

Open Work Session
Board of Education Quarterly Work Session
August 21, 2018

Dr. Donna Hanlin, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Bruce Ford, Chief Finance and Operations Officer, Dr. Rick Briggs, Chief Academic Officer, and Mr. Donald Fitzgerald, Board President, came before Council. Dr. Hanlin passed out an Agenda, and said there are five items on the Agenda, four of which came from Council, and she added item E, which has to do with a question about data from Wor-Wic Community College. She said she will start off by talking about goals for the year, and she thanked Council for the additional funding they gave above maintenance of effort. She said the \$500,000 is part of what she talks about in terms of her goals, and they are staying the course. She then handed out a condensed version of Imagine 2022, which talks about the goals for the future. She recognized the Board members present in the audience, introducing President Don Fitzgerald, Vice President Gene Malone, and Board members Mr. John Palmer, Mr. Michael Murray, and Mr. Allen Brown.

Dr. Hanlin said, in this condensed version of Imagine 2022 she will call Council's attention to the small grid, and the main message she wants to share with Council is that they are staying the course. She said these are the strategic priorities that were shared last year at numerous events and venues, and part of their strategic plan that led to their request to Council for funding. She said they are continuing to focus on three areas, the first being an effort to increase the number of students who are reading on grade level by 3rd grade. She said in that area Council knows they intend on implementing universal prekindergarten, and, again, the funding Council provided to them last year is helping to begin that initiative. She said she is going to go a little bit into letter B of the Agenda, which talks a little bit about how the new funding is being used. She reported, they were able to increase their classrooms for universal pre-kindergarten by five. She said they added five additional classrooms, including two at Chipman Elementary, one at West Salisbury, one at Prince Street, and one at Pinehurst. She said those are the five classrooms that will be open and ready to go. She said they have been talking about it broadly as much as they can so parents will know it exists where it may not have for them before based upon eligibility. Mr. Dodd asked how they added the five new classrooms, and whether they are portables, to which Dr. Hanlin responded, they are not portables. She explained, Phase 1 of universal prekindergarten, which Council may or not may remember, is looking at where they have existing space available, so this is part of Phase 1. Mr. Dodd said they were talking about portables at one point, to which Dr. Hanlin responded, at one point, but that is actually Phase 2 of universal pre-kindergarten.

Dr. Hanlin said they also are very appreciative to the Wicomico County Education Foundation who presented them with a check at the last Board meeting for \$45,095 for five tech packages, which is a very specific package of technology that will be used in those teachers' classrooms. She said that funding was much appreciated, and they are just going to continue the course with looking at where they can add additional classrooms for the following year, so Council can anticipate that as they move forward looking at more opportunities for students. Mr. Cannon asked how many students they anticipate for each of the additions, to which Dr. Hanlin responded, 20. She clarified, it is actually about 70 students, and the reason for that is because some of the additional classrooms are being used to change a half-day program into a full-day program, to which Dr. Briggs added, that is at Pinehurst. He said Pinehurst Elementary currently only has one classroom that services the two half-day programs, and with the additional staff they are now able to have two full-day programs there.

Dr. Hanlin said the second item is regarding graduation rate, and she is not going to go through all of those strategies with Council, but they are inching up slowly. She said they want to continue that, and this year they are starting the STEM NeXgen Academy at Salisbury Middle School, which is fully enrolled. She said they are looking at a number of other things, and they are very excited that, although it is small, in the fall they are initiating an early college program with Wor-Wic Community College. She clarified, when she says small, she is talking about less than ten students. She explained, these are students in the pathway of computer science who will be on Wor-Wic's campus fulltime in their junior and senior year, and will graduate with a high school diploma and an associate's degree at the same time. She said they are starting that program taking baby steps as a foot in the door, but they are excited about where it could go, including the possibility in the future of a pathway for teacher education. She said, with the teacher shortage they have, they are looking at how they can continue to grow their own.

Dr. Hanlin said they are looking at a number of other initiatives, specifically nontraditional pathways, with increased opportunities for students to do on-line learning at the Choices Academy, and other workplace development initiatives. She said Micah Stauffer, who is the Director of Secondary Education, is taking the lead on that, and he has described to her a menu of options that students will have, again, in an effort to keep students in school. Mr. Cannon asked how they do the on-line learning, and if it is in association with a third-party, to which Dr. Hanlin responded, in some cases, but they use a program called Edmentum. Mr. Cannon asked if it is a program the County has, to which Dr. Briggs responded, yes. He said it is an existing program where the students spend 20 percent of their time in the classroom receiving instruction, and 80 percent of the time electronically either in the lab, or even from home.

