MINUTES

Fairfax County School Board

School Board Work Session

Tuesday, April 07, 2026

10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

1. Forums

Item 1.01: Forum Topic #1: Wait Until 8th Initiative:

Meeting Manager, Robyn Lady, called the meeting to order at 10:37 a.m. with the following Board members present:

Sandy Anderson (Chair and Springfield)
Robyn Lady (Vice Chair and Dranesville)
Ricardy Anderson (Mason)
Tom Dannan (Braddock)
Seema Dixit (Sully)
Mateo Dunne (Mount Vernon, **Absent**)
Karl Frisch (Providence, **Absent**)
Kyle McDaniel (At-Large, **Absent**)
Ryan McElveen (At-Large)
Melanie Meren (Hunter Mill)
Ilryong Moon (At-Large)
Marcia St. John-Cunning (Franconia)

Leadership Team present: Division Superintendent Dr. Michelle Reid; Chief of Staff Marty Smith, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Sloan Presidio; Chief of Schools Dr. Geovanny Ponce; Chief Operating Officer Andy Mueck; and Chief Equity Officer Dr. Nardos King

School Board Office: Clerk to the School Board Christina Setlow; Deputy Clerk to the School Board Janet Brown; Deputy Clerk to the School Board Kevin Jackson

Discussion Highlights: The Board proposed a resolution to provide institutional support for families delaying smartphone adoption until the 8th grade, intending to signal the division's position on the importance of reducing screen time and addressing the negative behavioral and mental health impacts associated with early phone use. This proposal sought to empower principals and staff to share guidance and resources with families—such as information on using password protection to limit phone access during the school day—without altering school operations or existing curriculum. To maintain neutrality and avoid financial or proprietary conflicts, the Board planned to decouple the resolution from the specific "Wait Until 8th" non-profit, instead using its own language to encourage delaying personal devices while emphasizing that school-provided technology remains a vital tool for educational equity

Item 1.02: Forum Topic #2: Pandemic Preparedness

Meeting Manager, Robyn Lady, called the meeting to order at 11:08 a.m. with the following Board members present:

Sandy Anderson (Chair and Springfield)
Robyn Lady (Vice Chair and Dranesville)
Ricardy Anderson (Mason)
Tom Dannan (Braddock)
Seema Dixit (Sully)
Mateo Dunne (Mount Vernon, **Absent**)
Karl Frisch (Providence, **Absent**)
Kyle McDaniel (At-Large, **Absent**)
Ryan McElveen (At-Large)
Melanie Meren (Hunter Mill)
Ilryong Moon (At-Large)
Marcia St. John-Cunning (Franconia)

Leadership Team present: Division Superintendent Dr. Michelle Reid; Chief of Staff Marty Smith, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Sloan Presidio; Chief of Schools Dr. Geovanny Ponce; Chief Operating Officer Andy Mueck; and Chief Equity Officer Dr. Nardos King

School Board Office: Clerk to the School Board Christina Setlow; Deputy Clerk to the School Board Janet Brown; Deputy Clerk to the School Board Kevin Jackson

Discussion Highlights: The Board proposed establishing a staff-led working group on pandemic preparedness to conduct a comprehensive debrief of the division's 2020 response and develop a proactive, modernized emergency plan. This initiative aimed to replace outdated procedures with a robust framework that incorporates diverse perspectives, specifically including the special education community, student voices, and school-based staff—such as counselors and technology specialists—who were heavily impacted during the previous crisis. Board members advocated for a multi-stakeholder approach involving collaboration with the CDC, state, and county health officials to ensure future plans address both physical safety and instructional continuity. The Board reached a unanimous consensus to move forward with this proposal, setting a flexible goal for the group to return with findings in the fall to ensure the work is conducted with fidelity.

Consensus: The Board agreed to Mr. McElveen's request for establishing a staff-level working group on pandemic preparedness.

Move: Ryan McElveen, Second: Ricardy Anderson
Yes: Mateo Dannan, Marcia St. John-Cunning, Sandy Anderson, Robyn Lady, Seema Dixit, Melanie Meren, and Ilryong Moon
No: -

2. Strategic Plan Goal Four: Equitable Access and Opportunity Part 1

Item 2.01: Call to Order and Announcements, Dr. Ricardy Anderson, Meeting Manager

Meeting Manager, Robyn Lady, called the meeting to order at 11:36 a.m. with the following Board members present:

Sandy Anderson (Chair and Springfield)
Robyn Lady (Vice Chair and Dranesville)
Ricardy Anderson (Mason)
Tom Dannan (Braddock)
Seema Dixit (Sully)
Mateo Dunne (Mount Vernon)
Karl Frisch (Providence, **Absent**)
Kyle McDaniel (At-Large, **Absent**)
Ryan McElveen (At-Large)
Melanie Meren (Hunter Mill, **left 1:00 p.m.**)
Ilryong Moon (At-Large)
Marcia St. John-Cunning (Franconia)

Leadership Team present: Division Superintendent Dr. Michelle Reid; Chief of Staff Marty Smith, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Sloan Presidio; Chief of Schools Dr. Geovanny Ponce; Chief Equity Officer Dr. Nardos King; Chief Human Resources Officer William Solomon; Assistant Superintendent, Strategy , Planning, and Learning Marcy Kneale ; Dr. Terri Edmunds-Heard; Dr. Reilly; and Esther Ko.

School Board Office: Clerk to the School Board Christina Setlow; Deputy Clerk to the School Board Janet Brown; Deputy Clerk to the School Board Kevin Jackson

Item 2.02: Strategic Plan Goal 4 Report: Equitable Access and Opportunity

Summary: Fairfax County Public Schools' new Strategic Plan was adopted in June 2023 (Strategic Plan 2023-30) and presents our vision and goals as a leading public school division that is committed to delivering excellence, equity, and opportunity in education.

