

# P.G. Super News

Renee P. Williams

Prince George County Public Schools

December 18, 2017



## Important Dates:

**December 21**  
**First Day of**  
**Winter**

**December 20-**  
**January 2**  
**Christmas Break**

**December 25**  
**Christmas Day**

**December 26 -**  
**January 1**  
**Kwanzaa**

**January 1**  
**New Years Day**

**January 8**  
**School Board**  
**Meeting**

**January 15**  
**Martin Luther**  
**King Holiday**

**January 23**  
**Budget Work**  
**Session**  
**(if needed)**

## School Board News

The School Board held its regular meeting on December 11, 2017.

### Special Recognitions

- ⇒ **Buddy Smith** was recognized with 29 years of service as coach, lawn expert, and HVAC mechanic in the maintenance department.
- ⇒ **Reeve Ashcraft** and **Roger Franklin** will complete their elected board terms on December 31, 2017. Additional comments can be found on page 3. We thank them for their service and commitment to the School Board and wish them well.

### Presentations

- ◇ **Chris Romig** shared her message about North Elementary School and thanked her staff and **Christy Franchok** for making this the best start of a school year ever. She is privileged to be working with her staff and teachers at North. She presented a video to highlight some of the activities that make North so special. The video had students and teachers speaking about clubs and activities: Art Club, Green Team (recycling products), Helping Hands (grades 3-5 giving back to the school and community), little/big interactive groups, safety patrol, Cardinal Choir, and the storybook tree (ornaments made by students of their favorite storybook characters), just to name a few. She also invited everyone to attend their choir presentation on December 14. There are two performances at 9:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. She thanked **David Dockan** and the rest of her staff for preparing the video. She welcomed the Board to visit North anytime. On a personal note, she thanked **Mr. Ashcraft** and **Mr. Franklin** for their time served on the board and she wished them well. She also congratulated **Mr. Eley** and **Mr. Johnson** on being elected to the board and looks forward to working with them.
- ◇ **Ron Rhodes** recognized and publically thanked **Tony Vlk**, **Ralph Otey** and **John Campo**. These men "get it done" and he wanted them recognized because they step

it up every day, providing their expertise and taking care of things. He commented on the hot water heater repair at PGHS, completed work orders and replacement of HVAC filters. He is preparing a capital improvement list for next year.

- ◇ **Clarence Thweatt** stated on November 1, 2017 the School Board approved a Perfect Attendance Bonus for bus/car drivers and aides. As a result, 54 or 61 employees have had perfect attendance so far. The bonus was an incentive to keep drivers/aides from taking time off, and it's working. A job fair was held on December 8, 2017 and 12 people came with 10 potential bus/car drivers anticipated to start a January training class. On November 30, 2017, the Board also approved a \$1,000 signing bonus for new drivers who sign up before January 15, 2018 and a \$500 bonus for any school district employee who recruits a driver who passes CDL training and remains with the division through June, 2018. "Spread the word."

### Public Comment

- + **Erin Ehrenfeld** addressed the board with her concerns relating to late afternoon buses affecting teachers' time every day and the potential risk of problems with so many students staying late. She also commented on the lack of a School Resource Officer at Walton Elementary School. She is fearful of potential problems that could occur without a SRO on the open campus.
- + **Darkeesha Sims** expressed her concerns about late buses in the mornings which affects her child's instructional time at J.E.J. Moore Middle School.
- + **Butch Pearson** spoke about P3.com or P3tips.com, an enhanced Crime Solvers Program. This is a more user friendly program with dropdown boxes that prompt one to answer questions in real, live time. He thanked **Mr. Franklin** and **Mr. Ashcraft** for their service to the community and to the School Board.



**School Board  
Member Comments**

Mr. Cox thanked Ms. Romig for the popcorn and North presentation. He appreciated the positive feedback Mr. Thweatt provided on the transportation situation. He expressed gratitude working with Mr. Ashcraft and understands that he may come back and run again in the future. He respected Mr. Ashcraft's comments made and thanked him for his service. He stated he met Mr. Franklin 18 years ago and has enjoyed their working relationship. They have the same commitment to treat employees fairly and to advocate for students. He thanked Lena Franklin for sharing Roger with the board all these years and he congratulated both of them on their new life journey.