Dr. Hanlin said the third area is recruiting and retaining a high-performing workforce. She said they have a great group of teachers coming on board again, and the last time she checked they were down to two vacancies, to which Dr. Briggs added, he believes it is down to one as of this morning. Dr. Hanlin said there are school systems around them who are in a lot worse shape than Wicomico County. She said they are excited about the new group of teachers who are coming to work with them, and she knows the County's job is to support them and retain them through a number of initiatives. She said they just completed their salary study, and that was presented and accepted by the Board at the last Board meeting, which was simply just accepting it. She clarified, the Board, along with staff, will take a look at those recommendations and determine what they will do with the salary study. Mr. Dodd asked who the consultant was, to which Dr. Hanlin responded, it was the MAG Consulting Group, but she does not recall what MAG stands for. She reported, they did a very thorough job working with them looking at a market analysis, and they focused primarily on what they call Unit 3-4, which are classified employees, their non-certificated staff. She said what they learned was not a surprise to them, which is that the biggest gaps in salary are at the beginning of the scale, they get closer to the market at the midpoint of that scale, and then when they get to the top, they are pretty close, so they are really looking at the beginning of the scale. She said, ultimately, the recommendation is \$2.4 million dollars to correct the underpaid employees at the bottom of the scale, and Council will be hearing more about that after the Board really takes a look at it and decides how to move forward. Mr. Cannon said the County just did a similar study as well, and found they had some inconsistencies.

Dr. Hanlin said the last initiative has to do with the way they communicate important information. She said they have continued to work in that area, and Mr. Butler has taken on the initiative of working with an organization to create a new website that will be much more user-friendly, and easier for parents to use locating resources they need, and that will be launched on August 31st. She said that is a just a big overview, but the bottom line is they are staying the course, and continuing with the same initiatives.

Dr. Briggs said, as Dr. Hanlin pointed out, the goal of increasing kindergarten readiness falls underneath the strategic priority of making sure all students are reading on grade level by 3rd grade. He said they have tons of research on the importance of reading on grade level and how that correlates with positive graduation rates, and so forth. He said one of the main things they are going to do is focus on where their students are as far as literacy skills at the end of 3rd grade. He said they actually give a Benchmark Assessment System (BAS), which they give in kindergarten, first, and second grade, and that enables them to really focus on the literacy skills their students have, identifies both their strengths and their weaknesses, which then forms the instructional practices in the classroom so the teachers can be addressing those deficiencies the students have, and enriching the strengths they have. He said, currently, they have about 55 percent of students who are reading on or above grade level when they finish 2nd grade. He said that is going to be an area they will focus on and would love to see increased, especially through the expansion of the pre-k classrooms. He said they are going to be able to track that, and they can then desegregate the data and look at their pre-k students by the time they reach 3rd grade, and contract their reading levels as opposed to those students who are not a part of the County's pre-k system, or a part of any other pre-k. He said they look forward, hopefully, to sharing some positive results with Council in the future. Mr. Kilmer asked what the goal for that number to be by 2022 is, to which Dr. Hanlin responded, obviously, if she was being politically correct, it would be 100 percent, but she would feel really good by 2022 if that figure was approaching 65 percent, and she thinks that is realistic at this point. Mr. Kilmer asked, with the five new classrooms, are they considering this universal pre-k, or is this moving towards universal pre-k, to which Dr. Hanlin responded, it is moving towards universal pre-k. Dr. Hanlin clarified, the definition of universal pre-k is that all students in the County have access to a Wicomico County School full-day program. Mr. Kilmer asked if it is at that level yet, to which Dr. Hanlin responded, it is not there yet. She said they were at 56 percent last year, but they will probably never serve 100 percent because there will be families who will choose to stay in private pre-kindergarten programs. Mr. Ford said, if Council will remember, they asked for eleven classrooms, and they received five, and in Phase 2 they will ask for an additional 15 classrooms.

