



MINUTES
CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY SCHOOL BOARD ADVANCE
Charlottesville-Albemarle Technical Education Center (CATEC) Auditorium
1000 Rio Rd. E., Charlottesville, VA
Saturday, January 24, 2026 (8:30 AM)

1.1 Call to Order: Ms. Torres, School Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2.1 Roll Call of Board Members:

Board Members Present: Ms. Zyahna Bryant, Ms. Amanda Burns, Ms. Shymora Cooper, Ms. Emily Dooley, Mr. Chris Meyer, Ms. Nicole Richardson, Ms. Lisa Torres

Board Members Absent: None

Executive Leadership Team & Staff Present: Dr. Royal A. Gurley, Jr. (Superintendent) and Ms. Leslie Thacker (Board Clerk).

Executive Leadership Team & Staff Absent: None

3.1 Approval of Proposed Agenda: Ms. Burns made a motion, seconded by Mr. Meyer, to approve the proposed agenda. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried with Ms. Bryant, Ms. Burns, Ms. Dooley, Ms. Richardson, Mr. Meyer, and Ms. Torres voting aye. 6 ayes, 0 nays. Ms. Cooper was not present for this vote.

Items for Discussion

4.1 2026 School Board Advance: Strengthening the Governance Team for Collective Impact w/ Consultant Dr. Hutchings: The Charlottesville City School Board held a governance retreat to strengthen the governance team for collective impact, facilitated by Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., of Hutchings & Associates.

The retreat's focus was on Strengthening Governance Through Communication. The Board discussed the following key areas:

- **Governance Mindset and Collective Authority:** The Board discussed reinforcing that authority rests with the full Board and emphasized the importance of disciplined, unified public-facing communication.
- **Distinguishing Effort vs. Impact:** The Board discussed examining how governance decisions and actions influence systemwide impact for students, moving beyond adult effort.
- **Governance vs. Management:** The Board discussed strengthening the understanding of roles and boundaries, including maintaining clear boundaries and appropriately routing communication through the Superintendent.
- **Adult Behavior and System Coherence:** The Board discussed the need for intentional behavior, clarity of roles, and disciplined communication to prevent confusion.
- **Communication Guardrails:** The Board focused its discussion on protocols for constituent concerns, information requests, school visits, and public communication.

Outcomes and Agreements

The Board reinforced a shared understanding of governance roles and communication expectations, affirmed the consistent use of Board protocols, and agreed to continue governance learning through individual coaching sessions.

5.1 Closed Session: A Closed Meeting of the Charlottesville City School Board was held on Saturday, January 24, 2026, at 12:30 p.m., in the Charlottesville Area Technical Education Center (CATEC) Auditorium, 1000 Rio Rd. E., Charlottesville, VA.

Board Members Present: Ms. Zyahna Bryant, Ms. Amanda Burns, Ms. Shymora Cooper, Ms. Emily Dooley, Mr. Chris Meyer, Ms. Nicole Richardson, Ms. Lisa Torres

Board Members Absent: None

Executive Leadership Team & Staff Present: Dr. Royal A. Gurley, Jr. (Superintendent)

Executive Leadership Team & Staff Absent: None

Call the Closed Session to Order: Ms. Lisa Torres, Board Chair, called the closed session meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Closed Meeting: at 12:31 p.m., Ms. Burns offered a motion to go into a Closed Session as authorized by Section 2.2-3711 (A) (8) of the Code of Virginia, to consult with legal counsel engaged by the Board regarding specific legal matters involving the application of statutory legal authority and requiring the advice of counsel. Ms. Cooper seconded the motion, and the motion passed with Ms. Burns, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Meyer, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Torres voting aye. 6 ayes, 0 nays. Ms. Bryant was absent for this vote.

Closed Meeting Certification: At 1:21 p.m., Ms. Burns offered a motion that the board certify by recorded vote that, to the best of each board member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed, or considered. Ms. Cooper seconded the motion, and it passed, with Ms. Bryant, Ms. Burns, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Meyer, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Torres voting aye. 7 ayes, 0 nays.

Action: None

6.1 Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 1:21 p.m.

Lisa Torres, School Board Chair

Leslie Thacker, School Board Clerk