The Strategic Plan contains 5 goals:

- Goal #1 - Strong Start: Pre-K-12
- Goal #2 - Safe, Supported, Included, and Empowered
- Goal #3 - Academic Growth and Excellence
- Goal #4 - Equitable Access and Opportunity
- Goal #5 - Leading for Tomorrow’s Innovation

The purpose of annual goal reporting is to provide an update on the Division’s progress towards meeting the 2030 goals of the Strategic Plan.

Discussion Highlights: The Board proposed advancing Strategic Plan Goal 4: Equitable Access and Opportunity by implementing systemic changes to improve post-secondary readiness, most notably through the expansion of Algebra instruction to the 8th grade as a key predictor of student success. To dismantle barriers for historically underrepresented groups, such as multilingual learners and students with disabilities, the Board advocated for using Abl data for root cause analysis and transitioning toward an "opt-out" enrollment model to actively recruit students into advanced coursework. Furthermore, the Board proposed strengthening vertical

articulation across school pyramids to align support from elementary through high school and called for system-wide consistency in strategies—moving successful pilot programs into mandatory practices across all regions. Item 4.01 served as the procedural continuation of these proposals, reconvening the session after a recess to finalize the Board's questions and clarifying comments on these equitable access initiatives.

The Board took a brief recess from 12:29 p.m. to 1:02 p.m. between Work Session topics.

4. Strategic Plan Goal Four: Equitable Access and Opportunity Part

Item 4.01: Strategic Plan Goal Four: Equitable Access and Opportunity Part 2 Discussion

Summary: Fairfax County Public Schools' new Strategic Plan was adopted in June 2023 (Strategic Plan 2023-30) and presents our vision and goals as a leading public school division that is committed to delivering excellence, equity, and opportunity in education.

The Strategic Plan contains 5 goals:

- Goal #1 - Strong Start: Pre-K-12
- Goal #2 - Safe, Supported, Included, and Empowered
- Goal #3 - Academic Growth and Excellence
- Goal #4 - Equitable Access and Opportunity
- Goal #5 - Leading for Tomorrow's Innovation

The purpose of annual goal reporting is to provide an update on the Division's progress towards meeting the 2030 goals of the Strategic Plan.

The Board took a brief recess from 2:23 p.m. to 2:38 p.m. between Work Session topics.

Category #5: Middle School Advanced Academics Programs

Item 5.01: Call to Order and Announcements, Robyn Lady and Sandy Anderson, Meeting Managers

Meeting Manager, Robyn Lady, called the meeting to order at 2:38 p.m. with the following Board members present:

Sandy Anderson (Chair and Springfield)
Robyn Lady (Vice Chair and Dranesville)
Ricardy Anderson (Mason)
Karl Frisch (Providence, **Absent**)
Kyle McDaniel (At-Large, **Absent**)
Ryan McElveen (At-Large, **left 2:45 p.m.**)

Tom Dannan (Braddock)
Seema Dixit (Sully)
Mateo Dunne (Mount Vernon)
Melanie Meren (Hunter Mill, **Absent**)
Ilryong Moon (At-Large)
Marcia St. John-Cunning (Franconia)

Leadership Team present: Division Superintendent Dr. Michelle Reid; Chief of Staff Marty Smith, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Sloan Presidio; Chief of Schools Dr. Geovanny Ponce; Chief Operating Officer Andy Mueck; and Chief Equity Officer Dr. Nardos King

School Board Office: Clerk to the School Board Christina Setlow; Deputy Clerk to the School Board Janet Brown; Deputy Clerk to the School Board Kevin Jackson

Item 5.02: Middle School AAP

Background: On September 25, 2025, the Board directed the superintendent to develop a comprehensive plan for establishing Advanced Academic Programs (AAP) Centers in every middle school in the division. Once established, students who are eligible for Full-Time AAP would attend their neighborhood middle school in cohort classes for advanced coursework.

Staff has consulted with the Advanced Academic Advisory Committee (AAPAC) regarding the program standards for AAP Centers and has engaged the Middle School Principals Association (MSPA) about the program standards and the phasing plan to accomplish full implementation by SY 2030-31. Program standards include accountability measures for critical mass, rigorous instructional expectations and opportunities, school leader readiness, structures for program monitoring and goal setting, and teacher readiness.

The plan is proposed to take place in four phases based on analysis of facilities readiness. The plan proposes professional learning for teachers at schools that will be phasing in the new program each year, as well as for existing AAP Centers to ensure teacher readiness and equitable access to rigorous instruction.

Discussion Highlight: The Board proposed expanding Advanced Academic Program (AAP) centers to every middle school by the 2027-28 school year to ensure students can receive advanced services at their neighborhood base schools rather than being transported to separate centers. This initiative aims to increase equity and reduce transportation costs while maintaining instructional quality through a "critical mass" standard, defined as having at least two full class cohorts per grade level per subject to allow for teacher collaboration. The proposal outlines a four-phase implementation plan based on facility readiness and includes a five-year window for teachers to obtain required AAP certifications, with a recommendation that this training occur during contract hours. Furthermore, the Board sought to standardize the identification process to eliminate barriers such as the subjective "packet" system and the use of expensive private testing for appeals, which can disadvantage underrepresented student populations

Category #6: Adjournment of Work Session (Item 6.01)

The meeting was adjourned at 3:46 p.m.

Christina Setlow, Clerk of the Board

Sandy Anderson, Chair of the Board

Approved: April 23, 2026