Mr. Dodd said they all know the State Education Association is working hard. He then asked where they stand right now as far as funding for Wicomico County, to which Dr. Hanlin responded, only through grants. She explained, there has been no movement, but the Kirwan Commission has that as one of their pillars and one of their major recommendations. She said they are working on their funding strategies right now that will come out in December of this year, so they are anxiously awaiting to see what kind of recommendations they are going to make to the State of Maryland in terms of any kind of funding for pre-kindergarten, but, at this point, the County gets no funding through the regular formula. Mr. Dodd asked if the State is working on it for the Counties, to which Dr. Hanlin responded, they are not working on it yet, as she thinks they are waiting for some kind of recommendation from the Kirwan Commission. Mr. Dodd said he knows there has been discussion because he has been following their website.

Mr. Kilmer said there has been a lot of new research coming out lately on pre-kindergarten, such as in Tennessee with their pre-kindergarten program, and it was found that the way they implemented it has actually led to lower academic achievement in some respects because of the way they did it. He then asked what their goals are for ensuring they are using the latest methods and keeping up with research from other States to make sure it is done correctly here, to which Dr. Hanlin responded, what has recently been published is old research from Tennessee. She clarified, they did not take into consideration the things they know are important to do, which she may have mentioned last year. She explained, this is not about giving money towards pre-kindergarten, opening five classrooms, and expecting those numbers to change. She said they know the expectations for kindergarten teachers, and first and second grade teachers needs to change based upon what is happening in classrooms in

prekindergarten. She clarified, it is not just about what happens in the pre-kindergarten classrooms, but it is about what happens from that point forward, and making sure those teachers have professional development, or the resources they need to make sure they are moving on that trajectory. She said this is probably not an exact answer to Mr. Kilmer's question, but one of the things that popped into her mind is that the first year she was with the County, and years previous to that, one of the number one requests from principals was for intervention teachers to intervene with students who were not reading on grade level. She explained, they had so many students who were not reading on grade level that they wanted intervention teachers to work with those students. She said it is also her goal to not have that number increase, but may eventually decrease the number of intervention teachers needed, and that will be part of what they keep an eye on. She said there is another study from the Brookings Institute that talks about what she has just been discussing, and she will forward that to Council.

Mr. Dodd asked what the SRI and SMI are, and what grade level they are used with, to which Dr. Briggs responded, they have dropped the "S" and call it the Reading Inventory, but Wicomico County does not offer the math inventory anymore. He said that is something Scholastic tried to push out, but it was not beneficial to their teachers, and they are not fans of just assessing for assessment sake, so they do not utilize that anymore. He said the Reading Inventory is an assessment they use in 2nd grade through 11th grade to track students. He said it is an on-line assessment that tracks their reading progress, and lets teachers know exactly what level Lexile score the students are reading on so they can then make informed instructional decisions with those students, and make sure they are reading appropriate text and challenging them. Mr. Dodd said most Councilmembers always run into teachers and staff members who fill their ears with things they are concerned with, and that was something that was brought up. He then asked if it is true that when they do this testing they are only testing one student at a time, to which Dr. Briggs responded, no. He said with Reading Inventory, every student registers on-line and takes the assessment, which takes about 30 to 35 minutes, and then they resume regular instruction from there, and that is done twice a year. He said the one-on-one assessment is the BAS that he referenced earlier, and that is a one-on-one assessment where the teacher and student are sitting side by side and working through a series of text, and identifying letters and sounds so they can really understand the strengths and the weaknesses those students have. He said, ideally, in that situation where that one-on-one testing is happening, the other students are in small groups and an instructional assistant, or even additional support who are put into the classroom are making sure the other students are receiving instruction. Mr. Dodd said one of the concerns was what the rest of the class was doing while the teacher was doing the one-on-one. He then asked if the other students are occupied at that time, to which Dr. Briggs responded, yes. Mr. Dodd again said that was a concern, though he is not in the classroom and did not see it with his own eyes, but he did hear that. Dr. Briggs said that leads into the next question, which deals with the degree of testing.