Mr. Stevenson recognized Mr. Rhodes for being a team player. You never hear him say "I did" because he always gives credit to his staff in all situations. However, he will take the credit if anything goes "bad". He considered the great things Mr. Franklin said about Prince George. He had three children graduate from Prince George and still has one child in the middle school. He gives credit to Prince George schools for the exposure they had with the schools, teachers, administrators, and successful outcome as Prince George graduates. He spoke about getting to know Mr. Ashcraft personally in Boston stating, "It is rare for board members to sit around and socialize and get to know one another individually. Mr. Ashcraft brought a youthful aspect to the board and refreshed technology competencies that the board needed." They have had some heated debates but he's always respected him and will miss him. When Mr. Stevenson first come onto the Board, Mr. Franklin was quick to accept him and made him feel welcomed and like part of a family. He has always had interesting stories to tell and he will be missed.



**School Board News  
(Continued)**

**Action Items**

- ◆ Local Plan for the Gifted 2017-2022
- ◆ New Course Proposals at PGHS: AP Environmental Science, AP Principals of Computer Science, AP World History, AP 3D Art, Cybersecurity Fundamentals, Mechatronics
- ◆ Champions Request for Change of Hours at all Elementary Schools, starting at 6:00 a.m.
- ◆ Investigative Services RFP
- ◆ Request for Appropriation of Funds Received from Tyler Technologies and Volkswagen Group of America
- ◆ FY2019 Budget Calendar

**Discussion Items**

- \* Financial Statement for November 2017

**Superintendent's Report/  
Informational Items**

- 2017-18 November Bus and School Suspension and Expulsion and Reinstatement Reports
- Current Enrollment Report as of December 6, 2017
- 2017-18 Year-to-Date Building Use Requests and Student/Employee Emergency Monthly Report via School Messenger
- VSBA Policy Page

**Upcoming Events**

- VSBA Webinar—Improving Emergency Management in VA School Divisions—January 12, 2018
- VSBA Capital Conference—Richmond January 22-23, 2018
- VSBA Orientation for New Board Members and Chairmen and Vice Chairmen—Richmond—January 23, 2018
- VSBA Governance Training—January 30, 2018
- NSBA Conference—San Antonio, TX—April 7-9, 2018
- VSBA Southside Regional Spring Forum April 30, 2018 @ Nottoway High School



**School Board  
Chairman Comments**

Mr. Foster shared with the audience that "You don't have to like any of us, but everyone's heart is in the right place." Whatever side of the vote you are on, there is one common goal....our students. In October the Board met with the police and sheriffs' departments on school safety. He is happy to say that some things have been implemented as a result of this meeting and the division continues to move in the right direction. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas. It is a time to reflect on how truly thankful you are for living and/or working in Prince George County and the Commonwealth. He also mentioned that he and Mrs. Williams would be attending the Board of Supervisors meeting on December 12, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. to hear discussion on the sewer billing credit/reimbursement at North Elementary School.



*Next School Board Meeting  
January 8, 2018*



*Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Please be safe during your travels throughout the holiday season!*



See next page for farewell comments made by Mr. Reeve Ashcraft and Mr. Roger Franklin

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

## Farewell to Reeve Ashcraft

Mr. Foster recognized Reeve Ashcraft and Roger Franklin as they leave the board at the end of this term. Mr. Ashcraft has served 2 years and Mr. Foster stated Reeve was passionate about serving his community. He was young and sought to become a public servant by running for the Board in support of our district's children. He graduated from Prince George High School, has been a faithful member of the board for the last two years, has brought a youthful presence to the board, and he serves on the Maggie Walker Governors' Board and the inaugural CodeRVA board. He's enjoyed getting to know Reeve and they've laughed and debated about issues and he respects Reeve, and his desire for public service is much appreciated. Mr. Foster wished him luck as he pursues his educational goals. Mrs. Williams is thankful for the opportunity to work with Mr. Ashcraft. She too appreciates all that he has brought to the School Board during his short time on the board. She also stated Mr. Ashcraft was instrumental in introducing her to social media like Twitter, Snapchat, etc.

