessary for their athletic ability. He said we are producing some highly education students. Dr. Handy said what makes her most proud is to see the number of students who are receiving recognition and awards during the Board's Recognition and Award night and to see the diversity of the students. They are students from all walks of life, and she is proud of this County, the Board and superintendent for really pushing the idea most importantly for access and opportunity for everyone to excel.

Signatures are on the next page.

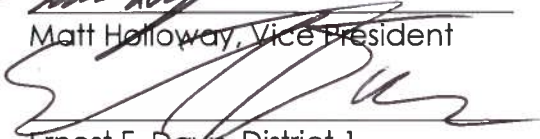
**Open Work Session Minutes
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John T. Cannon, President



Matt Holloway, Vice President



Ernest F. Davis, District 1



Marc Kilmer, District 2



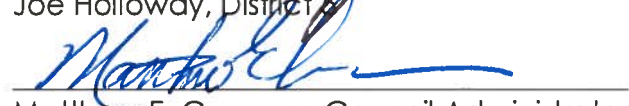
Larry W. Dodd, District 3



John B. Hall, District 4



Joe Holloway, District 5



Matthew E. Creamer, Council Administrator