Dr. Briggs said the assessments they give are a handful of what they call summative assessments that, basically, the State mandates, such as PARCC at the end of the year, and the PSAT during 10th grade. He said the majority of the assessments they give, such as BAS, RI, and the benchmark assessments throughout the year are formative assessments to inform them of the instruction that is going on. He explained, as he stated earlier, they are not fans of assessing students for assessment sake. He said those assessments should be translating into meaningful classroom instruction enabling the teacher to know what groups of students are deficient in one area so they can specialize that instruction toward those students. He said, again, it is a concerted effort to take those assessment scores, and really dig into that and break them down to see how that can translate into better instruction in the classroom because, if that is not happening, the assessments are pretty much worthless, and that is not what they want to happen. He said, to extend on that a little bit, a simple answer to the increasing or decreasing

would be neither, but that they are pretty much maintaining. He said Senate Bill 452, which came out the previous Legislative Session, is the More Learning Less Testing Act of 2017. He said this kind of forced them, which was a good practice, to develop a District Assessment Committee, which is administration, teachers, supervisors, parents, and their Teachers' Association to all come together to really look at the tests that are mandated throughout the school year. He said the law requires that they are below 2.2 percent of instructional time, and they were below that in all areas, and he will give a couple of percentages just for reference. He said kindergarten is their smallest at 0.3 percent, 3rd through 5th grade is about 1.6 percent, and in middle and high school it fluctuates depending on the year, but they are well below the 2.2 percent cap. He said the majority of those assessments, again, are their formative assessments that are beneficial in the classroom. Dr. Hanlin asked if that group continues to meet, to which Dr. Briggs responded, that is correct. He said the law says every two years, but they will probably reconvene every year, even if it is just to check in to make sure they are on the same page. Mr. Dodd said something teachers have been complaining a lot about is too much testing. He then asked Dr. Briggs if he stated they are maintaining the testing, to which Dr. Briggs responded, that is correct. Mr. Cannon asked if the 2 percent was in reference to preparing for testing or the actual testing, to which Dr. Briggs responded, it is testing time during the instructional day.

Dr. Hanlin said the next item is in regards to the impact of the newly formed Interagency Commission (IAC). Mr. Ford said it used to be a committee, but House Bill 1783, which just passed this previous Legislative Session, also known as the 21st Century School Facilities Act, basically created this new Commission, and the Commission has yet to meet for its first time. He said it is slated to meet on August 30th, so the jury is out as to whether or not it is going to be a good thing or a bad thing. He clarified, however, they believe positive things are going to come about as a result of the Commission versus the former structure that existed with the committee and the Board of Public Works. He said, just to give Council a little overview of what House Bill 1783 has done, it has formed a nine-member Commission to include three members who are State employees. He said the State Superintendent of Schools, who at this moment is the chair, Dr. Salmon, the Secretary of Planning, and the Secretary of General Services are also appointed on that Commission. He said the Governor can appoint two members, the President of the Senate can appoint two, and the Speaker of the House can appoint two members. He said, at this point, there are eight members with one vacancy still to be appointed by the Speaker of the House. He said the first meeting is slated on the 30th of August, and they are supposed to meet on a monthly basis from that point forward. He said the Commission will have enhanced responsibility for deciding school construction funding. He said, in the past, basically, the Committee made recommendations, but now the Commission will make final decisions relative to how State aid is allocated to the Counties. He said the timelines are essentially the same. He said the Commission is to approve school construction projects at the following levels: 75 percent preliminary must be approved by December 31st of each year, and then the final 100 percent by May 1st of each year, so the timelines are about the same as what the committee and the Board of Public Works operated under in the past, and that is not really changing. He said one of the other big things the House Bill does is establish, for the first time, educational facilities sufficiency standards that are created for the purpose of measuring, essentially, the facility's condition. He said by July 1, 2019 there is to be an evaluation of every school in the State of Maryland, and that report is to be presented to this Commission as a result of them hiring a consultant to perform these evaluations. He said they believe they are in really good shape in Wicomico County. He reported that Mrs. Ashby, their Director of Planning and Construction, is on top of it, and she and Mr. Auchey have a facility condition index for every one of the County's facilities, and, actually, they have already been working with the members of the staff who support the Commission on providing information relative to the facility condition index. He said they feel pretty good about it, but, as he said, the jury is still out, but they think it is going to be a pretty good process. Mr. Cannon asked if Mr. Ford