### Reeve Ashcraft Message

Mr. Ashcraft read from a prepared statement reflecting on his two years as an elected official, a freshly graduated student who fought "for the people within the hallways he had just finished walking" and he was grateful for the opportunity to serve the people. He was humbled by the tasks that were in front of the board and was inspired by the people who give Prince George the reputation it has and working together for one common purpose: Our kids, the next generation. He summarized many accomplishments the board made during his 2-year period: appointed a new superintendent to begin solving problems immediately, gave teachers and staff a raise, improved benefits, added personnel to help better serve our most challenged students, cut an outdated and inefficient IB program to give more academic opportunities to all of our students, enacted a 10-point grading scale to put our students on an even playing field for college admissions and scholarships, conducted studies on compensating our employees and providing safe buildings for our students, and updated within the technology department as a key tool to be used by teachers in the curriculum. Even with these accomplishments, there is still work to do and he feels "Mr. Johnson and Mr. Eley will be there to pick up the baton and keep us moving forward." He thanked his parents for making him the person he is today, his mom for her love and support during his formative years, and he hoped to be half the man that his dad is. He then thanked senior staff at the School Board Office for taking time with him, answering his questions, and fighting for our kids and bringing our school system into the future. Lastly, he thanked his fellow Board Members. "Though we've had many disagreements that tested the patience of each other, we showed why democracy works every meeting that was held. You each debated me on my ideas, and not on my character. You questioned my information, rather than my merits. You treated me like a colleague, and not simply as a community mascot. While you each have showed me why you have been elected and re-elected to serve in this critical capacity, I hope along the way I proved to you why I deserved to share the stage as well." He ended with, "While the future is uncertain, I like to believe that this isn't a goodbye, but an impatient and heartfelt see you later".

## Farewell to Roger Franklin

Mrs. Williams acknowledged that Mr. Franklin has served 14 years on the School Board. Teaching children is his passion and he advocates for keeping kids firsts and she is blessed that their paths crossed. Mr. Foster also stated Mr. Franklin has been a member of the School Board for 14 years, serving as Chairman and Vice-Chairman multiple times during his tenure. A lifelong educator of high school and college students for 46 years, he has touched the lives of thousands of students in the classroom. He led the charge in his local community by being an advocate of the multiple facets of public education. He has championed funding for operational and capital needs, and crafted policies to improve academic achievement for students. His drive for competitive salaries and benefits have resulted in successful recruitment and above retention rates. He was a pioneer in web-based distance learning and he initiated Richard Bland College's first distance education offering and championed the Prince George School system to adopt a virtual learning platform, (i.e., an alternative education for expulsion students to continue with their education and gain credits for graduation). Mr. Franklin has served on many committees and boards (i.e. Appomattox Regional Governor's School Board, College of William and Mary Board of Visitors, City of Petersburg Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee) and has held many positions overseeing academic classrooms and labs, creating, securing research and resources that allowed students the collaborative tools for learning and student achievement while employed at Richard Bland College. Mr. Franklin's personal motto, "If you got'em, you got'em", speaks volumes on his commitment to provide the very best educational environment for every student regardless of race, economic status, nationality, physical and mental challenge. As a lifelong educator, he was committed to instill in each student the love of learning and he believes each child deserves his 200% commitment to work towards providing the best education possible. Mr. Franklin is the "real deal" and while he is from Alabama, Prince George is now his home.

### Roger Franklin Message

Mr. Franklin humbly thanked the public for allowing him to serve the community for 14 years. He reflected on his years of service as a board member, vice chairman and chairman, stating that "hanging with these guys has been good for me and that the board has made it work by working together. Prince George is a very unique place and whatever position one holds in the division is an important job. Teaching here is very special, and we have great people in our system that impact tomorrow's generation. They take the challenge, meet the challenge, and rise to the challenge and we can expect greatness from all our students."