thinks that along with measuring the facility's condition that they might in this index take into consideration the quality of maintenance that has been done. He said he believes the reason this initially came about was that originally the Governor or the Comptroller were holding certain districts' feet to the fire in reference to funding because the maintenance was not what they felt up to standards, and maybe there was the feeling that they did not want to throw good money after bad. He then asked if Mr. Ford thinks that this new index will still account for not just the condition but the efforts towards maintenance, to which Mr. Ford responded, actually, the facility condition index is basically a formula that takes the total cost to repair a facility and divides it by the replacement cost, so it is a pretty simple formula. He said, if they are not keeping the repairs up on a facility, those repair costs are going to be much higher, and that factor is going to be impacted by exactly what Mr. Cannon is talking about. He said one of the things they are going to start to measure, and the staff from the Commission have told them, is that they are going to have various key performance indicators, and one of them is how much the County is spending per square foot on preventative maintenance. He said that is going to be a measure that he believes the State is going to hold all of the locals to in terms of reporting. He said they are going to have to start reporting those key performance indicators to the State, and they are going to start measuring it, and holding folks accountable. Mr. Dodd said at one time the Board of Education had summer maintenance crews that did a lot of painting, and they would hire teachers and students for the summer. He then asked what happened to that, to which Mr. Ford responded, because of all of the requirements that are associated with painting and the application of painting, and the whole issue of hazardous materials, they have brought that under contract now, so all of that is being done by contracted staff that have to meet certain criteria. Mr. Dodd asked if that maintenance is still going on, to which Mr. Ford responded, absolutely. He said they try to paint at least two schools every single summer, and they are working on trying to do three. Mr. Cannon said he is just wondering, from a local perspective, whether they need to make sure they take measures, and, if so, what measures should be taken, so that the rural Counties get as much of the benefit as possible, to which Mr. Ford responded, it is going to be key that their local delegation is aware of what their needs are. He said, in a meeting this morning, they reviewed the CIP submission with the Board that is due to the County, and to the State by October 1st, so they were having a conversation about that, and it is a concern that this new Commission be attentive to not only the large jurisdictions across the Bay, but that the rural Counties get their fair share of the pie, so it is going to be key for them to keep their delegates and senators aware of what their needs are. Mr. Fitzgerald said his biggest concern this morning at their meeting was that Wicomico County does not get overlooked. He said, from the meetings he has had with the State, he thinks it is everybody's concern because it really has not come out how they are going to do it yet. He said, until it comes out, they are all speculating, but he just does not want to get overlooked. He said he knows their delegation will work with them, and that is what it is all about. Mr. Cannon said, from what he understands, they are not alone, to which Mr. Fitzgerald responded, no, they are not. Mr. Cannon said there are a lot of rural Counties expressing the same concern as to whether a geographic index is put in there or not. He said they will just have to wait and see how it plays out.

Dr. Hanlin said the last item on the Agenda is coming back to the question that was raised in the spring about data from Wor-Wic Community College, and Dr. Briggs has been working closely with Wor-Wic, and doing his own research, and is going to provide Council with some information.

Dr. Briggs said first he would like to thank Councilman Kilmer for sharing that information with them because, honestly, he does not know if he would have ever dug this deep into this situation. He said the number that was so alarming to Mr. Kilmer and many of them with the Board was that 83.4 percent of students were entering Wor-Wic not college ready, so that was virtually only 16.6 percent of students entering Wor-Wic ready, and not having to take any remedial classes before earning credit. He said he

reached out to Dr. Mallory, the Head of Academic Affairs at Wor-Wic, and she was able to share some information and data with him. He said, before he gets to that specifically, Mr. Kilmer pointed out in one of his correspondences with Mr. Palmer that, obviously, they have different groups of students working through their system, so there are different goals for each of their students, and he would like to speak on holistic terms. He explained, they have about 50 to 55 percent of their students who attend a four-year college after graduation. He said, separate from that, they have about 20 percent who attend a two-year college, such as Wor-Wic, 10 percent directly enter the workforce, and then a small percentage also enter the military or attend specialized school or training. He said, again, about 20 percent of their students are going to community colleges such as Wor-Wic. He said Dr. Mallory was able to share specific data with him from 2016 and 2017, the two most recent years, and these are the percentage of just Wicomico's students who were deemed college ready when they walked into the doors at Wor-Wic, meaning they did not need any remedial classes, and were taking credits immediately. He said in 2017, 64 percent of their Wicomico County students were deemed college ready in reading, and that number was lower in math at 32 percent. He clarified, those are the students from Wicomico County who actually go and enroll at Wor-Wic, and those percentages, again, were deemed ready for college, and were able to jump right in taking college credit. Mr. Kilmer said he has talked with Dr. Hoy about this, and there is some disjunction between the math requirements upon graduation of high school and the math requirements for Wor-Wic, to which Dr. Briggs responded, that is true. Mr. Kilmer said Dr. Hoy stated there were State efforts to make the systems align, and his thought was that the number of college ready students would be increasing as high school requirements and college entrance requirements aligned, to which Dr. Briggs responded, Dr. Hoy is exactly correct. He said there is a difference, especially in math, specifically around Algebra 2. He said Wor-Wic uses Algebra 2 PARC, which is a summative assessment at the end of the year for Algebra 2, as one of their indicators for college readiness for math. He said, however, Algebra 2 is not a State-mandated course, many of their students do not take Algebra 2, and the vast majority of students who take Algebra 2 are the ones who are going to a four-year college or university, so there is a disconnect there, and it still exists. He said he is hopeful, as Dr. Hoy was, that they have improvement in that area, but there is still a disconnect in that. Mr. Kilmer said he appreciates Dr. Briggs looking at those numbers.

Mr. Dodd said Council met with Dr. Hoy several times to talk about the Economic Development Scholarship, and Dr. Hoy indicated that the Board of Education really did not work with Wor-Wic. He then asked how much coordination the school system has with Wor-Wic, to which Dr. Briggs responded, he feels they have a growing partnership, as Dr. Hanlin mentioned earlier with the expansion of their dual enrollment to an early college program, and he would like to say it is ever strengthening. He said he and Dr. Mallory both came into their new positions at the same time, and their relationship over the past year has been that they meet on a monthly or bimonthly basis. He said it is not where they want it to be, but he would say it is continuing to strengthen. Mr. Dodd asked if that is just for the kids who want to get a degree or obtain a lot of advanced college credits, to which Dr. Briggs responded, most of the focus is on their existing students, not postgraduate. Mr. Dodd said he was wondering how many students who are not the advanced placement type students are working with Wor-Wic to get them ready to at least enter Wor-Wic, to which Dr. Briggs responded, that is definitely an area where they can grow. He said, as far as math, there are some assessments Wor-Wic gives that the school system could possibly implement, such as AccuPlacer, which they use to determine math readiness, but that is not something the County uses at all, and does not align with their instructional program whatsoever, so that is where that disconnect is that Mr. Kilmer pointed out. He said, hopefully, with continuing to strengthen their relationship, they can be more aligned and make sure that a higher percentage of their students are deemed ready by Wor-Wic. Dr. Hanlin said she thinks the relationship between Dr. Mallory and Dr. Briggs is just the beginning, and the conversations that need to be going on are between the

County's curriculum supervisors and Wor-Wic's Department Heads in content areas so they are looking at what is being taught, and what is being assessed to create better alignment. Mr. Dodd said he thinks it is a good idea to get most students in the public school system ready for college whether they decide to go right away or not. Mr. Kilmer said he thinks the goal should be that they are successful no matter what their goal is post high school graduation, whether it be in a four-year college, a two-year college, or the workforce, and if a third of the students going into Wor-Wic do not meet the reading standards, that does not set them up for success. He said there are definitely problems with college persistence through a two-year college, but if they can be better readers when they go in there, the County is part of a larger system, and he thinks working with Wor-Wic better to figure out ways to do that would help. Dr. Hanlin said once they implement universal pre-kindergarten, that percentage will go up. Mr. Kilmer said the goal is to have students in Wicomico County be the best educated in the State, and he thinks that is what they are all looking for, and they all play a role in that. He said he appreciates Dr. Briggs trying to work with Wor-Wic to figure this out, to which Dr. Briggs responded, he will keep Council posted.

Dr. Hanlin said she will conclude unless Council has any other questions. She said she hopes to see Council at their kickoff next week as they are celebrating their 150th year. She said the County celebrated theirs already as a County, and the school system came shortly after that. She said their theme this year with the kickoff at the Civic Center next Thursday morning is a birthday celebration, happy birthday to them, games, cake, and presents. Mr. Dodd asked what time the event starts, to which Dr. Hanlin responded it is at 9:00 a.m., but the doors open at 8:00 a.m. She said they will be finished by 10-10:30 a.m., but it is a celebration to launch the school year.

Mr. Cannon said he neglected to put anything in this discussion about Career Technical Education (CTE) or public-private partnerships, but he does not want to belabor this meeting. He said, personally, his highest priority is seeing how they are expanding on the CTE programs and public-private partnerships, so that discussion is going to have to be for another day. Mr. Fitzgerald said it is something they have already been looking at, and that is nothing new to them. He said the biggest thing with expanding is having a place to expand to, but Dr. Briggs and Dr. Hanlin have been looking at that, and, as a Board, that is their objective. Mr. Cannon said they will definitely have it on the Agenda the next quarter when they get together so they can spend some time seeing what goals are set. Mr. Dodd said the CTE Committee meets twice during the school year, and they have all of their partners there as well, to which Mr. Fitzgerald responded, that is correct. Dr. Hanlin said they will be happy to talk about that.

Mr. Cannon asked if any of the Board members in the audience would like to make any comments. Mr. John Palmer, Board Member, came to the podium. He said he would like to let Council know that over the weekend at the County Fair the Board of Education had a tent. He said Mr. Butler initiated that, and he was with him Saturday and Sunday, and he can tell Council it was a great success. He said they had a lot of people stop by and ask questions. He said they had a number of teachers from other places who were asking about Wicomico County, and they took their names and gave them the numbers of who to contact. He said they had a lot of people asking about kindergarten, and it was just a great get together.

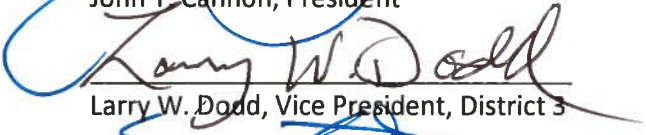
Mr. Palmer said, as far as measuring progress on kindergarten, they can wait for 3rd grade to do the reading assessments, but one of the best ways to measure progress is to go into the classroom on the first couple of days and watch the classes, and then go back in about three months. He said they will see the difference of how the teachers will structure these young students, and get them in line to where they are able to learn, and that is really a great way of seeing progress in the students. Mr. Cannon said that is correct, and it is really not until going into the classroom and seeing how it is being done hands-on that he really got the full effect of just how good of a program it is.

Mr. Palmer said he wants to thank Mr. Kilmer for keeping up with what is going on with Wor-Wic with the numbers and the testing because that is one of his areas he also wants to get involved in, so he appreciates Mr. Kilmer's work on that, to which Mr. Kilmer responded, he appreciates Mr. Palmer's back and forth on this, and keeping it on everybody's high priority, and he thanks him for that.

Mr. Allen Brown, Board Member, came to the podium, and said he has been a part of the education system in Wicomico County practically all of his life. He said he has his background here from first grade through twelfth grade, then went onto college, and then came back here and spent a 40-year career in public education. He said one of the things he noticed in working with the County Council is that the relationship between the school system and the County Council has grown, and he thinks it is going to continue to grow. He said he thinks right now it is at the best point it has ever been in working together. He said, when they talk about working with Wor-Wic and the school system, he also thinks the County Council has done a great job of that. He said meeting with Council like this gives both sides an opportunity to ask the kinds of questions they have on their minds, or to interact with the comments they hear from people in the public who they talk to, and then they can hear from the Board as well. He said the other thing is that they need to focus in a little bit more on the CTE program because, let's face it, all kids are not going to go to college. He said, if anyone has had a plumber or electrician come to their house lately, they know that those people do very well in the trade. He thanked Council for all they do for the Board of Education, and the working relationship they have, and he hopes it continues to grow. Mr. Dodd asked if the plumbing program is back in the school, to which Dr. Briggs responded, not yet. Mr. Dodd said that was one of Council's biggest concerns for the last two or three years, to which Mr. Fitzgerald responded, they combined it with HVAC. There was no further discussion.




John T. Cannon, President



Larry W. Dodd, Vice President, District 3



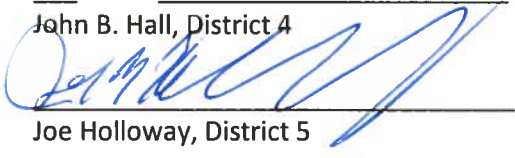
Ernest F. Davis, District 1



Marc Kilmer, District 2

absent

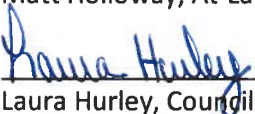
John B. Hall, District 4



Joe Holloway, District 5

absent

Matt Holloway, At-Large



Laura Hurley, Council Administrator